



Friends For The
Dearborn Animal Shelter

Cat Comforter Construction Tips

"Oh, this feels so good!" We try to keep the precious pets under our care as comfortable as possible during their stay with us. Research shows that cats remain more content if they are surrounded by familiar smells and of course, a cushy bed.



Our Cat Comforters are made by caring volunteers and each kitty gets their own (if we have enough)! When they go to their forever home, their comforter goes with them. We've found that this significantly helps to ease their transition to a new environment.

Making the Comforters is fun and easy. The approximate size is 18" x 24", but you can make them bigger and we'll fold them, or circular, or whatever. You can sew, tie (no sew), knit (page 3), and crochet (page 4) them. We supply materials or you can buy your own and we'll credit you with the donation. These are just a sample of possible construction tips.

Really Easy Sewing Using Fleece: (thanks to Anne Enright for this pattern)

1. The shelter has a bolt of red fleece. Staff or volunteers cut pieces from the bolt that are approximately 60" x 30". You may pick up these pieces to make your comforters. Please call Laura, our Volunteer Coordinator, at (313) 943-2697, ext. 3555, before you come so that we can be sure there are pieces available. Also pick up the Friends labels that go on the comforters. (Note that you may also use your own fleece and just pick up the labels.)
2. We recommend that you pre-wash the pieces. Use a cold water wash and a medium heat dryer. Adding fabric softener to the wash helps make the fleece softer. This is red fleece, so we recommend that you wash it separately to avoid staining any of your other wash items.
3. You may need to even out the fabric if it was not cut straight.
4. Fold the piece into thirds (lengthwise) so that you have a 20"x30" rectangle (approximately).
5. Cut the two folds so that you have 3 equal size pieces
6. Measure about 2 inches in from each edge and stitched on your sewing machine.
7. To add interest, cut the edges all around to make fringe. and sewed on the tag in the corner.
8. It looks nice and it was really simple!



Easy No-Sew Fleece:

1. The shelter has fleece in kits that you can pick up or you can supply your own fleece.
2. If you supply your own fleece, cut fleece into 24" x 18" pieces.
3. Lay the two pieces flat.
4. Cut a 3" square out of each corner.
5. Cut "fringe" all the way around (3" deep, 1" wide) – make sure the two pieces are even.
6. Double knot the fringe to join the two pieces of fleece together.

Easy Sewing Using Any Soft Material Stuffed with Batting: (thanks to Ann Garbus for this pattern)

1. Cut a Fabric rectangle approximately 44 x 20.
2. Fold it in half.
3. Place a 21x20 piece of batting on top of material.
4. Pin material wrong side together, place batting on top.
5. Sew 3 sides together.
6. Trim seams, turn right side.
7. Hand stitch opening.
8. Top stitch one inch from seam.

No Sew Fleece Pet Bed with Batting: (thanks to Barb Mattison for finding this pattern)

Supplies:

- Fleece
- Cutting Mat
- Rotary Cutting Tool (needs a sharp edge can also use scissors)
- Straight Edge
- Ruler
- Fiber Fill

1. To get started you will need two pieces of polar fleece that are the same size. For the pet bed shown here use two square pieces of polar fleece that were 26 inches square. Remember that you can use this same technique to create a pet bed in different shapes and colors. A simple shape is being used for demonstration purposes. If you decide to make a different shaped pet bed, it may be easier for you to start out by making a simple square pet bed first. Then after you have mastered the technique you may find it easier to make other shapes of pet beds such as hearts or circles.



2. Once you have two pieces of polar fleece, place the two polar fleece pieces on top of each other then evenly and carefully cut a four inch square from each corner of the two pieces at the same time. Next cut 1 inch wide x 4 inch long fringe along each edge. (Be sure that both the top and bottom pieces of polar fleece remain even while cutting your fringe, so that the fringe on both pieces matches up when you are finished cutting. Note: for less fringe and more bed cut 3 inch squares and 3 inch long fringe. It's just more work to tie the fringe together. Note: 1 inch wide can be eyeballed. The important thing is to be as consistent as possible and cut the top and bottom fleece fringe at the same time.



3. Once you have your fringe cut, you simply knot the top and bottom pieces of polar fleece together. With the two pieces of polar fleece still laying one on top of the other, Begin at a corner by taking a piece of fringe from the top piece of polar fleece. Then pick up the matching piece of fringe from the bottom piece of polar fleece. Tie them together in a simple double knot. Continue knotting the top and bottom fringe together until you have only one end that is not knotted.

At this point you will want to put some fiber fill in your pet bed to make it nice and soft for your pet. To make your pet bed cozy, only fill it lightly with fiberfill so that it is not packed tight. This will make a much softer bed that your pet can sink into for a comfy fit. If you are making your pet bed for a feline, you could also insert some cat nip inside of it before knotting the end of your pet bed closed.



4. Well there you have it.



Cat Comforter Construction Tips (continued):

How to Knit a Cat Comforter (very easy, any beginner can do) – thanks to Nancy Spilker for this pattern

This patterns will produce a thicker 2" x 20" blanket. You need Size 13 needles and 4 ply yarn. Knit with two strands of yarn Loosely cast on 76 stitches. Knit until you reach the desired length.

How to Knit / Pearl a Cat Comforter (very easy, any beginner can do) – thanks to Nancy Spilker for this pattern

Finished Product

This pattern will make a gorgeous 18" x 24" comforter with a cable-like row appearance..

Materials

You'll need Size 11 needles and 4-ply yarn (Red Heart Yarn works beautifully).

Casting On and Knitting

Start:

1. Cast on 54 stitches.
2. Knit the first 5 rows across width using a garter stitch.

Repeat sequence:

3. Knit 5 stitches for the border, then *pearl* remaining stitches until the last 5, then knit 5 stitches for the border.
4. Knit next row all the way across.
5. Repeat steps 2 -3, for a total of 6 rows (ending with a knit row).
6. Knit entire row.
7. Repeat Steps 3 -4 for 4 rows.
8. Repeat Step 3 for 2 rows.
9. Repeat Steps 3 through 8 until you have your desired length.

Finish:

10. To finish off with a border, knit off the last 5 rows using a garter stitch.

Final Finish

Drop off your finished product at the Shelter (address below) and we'll attach a label or pick up labels that you can attach.

How to Knit a Cat Comforter (requires some sewing)

(thanks to http://knitting-patterns-techniques.suite101.com/article.cfm/how_to_knit_a_cat_blanket)

This pattern will give you a blanket approximately 24 inches by 24 inches. This pattern is perfect for a beginning knitter, it allows for practice with the basic knitting stitch. Basic sewing skills are also necessary.

Finished Product

The finished product will contain four squares, two of two colors. The squares will be sewn together in order to form the blanket.

Materials

1. Size 11 (8mm) knitting needles
2. 2 skeins (different colors) of Coats & Clark Red Heart Yarn (it may be somewhat difficult to work with but it is a good deal and once the project is completed, just wash it and the stiffness will disappear)
3. Yarn needle

Casting On and Knitting

You will want to cast on 35 stitches. Knit for approximately 12 inches, or until you have a square. (Fold the square along the diagonal to check if you have equal lengths for a quick approximation) Cast off and bind, but do not cut the strings at the corners, you will need them later. Repeat this process three times, being sure to have two squares of each color.

Sewing

Place the squares in the pattern so that the top (casting off row) of one square can be sewn to the bottom (casting on row) of the square above it and so that the edges (the sides resulting from the knitting) will meet. Using leftover yarn, sew the pieces together, tying the sewing yarn to the yarn that was leftover from the casting on and off. Cut all excess string. If desired, wash the blanket in order to soften it.

Finish

Drop off your finished product at the Shelter (address below) and we'll attach a label or pick up labels that you can attach.

How to Crochet (thanks to http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Introduction_to_Crochet/Cat_blanket)

Materials

- Cotton yarn in ecru and Navy blue (or any two colors)
- 4mm hook (U.S. size G)

Construction

The body of this blanket is the important part and it's as easy as can be: one chain stitch, one double crochet. Wash, rinse, repeat. Work a half double stitch in a contrasting color around the border and do anything you like afterward. I got a little fancy because I had been staring at a book of border patterns and decided to try designing something of my own. So don't be afraid of the border design - it's really just sets of chain stitches and double crochet. If the thing gets frustrating, do a simpler border.

Instructions

Body:

- Row 1: Begin with ecru yarn. Chain stitch 154 plus a 3 stitch turning chain.
- Row 2: double crochet, chain stitch. Skip 1, then double crochet and chain stitch again. Repeat. At the end of the row make 2 double crochet stitches in succession. Make a 3 stitch turning chain.
- Row 3: skip 1, double crochet wrapping around the previous chain, chain stitch. Repeat. At end of row make two double crochet stitches in succession; the second double crochet goes into the previous turning chain. Then make a 3 stitch turning chain.
- Rows 4-72: as row 3.

Border:

- Part 1: switch to Navy blue yarn. Half double crochet around the entire edge. Make 1 stitch into each stitch of the rows, 5 stitches into the loose loop at each corner, and 2 stitches into each row along the sides.
- Part 2: switch back to ecru yarn. Double crochet 3, chain stitch 1; skip 1. Repeat. At corners double stitch 2 stitches into each of the 5 corner stitches from the previous row. Complete 1 circle around the border this way. Close the loop with with a flat stitch.
- Part 3:
 - Row motif: chain stitch 3, skip 2 and double crochet wrapping around the chain stitch from the previous row; chain stitch 2, double crochet a second stitch around the same chain stitch; make a picot of 4 chain stitches, close with a flat stitch; chain stitch 2, double crochet a third time around the same chain stitch, chain stitch 3, skip 3, single crochet around the chain stitch. Chain stitch 3, skip 3 and double crochet wrapping around the chain stitch from the previous row; chain stitch 2, double crochet a second stitch around the same chain stitch; make a picot of 4 chain stitches, close with a flat stitch; chain stitch 2, double crochet a third time around the same chain stitch, chain stitch 3, skip 3, single crochet around the chain stitch. Repeat to end of row.
 - Corner motif: chain stitch 3, skip 1 and double crochet; make a picot of 5 chain stitches and close with a flat stitch, double crochet, chain stitch 3, skip 1 and single crochet. Repeat.
 - Resume row motif for the other 3 rows and corner motif for the other 3 corners.

Finish

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