

Thanks

I want to extend my sincere thanks to all those who helped to create this web site. This site would not have been possible without the work of many individuals and organizations.

This site adapts and builds on the past work of Grace MacNabb who has diligently studied, researched, observed and educated others about the importance of touch quilts for the treatment of anxiety caused by dementia and Alzheimer's diseases.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Ottawa Valley Quilters Guild members who provided input based on their experience from making touch quilts and helped in the editing of this site.

My thanks also go out to organizations such as Granite Ridge and The Glebe Center and their professionals who provided valuable feedback.

My thanks to many Ottawa area quilters' guilds as well as The Country Quilter in Richmond, who encouraged the making of these quilts which ensuring their wide distribution in the eastern Ontario region.

For this, I am truly thankful.

Ottawa Valley Quilters Guild make a variety of quilts that help almost all Alzheimer patients. Please contact us should you wish to obtain such a quilt.

Jane Roszell
Touch Quilt Coordinator
Ottawa Valley Quilters Guild



Table of Contents

Touch Quilts Introduction.....	3
How to Make Touch Quilts.....	4
Supplies/ Laying Out the Quilt.....	4
Assembling the Quilt.....	5
Troubleshooting for Fabrics of Mixed Weight and Texture.....	7
Fabric Manipulation Enhancements.....	8
Pin Tucks.....	8
Ruffles.....	8
Shirring.....	9
Chenille.....	9
Quilting.....	9
Block Enhancements.....	11
In-Seam Pulls.....	11
Prairie Point.....	11
Yo-yo Flowers.....	12
Embellishments on Blocks.....	13
Examples.....	13
Trails.....	14
Pockets.....	15
Simple Pocket.....	15
Diagonal Pockets.....	15
Patch Pockets.....	15
Zipper Pockets.....	16
Pockets Toys.....	17
Fancy Blocks.....	18
Other Senses.....	24
Noise.....	24
Weighting.....	25

Touch Quilts Introduction

A Fidget, Fiddle, Touch Quilt or Sensory Activity Blanket is a small lap quilt, mat or blanket that provides sensory and tactile stimulation for the restless or "fidgety" hands of someone with Alzheimer's disease, or related dementia, autism, and developmental challenges. These quilts are pieced from fabrics with a variety of textures and colors placed next to one another, and embellished with accents or simple accessories such as pockets, laces, trims, appliques, buttons, secured beads, ribbons, braids etc. The most common use of touch quilts is to comfort, calm and stimulate anxious patients with mid - to late - stage Alzheimer's disease and related dementia. (The information presented here was developed for use with dementia patients, although it is widely applicable.) With these patients, the quilts are a therapeutic tool and can reduce the need for sedatives. They enable some people to sit calmly and happily, through a concert for instance, when otherwise they would be reaching out touching and disturbing those around them and becoming anxious themselves.

Typically, the quilts are made of blocks, each a fabric of a different texture from other blocks in the quilt — it is **texture that provides the therapy**. No pattern is required to create a fidget quilt or blanket. Although tactile quilts can be made any size, most are small. Those for wheel-chair-bound patients should be quite small, about 2 feet [60 cm] square, so they won't get caught in the wheels. Somewhat larger quilts, about 3 feet [90 cm] square, work better for mobile patients and are sometimes hung on walls to attract patients to come and touch.



Touch quilts are not difficult to make, although care is required to make them safe and sturdy. All attachments must be well sewn down as anxious patients will often throw or swing these quilts about. Each block should be large enough that all five fingers can touch it and move around to feel the tactile variety of the blocks. They should **never** have anything sharp or heavy on them and **nothing** that will fly away from the surface or can be pulled, twisted, or pried off. Bright **colours** are good, especially red; but any colour combination that you like will likely be pleasing for some patients. Note, however, that patients with Alzheimer's disease tend to see black as a hole in the quilt. Therefore use black sparingly, as no more than a bit of trim. Quilts destined for care facilities where yellow is used to indicate no-go zones should have little or no yellow.

While there is good evidence that well-made tactile quilts generally have calming, soothing and comforting effects, there is precious little evidence that any specific feature, any particular texture, noise, or embellishment is necessary for the calming effect, or more likely to achieve calming than any other specific feature. It is probable that the rule of different strokes for different folks applies: any given feature calms some and not others. By making our quilts all

different — different textures and mixtures of textures and embellishments (or not). It is can a process that is enjoyed by the quilter and useful to recipients.

This website is meant to help those who want to make a touch quilt for someone they love. This site lays out how to design and made these very valuable quilts. There is also a number of block designs and enhancements which can be added to the quilt blocks for you to adapt, if you wish.

How to Make Touch Quilts

When making a touch quilt think about the needs of Alzheimer's patients and how the quilt will be used. In residences, the quilts are used in several ways. Smaller quilts, 24 to 30 " square [60 to 90 cm], are put in the lap of wheelchair-bound patients, encouraging them to move and explore with their fingers. Quilts are also left around or hung on walls where people just pick them up or go to feel them. A patient who is especially upset and perhaps 'acting out', may be gradually distracted by a quilt put in his/her lap. Therefore make sure your quilt has lots of excitement for fingers. Make it strong and safe, so nothing will come off and choke a patient, so nothing will harm someone whipped by a quilt, and so it will stand up to patient abuse and harsh washing.

Supplies/ Laying Out the Quilt

1. Select fabric with your fingers, not your eyes. Texture of the fabrics makes the touch quilt.
 - **Quilts should have at least 10 different textures:** smooth, rough, raised stripes or circles, nap, plush, pile or shag, satiny, burlap-like, homespun, lacy, tweedy, terry cloth, soft, hard, etc, etc, etc. Try to use some **fake fur or minky** in each quilt.
 - Most fabrics are okay. Not acceptable are fiberglass , real fur and real leather.
 - Dementia patients appreciate attractive, brightly coloured quilts in the primary colors - **red, blue, and green**. (Neutral colours like beiges seem better for autistic people.). As our sight dims bright colors, contrasting edges, and larger patterns help. Red is a good choice for patients who are loosing their eye sight. Therefore it is recommended that every quilt should include red.

Notes:

Patients with Alzheimer's disease tend to see black as a hole in the quilt. Therefore use black sparingly, as no more than a bit of trim. Quilts destined for care facilities where yellow is used to indicate no-go zones should have little or no yellow.

2. When laying out the blocks to make the quilt, think about the patterns of texture. You may, for example, alternate smoother squares with rough (as you might light and dark colors). Or do you want a progression of smooth to rough, soft to harsh around the quilt? When you have arranged squares, close your eyes and feel how they go together.
3. After you have a design of texture, look at the colors. Is the quilt too bland? too jarring? If you want to change a fabric because of color, look for a similar texture in another color. If you feel your quilt is too dull, you might add color by using bright regular quilt fabric to make a couple of toys, or use that space for additional quilted textures.

4. Add embellishments as described in the next sections. Do not over embellish. A too-busy quilt detracts from the calming effect.
5. **For thread, use the strongest you have.** As these quilts maybe treated roughly and washed in commercial washing machines, they need to be as strong as possible. Therefore strong sewing threads are recommended. For embellishments which might be used to swing the quilt, use heavy duty button sewing thread, waxed dental floss, or even string as well as repeated stitching for attaching such embellishments etc.

Assembling the Quilt

1. Wash all fabrics and embellishments for top, back and, if using, a middle fabric. This step is necessary to control shrinkage in the finished quilt.
2. Quilts can be composed of squares or rectangles. What is important is a variety of textures (at least 10 different textures) and the size of the block (at least 6" X 6" [15X15 cm] in area - average hand size).

Squares

The square blocks can vary from 6, 7 or 8 inches [15,18,20 cm] in size when finished and with a requirement of a minimum of 10 textures. This can give an overall quilt size of 24" to 32" [50 to 80 cm] squared. The 16 squares in this quilt design leave plenty of room for textural variety.



Rectangles

Again use the guide of a minimum of 10 different textures and a minimum size of 6" X 6" [15 X 15 cm] for hand area. As this is more challenging to assemble, you may want to create rows of different size rectangles to simplify the sewing.



3. Cut your blocks. Accurate cutting is important.
4. At this point sew securely any embellishments/noise generators which will go in the seam allowance or on the block itself.

5. Sew the blocks together using a 1/4" [.65cm] seam allowance.
6. Press each seam allowances in order to tame some of the more resilient fabrics. Use pressing cloth as needed to protect heat-sensitive fabrics.
7. When joining two heavy fabrics, it may be easier/neater to press seam allowances open rather than to one side. Keep track of the way you want your seam allowances to go so they butt nicely when joining rows. Then press the seam allowance well in that direction before you cross it with another seam. Pressing carefully and intelligently will do wonders for how your fabrics fit together.
8. Press the entire quilt top flat and true.
9. Trim outside edges to make top square and edges even, if necessary.
10. To complete the quilt assembly, use a pillowcase technique to assemble the layers together. See YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=bwBv2vjPCHc>

Notes:

- Cut the backing about two inches larger than the top (gives an extra inch all around). If you are using a middle layer (batting) cut it about an inch (2.50 cm) larger than the backing.
 - If you want to add noise to the quilt, sew a 8" – 10" [20 - 25 cm] square piece of strong foil or plastic wrapped material somewhere onto the center of the quilt's middle on the underside of the top – **it should be inside**, unseen (see section on noise).
 - Add straps when the quilt will be put on a vertical surface. Cut two 4" X 9" [10 X 23 cm] pieces from regular quilting fabric. Fold in half the long way, wrong sides together, and press. Press long raw edges into center. Press again. Stitch closed along folded edges and three more time 1/4" [.6 cm] apart. Fold in half. Lay and pin with raw ends 1/4" [.6 cm] outside top about 3" [7.5 cm] from corner of top.
 - Leaving an 8" [20 cm] opening for turning. The opening should be on a firm fabric.
11. Quilt first starting with the center seams, machine quilt in the ditch along all seams in the top.
 12. Sew around the quilt 1/4" [.65 cm] from edge. Make sure this sewing has closed the 8" [20 cm] opening you used for turning the quilt. If it has not, whip stitch the opening closed.
 13. Quilt inside the blocks as you like. Use the quilting to emphasize the texture where possible. Quilting enhances the touch quality of the quilt: **don't skimp**. The absolute minimum is an X across each square: quilt diagonally from corner to corner each way. This results in skimpy quilting, okay **only** if fabric is thickish or on 5" or 6" [12 or 15 cm] squares.

Troubleshooting for Fabrics of Mixed Weight and Texture

All fabric must be washed before cutting. This is essential with mixed fabrics which shrink differently from one another.

In no particular order:

1. Stabilize stretchy or flimsy fabrics with iron-on interfacing before cutting.
2. Back light-weight or slippery fabrics with interfacing, muslin or flannelette.
3. Cut fake furs and piles from the **back** of the material.
 - With sharp scissors shave the pile of fake fur from the backing in the seam allowance. If your clipping is a bit rough it will not show.
 - Finger press the pile away from the edge, towards the center, before you pin and sew. If, after sewing, too much pile is caught in the stitching, pull it back with a pin, needle or crochet hook.
 - Use a walking foot, if you have one.
4. If fabric rolls in front of the presser foot, push down on it with your fingers as it goes under the presser foot. Be very careful not to get fingers under the presser foot or needle.
5. With some fabric combinations it matters which fabric is next to the feed dogs of your machine. If you have trouble getting the seams even, try turning your work over to sew it.
6. Try to keep seam allowances to $\frac{1}{4}$ " [.65cm]. However, if that is too difficult, cut fabric larger and adjust the seam allowance so that the finished block size remains constant.
7. Do lots of pinning. Baste if necessary.
8. Cutting out corners of seam allowances at intersections will help reduce bulk and help the quilt lay flat. Cut only fabric, not stitching, of the seam allowance.

Be patient and fuss a little to get things right.



Enhancements

Unless a quilt has a good range and mix of textures, it is **not** a good touch quilt. So the quilter's first task is to choose blocks with a variety of interesting textures and arrange them to give fingers interesting pathways to go from one to another. The quilter can also add something extra, a bonus. The touch sensation can be created in a number of ways - grazing over and over a given texture, pulling, twisting, poking etc,. There are many ways to provide these opportunities on the quilt. We have discussed the texture of the squares previously, now lets us explore how we can add to the quilt top to provide other tactile opportunities. These embellishments do *NOT* take the place of fabric texture. They can easily become clutter and they must be carefully made.

Fabric Manipulation Enhancements

Regular quilting fabric has a texture, of course — a rather bland one. With touch quilts we look for a stronger tactile experience. One way is to manipulate the fabric to create bumps and creases. Pin tucks/pleats, ruffles, shirring of the fabric will enhance the quilt's textural sensation. You can also chenille a number of layers of fabric. **The fabrics need to be lighter weight fabrics so they will take the shapes you are created texture.** Below are explanations and illustrations of these possible modifications.

Pin Tucks

This fabric manipulation can be added to by making pin tucks both down and across so the fabric looks like small raised boxes. Do not use thick or textured fabric for this manipulation. See video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mMgH6IW0iOw>



Ruffles

This technique can be used on a whole block or added in the seam allowance. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2g06F_b3lo&pbjreload=101

Shirring

This fabric manipulation can be made into a block or as an addition to an existing block. This YouTube video offers many possibilities for fabric manipulations.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rPp6Nn4mmYk>



Chenille

There are many YouTube explanations of how to make chenille. One suggestion is:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_kGsqbDmiQM

This video is tailored to making quilt blocks.



Quilting

Fabric that has fuzz, bumps, silkiness or harshness can be enhanced by the way you quilt them. If you have a fabric with ridges you can enhance that texture by quilting in the valleys between the ridges; one with bumps may be enhanced by quilting a grid that separates and frames the bumps; a piled pattern of upholstery fabric stands out when the flat, unpiled part, is heavily quilted. Not all fabric responds to such enhancement, but when it does the quilting can be well worth the effort and time. A rather plain textured fabric, can be enlivened by quilting an interesting pattern — a hand, a leaf, a heart, whatever. Below are examples of quilting which enhances the tactile feel.



Fuzzy fabric



Upholstery fabric



Plan cotton fabric



Satin fabric

Furthermore quilting alone can create texture: this red square is plain quilting cotton fabric, the ridges were stitched and the 'rocks' were a first effort at free-motion quilting. The plain cotton block and an extra layer of batting was sewn into the top: the quilting was done after assembly. The extra batting created a nice puffiness. Try your own patterns for quilting, but simple shapes are best.



Block Enhancements

Alzheimer patients also like to pull, twist and push things. The items listed below can be put into a seam or onto the block for that purpose. Keep in mind that the quilts must be safe for both patients and caregivers. **Do not put anything on a quilt that you would not wish to have hit you in your face** if a quilt is thrown. Do not use metal buttons or keys or anything hard that dangles. If you use a zipper use a sturdy plastic one, not a metal zipper and not one of the 'invisible' ones that break easily leaving a sharp pointy piece. Ribbons should be checked for wires (used for stiffening) along the edges. These wires break in the wash; they must be removed before the ribbon is put into a quilt. Keep any dangling toy close to the quilt so it cannot fly more than three inches off the surface. As well, anything to pull needs to be large enough so arthritic fingers can get a good grip. Alzheimer patients are usually old and have all the problems of age added to their Alzheimer's. Keep their needs in mind when designing the quilt.

With that in mind, the following is divided into two sections - items added into the seam allowances and secondly those items which can be added onto the block.

In-Seam Pulls

Attachments can be securely sewn into the seam allowance. Examples include but not limited to the following - fringes, lace strips, fabric tubs containing soft pompoms, erasers or buttons which can be pushed about; ribbon or fabric of a different texture from the block. Beads, plastic rings, buttons or tubing strung through cording then attached between seam allowances. Fringes etc should be greater than 2" [5 cm] wide so arthritic hands can handle them. Be certain to anchor the additions well into the seam allowances. **Remember no hard items which might hurt someone when thrown about.**

Prairie Point

How to make Prairie Points can be found on YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=omYkPfNmTlo&t=676s>

A square at least 6" [15 cm] allows fingers to get in the fold to wiggle around.



Other pull possibilities:



Ribbons, Fringe, interesting Fabrics



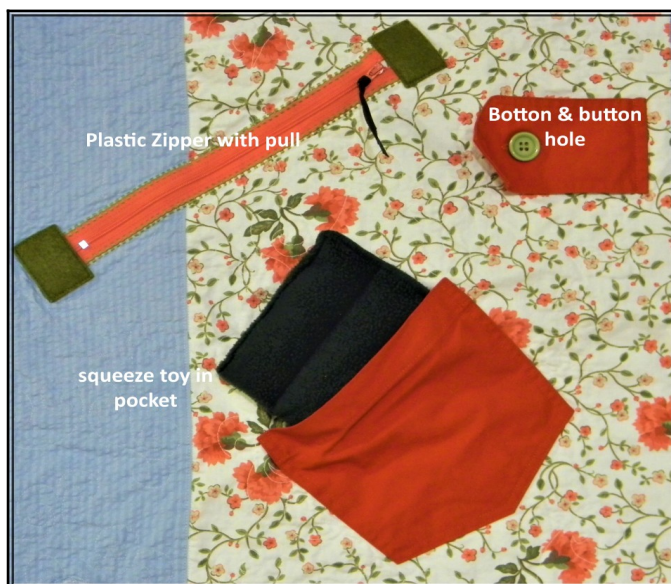
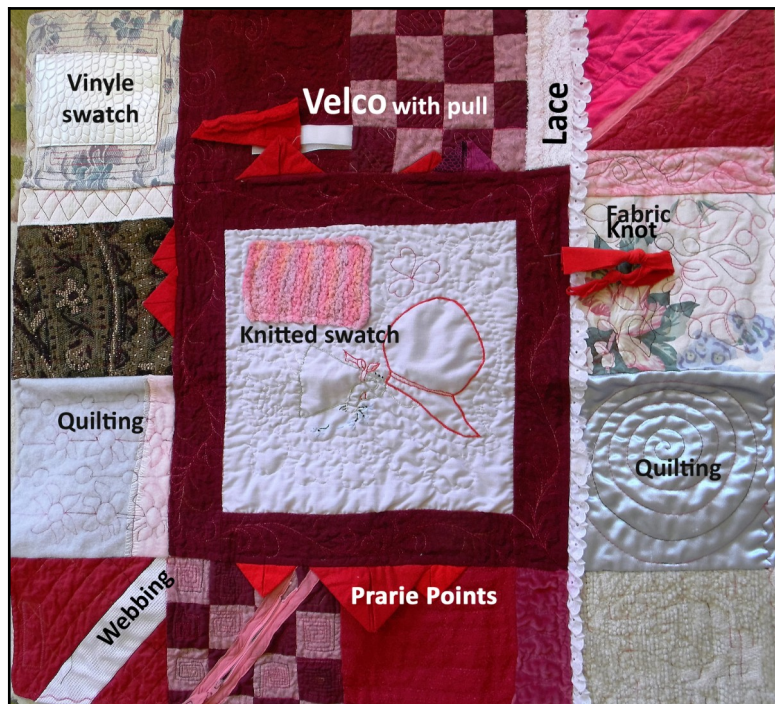
Tubing through a string

Embellishments on Blocks

Certain items can be sewn directly onto the block or quilt. Plastic zippers, cording, shoe laces, Velcro, crocheted doilies, ribbons, rickrack. These can be sewn down on the block or left partly open. Fabric strips of different texture from the block can be knotted, then sewn down.

Use your imagination. The only limiting factor is no hard items which could hurt some one. If you want to add hard items such as a necklace, place them in a fabric pocket or encasement.

Examples



Handmade Items



baby shirt with buttons



Fuzzy sock slipper

Clothing brings back memories



Modified Prairie Points

Three dimensional quilt block

Layers of Ribbons

Applique



3 - dimensional fabric items

Trails

Alzheimer patients will also run their fingers along a raised trail. The trail can be random (left below) or a formal pattern (right below). The green trail is made of braided cord with bits of ribbon added. The Celtic knot is a 3/4" [2cm] bias strip of cloth with the raw edges folded under. To the right is shoe lace trailer with buttons.



Pockets

They are fun. Alzheimer's patients love to search in pockets for some hidden treasury or toy. Below are some possibilities.

Simple Pocket

It is easy to use the back pocket from a pair of jeans. Select a pocket in which the hands will fit. Simply cut a square of the right size (possibly from a pair of jeans that includes the back pocket). Then possibly tuck a 'handkerchief' (just fabric) into it and sew across the pocket to secure the raw edges. This stitching should be far enough down that someone can put their hand well into the pocket.

One can also cut out the jean pocket and attach directly to the quilt block.



Diagonal Pockets

Cut a base or back out of interesting fabric (for example a very soft fur). Cut 2 pocket fronts the same size as base. Fold each pocket front in half diagonally and if you are including a toy in the pocket, position it on background fabric so it will be captured in the sewing as appropriate and stay stitch the raw edges to the base. Doubling pocket fronts makes the soft, furry base mostly hidden but easily found by exploring fingers.



Patch Pockets

This design can serve as a vase. To make the patch: cut fabric as wide as you want the vase to be plus $\frac{1}{2}$ " [1.3 cm] larger for seam allowances and twice as high as you want it to be plus $\frac{1}{2}$ " [1.3 cm]. Remember to make the container large enough so the hand can get into it. Fold this piece in half, right sides together, and stitch a $\frac{1}{4}$ " [.63cm] seam leaving 2" [5cm] open for turning. Turn right side out and press. If you are including a toy, position it on background textured fabric, as appropriate. Place the patch pocket on the background and stitch around three sides capturing the



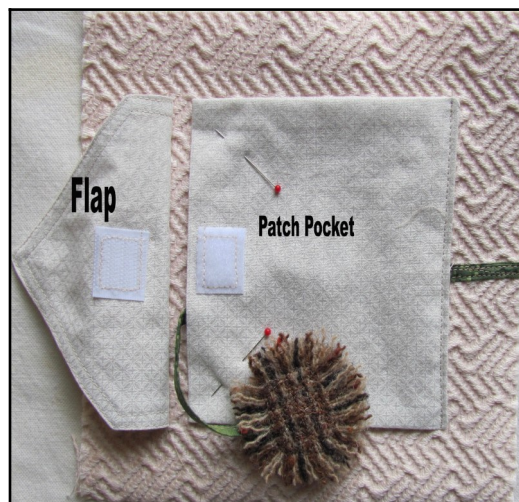
toy in the sewing, closing the turning gap in the process. You can sew a small piece of fuzz Velcro in the centre at the folded edge.

If you want to close the patch pocket you can add a flap and Velcro. Make a flap the same width as patch pocket. Fold the flap, right sides together and stitch a $\frac{1}{4}$ " [.63 cm] seam around leaving a gap for turning. Turn and press. Sew and turn the flap piece as you did the patch. Sew a matching piece of hook Velcro to the flap so that when closed the top of the flap (the edge to be closed) will be $\frac{1}{2}$ " [1.3 cm] above the top of the patch.

You can make the flap with a point if you wish, but be sure to leave plenty of fabric for arthritic fingers to grip and pull the flap.

If you wish you can attach the patch pocket only at bottom and sew the sides down with quilting after you have quilted the square beneath it.

This pocket design can also give a satisfying ripping sound when opened. The size of the Velcro closure will determine how much ripping sound the pull gets.



Zipper Pockets

Use a fat conventional plastic zipper - 7.5 " [18 cm] with closed end. Do not use metal or 'invisible' zippers. An 18 cm zipper will fit a 7" [18cm] finished square if you angle the pocket piece so one side is two inches shorter than the other. The zipper will almost reach the side seams so an extension is unnecessary. The zipper can run straight across the block or be angled as shown.

Pick two pieces of fabric, which when sewn together are 1" [2.5 cm] larger than the block size. They will form the pocket with a zipper opening. See YouTube video on how to install zipper between these two fabric pieces.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHDDhUzIXPY>



Once the zipper is sewn into the fabric, it is necessary to reinforce the zipper ends so the zipper does not rip out when pulled aggressively. Cut four pieces 1.5" x 3" [3.8 X 7.6 cm] of matching or contrasting fabric. Sandwich each end of the zipper tapes between two of these pieces, right side facing the zipper, (long sides parallel to the zipper and the short ends a half inch beyond the end of the zipper part). If putting a toy in the pocket, position it on the right side of the background fabric and attach. Lay the pocket piece over the block fabric, aligning the sides and stay stitch $\frac{1}{8}$ " [.3 cm] from edges. Stitch along the top zipper binding to attach it to the back. Use a ribbon, tape or gimp to hide and decorate the top edge of zipper. Thus

making an accessible pocket on one side on the block. Remember to put a ribbon or fabric through the zipper pull for arthritic fingers to grasp.

Pockets Toys

A whole range of toys can be added to each pocket - a yo-yo flower, button, a leaf, a shiny 'coin' (made of metallic cloth), a simple shape, pieces of elastic, hair scrunchy, crushed stuffed toys, etc). This adds to the tactile sensation of fiddling and pulling. See examples below. The pink pocket has a fish on the line. Whatever you put into the pocket should be attached with a stem, line, or leash that is long enough so it can be pulled fully out of the pocket but not lost.



Fancy Blocks

Below are some suggested block designs you may wish to try.

1. Symbolic Blocks

Hands are symbols of warmth and welcome! People respond to them by putting their own hand over the quilted one. Draw around your hand on a piece of paper (or freezer paper) and use this as a pattern to cut out a hand; any fabric will do, but suede has a nice skin-like feel. Machine applique the fabric hand onto the backing square. Add a heart in the palm if you like.

Other possible symbols include pets, hearts, words (love, names, etc).

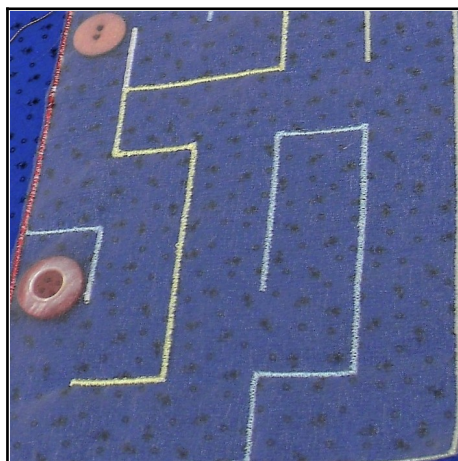


2. Push Toy Block

In this simple block, 1 to 3 plastic buttons are encased under a strip of cloth so they can be pushed around. Start with a square of background material - block size. Lay over this a 2" [5cm] or 3" [7.5cm] strip of fabric preferably one which can be seen through so patients can see what they are doing, and is strong and is long enough to go diagonally/straight across the background block. With ribbon or tape cover the edges of the strip and sew to down. Stay stitch one end of the block to the background 1/8" [.3cm] from the edge. Put the button into the cage and stay stitch the other end to background. Quilt over the ribbon to ensure that the cloth cage is secure.



Here are two variations of this push block.



3. Bonnie's Dragon Block

Cut:

1 quilt size block of textured fabric.

4 to 6 fabric squares ranging in size from 3.5" [9cm] to 4.5" [11.5 cm] for Prairie Points

1 piece 1" wide ribbon or tape 10" [25cm] or 11" [28cm] long (if using fabric to make tape cut 1.5" [4cm] wide and fold 1/4" [.63cm] under on each side)

Sew:

Make Prairie Points:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=omYkPfNmTlo&t=676s>



On the textured fabric quilt square, draw a line diagonally across right side of background 1" from upper left corner to 1" [2.5cm] from lower right corner (reduces bulk in the corners). Arrange two or three Prairie Points on each side of the line, bases almost touching, and 1/2" [1.3cm] from edges. Points can overlap a bit. Zigzag/sew the prairie points in place. Lay ribbon over rough edges and stitch along both sides of ribbon.

4. Pull Squares Block

Make this one with one, two or three pull squares, as you wish.

Cut:

1 block size of textured fabric

2 square pieces for each Pull Square Base:

Largest (A) 1" [2.5cm] smaller than quilt block

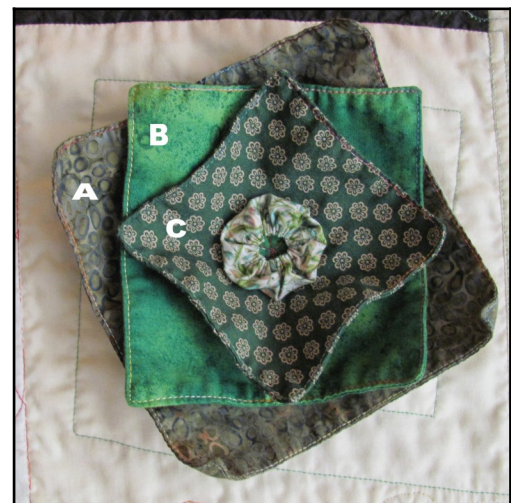
Middle (B) - 2" [5cm] smaller than quilt block

Top (C) - 3" [7.5cm] smaller than quilt block

Sew:

Sew A squares, right sides together, leaving a 2" [5cm] opening on one side for turning. Turn right side out and press. Top stitch close to edge all around, closing the opening. Repeat for B and C if using. Position A on background. If using B and C, position them, centred on A. Sew all layers together with a 1" [2.5cm] diameter circle in the centre. When quilting, sew over this circle twice. **This much quilting is necessary** to prevent squares from being pulled off. Also quilt background well under the squares. You can also attach the pull squares with a yo-yo as shown. Cut a 3.5" [9cm] diameter circle of yo-yo fabric.

Make yo-yo's: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSJq2J3zrwY>



Centre and attach the yo-yo circle on top and sew all layers together with a $\frac{3}{4}$ " [2cm] circle in yo-yo's centre. Leave yo-yo open until quilting is finished, then close the yo-yo.

5. Deco-pus Block

Cut:

1 background of textured fabric block size
1 medallion piece: your choice as to shape plus $\frac{1}{4}$ " [.6cm] seam allowance.

Ribbon pieces: $\frac{3}{8}$ " [.9cm] or $\frac{1}{2}$ " [1.3cm] wide

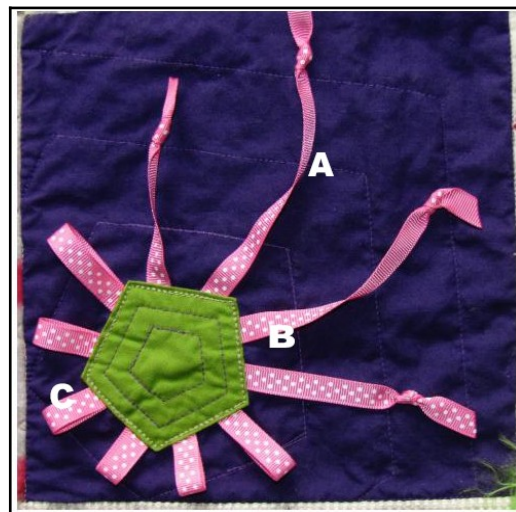
A. 1 pieces 6.5" [16.5cm] long,

B. 3 pieces 5.5" [14cm] long,

C. 6 pieces 4.5" [11.5cm] long or lengths of your choice.

Sew:

Iron seam allowance of medallion to back of fabric. Seal one end of each A and B (*Fray Check* or other sealants, if the ribbon is polyester heat sealant will work). Make a half hitch knot close to sealed end of each A and B ribbons. Fold C's in half. Position medallion on right side of background block and draw outline of medallion on fabric. Position and pin ribbon arms with $\frac{1}{2}$ " [1.3cm] inside the drawn pentagon. Sew to background just inside the drawn pentagon. Position medallion over ribbon ends and topstitch around edge sewing it to background. Add several inner rows of sewing over the medallion to firmly secure ribbons.



6. Four-Patch [Nine-Patch] Feely Shapes Block

Cut:

1 background block fabric (use a bit heavier fabric)

1 top fabric piece bite larger than block size, many choices: regular quilting fabric, thinner, possibly stretchy or see through.

Depending on the number of spaces, 2 [4] pieces $\frac{1}{2}$ " [1.3cm] wide grosgrain ribbon or tape longer than block size, 4 [9] foam shapes or soft fuzzy balls

Sew:

Lay top fabric on background so $\frac{1}{4}$ " [.6cm] extra is even around outside.

For **smaller block**: Lay one ribbon across centre of block and sew both edges through top and back.



Lay second ribbon piece at right angle to first across centre of block and sew both edges through top and back. For **larger block** Lay two ribbon pieces across block dividing it into thirds. Sew edges down. Lay one ribbon at right angles and a third of way in. Sew edges. Put one shape/ ball into centre square. Lay and sew final ribbon. Tuck one shape or ball into each square and stay stitch 1/8" [.3cm] from edge around back. You only need to quilt over ribbon or tape.

7. Simple Liz's Twist Block

Cut :(Makes a 7.5" or 8.5" block):

2 background pieces of textured fabric 4.5" x

7.5"[11.5 X19cm] or 5.5" x 8.5" [14 X 21.5cm]

1 twist piece 3" x 9" [7.5 X 23 cm] or 3" x 10.5" [7.5 X 26.5cm]

1 piece cord or heavy string 9.5" [24cm] or 10.5" [26.5cm] long

Sew:

Fold twist piece in half, wrong sides together place string next to fold on inside. Using zipper foot, stitch as close to string as possible. Stiffen the twist below the string with stitching, Position the twist between the two background pieces, right sides together and sew the three pieces together. Bast bottom end of twist in one direction along one edge of the background piece and in the opposite direction on the other edge. Trim block to square.



8. Rings on a String Block

Cut:

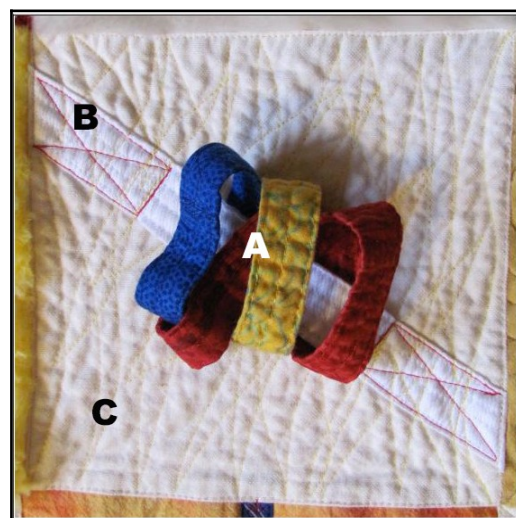
1, 2 or 3 (as many rings as you want) pieces 3" x 7.5" [7.5 X 19cm] from colorful sturdy non textured fabrics (A).

1 piece 4" [10cm] wide X 10.5" [26.5cm] quilting fabric for 'string'(B).

1 background block size piece (slightly heavier textured fabric).

Sew:

For each ring - Fold A in half the long way, wrong sides together, and press. Fold long raw edges into centre fold right sides out and bring towards center and press. You now have a strip 7.5" [19cm] long and 3/4" [2cm] wide. Open these



folds, fold across the short way and bring towards center to form a ring, right sides together, and stitch the short ends together with 1/4" [.65cm] seam. Press seam allowance to one side and refold the piece into a ring with raw edges hidden. Stitch around the double folded edge and spiral to make a line of stitching around the middle and again around the single folded edge. End by sewing over the seam allowance joining the short ends.

Fold B in half right sides together, and repeat as described above. Sew along double folded edge and three more rows 1/4" [.65cm] apart. Position string across back C at an angle. Sew one end of string to raw edge of C for about 2" [5cm]. Put rings onto string and sew other end of string to other raw edge of C for about 2" [5cm]. Quilt block background firmly especially under the centre of string and across the attached ends of string. When rings are pulled, the whole quilt should rise with them.

9. Yo-Yo Bouquet Block

The trick to making a yo-yo flower bouquet is to leave the 'flower' open until *after* you have *quilted* the circle inside the flower. So make the stem of each as above or use a narrow ribbon or cord. Lay the stems on the backing square and stitch into position. Cut a circle of quilting fabric for each flower about 2.5" [6.5cm] to 3" [7.5cm] in diameter. Make yo-yo's:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSJq2J3zrwY>

Before drawing the fabric yo-yo's closed, centre the partially made yo-yo circle over the end of its stem, right side to the back, and hand sew an 1/4" [.65cm] circle in the centre attaching both flower and stem to the backing fabric. Do not draw the yo-yo closed until you quilt this circle again as you are quilting the quilt. Then pull the running stitches to gather the yo-yo.



10. Yo-Yo Flower Block

Yo-yo's start with large circles – 8" [20.5cm] placed on the block to form a group of flowers.

Make a stem by pressing a 1" [2.5cm] wide strip of quilting fabric in half (making it 1/2" [1.3cm] wide) and then folding the raw edges into the centre to make a 1/4" [.65cm] stem or use commercially made bias tape. Stitch the open side closed.

Cut two circles of quilting fabric about 2.5" [6.5cm] to 3" [7.5cm] in diameter. Put the two circles right sides



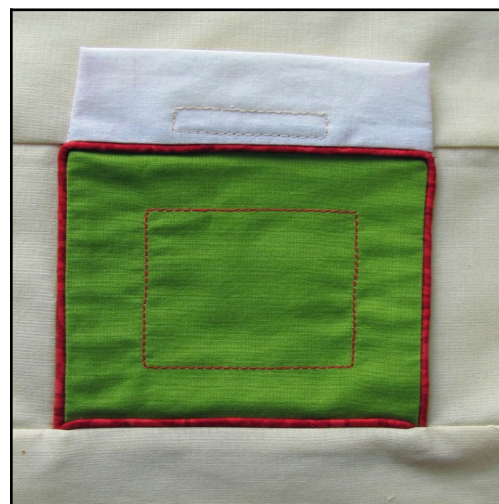
together, sandwiching an end of the stem between them so it crosses the centre point by $\frac{1}{4}$ " [.65cm]. Machine sew the two circles together with a circle 1" to 1.25" [2.5 to 3.2cm] in diameter, then crisscross this circle with two or three lines of stitching to make the stem secure. Now complete the yo-yos. See yo-yo video : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSJq2J3zrwY>

11. I Spy Door Block

If you are making a quilt for someone you know, you can personalize the picture behind the door: Find a picture of the breed of dog that the person loved when he was about ten years old. Any animal — dog, cat, horse — that the person generally loves will be attractive, as might an old car (the first car he owned?). If you have a good, crisp photo of a sibling or parent as they were when the patient was about ten, a photo transfer may work. Where the quilt goes to a nursing home, dogs and cats, an old car, a Superman or Batman, a bright flower, a monster, a Laurel Burch lemur — anything, really, that has oomph — will please when the door is opened. You can also make a traditional quilt pattern like flying geese. The picture does not need to be square; it can be oblong, either wider or longer than square. It should be no bigger in any direction than 5" [13cm] for a 7" [18cm] finished square, or 6" [15cm] for an 8" [20cm] finished square. Cut the cloth with the picture to size appropriate to the picture plus a $\frac{1}{4}$ " [.65cm] seam allowance. Iron under the seam allowance and top stitch down to the background block.

To make the door: Cut the 2 pieces of fabric the same size as the photo plus additional 4" [10cm] to the length. With right sides together, sew 2 pieces together on three sides leaving one width open. If you want to put piping on the door, sew the piping $\frac{1}{4}$ " [.65cm] around both lengths and top width, of the front piece before sewing the 2 pieces together and then stitch a seam 2" [5cm] down from the top. Sew hook Velcro to the back of the door as shown in the photo.

Attach the door to the picture by turning under the open width so that the door matches the picture in size and iron down and then sew in place to complete the door. Sew fuzz Velcro in place (under the hooks) on picture surround.



Other Senses

Noise

The crinkle is very effective for both auditory and tactile purposes. If someone has a hearing impairment then the tactile component (bumpier texture) has been noted to catch their attention.

There are two types of noise that add a non-tactile dimension to a touch quilt: the crinkle sound of a potato chip bag, and the tearing sound of unfastening Velcro. Noise seems to please some Alzheimer patients, although it is not suitable to every situation where tactile quilts are used. For example, touch quilts used to help a patient be quiet and not reach out to touch others at a concert. So put it in or not as you feel incline.

For **Crinkle** - a potato chip bag can be used to make a crinkle sound if the quilt is to be used in a home setting. These bags do not, however stand up to the commercial washing that most care facilities use. For quilts going to nursing homes you need a plastic coated foil, of the type that is used these days to keep coffee beans fresh. These bags (at time of writing) cannot be recycled. So go to your favorite coffee house. If you see big bags like the one shown here, ask nicely if they will give you some empty bags. They probably will be glad to find a use for them. Whether you use potato chip or coffee bean bags, cut them open and wash them free of coffee remnants, salt and oil. Cut off the plastic vents and any crimped seams so you have a flat sheet of crinkle material. The easiest way to use it is to cut a good sized hunk and sew it to the middle layer of your quilt on the backside of the square with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " [.65cm] seam. **Do not sew them on the front of the block as pieces of the material can rip away from the stitching.**



Velcro Fancy Block

A simple Velcro embellishment that gives a nice tearing sound, is a piece of $\frac{1}{2}$ " [1.3cm] wide fuzz Velcro laid across a background square. Cut a length of grosgrain ribbon greater than twice the block's width. Fold the grosgrain in half. Cut a length of fuzz $\frac{1}{2}$ " [1.3cm] wide Velcro the width of the block and sew down onto the block.

Cut a shorter piece of hook Velcro, about 4" and sew to the doubled ribbon $\frac{1}{2}$ " [1.3cm] from the raw ends. This will keep the hooker Velcro outside



of the seam allowance (The hooks would make the seams too thick to sew). Place hooks over the fuzz Velcro so the raw end of the ribbon line up with the edge of the block and sew down. Leave the folded ribbon open so fingers can get inside and pull hard to open with a nice r-r-ripping sound.

Weighting

Some people believe that weighting a quilt gives it an added dimension of calming and comfort — sort of like having a cat purring in ones lap. There is little evidence about the effectiveness (or not) of weighting. It has been observed that some patients respond well to light weight (2 pounds [900g]) and will ignore the tactile items on the quilts. However, weighting can turn quickly into a restriction. With this in mind, in long term care settings, it will take monitoring and much observations in order to use a weighted touch quilt as a calming tool. Therefore weighting is not recommended at this time.