



Technique: Machine Sewing

Designed By: Marie Duncan

Skill Level: Confident beginner

Crafting Time: One day

Featuring Coats eloflex®

Whether you use super hero shirts, or school event shirts, any favorite shirts will be given a second life, in a soft, comfy t-shirt quilt. Traditional t-shirt quilts have been made by fusing interfacing to the back of the shirts, to stabilize the stretch. NOW, thanks to **Coats eloflex®** stretchable thread, they do not need to be interfaced at all!

Supplies

- Coats eloflex® stretchable thread in coordinating color
- Solid Cuddle® fleece amount to be determined*
- 12 t-shirts (or number desired)
- Rotary cutter, board and ruler
- Safety pins
- Spray starch

* See step 12

The quilt pictured was made from purchased officially licensed Marvel comics apparel.

Prepare the shirts

The quilt shown is made from toddler sized t-shirts. The finished quilt is approximately 30" x 48" (76.20cm x 121.92cm). If using larger child sizes, or adult sized t-shirts, the finished size will differ. All other directions should be the same regardless of the shirt size.

Open up the shirts

1. The first step is to cut open the shirts. Trim up the side seam (there may not be an actual seam), around the armhole, shoulder and neck. Trim carefully, and as close as possible to the stitching. Set the shirt backs aside.



Cut out the shirt rectangles

1. The objective is to come up with three rows of shirts, each one four shirts long. (For a larger quilt, add more rows) Each shirt will be a little different, if the design area is too small, that isn't a problem- just cut it with a bigger border around it. If the design area covers the whole shirt front, you may need to cut into the design. That is OK too.
2. This shirt is an example of one where you will have to cut into the design. A rectangle containing the full design would go into the armhole area where there isn't any fabric



3. Cut it as shown, maintaining as much of the design as possible



4. Align the first shirt on the rotary cutting mat with the bottom hem aligned with a line on the mat. Cut off the first side, aligning the ruler with one of the lines on the mat so the cut is perpendicular to the bottom hem. Cut off as little as possible, keeping as much of the width as you can.



5. Cut off the other side in the same way.
6. Trim the top and bottom, using the lines on the mat to keep the shirt square.



7. Continue, trimming all the shirts.

8. Compare the results. They will probably be different sizes. Continue trimming until they are a uniform length. If the length of the shirts differs, the corners won't line up.
9. Check the width. Each vertical row of four shirts must have the same width shirts. In our quilt, there is one narrower vertical row in the center, and two equal width, wider vertical rows on the outside.
10. Once the shirts are cut, lay them out as desired, keeping the widths in mind.



11. When you are happy with the layout, overlap each shirt a bit, and pin the vertical rows as shown. This will keep them in order as you sew.



Sew

1. Pick up the first pinned row, and take it to the sewing machine.
2. Reposition the first two shirts right sides together, and pin.
3. Stitch the seam, using a 1/2" (1.27cm) seam allowance.
4. Repeat until all the seams in the first vertical row are sewn.
5. Place it back with the other shirts, and pick up the second pinned vertical row.
6. Sew the seams, replace it, and stitch the last row.
7. Place the first two vertical rows right sides together, pinning the corners, and stitch.
8. Repeat with the last vertical row.

9. The t-shirt quilt top is now complete!
10. Because t-shirt knit is a single knit, that tends to "roll" instead of lay flat, topstitch the seams to keep the edges in place. Sew with the right side of the quilt top up, and find a place on the presser foot to guide, so you are stitching approximately 1/4" (.635cm) from the seam. Topstitch on each side of each seam.



11. On the outside edges, the fabric really wants to roll! So, get out your spray starch. Spray the edges and press. You can see what a difference it makes on the shirt on the right, as compared to the one on the left! Be careful not to press on the images, as the iron may stick.



12. *Measure the quilt top. You will need the length of the quilt top plus 2" (5.08cm) . Solid Cuddle® fleece is 58"-60" (147.32cm x 152.40cm) wide. If your quilt width is more than 58" (147.32cm), buy double the quilt length plus 2" (5.08cm). (If you have a wider quilt requiring two lengths, stitch the two together creating one large backing piece.)
13. Place the quilt top centered, on top of the Solid Cuddle® fleece with the wrong sides together. You should have an inch or more extra on all edges.
14. Safety pin baste the layers together. To make it easier to handle, hand or machine baste around the outside edge.
15. Stitch in the ditch of the seams, between the topstitching.
16. The quilt is now "quilted" and is ready for the binding.
17. Trim off the excess Solid Cuddle® fleece.
18. Using a drinking glass, round the corners. Because a stretch fabric is being used for the binding, the corners can be rounded, eliminating the need to miter the corners.
19. Using the remainder of the t-shirts, trim off the seams, hem and sleeve/neck portions leaving a "clean" rectangle as shown.
20. Cut the rectangles into 2½" (6.35cm) wide strips.
21. Measure around the quilt to determine how much binding is needed. Stitch the 2½" (6.35cm) wide strips end to end, forming one long strip to achieve the determined length.
22. Fold the binding strips in half lengthwise, wrong sides together. You can press this, but with the knit fabric it really isn't necessary.
23. Place the raw edge of the binding along the raw edge of the right side of the quilt, starting in the middle of one of the sides (not at a corner).
24. Begin sewing 3" (7.62cm) from the end of the binding using a ¼" (.635) seam allowance. Sew a few inches and check to be sure the binding will come around to the back, and just cover the stitching. If it isn't right, adjust your needle position a bit to get the correct seam allowance.
25. Sew the binding in place, stopping a few inches from the beginning to seam the two ends of the binding together.
26. Bring the binding to the back of the quilt, and hand stitch in place.
27. You will now be an official "hero" when you present this cuddly quilt, to your special someone!

