

Bed Caddy

Editor: Liz Johnson

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I don't know about you, but my nightstand is pretty crowded. There are books and magazines and lotions and a clock and remotes and, and, and! This handy bed caddy allows me to keep my most-used items right at my fingertips, and the top of my nightstand stays tidy. The pockets all have the perfect expandable gusset: big enough to easily slide stuff in and out, but not so big that things topple out.

We used two coordinating Amy Butler fabrics in a decorator weight: a solid in Leaf and Garden Knot in Olive from her August Fields collection. You really need the extra heft in the fabric for both strength and stability.

Sewing Tools You Need

- Any Sewing Machine (we recommend the [Janome Memory Craft 5200](#))

Fabric and Other Supplies



- Fabric for base: $\frac{3}{4}$ yard of 54" decorator weight fabric: we used Amy Butler's Decorator Solids in Leaf
NOTE: if you don't choose a solid, you will likely need a full yard to account for directional patterns
- Fabric for binding and pockets: $\frac{1}{2}$ yard of 54" decorator weight fabric: we used Amy Butler's August Fields in Garden Knot Olive
- Gripper fabric: one piece apx 20" x 4"
NOTE: this is like the traction fabric used on the bottom of feetie pajamas - it can be found in stores and online under the names Slipper Gripper and Jiffy Grip
- All purpose thread
- See-through ruler
- Fabric pencil
- Iron and ironing board
- Scissors or rotary cutter and mat
- Straight pins

Getting Started

Some important notes on sizing

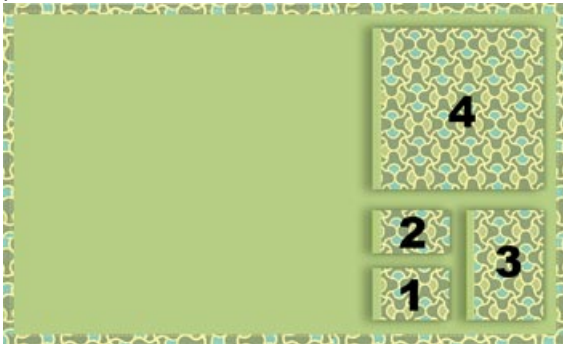
Our pocket sizes were determined based on the things we wanted to store; you'll have different stuff, and you can change the pocket sizes to get the best fit. Remember, the pockets can go horizontally or vertically. Do whatever works best in your space. We needed the following items handy: a Logitech Harmony One remote, an iPhone 3GS, a Sonos Controller 200, and an issue of Martha Stewart Living.



Also, bed frames and mattress depths vary considerably. So before you decide our measurements are going to be perfect for your bed and your arm, we recommend grabbing your cloth tape measure, a note pad and a pencil, and heading on over to your bed. Lift up the mattress and insert the end of the tape measure about 18" (make sure you insert the 1" end). Drop the mattress and let the other end of the tape measure fall to the floor. Climb in bed, but do not go to sleep! Instead, drop your arm over the side of the bed and gauge a comfortable reach for the pockets. Grab the tape measure at the points you think are good for the pockets, note these measurements on your pad of paper. Finally, get out of bed (I know bummer!) and pick the bottom point. This should be an inch or so from the floor. If you have a dust ruffle, you could make the bottom of the caddy flush with the that.

Okay ... now you can start

1. Lay out base (solid) fabric and measure, draw and cut a rectangle 20" wide x 34" high.
2. All the pockets have side gussets for expansion and an inside lining for stability. The lining fabric folds over the top to mimic binding. This means 3½" must be added to the finished width and ¼" to the finished height for the outside or printed fabric. And, 3½" must be added to the finished width and 1¼" to the finished height for the inside or solid fabric.



3. For our sample, we chose three small pockets and one large pocket.
 - Pocket 1:** Finished size needed to be 3" wide x 4" high. From the printed fabric we cut a rectangle 6½" wide and 4¼" high. And from the solid fabric we cut a rectangle if 6½" wide and 5¼" high.
 - Pocket 2:** Finished size needed to be 2½" wide x 4" high. From the printed fabric we cut a rectangle 6" wide and 4¼" high. And from the solid fabric we cut a rectangle if 6" wide and 5¼" high.
 - Pocket 3:** Finished size needed to be 6½" wide x 4½" high. From the printed fabric we cut a rectangle 10" wide and 4¾" high. And from the solid fabric we cut a rectangle if 10" wide and 5¾" high.
 - Pocket 4:** Finished size needed to be 9½" wide x 10" high. From the printed fabric we cut a rectangle 13" wide and 10¼" high. And from the solid fabric we cut a rectangle if 13" wide and 11¼" high.
4. For the edge binding, cut two strips of the printed fabric 2" wide x 22" long and two strips of printed fabric 2" wide x 34" long.

NOTE: *You'll need to cut these pieces across the width of your 54" decorator fabric.*
5. Cut a strip of gripper fabric 20" wide x 4" high. Finish the raw edges with pinking shears or a pinking rotary cutter. You could also serge the edge or fold under ¼" and edge stitch. This gripper fabric will help make your caddy extra resistant to slipping.

At Your Sewing Machine & Ironing Board

Constructing the base

1. Place the 20" x 4" gripper fabric against the back side of the base fabric, positioning it 4" from top edge and edge-to-edge across the width. Pin.



2. Edgestitch in place.



3. If gripper fabric does not slide freely under your machine's presser foot, place a sheet of wax paper over the gripper fabric and stitch on top of the wax paper. The wax paper tears away from the stitching easily when finished.



4. Take your four pieces of binding fabric and create a double fold binding tape. Iron each strip in half, right sides facing out, then open and fold each edge to the middle. Press both new folds, then fold in half again and press. This will create two strips of binding tape $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 22" and two strips $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 34". If you are new to creating binding, read our [Bias Binding tutorial](#).
5. First, sew the binding on each side of the base fabric.
6. Then sew the binding to the top and bottom edges, overlapping the side bindings at each corner with a folded, finished edge. Again, for step-by-step help attaching binding, see our tutorial, [Bias Tape: How To Make It & Attach It](#)
7. Set your completed base piece aside.

Constructing the pockets

1. Lay out all your printed and solid pocket pairs with right sides together. Line up the bottom edges of the solid and printed fabrics. The top edge of the solid fabric should extend 1" above the top edge of the printed fabric.



2. For EACH pair: pin together, and using with $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance, stitch the two sides and the bottom edge. Leave the top edge open.



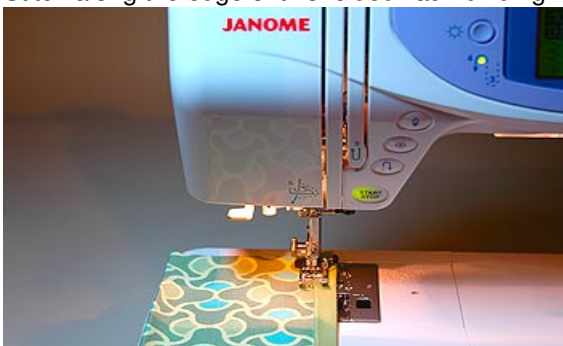
3. Trim the bottom corners diagonally (to make a cleaner point), turn all the pockets right side out and press.



4. Take one pocket. Fold down the solid fabric top edge $\frac{1}{2}$ " and press. Fold it down another $\frac{1}{2}$ " to cover the top raw edge of the printed fabric. Press.



5. Stitch along the edge of this folded 'faux binding' with a straight or zig-zag stitch. We chose a zig zag stitch.



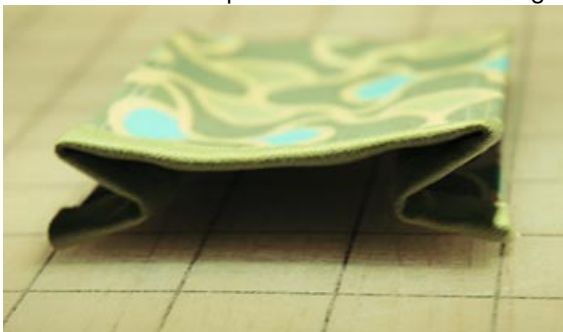
6. Repeat with remaining three pockets.
7. To form the side gussets, fold each side of the pocket back $1\frac{1}{2}$ " and press to create a firm fold.



8. Edgestitch along the fold and then stitch again 1/8" from the first edgestitching to create double stitching lines. Do this along both folds.



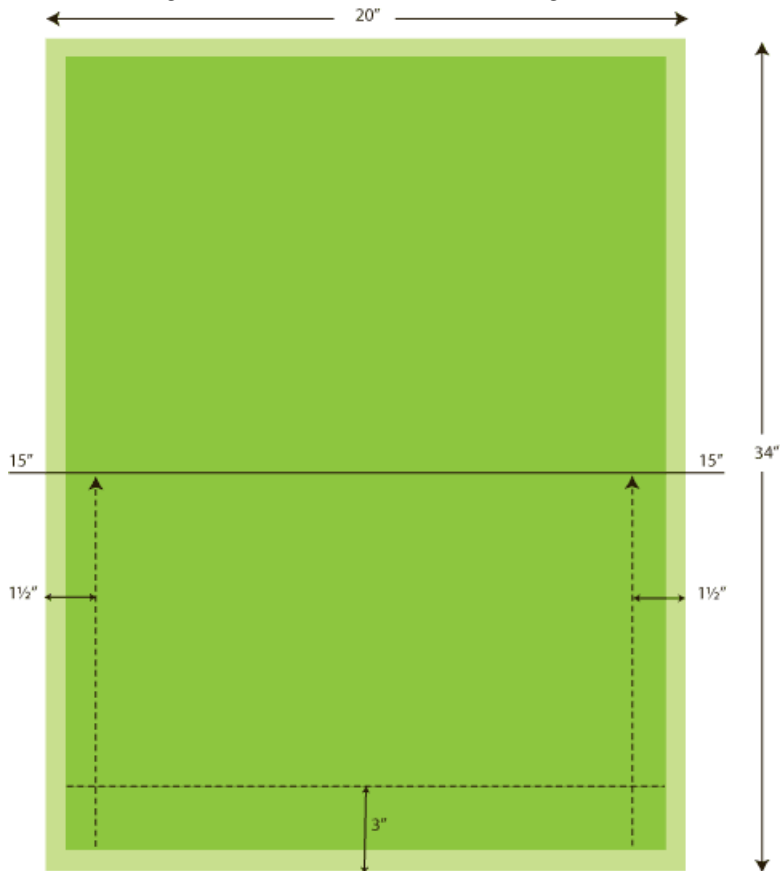
9. Fan fold the side flap back towards the side edge. Press firmly. Fan fold the other side flap. Press.



10. Repeat for each pocket. Set all the pockets aside.



11. Lay out your base fabric piece and use your fabric pencil to draw guides for your pocket placement. If you're duplicating our design: measure 1½" in from each side edge and draw a 15" vertical line along each side. Then, measure 3" in from the bottom edge and draw a horizontal line straight across.



12. Using your drawn lines as guides, square up the largest pocket first (in our sample, the #4 pocket). Line up the right hand side of the pocket with the right vertical line and the bottom of the pocket with the bottom horizontal line.
13. Pin the pleated edge to the base fabric along both sides.



14. Edgestitch each side of the pocket to the fabric base, then stitch again about 1/8" from the first edgestitching line. Leave the bottom edge open. Remove from the machine.
15. Fold the gussets out to their final position and pin the the bottom edge of the pocket to the base fabric. Stitch the bottom closed by edge stitching through all layers, then stitch again about 1/8" from the first edgestitching line. Start and stop these seams at the corners to best match the vertical stitching lines of the gusset's fold.



16. Lay pocket #3 on the base fabric, lining up the bottom and left side edge with your drawn lines on the left side and bottom. Pin and stitch as indicated above in steps 13-15.
17. Lay pocket #1 on the base fabric about 1½" above pocket #3 and lined up with the left side vertical drawn line. Pin and stitch as indicated above in steps 13-15.
18. Lay pocket #2 on the base fabric about 1½" above pocket #3 and ½" to the right of pocket #1. Pin and stitch as indicated above in steps 13-15.



19. Slide your caddy between the mattress and box springs. Adjust so the pockets fall within arm's reach.

Hints and Tips

What are all those double stitching lines for?

These pockets need to hold some heavy things, and the gussets need to flex in and out repeatedly. The double lines of stitching keep the seams nice and secure. Double lines for double strength!

Stitching through the layers

When you're sewing the pockets to the base fabric, and you get to the corners, you will be stitching through a lot of layers!

Go slowly and carefully. Rather than using the foot pedal, sometimes it helps to use your machine's handwheel to crank through the last half to quarter inch, and go stitch-by-stitch.

This is also the time to use your lock stitch button if you have one. If you don't, hit reverse and use the handwheel again to back tack a few stitches.

Contributors

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