

Everyday Polar Fleece Mittens

By Janie Lantz



Project Description

Warm mittens are a must for breezy, chilly days! Whip up these easy, custom fit polar fleece mittens in less than an hour. Polar fleece is durable, water-resistant, easy to launder, and fast to dry.

Use left-over polar fleece from other projects, recycle a polar fleece garment you no longer wear (or from the thrift shop), or purchase a unique polar fleece that caught your eye! Light to medium non-pill fleeces with some crosswise stretch work best.

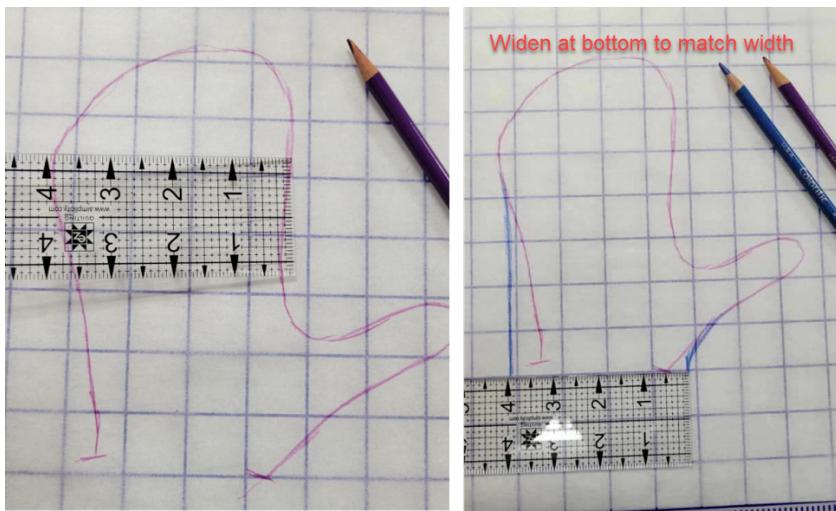
These mittens make great gifts for family and friends, too.

What you need:

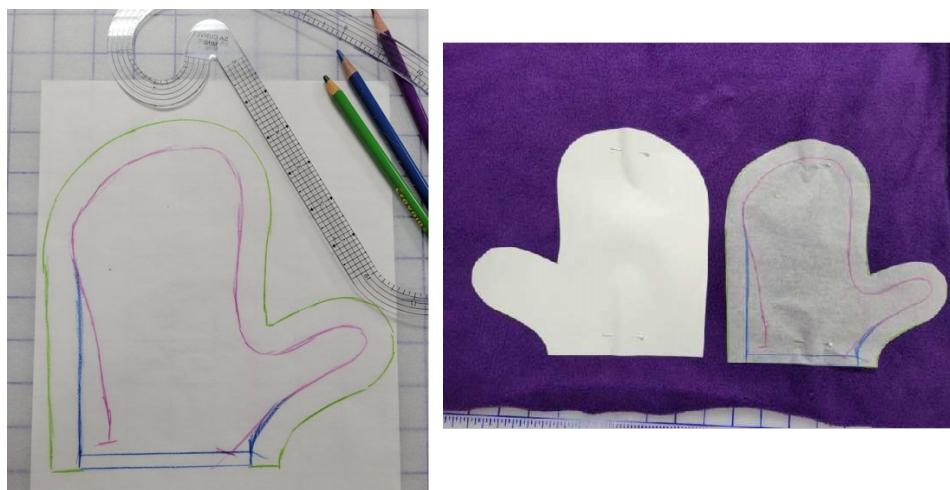
- Paper and colored pencils (for tracing around hand)
- See-through ruler (for adding ease and seam allowances)
- 1/3 yard (or equivalent in scraps or a recycled garment) polar fleece with some crosswise stretch
- 2 of 6" strips matching or contrasting stretchy knit or knit ribbing fabric, cut across the greatest stretch to your wrist diameter plus 1/2" for seams
- Matching thread
- Sewing Shears
 - Optional: Pinking shears
- Straight Pins (or sewing clips)
- Sewing Machine
- Universal size 70 or 80 sewing machine needle
- Walking foot or 1/4" guide foot

Design a Pattern

1. Lay one hand on a piece of paper with thumb extended and fingers slightly apart (to add wearing ease).
2. Trace around the hand, including the base of the hand and about 1" past the wrist bone.
3. Measure the widest area across the four fingers, and extend that width down to the wrist (where the cuff will go). Level off the bottom edge, drawing a line across the base of the mitten pattern to form a closed mitten shape.



4. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam at the bottom (cuff edge).
5. Add $\frac{5}{8}$ " around the outside of the rest of the mitten (but not at the wrist) for wearing ease plus seam allowance, or slightly more if you prefer a loose mitten.

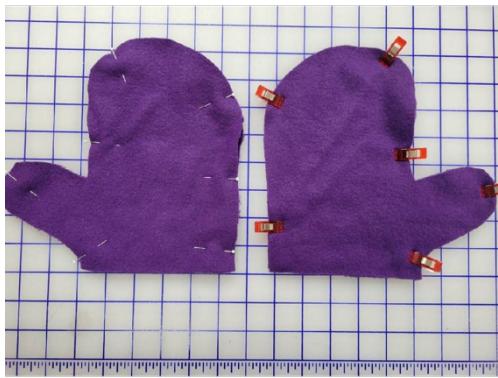


Cut the Pieces

6. Lay the polar fleece in a single layer, right side up, and place the pattern so the greatest stretch will go across the mitten (for wearing ease).
7. Cut two pieces with the thumb pointing left, and then flip the pattern and cut two pieces with the thumb pointing right (to make left and right mittens).

TIP: Trace a second pattern piece so you have a right and a left for cutting.

8. Put two mitten pieces right sides together and pin or clip.



Repeat to assemble the second mitten.

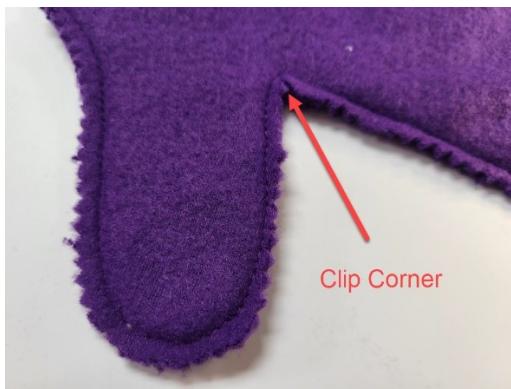
Sew a Right and Left Mitten

10. Set up a sewing machine with a straight stitch at a 3.5mm stitch length.

TIP: Polar Fleece doesn't ravel, so the seams don't need to be finished.

11. If available, attach or engage a walking foot. Alternately, use a $\frac{1}{4}$ " guide foot (pictured).

12. Stitch around the outside edge of each mitten with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam, leaving the cuff area open.



13. Clip to (but not through) the seam allowance where the thumb meets the body of the mitten to release the seam allowance for turning.
14. If you have pinking shears, pink around the curves of the thumb and top of mitten (as shown in image at right) to reduce bulk for a better fit, being careful not to cut through the stitches.

Add a Stretch Knit Cuff

15. Measure the diameter of your wrist just above the wrist bone, and add $\frac{1}{2}$ " for two $\frac{1}{4}$ " seams.
16. Cut the cuff fabric to 6" x the length needed (above).

17. Fold the cuff right sides together and straight stitch closed to make a tube 6" tall by the diameter of your wrist.

18. Finger press the seam open, then fold the cuff in half to enclose the seams and form the cuff.

19. Put the cuff inside the mitten wrist with the cut edges matched, stretching to the circumference of the mitten's wrist, and pin or clip in place.



20. Sew with a quarter inch seam, stretching gently as you sew so the ribbing stretches to match the wrist opening on the mitten.

21. Repeat for the second mitten.

22. Turn the mittens right side out.

You will never run out of dry mittens again, even on the snowiest day, when you whip up your own, custom-sized polar fleece creations!

Fun Variations:

- After cutting the mitten pieces, embellish with decorative stitches or embroidery. Assemble as instructed.
- Piece together multi-colored fleeces, and cut to make patchwork mittens.