

CHALKBOARD PLACEMAT

By Stacy Schlyer



Keep the kids entertained at dinnertime (or anytime) with this easy-to-sew chalk cloth placemat. Make a few extras to post menus, write fun messages or just to express your creativity at the table.

MATERIALS

- 1/2 yard chalk cloth (chalkboard) fabric
 - 1/2 yard of fabric(s) for border and back of placemat*
 - Coordinating thread
 - Scissors and/or rotary cutter and mat
 - Water-soluble marking pen or tailor's chalk
 - Ruler
 - 4 sticks of colored chalk
- *Cotton fabric can be used for the borders and backing. But if you want to make your entire placemat easy to clean, use a laminate fabric for these areas.



STEPS

Cutting

From Chalk Cloth

Cut one 8½" x 14" rectangle

From Border/Backing Fabric

Cut two 3" x 8½" rectangles

Cut two 3" x 18" rectangles

Cut two 3" x 5½" rectangle for chalk holder

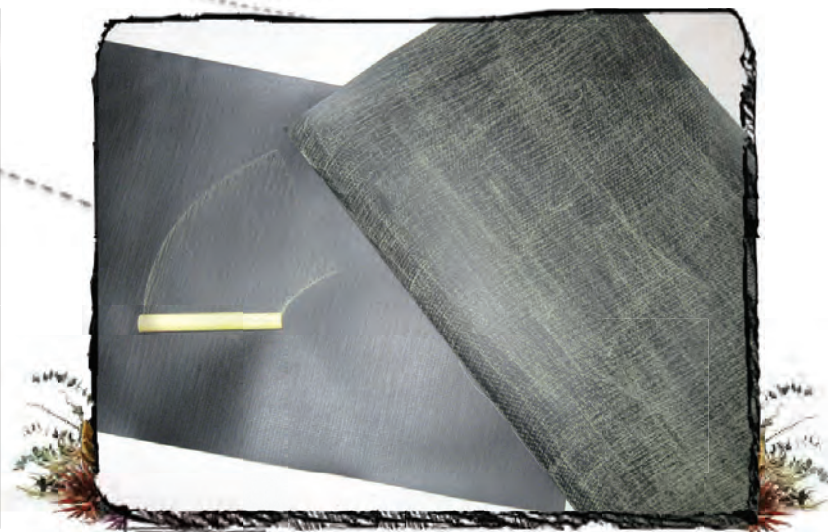
Cut one 12½" x 18" rectangle for backing



Preparation

"Prime" Chalk Cloth

It's important to prime the chalk cloth before you start using your placemat. To do this, rub a piece of chalk across the material (back and forth, up and down) and then wipe with a damp cloth. Priming allows the chalk to "stick" to the material. You may find after repeated use that the fabric must be reprimed.



Be Careful!

Never crease your chalk cloth. This will crack the surface of the material, making it unusable. When pressing the fabric, use a press cloth and the synthetic setting on your iron.

STEPS

Step One

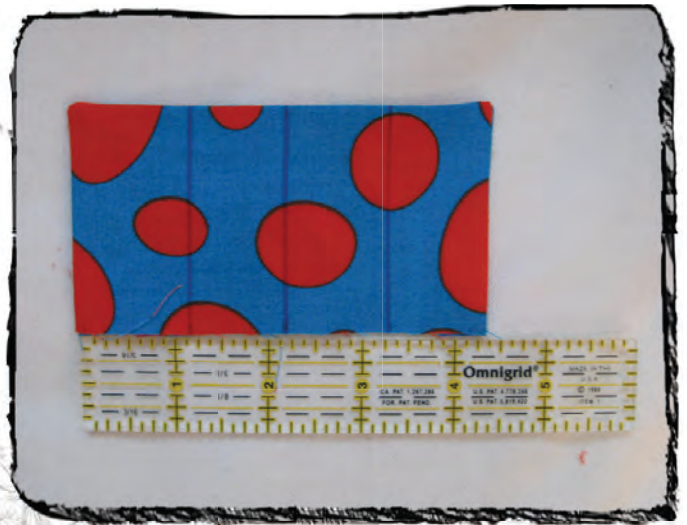
Chalk Holder

Place the two 3" x 5½" rectangles (chalk holder) right sides together. Sew around three sides. Clip the corners, turn right side out, and press.



Measure

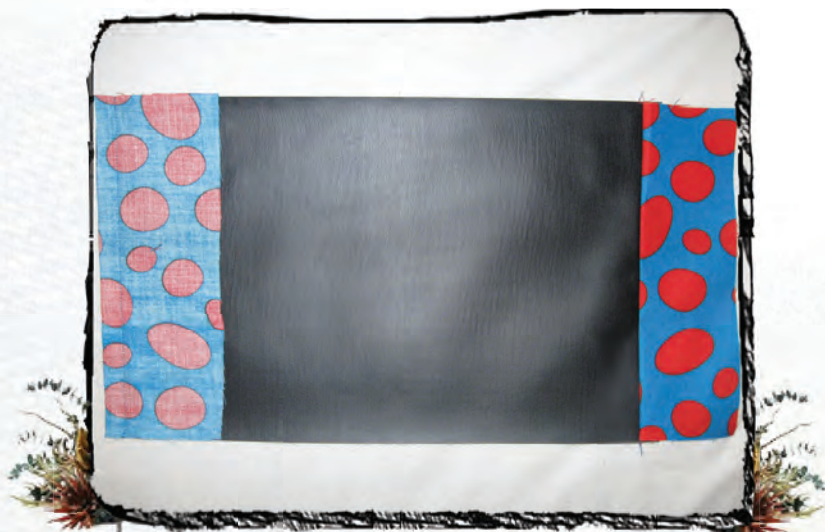
Using a water-soluble marker or tailor's chalk, draw horizontal lines 1⅛", 2⅛" and 3⅛" from the finished edge. Set aside.



Step Two

Sew Side Border

With right sides together, sew a 3" x 8½" strip to each short end of the chalk cloth. Press seam allowances open.



STEPS

Step Three

Sew Top and Bottom Border

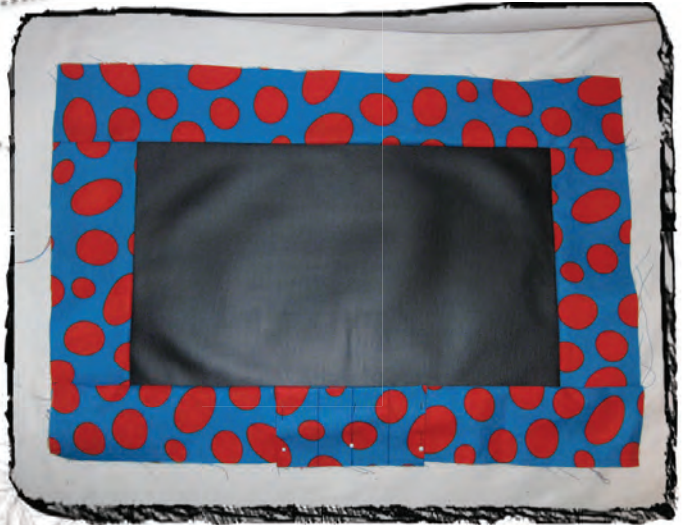
With right sides together, sew a 3" x 18" strip to each chalk cloth side border. Press seam allowances open.



Step Four

Place Chalk Holder

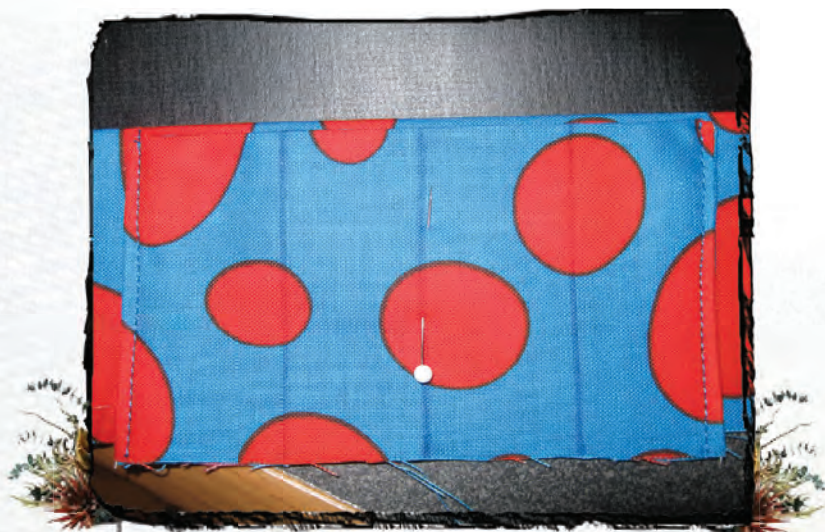
Center the chalk holder pocket on the lower edge of the placemat, aligning raw edges.



Step Five

Sew Chalk Holder

Attach the pocket to the placemat by edgestitching (sewing about 1/8" away from) the side edges.



STEPS

Step Six

Chalk Pockets

Machine stitch along the drawn lines, through all thicknesses, to create the individual chalk pockets.



Step Seven

Sew Placemat Together

With right sides together, sew the placemat front and back together, leaving a 3" opening for turning.



Step Eight

Corners

Clip the corners.



STEPS

Step Nine

Flip It Out

Turn the placemat right-side out through the opening. Press.



Step Ten

Stitch

Edgestitch $\frac{1}{8}$ " away from the finished outer edge of the placemat. It is not necessary to sew the slipstitch opening closed, as the edgestitching will "naturally" close the opening.



Step Eleven

To Finish

Place chalk sticks in the holder pockets and have fun! To clean, simply wipe the chalk fabric with a damp cloth.



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