

Springtime Towels by Sarah Ann Smith



It's that time of winter when you start looking forward to spring and a dash of color, but in Maine Spring is a long way away. So, I decided to grow a little spring in our hall bath with two new hand towels in this quick, quick, quick project.

You'll need:

A hand towel (or two)

Fabric to look lovely with the towel, about 18 x 8 inches

More fabric or ribbon if you want to do the stripe on the second end, about 18 x 2 inches

Sewing machine

Thread, I used a 40-wt shiny polyester to jazz up the stitching

If you want to be really careful, pre-wash both the towel and your fabric.

Step 1:

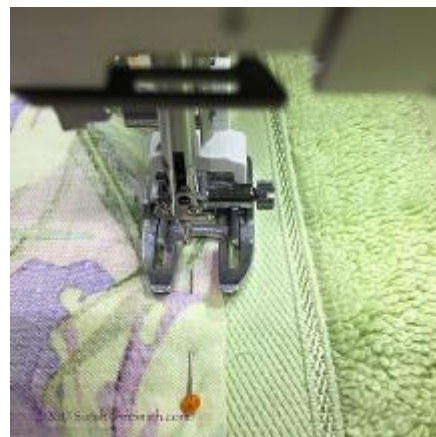


- Measure the width of your towel.
- Measure from the top of the woven stripe to the bottom of the towel.
- Cut your fabric the width of the towel (in my case 16.25 inches) plus an inch or more. I cut mine 18 inches wide.
- Cut your fabric two times the distance from the top of the woven strip to the bottom of the towel plus a bit more than an inch. My distance was 3 inches, so I cut my fabric 7 1/2 inches deep. If you have a directional print, one with a clear up and down (like trees or animals) you may wish to cut two pieces of fabric and sew them so that the motifs will face up on both sides of the towel.
- Cut your fabric, in my case 18 x 7 1/2" total.

Step 2:



- Press your fabric in half lengthwise, wrong sides together.
- Pin the raw edge of the fabric, right side down, to your towel with the raw edge facing the end of the towel. Allow a generous 1/4" seam allowance. I pinned so that my line of stitching would be on the upper edge of the woven band.





When stitched, the woven band is not visible.

Step 3:



- To sew the ends of the decorative fabric, fold the fabric in half, right sides together.
- Pin the edges, making sure that raw edges are aligned.



- Sew up to the first stitching line.

- Turn right sides out.



Step 4:

- Turn under the seam allowance on the back side and pin in place. Turn over and move the pins one at a time, to the front side of the towel. Check on both sides that the woven stripe is fully covered and that you will catch both sides of the decorative cotton when you stitch.

Step 5:

- Use a straight stitch or decorative stitch to sew through both sides of the cotton fabric. I tested various decorative stitches, and decided I liked a bold but simple blanket stitch best.
- I used Applique Stitch 4 on my 9400, but increased the width and length to 4.0 from the default size. I also reversed the stitch so that the zig stitch is to the right (not left).



- Position your needle so the straight portion of the stitch is just barely on the edge of the decorative fabric.
- I pulled the back part of the towel into the photo so that, on the left, you can see stitches.

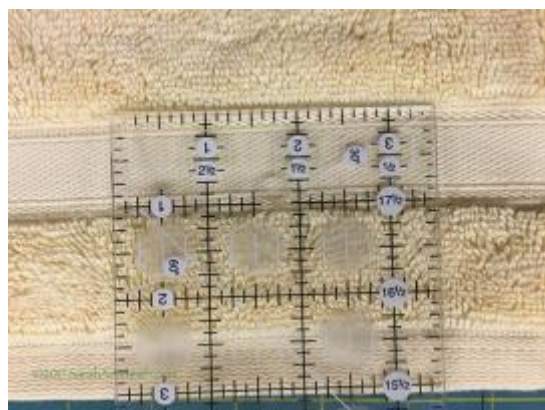
- The two photos below show my stitching on the front and back. On the yellow towel, the reverse side (on the left) shows a bit more of the fabric above the blanket stitch. On the green towel, it is nearly perfect. If you are a very particular sew-er, you may wish to glue-

or hand-baste the second side to get it perfect, then add decorative stitching.



Step 6:

As an alternative to wrapping the bottom edge of the towel, or as a little extra treat, you can simply sew your decorative fabric on top of the woven stripe. You could also use ribbon.



- Measure the width of the stripe, and cut a piece of fabric as wide as the towel and double your measurement. My stripe was just over an inch, so I cut my fabric 2 x 18 inches.

Step 7:

- Iron your strip in half lengthwise, wrong sides together.
- Open up the strip, and press the raw edges to the center.



- Pin the decorative fabric strip onto your towel, turning under the short ends to be even with the edges of the towel

**Step 8:**

- Stitch in place. I opted to use the Straight Stretch Stitch and lengthened the stitch length to 3.30.
- To sew, I used the F2 open-toe applique foot, but you could also use the Edge-Stitch foot, pictured. I aligned the fold of the cloth next to the right side of the F2 foot and



moved the needle to the right to sew next to the fold.



- This image shows the front (on the right) and reverse side after stitching.

And the towel, laid flat:



It took far longer to type these instructions than it did to make two towels—it is a really quick pick me up as we wait for Spring!