

Ironing Board Thread Catcher & Caddy

Editor: Liz Johnson
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During any given project, I figure I log at least five miles running back and forth between my sewing machine and my ironing board. *Crap... need another pin. Dang... where are my scissors? Shoot... forgot to grab the seam gauge again.* Sound familiar? We decided our taken-for-granted ironing board was in desperate need of its very own notions caddy. One end holds your most-used tools; the other end is a handy thread catcher with a cute button-on pincushion. Of course all this fabulous organization means I now have to make up that five miles with extra laps on the treadmill.

The middle strip on our caddy is there to anchor the pocket panel and the thread catcher, but it is also clever in its own right. We added a layer of batting underneath the pretty fabric so you can stick pins into this center section as well as into the detachable pincushion. And, the flip side has a strip of gripper fabric sewn in place to keep the caddy from slipping and sliding. Our measurements below are perfect for most standard ironing boards. And, it also fit nicely on the side extension of my sewing table.

We originally used Half Moon Modern by Moda. Any set of four coordinating cottons would be great – with or without a sewing motif.

Sewing Tools You Need



- Sewing Machine and standard presser foot
- Walking or Even Feed foot; optional but helpful when quilting layers

Fabric and Other Supplies



- ¼ yard of 44"+ wide fabric for the center of the caddy: *we used Half Moon Modern by Moda Fabrics in Dots Spots Red*
- ½ yard of 44"+ wide fabric for the pocket and thread catcher: *we used Half Moon Modern by Moda Fabrics in Scissors Red*
- ¼ yard of 44" + wide fabric for the center lining: *we used a bright white cotton duck – a slightly heavier weight fabric is recommended but not critical*
- Gripper fabric: ⅛ yard or one piece 4½" x 14"
NOTE: *This is like the traction fabric used on the bottom of feetie pajamas. You can also use a shelf gripper sheet, which is easy to find in most kitchen supplies aisles.*
- ¼ yard of low loft cotton batting; *we used Warm & Natural quilt batting*
- ¼ yard heavyweight fusible interfacing; *we recommend Pellon 71F single sided fusible extra-strong stabilizer ; this product is 20" wide*
- All purpose thread to match fabrics
- See-through ruler
- Erasable fabric pen or pencil
- Seam gauge
- Seam ripper
- Iron and ironing board
- Scissors or rotary cutter and mat
- Two large safety pins
- Straight pins

Additional for detachable pincushion:

- Scrap of print fabric 4" x 6½": *we used Half Moon Modern by Moda Fabrics in Dots Spots Yellow*
- Scrap of solid fabric 3" x 3½": *we used we used Moda Fabrics' 200 count muslin in Warm White*
- Scrap of lightweight fusible interfacing 1½" x 3½"; *we recommend Pellon Shir-Tailor*
- ONE decorative button, apx 1 to 1½"; *we used a plain white 1" button*
- Handful of polyester fiberfill

Getting Started

1. From the fabric for the caddy center (*Dots Spots Red in our sample*) , cut ONE piece 7" high x 27½" wide.

2. From the fabric for the caddy lining (*white cotton duck in our sample*), cut ONE piece 7" high x 27½" wide.
3. From the fabric for the pocket and thread catcher (*Scissors Red in our sample*), cut the following:
TWO 7" x 7" squares for the pocket
FOUR 7" high x 9" wide rectangles for the thread catcher.
NOTE: *If you are using a directional pattern as we did, make sure the motif is running horizontally across the 9" width.*
4. From the batting, cut ONE piece 7" x 27½".
5. From the heavy fusible stabilizer, cut the following:
TWO 2" x 5" rectangles
ONE 5" x 5" square
6. From the gripper fabric, cut one piece 4½" x 14".

At Your Sewing Machine & Ironing Board

1. Place the 7" x 27½" main fabric piece right side up on top of the 7" x 27½" batting piece. Pin together around the outside edges.
2. Using matching thread in the top and bobbin, quilt the two layers together with four lengthwise lines of stitching. We lengthened our stitch and used a Walking foot. Starting from one 7" raw edge, each line should be 1½" apart.



Create and attach the caddy pocket

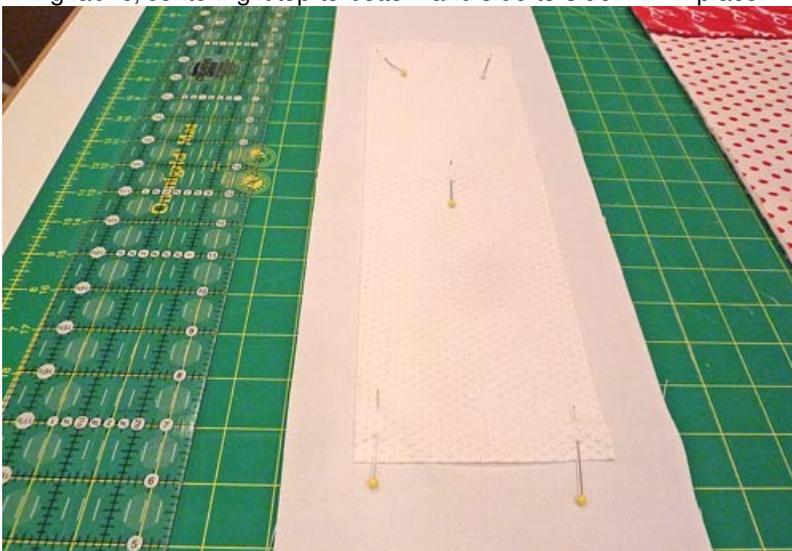
1. Find the two 7" x 7" pocket squares.
2. Place the squares right sides together. Pin along the top only.
3. Stitch across the top, using ½" seam allowance. Press the seam open and turn right side out. Press flat.
4. Place the pocket on one end of the quilted center piece. Perfectly align the raw edges of the pocket with the raw edges of the quilted center piece. Pin in place.
5. Using your erasable fabric pen and see-through ruler, measure and mark pocket dividing lines to best match the tools you want to insert.
6. Topstitch in a contrasting thread (we used white thread against the red fabric) along each drawn line from the bottom raw edges to the top folded edge of the pocket. You can also use a Walking foot and/or quilting bar to keep your lines straight.



7. For our sample, we measured 2" in from each of the raw side edges. On our finished piece, this gave us two 1½" narrow outside pockets and one 3" center pocket. Use a lock stitch or pull the thread tails through to the back and hand knot to keep the seam's finish at the top of the pockets neat.

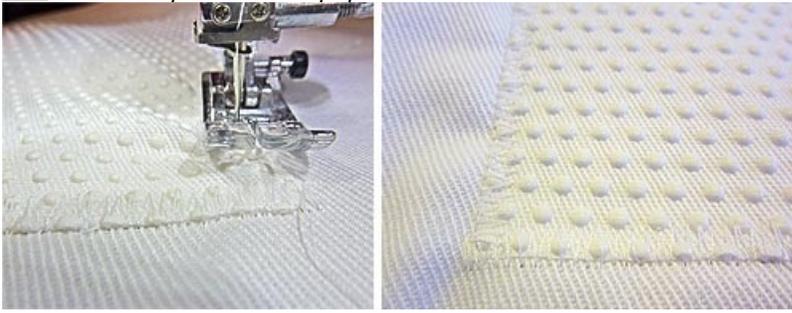


8. Find the 4½" x 14" piece of gripper fabric and the 7" x 27½" piece of lining. Lay the gripper fabric on the right side of the lining fabric, centering it top-to-bottom and side-to-side. Pin in place.



9. Zig zag in matching thread all the way around the gripper fabric.

NOTE: If you have trouble with your presser foot moving across the gripper fabric, try using a Teflon® or Ultra Glide foot or insert a piece of wax paper between the fabric and the foot.



10. Place the lining/gripper piece right sides together with the main center piece to which you already stitched the pocket. Pin in place along both sides and across the pocket end. On the opposite end, leave an approximate 3" opening for turning. You will stitch around both corners of this end; only the center part of the end will be left open. Stitch the layers together, using a 1/2" seam allowance.



11. Press the seams open, cut corners at a diagonal, being careful to not cut into the seam, and turn right side out through the open end.
12. Press flat and gently push out the corners with a long blunt-end tool, like a knitting needle or chopstick. Turn in the raw edges of the open end 1/2" so they are flush with the sewn seam and press. Pin together to hold in place (this opening will be closed when we attach the pouch later in the instructions). Set aside

Create and attach the thread catcher

1. Find the FOUR 9" wide x 7" high thread catcher rectangles and all the pieces of fusible stabilizer.
2. Place the 5" x 5" stabilizer square on the wrong side of one 9" x 7" thread catcher piece. Center the stabilizer so it is 1/2" from the top and 1 1/2" from the bottom. It should sit 2" in from each side.



3. Following manufacturer's instructions, fuse in place. For best results, use a pressing cloth or simply the other fabric rectangle, which is what we did. This is important because this heavy stabilizer requires extra heat and pressure to fully adhere.



4. Place this fused 9" x 7" rectangle right sides together with a plain 9" x 7" rectangle. Pin together along both 7" sides.
5. Re-thread your machine with thread to match the thread catcher fabric in the top and bobbin.
6. Using a 1/2" seam allowance, stitch both 7" sides. Press the seam allowances open, turn right side out, and press flat.
7. If you are familiar with boxed corners, this is what you will do next to form the bottom of the thread catcher. Use a ruler to measure and mark a 1" x 1" square in both bottom corners.



8. Cut out the squares along the drawn lines.



9. Turn the thread catcher inside out again (right sides together), and pin across the remaining bottom edge.
10. Stitch across the bottom, using a 1/2" seam allowance. Press the seam allowance open.
11. At each corner, pull the outside edges of the cut-out square to flatten it, and match up the seam lines on either side. Pin together.



12. Using a 1/2" seam allowance, stitch across each corner. Turn right side out and push out the boxed corners.
NOTE: *If you are new to boxed corners, we have [a great tutorial showing two options](#).*
13. Find the two 2" x 5" pieces of heavy stabilizer.
14. Draw a line lengthwise down the center of each piece.
15. Using this drawn line as a guide, slide one piece of stabilizer inside the sewn thread catcher. The drawn line should match-up with the sewn seam.



16. The end of the stabilizer should go all the way against the bottom of the thread catcher.



17. Using the same method as before, fuse the stabilizer in place. Remember to use a pressing cloth or another piece of fabric against the iron's surface. It's a little tricky, but you *can* maneuver your iron to get in there - we promise.



18. Repeat to fuse the remaining 2" x 5" stabilizer piece into place on the opposite side.
19. Then, repeat all the steps with the remaining two 7" x 9" rectangles except don't add stabilizer to this box. It will become the *outside* of the thread catcher.
20. With the inside of the thread catcher (the stabilized box) wrong side out and the outside of the thread catcher (the plain box) right side out, slide the outside into the inside so they are now right sides together.



21. Pin around the top. Leave a 3-4" opening for turning.
22. Using a 1/2" seam allowance, stitch around the top, remembering to leave that 3-4" opening. Lock your stitch on either side of the opening.
23. Turn the thread catcher right side out through the opening, being careful as you bend the stabilizer to snake it through. It will be a little tricky to maneuver, but if you fused it well, it will bend just fine.
24. Press well, folding in the raw edges of the opening so they are flush with the sewn seam.
25. Edgestitch around the top to flatten the seam and close the opening.
26. Place the top edge of the *un-stabilized back of the thread catcher* on top of the the end of the main center piece. The top of the caddy should sit 1/2" in from the sewn edge of the center panel. The stabilized side of the thread catcher is the front; the front and the sides hold the box shape, the back is soft.
27. Re-thread your machine again to make sure the bobbin thread matches the lining (white in our sample) and the top thread matches the thread catcher (red in our sample).
28. Edgestitch the thread catcher onto the center piece with one line of stitching from side-to-side, corner to corner.



29. Here is what it looks like from the top:



30. From the side:



31. From the back:

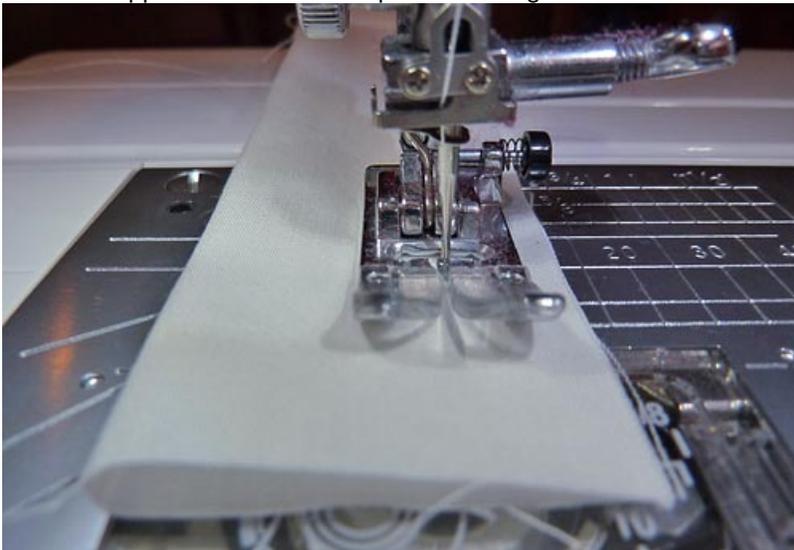


Optional button-on pincushion

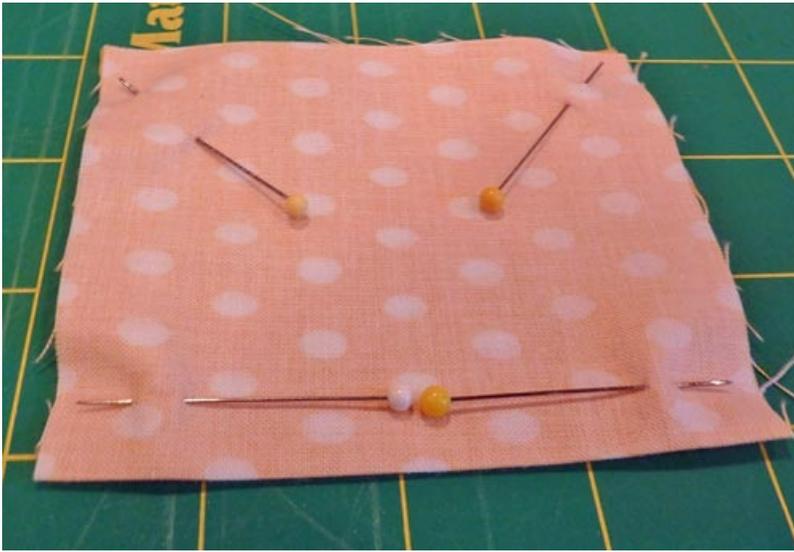
1. Hand sew the button to the top center front of the thread catcher.



2. Fold the 3" x 3½" solid fabric in half, wrong sides together, so it is now 1½" x 3½". Press lightly to form a crease.
3. Open up the strip, wrong side up, so the middle crease is visible.
4. Place the 1½" x 3½" strip of interfacing on the wrong side of the strip, aligning it with the center crease. Following manufacturer's instructions, fuse in place.
5. Re-fold the strip right sides together and pin in place. Using a ½" seam allowance, stitch across one end and down the side. The opposite end remains open for turning.



6. Clip the corner, trim the seams and turn right side out. Press flat.
7. Following your machine's manual, make a vertical buttonhole at the bottom the strip (the finished end) to match the size of the button on the thread catcher. Place the buttonhole ¼-½" up from the finished end and center it side to side.
8. Place the 4" x 6½" piece right side up on your work surface.
9. Place the finished strip on top of it, aligning the raw edge of the strip with the top (the 4") raw edge of the fabric piece. The strip should be in the exact center of the 4" edge. Pin in place.
10. Fold up the fabric piece so it is now right sides together and 4" x 3¼". The strip is sandwiched between the layers. Pin across the top and along both sides, but leave a small opening on one *side* for turning and stuffing.



11. Stitch around the three sides, pivoting at the corners. Stitch back and forth several times across the strip to reinforce it in the seam. Also, remember to leave that opening at the center of one side and to lock your stitch on either side of the opening.



12. Clip the corners and turn right side out. Poke out the corners so they are nice and sharp. Press flat, pressing in the raw edges of the opening so they are flush with the sewn seam.
13. Stuff with the polyester fiberfill to your desired plumpness.
14. Whip stitch the side opening closed.



15. Button in place on the thread catcher pouch.



Contributors

Project Design: Alicia Thommas
Sample Creation: Debbie Guild

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