



Making Fabric Chenille

Fabric chenille creates depth, texture, and softness by sewing, cutting, and laundering 4 to 5 layers of coordinating fabric. It makes beautiful pillows, vests, totes, potholders ...

Select 4-5 coordinating fabrics. You will get the best results when you keep the following in mind as you choose your fabrics:

- ♦ A looser weave will create a softer texture. This doesn't mean you should compromise on quality but avoid batiks and other very finely woven fabrics.
- ♦ Pay attention to the wrong side of the fabric and choose fabrics with some color on the reverse. If the back side is too white it will lessen the impact of your color choices.
- ♦ The only fabric that will actually show an overall pattern is the top fabric. Choose this one carefully. The other fabrics will contribute color but the pattern will not be significant. Solids and prints work equally well.

Cut the fabrics to the size desired. Add a few inches to the overall dimensions to allow for shrinkage.

Mark a series of lines on the top fabric approximately 3/8" to a scant 1/2" apart. The lines must be *diagonal to the grain* of the fabric.

Layer the fabrics together right side up. You may wish to make a series of 4" samples to test out the effects of various options. The color impact of each fabric lessens as it is placed farther down in the series. The bottom fabric will become the backing.

Pin the layers of fabric together and stitch along the marked lines.

Carefully **cut** through all the layers of fabric right between the lines of stitching while *leaving the backing in tact*. You will need a sharp pair of scissors and a steady hand. You can use your rotary cutter only if you have a set of Mini Omnistrips, a very useful tool if you intend to make several chenille projects. Another good cutting option is the Slash Cutter by Clover. It is a specially modified rotary cutter for chenille.

Launder your project to reveal the soft edges of the layers of fabric. The agitation of the washer and the tumbling action of the dryer soften the cut edges to reveal the depth of color in the chenille. Dry thoroughly.

Sew or **bind** your chenille fabric as desired.