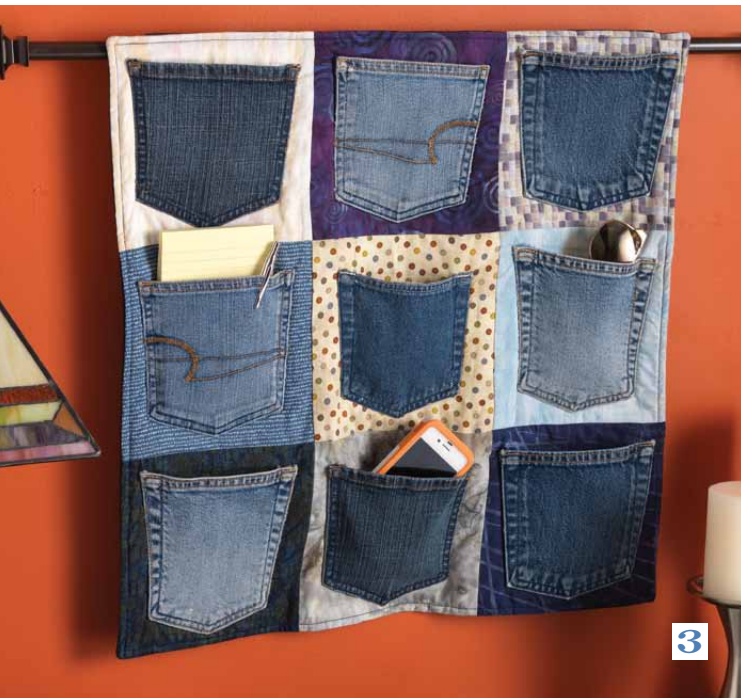


upcycling IDEAS:

3 FREE Sewing Projects for Refashioning and Upcycled Clothes

- 1** Sweater Stitch Switch
- 2** Recycled Denim Wine Tote
- 3** Patched Pocket Panel



Welcome to the Sew Daily eBook: **Upcycling Ideas: 3 Free Sewing Projects for Refashioning and Upcycled Clothes.**

We know that you adore refashioning well-loved garments into something new and stylish, along with upcycling discarded objects into something useful and beautiful, so I am pleased to offer you a selection of free patterns that will give your green sewing a jump start.

The **Sweater Stitch Switch** by Kirsten Coplans is the perfect refashioning project when weather turns chilly. Stay stylishly warm in a sweater embellished with pretty trim, topstitching, and vintage buttons. In this simple remake of a plain pullover, it's the decorative details that count.

The **Recycled Denim Wine Tote** by Lisa Cox is cleverly embellished with sashiko stitching to make a cool hostess gift. It is easily constructed from a recycled pair of child-size jeans or denim fabric. A jeans pocket that's perfect for holding a corkscrew or card is restitched on one side of the tote. It's sure to be a hit at any party.

Speaking of jeans pockets, the **Patched Pocket Panel** by Mary Walter is a quick and easy quilted wall hanging that combines cotton squares and rescued denim pockets as brilliant storage for all your phones, phone chargers, and media accessories—or as an entryway cache for stashing your sunglasses and keys. Help conserve resources and de-clutter. What could be better?

These great projects will get you started on refashioning and upcycling projects, and I'm willing to bet that they will inspire you to think of others to create for yourself. We are surrounded by clothes and objects that are ready for a second life. I hope you enjoyed sewing your way to a greener lifestyle.

Happy stitching,
amber eden

Editor, *Stitch* magazine and
SewDaily



PHOTO BY LARRY STEIN

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Sweater Stitch Switch

When a cool spring breeze blows through, stay stylishly warm in a refashioned sweater embellished with pretty trim, topstitching, and vintage buttons. In this simple remake of a plain pullover, it's the details that count!

by **KIRSTEN COPLANS**

GARMENT

—Lightweight pullover sweater

OTHER SUPPLIES

- Contrasting sewing thread
- Decorative trim such as rickrack or embroidered ribbon
- Pretty buttons
- Removable fabric-marking pen (optional)

CHOOSE A SWEATER

1 If you want to energize last year's look, just peek in your closet for a plain sweater that you've worn just one too many times. For spring, choose a lightweight knit, such as cashmere or fine Italian wool, something soft and airy.

REFASHION SWEATER

2 Cut the sleeves to three-quarter length for the warmer weather ahead (or trim sleeves to the desired length). Cut off the edge of any ribbing along the bottom (or if the ribbing is narrow enough you can cut it off completely; just make sure you will still be happy with the length after trimming). Cut off the edge of any ribbing along the neckline (or cut it off completely as for the bottom). Removing the ribbing



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PHOTO BY JOE HANCOCK

adds extra room and creates a simple, clean look overall. Next, cut down the center to create a cardigan. If the neckline is too high, cut a V-shape (or other desired shape such as a scoop neck) to lower it a bit. You may want to test the shape by drawing it with a removable fabric-marking pen prior to cutting.

3 Choose a bright contrasting color thread that will really show up as a stitching detail. Topstitch three overlapping rows around each sleeve opening about $\frac{1}{2}$ " in from the cut edge; make the rows straight and close together, or space as desired. Then topstitch around the neck edge and the edges from the cut down the center three times, as on the sleeves. Topstitch around the hem three times, as on the sleeves. Sewing about $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the cut edge shows off the stitch detail better, and the stitching ensures that the sweater will not ravel.

4 If you think more is more, and the cardigan needs a bit more detail, sew a decorative trim across the bottom or on the open edges in the front. I stitched patterned ribbon along the center of the sweater opening, topstitching along both edges of the ribbon. Then I sewed a wide zigzag stitch down the center of the ribbon.

5 Choose a fantastic vintage button or two to close the sweater in front. An oversized button makes a nice focal point. Sew the proper size buttonholes on one side of the center cut edge, then mark the corresponding spot on the opposite edge for the button. Sew on the buttons at the mark (check the placement with the buttonholes). Be sure to place the buttonholes and buttons at least $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the edge; a large button may need to be placed farther in so that it lies nicely on the garment. Press or steam the cardigan to make it look snappy.

6 For an alternative, use this stitch detail technique on a pullover sweater that has been cut down the middle, off center. Just sew the cut edges back together with a small seam allowance using lots of stitches. Try adding additional trim or decorative buttons. The details are what count!

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Recycled Denim Wine Tote

This clever wine tote embellished with sashiko stitching makes a cool hostess gift. It is easily constructed from a recycled pair of child-size jeans or denim fabric, and a jeans pocket—perfect for holding a corkscrew or card—has been restitched on one side of the tote.

by LISA COX

FABRIC

1 pair of repurposed child-size jeans (with leg measurement of at least 6" wide) or ½ yd of denim

OTHER SUPPLIES

- ⅔ yd of ¾" -wide cotton twill tape (shown: burgundy)
- 3" of cream-colored ½"-wide twill tape
- Coordinating all-purpose sewing thread
- Jeans topstitching thread (if using denim fabric)
- 1 skein each of 2 colors of No. 5 pearl cotton (shown: DMC Perle 5 variegated thread in 4210 Radiant Ruby and 92 Avocado)
- Denim/Jeans needle for sewing machine
- Hera marker or fabric marking pen
- Sashiko needle or embroidery needle
- Handsewing needle
- Recycled plastic (milk jug or other container) 5" square or sheet of template plastic
- Wine Tote Grapes template



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FINISHED SIZE

14" high × 7½" wide. With handles, tote is about 17½" high. Width may vary slightly depending on the size and style of jeans used.

NOTES

- All seam allowances are ½" unless otherwise noted.
- For explanations of terms and techniques, see Sewing Basics.
- For machine stitching on denim use a Jeans/Denim needle size 90/14 or 100/16.

CUT THE FABRIC

1 If using a pair of jeans:

- Measure and mark a line 16" above and parallel to the hem on one of the legs and cut the leg along the line, leaving the hem intact. This is the tote piece.
- Cut around the back jeans pocket, cutting through the jeans body as close as possible to the pocket edges. Working from the wrong side, cut away the jeans body fabric underneath the pocket.
- From the remaining jeans fabric, cut two strips 1½" × 10" for handles.
- Cut two 12" lengths of twill tape.

OR If using denim fabric, cut:

- One rectangle 17½" long × 16" wide for the tote
- One rectangle 6" long × 6½" wide for the pocket
- Two strips 1½" × 10" for handles
- Two 12" lengths of twill tape

ASSEMBLE THE JEANS LEG

- 2** If you are using a repurposed jeans leg, skip to Step 4.
- 3** Fold the denim tote rectangle in half lengthwise with the right sides together and, with a Jeans needle in the sewing machine, stitch the long edge to make a tube using coordinating thread. Serge or zigzag the raw edges and press to one side.
- 4** Press ¾" to the wrong side on the top edge of the denim "leg" just created, and then fold and press another ¾" to the wrong side. Stitch the



top hem using jeans thread. Turn the tube right side out.

EMBROIDER THE DESIGN

5 Using a hera marker or fabric marking pen, transfer the grape design from the template to one side of the jeans leg, with the jeans hem facing upward. Position the grape design midway between the seams of the repurposed jeans leg or centered 3¾" from the seam of the assembled tube, with the top of the grape design 3" from the top of the tote.

6 With the sashiko needle, embroider the grape design with a running stitch, using red pearl cotton for the grapes and green pearl cotton for the leaves. Following the manufacturer's instructions, remove any pen marks. This is the tote front.

7 Fold the jeans leg in half lengthwise with the grape cluster centered on one side and the side seam(s) lying to the side(s) of the grapes. On the opposite side of the leg (flip the leg over so that the grapes are no longer visible), mark three parallel lines ¼" apart from the top of the hem to the bottom of the leg. Position the first line 2" from the fold. Use a running stitch and red pearl cotton to stitch the lines. This is the back of the tote.

8 On the 3" length of cream twill tape, use red pearl cotton to sew a running stitch along the center of the tape.

ATTACH THE POCKET

9 If using denim fabric, fold ½" to the wrong side along the top edge of the pocket piece and press, then fold and

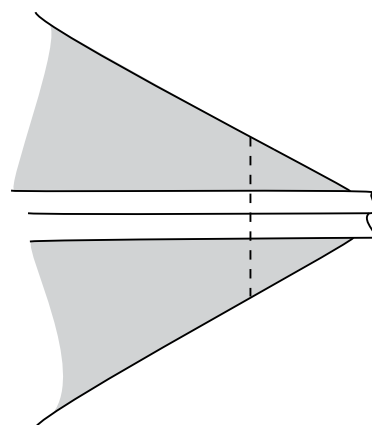


figure 1

press another ½" to the wrong side. Topstitch in place using jeans thread. Press ½" to the wrong side on the bottom and side edges. Decorate the pocket with topstitching as desired so it resembles a jeans pocket.

10 Center the repurposed or self-made pocket on the back of the wine tote with the top edge of the pocket 3½" below the top of the tote and pin. The pocket overlaps the parallel lines of running stitches. Fold the embroidered cream twill tape in half to form a loop (one short end lying directly on top of the other) and slip its raw edges just under the right-hand side of the pocket.

11 Edgestitch the pocket to the tote using matching thread in your sewing machine and catching the twill tape in the seam. Be careful to stitch through one layer of the jeans leg only; turning the leg inside out may help. The pocket can also be attached by hand with slipstitches in matching thread or decorative running stitches in pearl cotton.

CREATE THE BASE

12 Turn the denim tote inside out. Serge or zigzag to finish the raw bottom edge. Fold the tote as in Step 7 and stitch the bottom edges of the tote together.

13 To give the tote structure, box the bottom corners. Fold the tote so the bottom seam is aligned with one of the side folds or seams, creating a triangular point. Draw a line perpendicular to the seam and 2½" from the corner; this line will be about 3" long. Machine stitch through both layers along the line (figure 1). Repeat

with the other corner to form the bottom of the tote. To strengthen the tote, leave the excess fabric in place and press the triangles toward the bottom of the tote. Turn the tote right side out, revealing a flat bottom with boxed corners.

14 Measure the base of the tote (about 3" x 4"). Cut a piece of recycled or template plastic the same size as the tote base. Double the dimensions of the plastic and add 1" to each dimension, then cut a piece of leftover denim fabric that size. Fold the denim in half, right sides together, and stitch the short ends. Clip the corners and turn the denim right side out. Insert the piece of plastic, fold the seam allowances on the open edge to the wrong side, and slipstitch the opening to secure. Slip the denim-covered plastic into the base of the tote.

MAKE THE HANDLES

15 Press $\frac{3}{8}$ " to the wrong side on both long edges of a denim handle strip, creating a strip measuring $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 10". Repeat with the other strip.

16 Lay a prepared denim strip on a length of twill tape, wrong sides together, with the twill tape extending 1" beyond the denim at each end. Edgestitch the twill tape to the denim along each long edge, matching the needle and bobbin threads to the respective fabrics so the stitching is almost invisible.

17 Repeat Steps 15 and 16 to make the second handle.

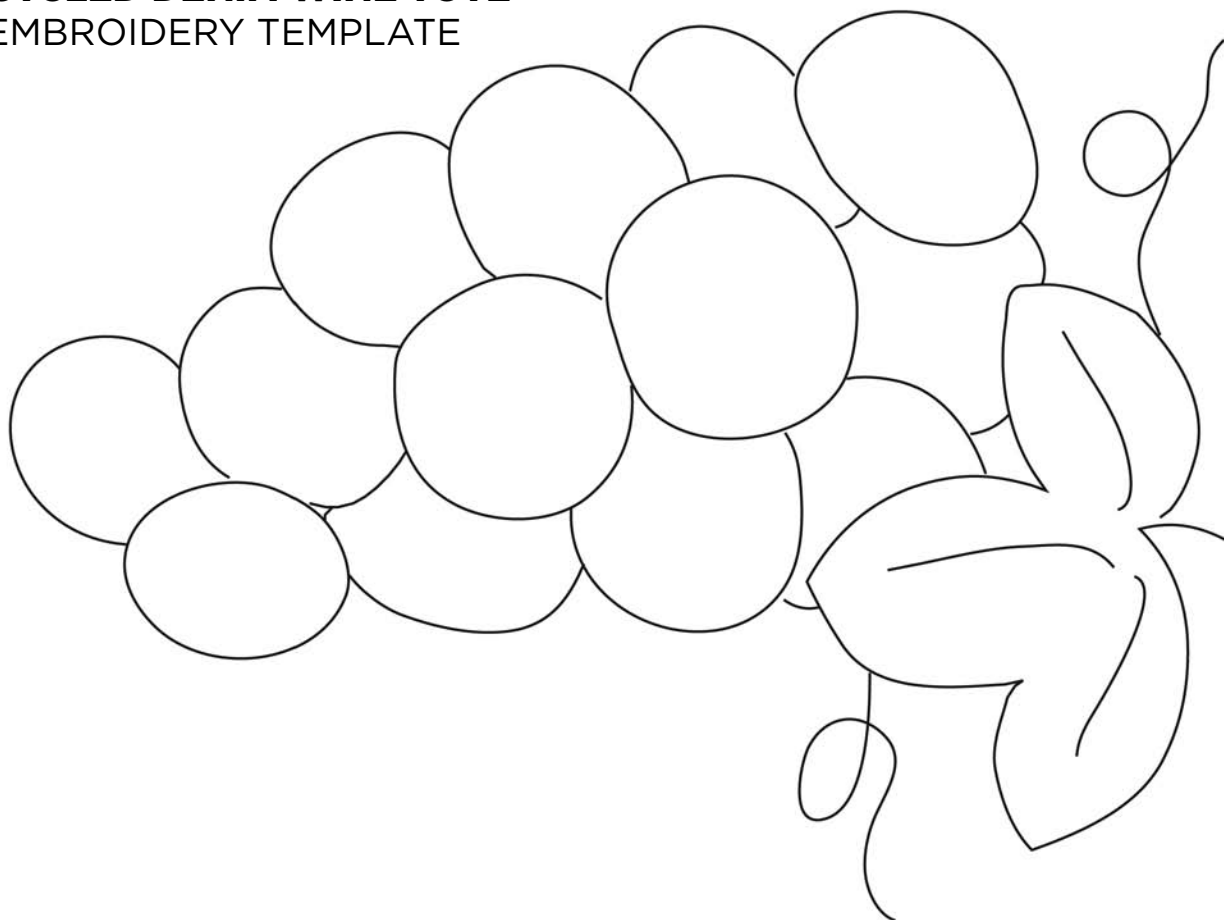
18 Using pearl cotton and a running stitch, stitch along each long edge of both handles, $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the edge.

19 Fold the extra length of twill tape to the denim side of each handle, covering the raw edges. With the tote folded as in

Step 7, position one handle on the front and one on the back, spacing each handle's ends $2\frac{1}{2}$ " apart. Pin the handles inside the tote's upper edge with the handle's denim side toward the tote and the handle ends 1" below the tote's upper edge. The extra twill tape should be between the handle and tote; trim any twill tape visible from the tote's right side. Stitch an X inside a square on the end of each handle to secure the handles to the tote, matching the needle and bobbin threads to their respective fabrics.

LISA COX is an occupational therapist by day and an avid crafter at night. Her designs have appeared in many books and magazines including *Pretty Little Presents*, *Craft Hope*, *Quilting Arts Gifts*, and more. Lisa lives in Perth, Australia, and she collaborates with her daughter Sarah on their blog spoonfullofsugargirls.blogspot.com.

RECYCLED DENIM WINE TOTE EMBROIDERY TEMPLATE



Patched Pocket Panel

This quick-and-easy quilted wall hanging combines cotton squares and rescued denim pockets as the perfect storage place for all your phones, phone chargers, and media accessories—or an entryway cache for stashing your sunglasses and keys.

by MARY WALTER

FABRIC

- Nine 8" x 8" cotton squares
- ¾ yd cotton fabric for backing and hanging sleeve

OTHER SUPPLIES

- 9 pockets from formerly loved jeans
- 25" square of batting
- Thread to match fabrics
- Denim or size 90/14 machine needle
- Rigid acrylic ruler, self-healing mat, rotary cutter

Hanging hardware

- ½" dowel cut to 21½"
- Two ¼" screw eyes
- 2 small nails or cup hooks

FINISHED SIZE

22½" square

NOTES

- A variety of pockets will add interest to your project. Make sure the pockets aren't larger than 7" x 7" to comfortably fit on the patchwork squares.
- All seam allowances are ¼".



PHOTO BY LARRY STEIN



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Use a denim needle to stitch through the heavy double-stitched lines of the pockets.

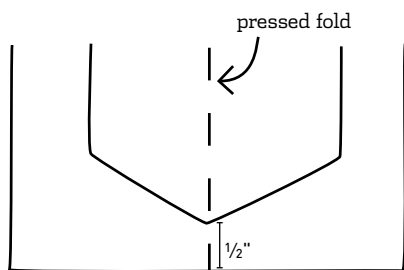


figure 1

CUT FABRIC

From backing fabric, cut the following:

- One 22½" square
- Strip for hanging sleeve 10" × 20½"

MACHINE APPLIQUÉ POCKETS TO COTTON SQUARES

1 Lay out the nine cotton squares and place a denim pocket on each.

2 For easy placement, press each cotton square and pocket in half. Layer a pocket onto a cotton square, lining up the pressed folds, and placing the pocket ½" from bottom edge of the cotton square.

(figure 1) Pin pocket in place.

3 Sew each pocket to a cotton square stitching on the sides and bottom, following the double-stitched lines of the pocket.

ASSEMBLE QUILT + FINISHING

4 Arrange the sewn pocket panels into 3 rows of 3 squares. Sew each row together alternating the direction of the pressed seams to nest the seams

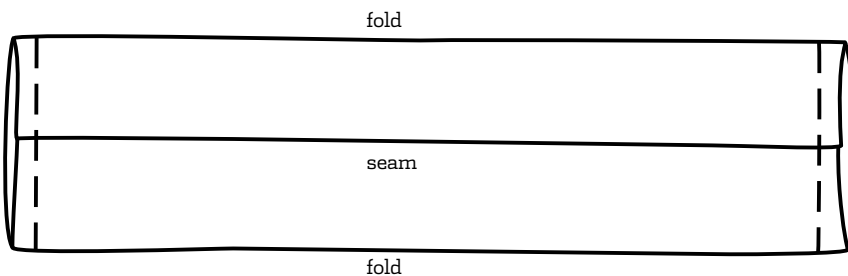


figure 2

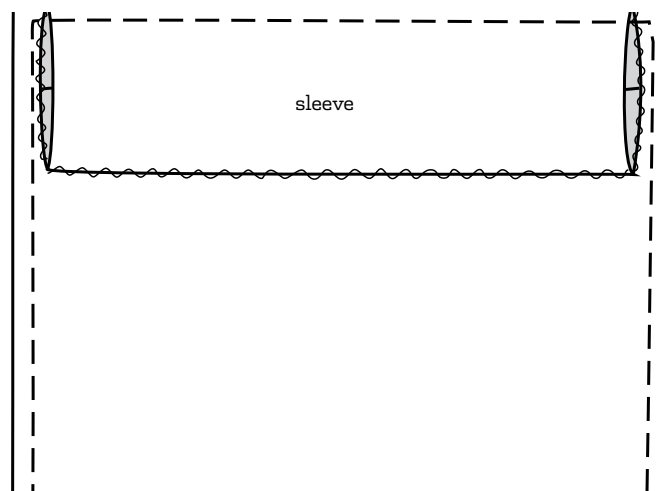


figure 3

where the squares meet. This is your Patched Panel Top.

5 Layer the Patched Panel Top right side up, the backing wrong side up, and the batting on top. Pin the layers together. Stitch the layers together using a ¼" seam allowance, leaving a 4" opening on the bottom for turning. Trim excess batting.

6 Clip corners, turn right side out and press. Turn in open seam edges and slipstitch closed.

7 Stitch in the ditch around each pocket square.

PREPARE HANGING SLEEVE

8 Hem the short ends of the hanging sleeve—press up ¼" then another ¼". Topstitch close to the fold.

9 Fold long raw edges of the sleeve right sides together, press and stitch using ¼" seam allowance. Turn sleeve right side out and press, centering the seam on the back. **(figure 2)**

10 Pin sleeve to upper back edge of wall hanging (seam side down), centering and aligning a folded edge of sleeve with the top of the patched panel. Pin.

11 On the front of the patched panel, edgestitch ¼" around the perimeter, catching in the top fold of the sleeve.

12 Blindstitch the bottom side of the sleeve edge and only the bottom fold of the sleeve to the patched panel back.

(figure 3)

13 Screw the ¼" screw eyes into the ends of the dowel.

14 Slide the prepared dowel into the hanging sleeve. Place nails or cup hooks on the wall or door where you want to display your patched panel. Align screw eyes with hangers and hang.

MARY WALTER is a quilter, designer, teacher, NQA quilt judge, and Stitch technical editor. She enjoys creating new projects to teach and share with her students.