

FABRIC POSTCARDS

Supplies Needed

Sewing machine -- although you could do this by hand if you really wanted to

Needle and thread -- for however you decide to sew

Iron -- hot and dry -- no steam needed

Ironing surface -- whatever works for you

Carol Doak 2"-4" block pattern -- take your pick there are many many choices

Fabric to create the block -- scraps work well

Fabric to use on the addressable side/**backing** -- 200 count muslin was recommended, but my closest dept store didn't have it so I bought drapery lining; as long as it has a "tight weave" (high thread count) any fabric would work

NOTE: Print may smear a little on looser weave fabrics and may not show up well on dark fabrics

Freezer paper if you are going to print on the fabric with your ink jet printer -- or you can use permanent marker and write on it by hand, you can purchase special fabric that goes in your printer, you can use iron on printer paper and reverse your print -- or your swap receiver may want it plain

Stabilizer of some sort -- I used *Pellon Peltex 70* - because they had it at the dept store closest to my house

NOTE: You can get a fusible stabilizer like *Timtex*, *Stiff Stuff* or *Peltex 721* and skip the adhesive

Adhesive Web -- I used *Pellon Wonder Under* - again because it was available close -- you can use *Stitch witchery*, *Steam-a-seam*, whatever you're used to

You can use any size block that is less than 4" high. And you can use them in multiples if you choose. So if you use a 2" block -- you could use 6 of them and need no border. If you use a 4" block; you could stretch it with foundation factory and make it 4" x 6" or you could use 2 of the 3" blocks with a small top/bottom border, or just one of a 2", 3", or 4" block with appropriate borders. If you use a 5" or 6" block you'll have to compress it with foundation factory so that it is only 4" high.

Bottom line: these postcards need to be 4" x 6"

Estimated Cost

Just to give you an idea of how much this project may cost, here's what it cost me. You can certainly do things cheaper than I did or more expensive than I did. I think my cost is middle to high-end for this project. I can only tell you the costs here in Harford County, Maryland. Yours are probably lower!

Pellon Peltex 70 - \$4.94/yard -- it is 22" wide; you can get 6 postcards that are 4"x6" out of 1/4 yard

Wonder Under - \$1.17/yard -- it is 17" wide; you can get about 3 postcards if you cut a little smaller than 4" x 6" out of 1/4 yard (2 per card)

Drapery Fabric - \$2.67/yard -- mine was 56" wide; you can get 18 postcard backs out of 1/4 yard

Totals up to about \$2.50 for 6 postcards or 2 groups in the sign up.

Can't remember how much the freezer paper was, but it seemed very cheap to me for what you got. And scrap cost -- well that's on you. It is certainly a better use for your scraps than some things IMHO.

How to make a fabric/quilted postcard In 10 easy steps

1. Paper piece the block(s); add borders as needed and trim to 4" x 6"
 2. Cut the stabilizer to 4" x 6"
 3. If you are addressing the backing fabric via inkjet printer (further instructions below), you need to apply freezer paper to the fabric and cut to 8 1/2" x 11" before printing
 4. Cut the backing fabric to 4" x 6"
 5. Apply the adhesive if it isn't already on the stabilizer (follow the directions)
- NOTE: I recommend only applying adhesive to one side of the stabilizer and then also applying it to one side of the backing fabric. I tried different combinations and this seemed to work the best for me
6. Put the block and stabilizer together (If you are quilting -- now is the time)
 7. Add the postcard form to the block and stabilizer (If you are adding an address and message -- now is the time)
 8. Bind the edges -- you can use conventional quilting binding methods, satin stitch or zig zag the edges together or use a fancy stitch if your machine does that
 9. Admire your work! Smile pretty. Take a picture of your postcard and send to me via email (clkinmd@msn.com)
 10. Add a 39 cent stamp and mail to one of your group members
(I've been told it's 63 cents for international mailings, but I'm not sure)

NOTE: My postman says it should only cost 24 cents to mail your postcard but he was afraid postal workers on the receiving end would decide it was too thick and want to charge the standard first class rate -- so they would charge the receiver. To avoid that, I just put 39 cents on it in the beginning - as long as it is less than 1/4" thick, first class postage works. If your post office lets you send it for 24 cents, it's up to you if you want to chance it. I asked them to cancel the postage by hand, but only because the one I received from Christine was postmarked on the wrong side. Silly postal workers! The USPS reserves the right to charge you more for anything that won't easily go through their machines -- e.g., if you ask for hand stamping -- some USPS offices are more lenient than others. If your swap receiver wants it to be sendable, then you mail it to them in an envelope - first class postage applies. I myself want to see the message from my swap sender so I want mine mailed.

Another option: Some folks prefer to cut it all a little large and trim just before binding. Since I didn't figure the postcard police would measure and give me a hard time if it's a tiny bit smaller than 4 x 6, and since the USPS only cares if it's bigger than 4"x6" I cut everything close and I get more from my fabric. But ... that's another option for you. You can cut everything to 4 1/4" x 6 1/4" or 4 1/2" x 6 1/2" and trim after step 7.

Printing on fabric: Put the freezer paper shiny side up on your ironing board. Put the fabric wrong side down on top of it and just press the fabric. It sticks - it's like magic. Then you cut it to 8 1/2 x 11 and put it in the paper tray of your inkjet printer and just print like normal. You can make the document in word or any program that writes. According to Christine, if you change the paper type to heavy cardstock, that will cause your printer to "lay down" more ink and result in deeper/darker colors. You should also let your fabric sit for about 10 minutes to let the color set before you peel the back off. Also use a high thread count - this will help the ink get more even/dense coverage than a loose weave fabric where it will get sprayed onto the freezer paper.