

A fabulous fabric shelf

Another stone cold idea

My local quilt shop has a design wall that is used for class samples. For wearable art or quilts it's quite easy to display the sample, but for dolls it's another story. They either get put inside a basket that is tacked to the wall or, horror of horrors, the doll itself gets pinned to the wall. I didn't want my mermaid to face that fate so I decided to design a lightweight fabric shelf that could be pinned to the wall. This is what I came up with

Supplies:

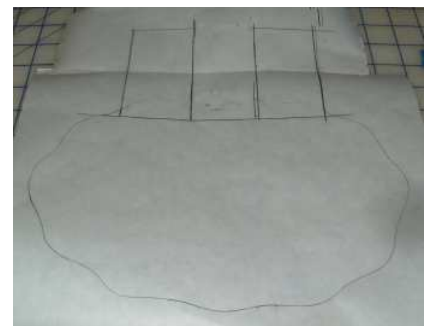
Freezer paper, pencil, scissors

Cotton fabric, cotton quilt batting, transparent Paverpol, stiff wire.

1. The first step is to find 'something' that is the size you want your shelf to be. This will be your template.

2. Trace around your template onto freezer paper. I used a quilting gizmo that adds a 1/4 seam allowance as you draw. Handy little thing!

3. Next, you need to draw a straight line for the back of the shelf and you need to add the hanging tabs. My tabs are about 4" tall. It's going to depend on the shape of your template. Don't make little stubs though. Cut your pattern out when you're happy with it.



4. Make a fabric sandwich. Two layers of cotton, right sides together, and one layer of quilt batting. The batting is the bottom layer. Cotton batting (or wadding) won't get caught in the feed dogs. Iron pattern onto your fabric. Pin. Give yourself a hand. Mine is felt.



5. Sew around the freezer paper. Using pinking shears, cut around the shape, leaving a 1/4 inch seam allowance. Clip all curves and corners. Make a 2 inch slit in the center of top fabric layer and turn inside out. 'Finger press' seams open with your hemostats or something with a rounded end.



6. Press the shape flat. If you have puckers at the corners try wiggling the fabric between your thumb and forefinger. It will relax the fibers. Try to sew your tabs straight—not crooked like I did. Actually, it's not really the sewing—my pattern wasn't straight. Oops.

Sew the slit closed. Or fuse a strip of material over the slit. I did both—can you say “overkill” !



7. Topstitch all the way around. Sew straight across the bottom of the tabs, that way you will be able to bend the tabs upwards later on. Do some free motion embroidery or wiggly lines or a grid or just 'something' to the entire piece to quilt it. Make sure to quilt the tabs too. Oh, nearly forgot, sew some eyelets on the tabs, or buttonholes. About 1/2" from the top edge. Cut open.



8. Messy, messy, messy. Dip the bottom half into your Paverpol. This is the product that will stiffen the piece. 'Squeegee' off any excess with your fingers. You can see my free motion embroidery, but don't look too close. I decided to hang the piece off the edge of my sewing table until it dried a little bit. After an hour or so I laid it flat on some tin foil. I let it dry overnight.

** I was told to try inside out plastic bags instead of foil. If it sticks it will peel off the plastic easier than foil.



9. You can see that the piece is stiff—it doesn't need much help to stand on edge. Now dip the tabs into the Paverpol, push off excess. Let dry for an hour or two and then lay the piece flat and stand tabs straight up. Let it dry overnight.

I leaned my piece against the wall (put foil around the tabs) and put weights against the tabs to hold them upright.



10. So sad, it didn't dry hard enough to support the doll. It needed a bit of help. Cut two strips of your cotton fabric 1" wide, sew RST with a 1/4" seam allowance. Turn inside out. Slip wires inside the tubes, bend to fit, and glue them to the shelf.

I was told that the piece will become stiffer in a week or so as the Paverpol continues to cure.



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