

Instructions for Fabric-backed Diaper

Burp Cloth (copyright)

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1. Prewash both the diaper and the fabric. Press both the diaper and the fabric. You will need a piece of fabric that is the exact width of the diaper (for example, 13.5") and 4" longer than the diaper (for example, my diapers are 18.5", so my fabric is 22.5"). The length of the fabric allows for a 2" wide "band" across the bottom front of the diaper. That width is about right for allowing adequate room for any embroidery, but you could, of course, vary this. The measurement is always the length of the diaper plus twice the measurement of the "band."

2. Note: There is no band across the back end of the diaper, although you could probably do that if you choose. In the case, add another four inches. You would also need to leave (and eventually close) an opening on the side to allow for turning. I haven't done one with the second "band" but feel sure that would work.



3. With right sides together, pin the front end of the fabric to the front end of the diaper. Remember, you are only going to stitch the end, NOT the sides at this point.





4. Stitch across the end, taking up a 2" seam. DO NOT trim this seam. The size of this seam determines the width of the front "band."
(Note: this picture shows how it looks after you have sewn the 2" seam.)



5. Press this seam just as you would any seam. I always go to the front and press downward from the diaper to the fabric to ensure a smooth joining. (This takes longer to read about than to do!)



6. With end of the diaper away from you and the fabric on the top, lift the fabric up 2" away from the seam and fold down to meet the fold with the original edge of the diaper/fabric. You can adjust the pleat at this point. (The crease you see in the picture is the ridge formed by the pleat fold underneath—the fabric at this point is smooth down to the fold of the pleat. See next picture.)



Pleat – note that you have essentially three layers of fabric where the pleat is.



7. Pin the side of the pleat. It isn't necessary to pin all across the bottom edge, but I usually put one pin just in the middle so that I keep the entire pleat in place as I pin the sides. (Incidentally, if you cut the width of the fabric a scant measurement of the width of the diaper, the fabric will roll just a bit to the back when finished—same basic sewing principle as when we make an under collar just a tiny bit smaller than the upper collar. I don't measure the fabric. I lay the diaper on it and cut around.) If you need reassurance that you are doing this correctly, note that you will be sewing through 3 layers of fabric plus the diaper when you sew the pleat.



8. Pin up both sides and across the (back? top?) end, leaving an opening to allow you to turn the fabric and diaper. My diapers have a fairly thick middle, so I have found that it is easier to leave this opening on one side or the other of the middle, as the thick middle is hard to turn and topstitch. I use 3/8" seams on the sides, but a 5/8" seam across the end. This allows a bit more fabric and diaper and makes the final closing easier. I have found that I need an opening for turning of just a bit more than 4."



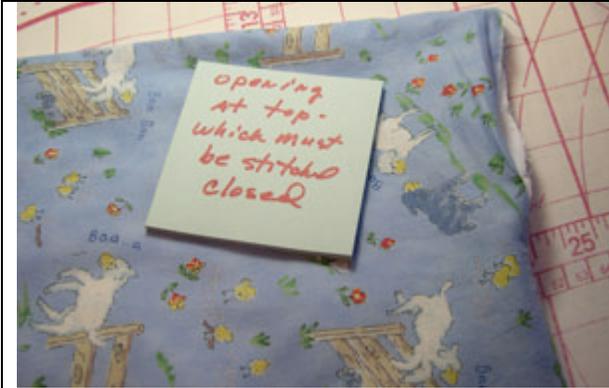
9. Sew sides and top, remembering to leave opening.



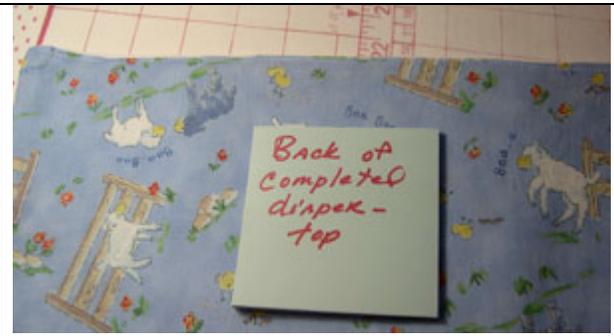
10. You are now ready to turn. At this point, I will usually trim the serged edge off the top of the diaper, just to eliminate some of the bulk in the top seam.



11. When you turn the diaper right side out, the pleat will result in a 2" band" across the bottom edge of the diaper. The side seams are finished. I press from the fabric side at this point



12. Turn in the edges of the opening, press and top stitch the opening closed. I usually stitch all the way across the top of the diaper so the stitching looks more like topstitching than simply a line of stitches closing an opening. I use white thread so the thread is inconspicuous on the front of the diaper. If you want, you can close the opening by invisible stitches by hand. I would not do that except for a very special burp cloth used for a wedding, Christening, etc. These will be washed often, so "pretty or cute, but sturdy" is my philosophy



You can do three diapers this way using only 24" of 45" wide fabric—method is fast, inexpensive, and, in my opinion, looks great.

I bought 1.5 yards of this sheep design fabric at Vogue Fabrics in Chicago in January. Sure wish I have known then that Martha Pullen was going to have cute little sheep on her Baby's Layette CD. I certainly would have purchased more!

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