Scrubsters: Seat Belt Cover

Buckle up! But do it with more comfort and style with a super cute seat belt cover. Another great Scrubsters! project, this easy wraparound cover is not only perfect for seat belts, it's also great for briefcase or suitcase straps. It even worked nicely to pad the handles of the recent heavy-duty Grocery Totes we made. Our design is reversible so you can make one side in cozy fleece for cold days and the other side in cool cotton for warm weather. Not only are seat belt covers an added comfort, they also help keep your shirt or jacket from becoming a wrinkly mess on long drives. These versatile straps would make a great gift for all the drivers your know – customize the fabric to match their moods.

We measured the seat belts from a variety of cars, and found they all were just a shade under 2” wide, so this is the size we used to come up with our cut sizes. Double check your seatbelt or strap to be sure it will fit. The Velcro® is pretty forgiving if the strap is just slightly larger or smaller.

And, because I know you’re wondering, here’s a link to those great Grocery Totes.

Sewing Tools You Need

- Any Sewing Machine (we recommend the Janome HD1000)
- Optional: Walking foot

Fabric and Other Supplies
Amounts shown are for ONE seat belt cover.

- Scraps or TWO coordinating ¼ yard cuts fabric: we dove into our scrap stash and picked out a beautiful cheetah print Minky and coordinating brown faux suede – both from Fabric.com, as well as a bright cotton from Central Park by Kate Spade for Moda with a sherpa fleece from Minky Delight. You need just 6½” x 10” cuts of each fabric.
- Scrap or ¼ yard of medium weight fusible interfacing
- Scrap of ¼ yard of ¾” - 1” sew-in Velcro®
- All purpose thread
- See-through ruler
- Fabric pencil
- Iron and ironing board
- Scissors or rotary cutter and mat
- Seam guage
- Straight pins

**Getting Started**

1. From the exterior fabric, cut ONE 6½” x 10” rectangle.
2. From the interior fabric, cut ONE 6½” x 10” rectangle.
   - NOTE: *If you are working with a directional print, the height is 10” and the width is 6½”.
3. From the fusible interfacing, cut ONE 6½” x 10” rectangle.
4. Cut an 8” length of Velcro®.
At Your Sewing Machine & Ironing Board

NOTE: We made two of these covers so our photos jump back and forth a bit from one to the other in the instructions... just making sure you're paying attention.

1. Following manufacturer's instructions, fuse the interfacing rectangle to the wrong side of the exterior piece.
2. Pin the fused exterior piece and the interior piece right sides together along both long sides and one short end.

3. Using a ½” seam allowance, stitch around the three pinned sides, leaving the one short side open for turning. Remember to pivot at the corners and to lock your seam at the beginning and the end.

   NOTE: When sewing on fleece or bulky fabrics, we like to use a Walking foot (sometimes called an Even Feed foot) to help keep the layers feeding evenly. Another tip when working with two fabrics that are different thicknesses and/or textures: sew with the thicker/slipperier fabric on the bottom and let your machine's feed dogs help handle the "problem" fabric. For example, we used our Walking foot and sewed with the Minky side down on the one pair and the sherpa fleece side down on the other pair.

4. Clip the corners and seam allowance as needed to ease the bulk and turn right side out. If you are new to this technique, check out our tutorial on Stitching and Clipping Corners Correctly.
5. Fold in the raw seam allowance along the open edge so it is flush with the sewn seam and pin closed. Press if need be, but remember that some fabrics, like Minky and fleece should not be directly pressed. Iron from the other side or use a pressing cloth.

6. Topstitch around all four sides approximately ⅜” to ½” from the edge.

7. With the exterior right side up and flat on your work surface, place one side of the Velcro® strip along the RIGHT side, lining up the outside edge of the strip with the topstitching seam you just made. Pin the Velcro® in place or use my fave, seam tape to hold it steady while you stitch.

8. Stitch the Velcro® in place along all four sides through all layers, pivoting at the corners to make a rectangle of stitching. Go slowly and carefully; your stitching will show so you want your seam to be nice and straight.

9. Flip over the cover so the interior is now right side up. Place the opposite side of the Velcro® strip along the RIGHT side, lining up the outside edge of the strip with the topstitching seam. Pin the Velcro® in place or otherwise adhere. NOTE: Yep, you’re working along the RIGHT side in both cases. But, because you flipped over the piece, that means in reality the Velcro® strips will be opposite one another. Ouch… brain tease!

10. As above, stitch this opposite piece of Velcro® in place. We stuck with our Walking foot for the Velcro® steps.
NOTE: Make sure the Velcro® stays in place at least \( \frac{3}{8}'' \) to \( \frac{1}{2}'' \) from the edge. You don't want it to creep over the edge or it could snag on your clothes and rub on your neck.

11. Measure 3” in from each end and use your fabric pen or pencil to draw a vertical line. With heavily napped fabrics it can be hard to use a marking pen or pencil, you can instead mark with pins, removing them as you stitch, or - since it's such a short seam - you could even lead with your seam gauge to keep the stitching in line.

12. Yes! You are stitching directly across through the Velcro®. This helps secure it in place.

13. Here are both our samples from both sides:
14. Simply fold in thirds, one side over the other, to close.

15. We added our Sew4Home label on the sides that were our "main" exteriors.
16. The covers are easily reversible for a new look.
Contributors

Project Design: Alicia Thommas
Sample Creation and Instructional Outline: Kathy Andrews, What Sew Ever

Fabric Art & Accents

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