

Fidget Quilt Instructions

Materials Needed:

- 24 - 5-inch cotton fabric squares (top layer) – you can choose a preselected packet of 24 squares, or pick your own squares from our selection or bring the squares from your home collection.
- Batting (middle layer) - minimum 20 x 28 inches
- Fleece (back layer) – minimum 20 x 28 inches
- Fabric for the binding – minimum 42 x 12 inches.
- **Machine washable fidget items.** You can choose a preselected packet of fidgets, or pick from our selection or bring from your home collection: Fidget items include buttons, zippers, ric rac and other fabric trims, shoelaces, large plastic beads, small buckles, ribbon made from fabric, neckties.



How to make a fidget quilt:

1. Arrange your 24 - 5-inch squares 4 squares deep and 6 squares wide.
2. **Place your fidget items in the 8 center squares.** Keep in mind how thick these items are making the final quilt. Too thick and it might be tough to sew all the layers together.
3. Tape fidget items into place.
4. Sew the squares together. I usually pin the seams to be sewn together so I can batch sew the seams. Make sure that all the fidget pieces are well sewn into seams if that is how you are attaching them.
5. Press the top – making sure not to melt or burn your fidget item.
6. Lay backing face down.
7. Lay batting on top of the backing.
8. Lay top face up on top of the two layers. Adjust as necessary to make sure top layers is on top of the middle and bottom layers. Pin through all the layers (two pins per square seems to work well) starting with the center squares and working outward. Leave pins in until after the binding has been sewn in place.
9. Using a sewing machine with a walking foot, sew all the layers together by stitching in the ditch - starting with a center seam and working outward, so that eventually all seams have been sewn through all three layers.
10. Cut binding fabric into 3.5 inch-wide strips. Fold strip in half and iron thoroughly.
11. Using a sewing machine with a walking foot, sew binding onto the top layer – seams from binding and all three layers in a stack. Using a .25 seam allowance, start sewing all the layers together. Starting stitching a few inches up from the bottom of one side and

going around until a few inches into that same side. Miter the corners. Use 3.5 overlap technique to fuse the end of the binding with the beginning.

12. Remove pins holding the three layers together.
13. Roll free edge of the binding from the front to the back, making sure that the binding is secure and sewing all three layers together. Pin binding in to place.
14. Hand stitch binding using double thread.
15. Sew on any buttons or last minute fidget items.

Suggestions for making a fidget quilt:

- We will be using 24 5-inch squares of fabric, but once you get the hang of making fidget quilts, try using different size pieces.
- Contrast is pleasing. Perhaps pair a solid color with a busy pattern. Squares can be arranged in lots of ways – I usually use a checkerboard or diagonal pattern of different colors.
- Final quilt must be machine washable.
- The smaller the width of ribbon, the more sewing needed to secure it so it can't be pulled off.
- When selecting fidget items, keep in mind movement, texture, and activity like button/unbutton, lifting a flap, sliding beads back and forth. You can add sound by adding a small cat bell.
- Zippers may be included, but consider that patients lose the ability to know how to work a zipper as the disease progresses. The same line of thought applies to adding clothing pieces like the cuffs, collar and front button/snap closures.
- Place the fidgety bits on the inner 8 squares. The outer squares will be hanging off the sides of the lap. That said, I sometimes add a colorful loop in a seam just to add a spot of bright color and fun.
- Consider themes. A lady might like pinks and florals. A man may prefer blues, browns and sports logos. What about a farm or sports or camping theme?
- Sew buttons onto the quilt after it has been constructed – this way they are so more securely attached and can't be pulled off.
- Using fleece or textured fabric on the back of the fidget quilt helps keep it from sliding off the lap. It also adds another texture and gives the lap quilt a nice weight, which may be comforting to some recipients.
- Painter's tape is useful for taping fidgety bits in place before/during the sewing.
- Knit hair ties work well. Regular hair elastics are a bit dense for the sewing machine.
- Use random scraps of fabric to make flaps or pockets or random bits of spot color.
- Visit [Etsy.com](https://www.etsy.com) or [Pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com) for creative ideas.
- It's easy to stitch in the ditch when securing the three final layers together, but other stitch patterns can be used. Keep your final stitch pattern in mind when placing fidgety bits.
- Fidget quilts are a great way to use up batting scraps. Use a zigzag stitch (Frankenstein!) to piece together batting scraps to make piece big enough for your fidget quilt.
- Not sure metal objects are best for the fidget quilt (rust issue?), but I have used small bells on ribbon to give a little sound stimulation.