

Mother's Day: Spa Wrap

Editor: Liz Johnson

Friday, 30 April 2010 9:00



This cozy terry cloth wrap will make Mom feel like she's at a luxury spa every time she steps out of the shower. We used extra-thirsty 100% cotton terry velour in a soft pink. The polka dot binding, flower accent and ribbon-edged pocket add the elements of style that make this such a perfect gift. Velcro as well as pretty ribbon straps keep everything in place... there'll be no awkward slipping, sliding, hiking and tugging with this wrap. Tuck in some pretty soaps or bath beads and you have a present that Mom will enjoy every day.

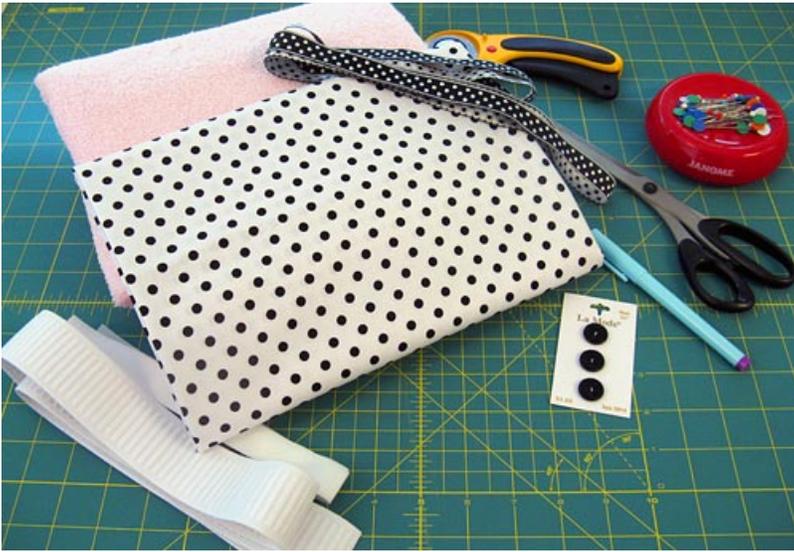
I've made several notes within the instructions, but I want to mention right off the top that it's *really important* you test all our measurements on yourself or a handy helper or a dress form to make sure they are right for YOU! People come in all shapes and sizes; we've tried to come up with a good average size to create a generous wrap (not good to skimp on the overlap), but there is really no way to insure it will be 100% right for you. That's what pins are for! Pin, test, re-pin as needed... and *then* stitch.

Our thanks to [Michael Miller Fabrics](#) for providing the brand new [Ebony Dumb Dot](#) for the binding on this project. And, to our friend [Jona at Fabritopia](#) for the amazing ribbon. Jona carries a wonderful selection of the [Renaissance Ribbons](#). We were very impressed with the quality; they are so beautifully woven, they look almost as gorgeous on the back as from the front. Fabritopia also has lace, novelty trim and appliques.

Sewing Tools You Need

- Any Sewing Machine (we recommend the [Janome MO200QC](#))

Fabric and Other Supplies



- 1 yard of 60" wide towel fabric: we used *Terry Cloth Velour Cotton in Soft Pink* from [Harts Fabric](#)
- For the binding: 1 yard of 44-45" wide fabric: we used *Michael Miller's Ebony Dumb Dot*
- All purpose thread to match the terry cloth
- All purpose thread to match the binding
- 1½ yards of 5/8" fancy ribbon: we used *Renaissance Ribbons' White on Black Dots* from [Fabritopia](#)
- 10" of 1" wide sewn-in Velcro
- 20" of 1¾" no-roll elastic
- Small button for [Tattered Flower](#) accent
- Safety pin or jewelry pin for [Tattered Flower](#) accent
- Scissors or rotary cutter and mat
- Straight pins
- See-through ruler
- Fabric pencil or marking pen or chalk
- Hand sewing needle
- Iron and ironing board

Getting Started

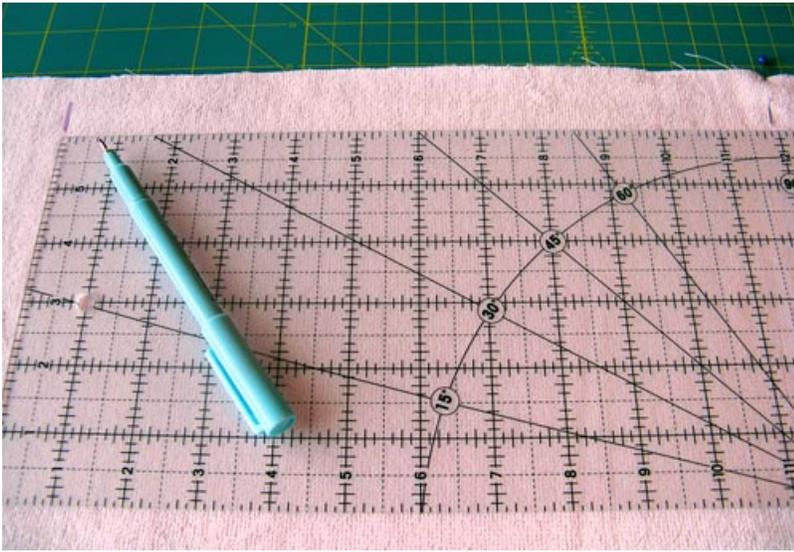
1. Cut one 56" x 35" rectangle from the terry cloth fabric (*Soft Pink Terry Cloth* in our sample).
2. From the binding fabric (*Ebony Dumb Dot* in our sample) cut:
 - Three 44" (width of fabric) x 8" strips for binding
 - One 44" x 2" strip for [Tattered Flower](#)
 - Two 8" wide x 9" high rectangles for pocket
3. Cut the ribbon into three lengths: two at 21" and one at 8"

At Your Sewing Machine & Ironing Board

Elastic casing

We wanted to take up about 4" of the overall width of the wrap with elastic casing in the back. This width may vary based on the size of wrap you want. I played around with my elastic, seeing how far I could stretch it and measuring that against the center of my wrap. I decided on a 24" casing and a 20" piece of elastic. Again, I want to STRESS this is an estimate. It should be a good average, but wrapping and measuring on yourself (or your recipient) will be your best bet.

1. Fold to find the exact mid-point of your terry cloth piece. Mark with a pin.
2. Measure 12" on either side, 24" overall, and use your fabric pen or pencil to mark the start and end point (1" and 24").



3. Line up your 20" piece of elastic at the start point and along the top raw edge. Pin in place just at this start point.
4. Now, I'm going to make you do about three things at once: hold the elastic, stretch the elastic and stitch the elastic. (I was also going to make you juggle chainsaws, but I'll save that for later.)
5. Your machine should be threaded with thread to match the terry cloth.
6. Insert the fabric and elastic under the presser foot, aligning the edge of the foot with the fabric/elastic edge. You should be far enough up on the elastic so the foot is firmly holding it in place. Drop the needle.



7. Stretch the elastic to your end point mark. Secure the start of your seam, then stitch an inch or two, just far enough so you can get a grip on the starting point of the elastic, stop with the needle in the down position. Grab the starting point of the elastic with your left hand and the ending point of the elastic with your right hand - keeping it in line with the terry cloth. Stretch and stitch.
 NOTE: You are **NOT** pulling the elastic and the fabric through the machine. Let the machine do the feeding! Your job is to keep the elastic stretched to its full length and matched up to the fabric. The tension you're maintaining as it comes out the back of the needle simply helps the seam stay straight.
8. When you get to your marked end point, secure your seam and remove the project from the machine. When you let go of the elastic it will snap back, taking up the requisite inches of width... about 4" in our sample.



NOTE: This is a very moderate amount of 'stretchiness', if you want more, use a shorter piece of elastic. You could also simply decrease the width when you cut your terry cloth and leave out the elastic all together. However, then you will be relying on the wrap and the velcro to do all the fitting.

9. Fold your new elasticized edge down 1½".



10. Fold another 1½" to create a casing the full width of the terry cloth.



11. Edgestitch in place close to the inside fold across the full width.

Binding

1. Collect all three 44" x 8" binding strips.
2. If necessary, re-thread your machine with thread to match your binding fabric. I used a very pale pink thread and so used the same thread for both stitching on the terry cloth and stitching on the binding.
3. Seam the three strips together end to end to create one long, continuous strip.
4. To do this, you match right sides together along the 8" sides and stitch, using a ½" seam allowance.
5. Press all your seams open.
6. Fold the binding in half, length wise, wrong sides together and press.
7. Open up your strip wrong side towards you.
8. Fold each side towards the center crease and press.



9. Fold again along your first crease, right sides together, so your two folded edges are together. Press.
10. Start binding on the right side of the spa wrap. Slip the binding over the the raw edge of the terry cloth. Leave about ½" extra binding at the top edge so you can tuck and wrap it around the top edge to finish (later we'll slip stitch this to further secure).



11. Continue to wrap and pin in place all the way down to the first corner. Work from what will be the front of your spa wrap. Be very careful that your middle fold is right on edge and your binding is even on both sides.
NOTE: *Normally, you'd start at the top edge and go, go, go, But in this project, the binding needs to finish neatly at the two top corners where it wraps the casing. Because you're working with two different fabric types (one is stretchy and the other is not), the two layers may slip slightly. The top edge can adjusted (you can tuck and wrap a little more or a little less) so you will start stitching at the bottom corner and sew all the way up to the top.*
12. As you stitch from the bottom corner to the top, guide the edge of your presser foot along the edge of the binding to keep the seam even.
13. When you get to the top, stop a couple inches from the edge with your needle in the down position. Re-tuck and wrap the edges of the binding as necessary to accommodate any extra fabric that has crept up. Make sure the two folded edges of the binding are neatly aligned and flush with the top of the terry cloth casing. Then, finish your seam, securing it at the end.



14. Remove the project from your machine. Turn it around to the bottom corner where you started. Fold a pleat in that corner to make a 45° angle.
15. Pin. Encase the bottom raw edge with the binding, working your way to the opposite corner. Press and pin in place.
16. Return to your machine, and matching your original line of stitching, edgestitch around the corner and all along the bottom of the spa wrap to the next corner. Stop at the corner and back-tack.
 NOTE: By "around the corner" I mean you should drop your needle in at the end of your original line of stitching, stitch into the corner, pivot, and then stitch down the new edge. This way, your line of stitching around each corner will appear uninterrupted.
17. This is what we call a Faux Mitered Corner. If you're new to this technique, we have step-by-step instructions [here](#).
18. When you get all the way around to the opposite top corner, trim your binding to about 1/2" and tuck and fold the ends around the terry just as you did in Step 11.

Velcro

1. We used a 10" strip of Velcro. This is generous; you could go shorter, but I wouldn't go longer.
2. Pull the Velcro apart. Position one side (we used the loop side) on the INSIDE of the top casing, approximately 1/4" from the outer edge of the binding and centered along the casing. Pin in place.
3. Position the other side of the Velcro (the hook) to the OUTSIDE of the top casing. We positioned ours 6" from the edge.



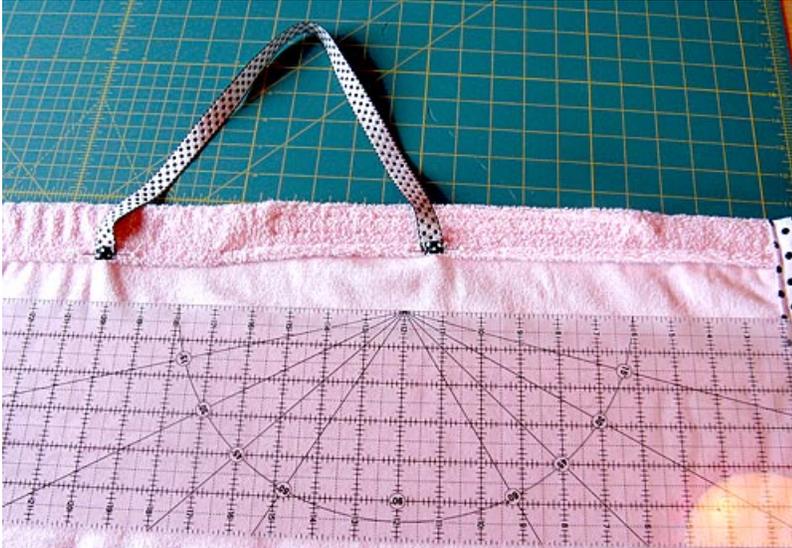
4. You can start with our measurements, but TEST it on yourself before your stitch anything in place! With the Velcro pinned in position, wrap the towel around yourself and check to see that it you can 'snug it up' nice and tight. If not, adjust the hook piece (the piece on the outside of the top casing), then test again.
5. Once you are happy with your Velcro position, stitch it in place around all four sides, staying as close to the edge of the Velcro as possible. Pivot at all the corners and stay nice and straight - you'll be able to see this stitching on the other side of the casing.

Ribbon shoulder straps

1. Find your two 21" lengths of ribbon.

NOTE: *As above, I'm going to give you our sample measurements as a guide, however, you REALLY need to pin the ribbon in place and try it on yourself (or a patient model) to make sure it's right for you.*

2. Lay the project out on your work surface wrong side facing up.
3. Working from the right side (the side with the Velcro on the OUTSIDE), position the end of first strap 11" from the edge of the binding. Loop the ribbon to form the strap, placing the opposite end approximately 8½" from the first end. Tuck the raw edges and pin in place.



4. Start the second strap approximately 9" from the first strap and again use an 8½" spread to create the second strap loop. Tuck the raw edges and pin in place.



5. Try it on. If it fits well, you're good to go. If not, simply un-pin and adjust as necessary.
6. Once you have everything just the way you want it, thread a hand sewing needle and whip stitch the straps in place. Make sure you hand stitch from the bottom of the ribbon all the way up, along both sides of the ribbon, to the top of the casing. You want the ribbon to lay nice and flat and secure against the casing.
NOTE: *I hand-stitched my straps in place because I didn't want any stitching to show on the outside of the casing. However, if you don't mind the stitching lines and feel a machine stitch would be more secure.. go for it.*

Pocket

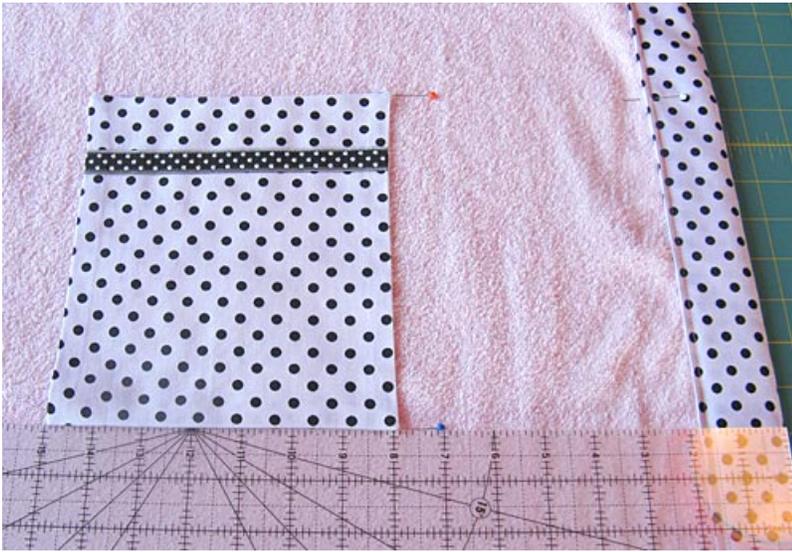
1. Find your two 8" x 9" pocket pieces and the 8" length of ribbon.
2. Stitch the ribbon in place across one of the pocket pieces approximately 2" from the top raw edge.



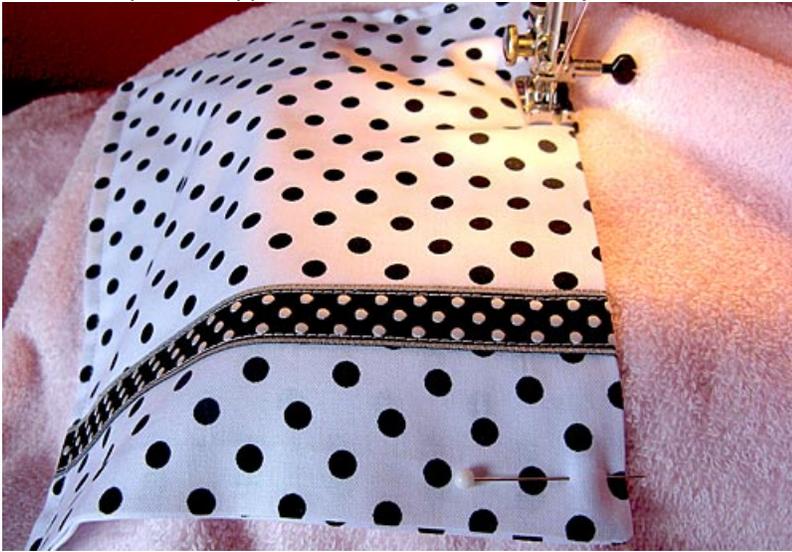
3. Place the two pocket pieces right sides together and stitch, using a $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance, around all four sides leaving a small opening for turning along the bottom. Clip all corners.



4. Turn right side out, push out all corners so they are super sharp.
5. Place the pocket on the wrap. It should be on the side of the wrap with the Velcro on the inside. In other words, lay the project flat on your work surface right side facing up - the pocket will be on your right not your left. Again, you may need to adjust placement slightly for your size, but our pocket is approximately 19" up from the bottom and 8" in from the binding's edge.
6. Measure and mark with pins, then pin the pocket in place. Use your ruler to insure the pocket is square to the binding.



7. Edgestitch the pocket in place. Start from the top corner of one side, go down, pivot, sew across the bottom, pivot and sew back up to the opposite corner. I switched to my $\frac{1}{4}$ " foot to make sure my seam would be nice and straight.



Finishing

1. Using our [Tattered Flower tutorial](#), make a flower from the 44" x 2" strip of binding fabric. Attach the finished flower to the top front corner of the wrap.
2. Optional, but a nice finishing touch: thread a hand-sewing needle and slip stitch the two top edges of the your binding

and the front and back of the binding's mitered corners.

Hints and Tips

Binding

If you're new to creating and/or attaching binding, read our tutorials [Bias Tape: How to Make It and Attach It](#) and [How to Make Faux Mitered Corners](#). We did not cut our binding strips on the bias for this project because we are dealing only with straight edges, however, the first tutorial gives you a good, basic understanding for all types of binding construction. The second tutorial shows you how to create the clean corners.

A big, heavy project

This is a large project and the terry cloth can get heavy. Be careful when you're at your sewing machine that you keep most of the fabric up on the sewing table. If it suddenly drops off the end, it can jerk your fabric while stitching and throw your seam line off. Not pretty. Stop every now and then, with the needle in the down position, and adjust the bulk of the fabric so it doesn't cascade to the floor.

Contributors

Project Design: Alicia Thommas

Sample Creation: Liz Johnson

Tags:

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