

Sewing Skills Self-Assessment (no serging required) to Prepare for Sewing Our New No-Wire Fabric Mask

Thank you for your interest in sewing fabric masks for *Sewing for Ottawa*. We so much appreciate that you are offering your time and talent to help others. Note to Quilters: These instructions will result in a rounded shape (not flat!).

These instructions explain how to make two pleats in a scrap piece of fabric before sewing the new wire-free mask design (which includes the same pleats). If you have questions while completing this self-assessment, please contact Donna Neff via Messenger. She can help you via video chat. If you are new to sewing this face mask design, this self-assessment will help ensure that the masks you sew are great and that our limited resources are used to best advantage.

Cut two pieces of different fabric (one light/plain and one dark/printed) measuring 6 inches (15 cm) by 4 inches (10 cm). The fabric can be print or plain. For this assessment, any kind of fabric can be used although slippery fabrics should be avoided as they are much harder to work with.

Thread your sewing machine with a thread colour that contrasts with the fabric so that it is as visible as possible (white thread on black fabric, orange thread on blue fabric, etc.).

With the two pieces of fabric right sides together and edges aligned, sew the two pieces of fabric together along one long side using a $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.3 cm) seam allowance.

Press the seam open and keep the mask flat with both inner and outer pieces laid out in a single layer. The right sides should be facing down and the wrong sides facing up.

Using a pin to mark the centre of the seam you have just sewn. Measure $1\frac{1}{2}$ " (4 cm) from the centre along the seam and pin that location. Do the same placing another pin $1\frac{1}{2}$ " (4 cm) on the other side of centre. Remove the centre pin.

Form two pinch pleats as follows (sketch at bottom of page may be helpful):

1. At the pin location, pinch the fabric across the seam and then re-locate the pin so that it is across the pleat ready for sewing.
2. From the fold, measure $\frac{1}{4}$ " (1/2 cm). This is the width of the pleat from the crease (where you pinched the fabric) to where you will stitch.
3. Starting at the seam and stitching at right angles to the seam, stitch back $\frac{1}{2}$ inch then stitch forward 1 inch then stitch back $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1/2 cm) to the seam.
4. Repeat at the other pin location.

You're done! Use Messenger to send Donna a photo of your finished pleats. And once again, thank you!

