

SHAPED NEEDLEBOOKS

There are many ways of storing needles, but since patchwork is predominantly what we do here, we have shared a couple of ideas for making soft cover needlebooks. These can be any shape (let your imagination run free) and any size (those with doll-making needles will know how what I mean!) A great way of using orphan blocks, any of these would make a lovely gift for a stitching friend.



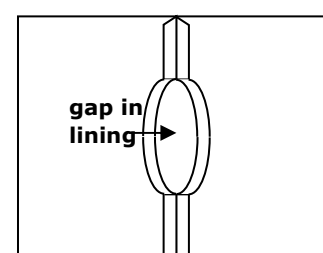
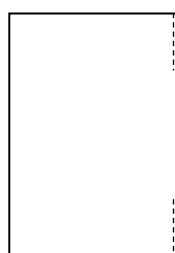
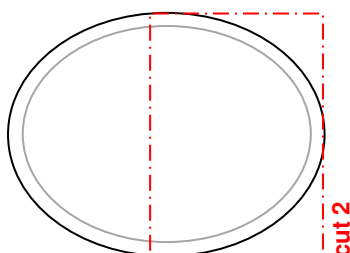
Outside
showing loop and
button closure

Inside
showing felt
pages cut to
shape and
shaped patch
pocket on inside
front cover

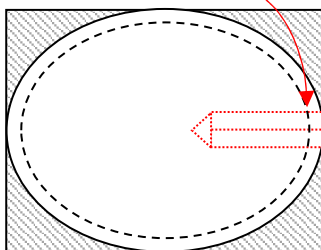
My needlebooks often start their life as little quilts, either repurposed from larger pieces, or made especially, in which case either of these methods work just as well to finish the edges. Sometimes the shape you have selected for your book will be easier to face than bind.

Cut your outer cover to the shape you want with a $\frac{1}{4}$ inch seam allowance all round.

Make a lining/facing piece from cotton fabric by cutting two pieces the same height as your outer, but only half the width + $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. Stitch these two pieces together, leaving a gap in the middle of the seam (to turn the facing through) and press the seam open.

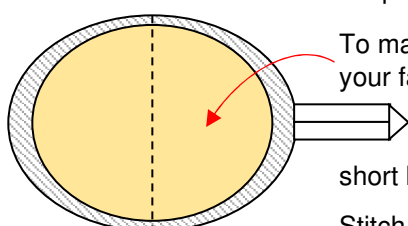


If you want to include a pocket on the inside of your faced book you will need to add it to one (or one on each) half of the facing at this point. Make a small patch pocket that will fit within the shape of the outer and stitch it in place. Likewise, if you want to add a fabric or ribbon loop for a loop-and-button closure you need to add it now so that it is stitched securely into the outer seam (it needs to be trapped between the two layers). See additional notes for both of these on the following page



Place the outer and the facing Right Sides Together (RST) and stitch on the $\frac{1}{4}$ inch seam allowance all round your shape. Trim the facing to the shape of the outer and snip the seam allowance on any curves.

Turn the book the right way out through the gap in the facing and push out any corners carefully. Roll and manipulate the outer seam until it is flat at the correct shape. Stitch the gap closed. If desired, top-stitch close to the edge of your shape all round

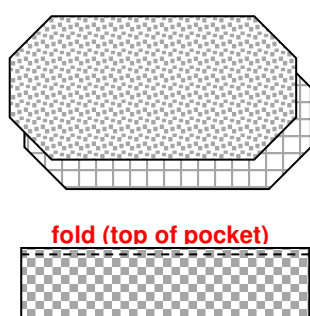


To make the pages of your book cut two or three pieces of felt to the shape of your faced panel, but $\frac{1}{2}$ inch shorter in height and 1 inch narrower in width. Pin in place centred on the inside (facing) and stitch through all layers – you might want your walking foot on for this. By cutting the pages slightly short like this they will not show when the book is closed.

Stitch a button to the front cover to line up with the loop and you're done!

METHOD 2: Bound Edge

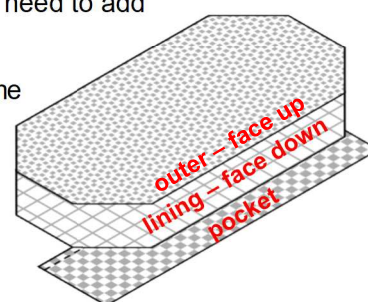
The crazy patchwork outer covers for these examples have been made on a fabric foundation and are quite stiff so I opted to bind the edges rather than try to fold them with facing. You can make these with curved edges – just use bias binding. This method also makes it easier to include a pocket on the inside. Make a ribbon or fabric loop closure with a button, or a flap with a little Velcro to keep everything securely closed.



Start by cutting the shape of the book you want for your outer and (depending on the back of this panel) cut an identical shaped piece of cotton fabric for lining. Because this will have a bound edge you do not need to add any seam allowance to the shapes.

Add a pocket by cutting a piece of fabric the same width and height as these panels. Fold this in half, Wrong Sides Together (WST) and press. Top-stitch close to the folded edge.

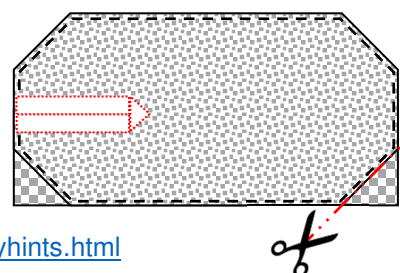
Place the pocket on a flat surface and place the lining piece, face down directly on top. Add the outer face up and pin all layers together.



Stitch the layers together close to the edge (within the ¼ inch seam allowance) and trim the pocket piece to the shape of the outer.

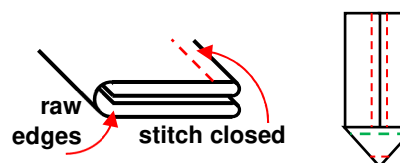
Pin the loop to the outside back cover of your book so the raw edges will be trapped in the seam when you put the binding on

Bind the edge of your book finishing by hand or machine. See our other tutorials for information: <https://www.littlepatchpockets.co.uk/patterns/handyhints.html>



Cut felt pages to shape and add them the same way as shown on the previous page. Add a button to the front cover to line up with the loop and you're done!

Making a fabric loop: Cut a piece of fabric 1½ x 6 inches. Press it in half lengthwise WST, unfold and then press each half in half again WST. Remake the original fold, enclosing all the long raw edges inside. Stitch down the open edge to close. Fold the strip in half so the stitched edges meet and the fold forms a point – stitch across the base of this triangle to hold in place (shown in green on far right)



Simple patch pocket: Cut a piece of fabric the width x twice the height of your desired pocket with a ¼ inch seam allowance all round. Fold the pocket RST and stitch down each side and a little way across the bottom edge leaving enough of a gap to turn it through. Snip the corners diagonally and turn through the gap pushing corners out carefully. Press the pocket including a crease along the edges of the gap. Top stitch across the top edge, close to the fold, and then stitch the pocket in place, 1/8th inch from the edge, with back-stitching at each end to secure and reinforce. This effectively closes the gap in the seam at the bottom without any additional stitching

Variations: of course, your patch pockets don't have to be square!

