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Fleece Hats

Keep warm all winter with these easy-to-make fleece hats. Fleece is wonderful fabric for winterwear because it's soft -- not itchy -- lightweight, durable, and machine washable. It was developed in the seventies as a synthetic alternative to wool; it traps heat just as efficiently, but unlike wool, its stretchy fibers don't absorb water or shrink.

Tools and Materials

Soft tape measure
Fleece fabric
Pins
Strong matching thread
Scissors
Sewing machine

Vertical-Stripe Hat

1. Measure the circumference of your head (around your ears). If you're making the hat as a gift for someone and don't know his or her size, use our size chart below. You'll need four fabric panels, two of each color. To determine the width of the panels, divide the head circumference by four, and add 1/4 inch on each side for seam allowance. The length for an adult hat should be about 13 inches; for a child's hat, about 10 inches. Cut out the panels.
2. Pin the right sides of the long ends of the panels together, alternating the colors. Sew panels together, leaving a 1/4-inch seam allowance. Sew the end panels, right sides together to form a tube.
3. Trim seam allowance closely. Use your fingers to open the seams; do not use an iron to press them, or the fabric could melt.
4. Flatten the hat, right sides together, so that two panels lay directly on top of the other two panels. Match up the center seams.
5. To make the hat's cuff, fold fabric up about 3 inches; fold in again 1/4 inch. Sew hem close to the turned edge. Turn hat right side out.
6. Pin along the top of the hat and sew, leaving a 1/4-inch seam allowance. Trim seam.
7. Join the two corners of the top of the hat together with a single stitch. Using strong thread, bring the needle through the inside of one corner and down through the other. Pull thread tight so the corners meet at the center. Tie off the thread.

Solid-Color Hat

1. You'll need one panel of fabric to make this hat. To determine the width of the panel, measure the circumference of your head (around your ears), or use our size chart below; add 1/4 inch on each side for seam allowance. The length for an adult hat should be about 13 inches; for a child's hat, about 10 inches. Cut out the panel.
2. Sew the long ends, right sides together, to form a tube.
3. Trim seam allowance closely. Use your fingers to open the seams; do not use an iron to press them, or the fabric could melt.

4. To make the hat's cuff, fold fabric up about 3 inches; fold in again 1/4 inch. Sew hem close to the turned edge. Turn hat right side out.
5. Sew along the top of the hat, leaving a 1/4-inch seam allowance. Trim seam.
6. Join the two corners of the top of the hat together with a single stitch. Using strong thread, bring the needle through the inside of one corner and through the other point. Pull thread tight so the corners meet at the center. Tie off the thread.

Horizontal-Stripe Hat

Follow the instructions for the solid-color hat, but combine horizontal bands of different-colored fleece to equal the correct height (about 13 inches for adults and 10 inches for children). Use as many bands as you like in any width; allow 1/4 inch for seam allowance on the top and bottom of each band, and 3 inches to the bottom band for the hat's cuff.

Jester Hat

1. Follow steps 1 to 4 for the vertical-stripe hat above.
2. Measure the crown of your head (ear to ear as if for earmuffs) or use our chart below. Place one end of a soft tape measure at the bottom left corner of the hat, extend tape measure to the right corner of the hat, the distance equal to your crown measurement (for example, 14 inches if your crown measurement equals that). Hold both points of the tape measure in place, and arch the excess in between. Pin on the center seam, 3 inches above the highest point of the arc; that is your "low point."
3. Mark the side seams 1 1/2 inches higher than the low point for a child's hat, 2 inches higher for an adult's. Connect the high points and low point with a marker, making a V. Sew along the V, making sure center seams match up. Trim seams, turn right side out, and shape points. Attach small pom-poms to each point (pom-pom instructions below).

Pom-Pom

1. For a large pom-pom, cut a strip of fleece 24 inches in length (9 to 12 inches for a smaller pom-pom) and as wide as you would like the pom-pom to be, (our pom-pom for an adult hat is 4 inches wide). Fold the strip in half widthwise.
2. Lightly draw a line down the center of the fabric lengthwise. Cut fringes to the left and right of the line, leaving about 1/4 inch uncut in the center. The fringes can be as narrow or as wide as you like.
3. Roll up strip of fabric.
4. Using strong thread such as upholstery thread, bring the needle through the core of the pom-pom, and wrap the thread tightly around the center a few times. Bring needle through the core again, and tie a knot as close to the pom-pom as possible. Use the excess thread to sew the pom-pom to the top of the hat.

Average Head Sizes

Newborn (6 months and younger)

Circumference: 14 to 17 inches

Crown: 8 to 10 inches

Infant (6 to 12 months)

Circumference: 16 to 19 inches

Crown: 11 to 12 inches

Child (12 months to 3 years)

Circumference: 18 to 20 inches

Crown: 11 to 12 inches

Child (3 years and older)

Circumference: 20 to 22 inches

Crown: 13 to 14 inches

Adult Woman

Circumference: 21 to 23 1/2 inches

Crown: 13 to 15 inches

Adult Man

Circumference: 22 to 24 1/2 inches

Crown: 14 to 16 inches

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