



Fabric Postcards for our Troops

Who: Anyone and everyone can participate – kids, moms, dads, cats, dogs. Quilters from all around the world have sent in fabric postcards. Pictures of the postcards are posted on the web at:

<http://Fabric-Postcards.com> and you can get FREE patterns at www.QuiltBlockLibrary.com

What: Fabric postcards – patchwork / pieced; hand drawn; glued with lace or other decorative fabric. Write a greeting on the back, if you would like. Sign it and include an address, you might get a response from the soldier who receives the card. The idea is that the soldiers can carry these with them as a reminder of home.

The postcards can measure from 3" by 5" up to about 9" by 12." For a classroom project, the easiest is to use 2 rectangles of white cotton fabric approximately 4" x 6" and 1 piece of white cotton flannel between the two pieces of fabric (sandwiched like a quilt). Stitch around the outside (about ¼" away from the edge) to secure the fabric pieces. They don't need to be rectangles. Use your imagination in decorating them, and let your kids use theirs! Permanent fabric markers are great; some classes have glued glitter on the cards, too.

When: Penny's Postcard Posse Rounds up postcards all year round. Just mail 'em in, and we'll take care of getting them to the troops.

Why: To show our support and appreciation for the troops overseas and remind them that we are thinking about them all year around, and especially during the holidays.

Where: Send the finished fabric postcards to How to Quilt, Penny Halgren, 7925 Pasadena Ave., La Mesa, CA 91941 or Diane Malaznik, 14215 Westmore St., Livonia, MI 48154-4149.

www.How-to-Quilt.com and www.Fabric-Postcards.com

Additional details can be found at www.Fabric-Postcards.com
If you have questions or need help, email Penny:
info@how-to-quilt.com

Instructions for Making Lots of Simple Fabric Postcards

Each postcard should be around 4" by 6" – don't get too carried away with accuracy. Quilters have provided us with a variety of sizes. Each postcard will be 3 layers – 1 piece of flannel between 2 pieces of cotton.

Using a rotary cutter is the quickest and easiest way to cut the fabric. With a sharp rotary cutter, appropriate mat and ruler, you should be able to cut through 4 layers of fabric.

The first step is to line up fold the length of fabric in half, matching the selvedge edges. (Those are the sides that are tightly woven.)



After you smooth the fabric out, then fold it again – matching the fold with the selvedge edges. You will end up with a long piece of fabric 4 layers thick and about 10" wide, and it will look something like the picture on the left.

The selvedge edge is at the top of the picture. The raw edges are on the side – with all of the dangling threads.

Next you will cut the raw edges off.

Lay the ruler down on the fabric so that the raw edges are exposed and ready to be cut off. Check to be sure that the raw edges of the inner layers of fabric will be cut off. (Sometimes they are shorter than the outside layers.)

Once the raw edges have been cut off, you are ready to cut strips. Because this fabric is about 40" wide, you can easily cut 6" strips, and then cut 4" pieces off of the strips to make your 4" by 6" pieces.

The yellow guidelines on the rotary cutting mat are helpful for measuring. Line up the fabric between two horizontal gridlines. Make sure that the cut end of the fabric is lined up with a perpendicular gridline. Then find a yellow line that is 6" from the end of the fabric. Line up the ruler, and then cut the fabric, using the ruler as a guide for the rotary cutter.



Cut as many strips as you need for the postcards you will be making.
Figure you will get 10 postcards for each strip.



Once you have the 6" strips, open them up so they are 2 layers thick. (This is to make the most of the fabric.)
Again, you can easily cut through 4 layers of fabric, so you can layer your strips to cut through 4 layers.



Now cut 4" pieces off of the strips.

Use either the yellow gridlines on the mat or your ruler to measure these pieces. You may end up with a piece at the end that can be unfolded and used for a postcard. If not, just toss it!

Repeat this for the flannel.

You should cut 2 pieces of cotton and 1 piece of flannel for each postcard. Stack them up, matching the corners and edges. The

picture on the left shows the 3 layers before they have been lined up.

Once they are in a nice stack, sew around the outside edge approximately ¼” away from the edge. Begin stitching on one side, somewhat away from the corner.



Sew down the side until you are about ¼” away from the end of the fabric.

Then lift the presser foot on your machine and turn the fabric stack 90°.



Stitch down the next side.

Repeat until you have sewn all the way around. When you get back to where you started, just stitch over your beginning stitches by about 1” – this will secure the stitches without backstitching.

And that's it! Take it out of the machine, clip the extra threads, and they are ready to decorate.

The kids can use markers or crayons. If they use crayons, pressing them will make the crayon last longer. I'm not sure how successful it would be to press the 3 layers with crayons – it may bleed through to the other side, but it's probably worth a try.

If you do press crayon drawings, use brown paper under the fabric and on top – to protect your ironing board and iron.

Enjoy! There are no limitations, except good taste. The soldiers appreciate and love each and every one of these.