

Enhancements

Unless a quilt has a good range and mix of textures, it is not a good touch quilt. So the quilter's first task is to choose blocks with a variety of interesting textures and arrange them to give fingers interesting pathways to go from one to another. The quilter can also add something extra, a bonus. The touch sensation can be created in a number of ways - grazing over and over a given texture, pulling, twisting, poking etc,. There are many ways to provide these opportunities on the quilt. We have discussed the texture of the squares previously, now lets us explore how we can add to the quilt top to provide other tactile opportunities. These embellishments do NOT take the place of fabric texture. They can easily become clutter and they must be carefully made.

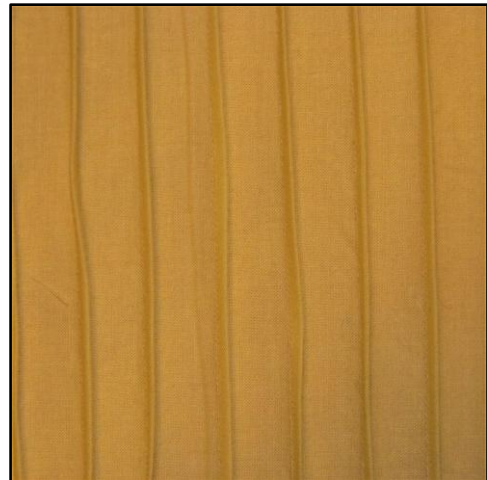
Fabric Manipulation Enhancements

Regular quilting fabric has a texture, of course — a rather bland one. With touch quilts we look for a stronger tactile experience. One way is to manipulate the fabric to create bumps and creases. Pin tucks/pleats, ruffles, shirring of the fabric will enhance the quilt's textural sensation. You can also chenille a number of layers of fabric. The fabrics need to be lighter weight fabrics so they will take the shapes you create. Below are explanations and illustrations of these possible modifications.

Pin Tucks

This fabric manipulation can be added to by making pin tucks both down and across so the fabric looks like small raised boxes. Do not use thick or textured fabric for this manipulation. See video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mMgH6IW0iOw>



Ruffles

This technique can be used on a whole block or added in the seam allowance.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2g06F_b3lo&pbjreload=101

Shirring

This fabric manipulation can be made into a block or as an addition to an existing block. This YouTube video offers many possibilities for fabric manipulations.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rPp6Nn4mmYk>



Chenille

There are many YouTube explanations of how to make chenille. One suggestion is:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_kGsqbDmiQM

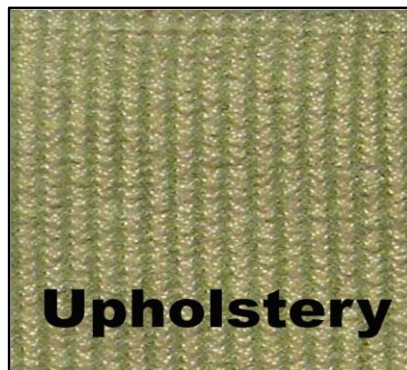
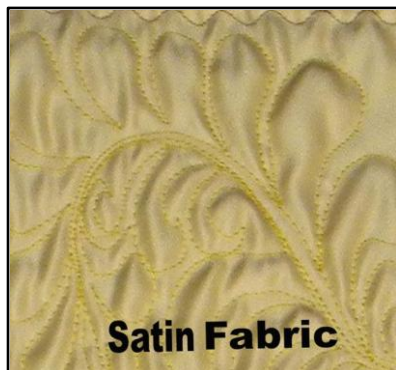
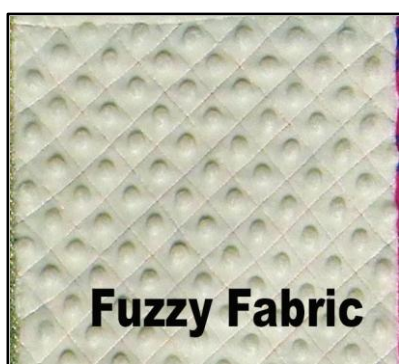
This video is tailored to making quilt blocks.



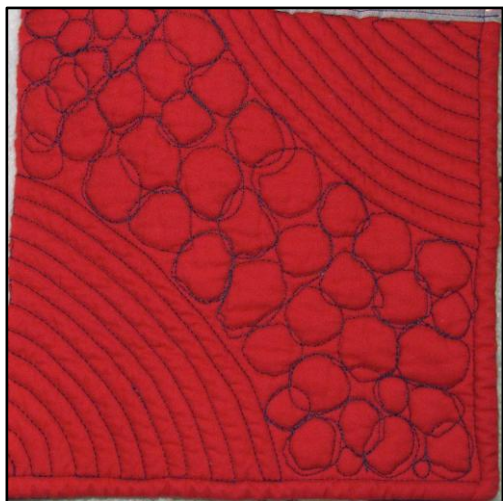
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Quilting

Fabric that has fuzz, bumps, silkiness or harshness can be enhanced by the way you quilt them. If you have a fabric with ridges you can enhance that texture by quilting in the valleys between the ridges; one with bumps may be enhanced by quilting a grid that separates and frames the bumps; a piled pattern of upholstery fabric stands out when the flat, unpiled part, is heavily quilted. Not all fabric responds to such enhancement, but when it does the quilting can be well worth the effort and time. A rather plain textured fabric, can be enlivened by quilting an interesting pattern — a hand, a leaf, a heart, whatever. Below are examples of quilting which enhances the tactile feel.



Furthermore quilting alone can create texture: this red square is plain quilting cotton fabric, the ridges were stitched and the 'rocks' were a first effort at free-motion quilting. The plain cotton block and an extra layer of batting was sewn into the top: the quilting was done after assembly. The extra batting created a nice puffiness. Try your own patterns for quilting, but simple shapes are best.



Pockets

They are fun. Alzheimer patients love to search in pockets for some hidden treasure or toy. Below are some possibilities.

Simple Pocket

Simple Pocket is easy to use the back pocket from a pair of jeans. Select a pocket in which the hands will fit. Simply cut a square of the right size (from a pair of jeans that includes the back pocket. Then possibly tuck a 'handkerchief' (just fabric) into it and sew across the pocket to secure the raw edges. This stitching should be far enough down that someone can put their hand well into the pocket.

One can also cut out the jean pocket and attach directly to the quilt block-not necessary to keep the jean material around the jean pocket.



Diagonal Pockets

Cut a base or back out of interesting fabric (for example a very soft fur). Cut 2 pocket fronts the same size as base. Fold each pocket front in half diagonally and if you are including a toy in the pocket, position it on background fabric so it will be captured in the sewing as appropriate and stay stitch the raw edges to the base. Doubling pocket fronts makes the soft, furry base mostly hidden but easily found by exploring fingers.



Patch Pockets

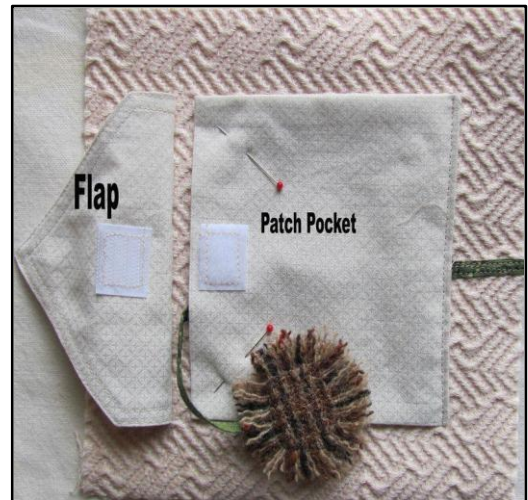
This design can serve as a vase or other container. To make the patch: cut fabric as wide as you want the vase to be plus 1/2" larger for seam allowance and twice as high as you want it to be plus 1/2". Remember to make the container large enough so the hand can get into it. Fold this piece in half, right sides together, and stitch a 1/4" seam leaving 2" open for turning. Turn right side out and press. If you are including a toy, position it on background textured fabric, as appropriate. Place the patch on the background and stitch around three sides capturing the toy in the sewing, closing the turning gap in the process.



If you want to close the patch pocket you can add a flap and Velcro. Make a flap the same width as patch pocket. Fold the flap, right sides together and stitch a 1/4" seam around leaving a gap for turning. Turn and press.

You can sew a small piece of fuzz Velcro in the centre at the folded edge. Sew and turn the flap piece as you did the patch. Sew a matching piece of hook Velcro to the flap so that when closed the top of the flap (the edge to be closed) will be 1/2" above the top of the patch.

You can make the flap with a point if you wish, but be sure to leave plenty of fabric for arthritic fingers to grip and pull the flap. If you wish you can attach the patch pocket only at the bottom and sew the sides down with quilting after you have quilted the square beneath it.



This pocket design can also give a satisfying ripping sound when opened. The size of the Velcro closure will determine how much ripping sound the pull gets.

Zipper Pockets

Use a fat conventional plastic zipper, 15cm [18 cm] with a closed end. Do not use metal or 'invisible' zippers. The invisible ones break too easily and leave a sharp end. Metal ones can hurt others when swung about.

An 18 cm zipper will fit a 7' finished square if you angle the pocket piece so one side is two inches shorter than the other. The zipper will almost reach the side seams so an extension is unnecessary.

The zipper can run straight across the block or be angled as shown.

Pick two pieces of fabric, when sewn together are 1" larger than the block size. They will form the pocket with a zipper opening. See YouTube video on how to install zipper between these two fabric pieces.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHDDhUzIXPY>



Once the zipper is sewn into the fabric, it is necessary to reinforce the zipper ends so the zipper does not rip out when pulled aggressively. Cut four pieces 1.5" x 3" of matching or contrasting fabric. Sandwich each end of the zipper tapes between two of these pieces, right side facing the zipper, (long sides parallel to the zipper and the short ends a half inch beyond the end of the zipper part). If putting a toy in the pocket, position it on the right side of the background fabric and attach. Lay the pocket piece over the block fabric, aligning the sides and stay stitch 1/8" from edges. Stitch along the top zipper binding to attach it to the back. Use a ribbon, tape or gimp to hide and decorate the top edge of the zipper. Thus making an accessible pocket on one side of the block. Remember to put a ribbon or fabric through the zipper pull for arthritic fingers to grasp.

Pockets Toys

A whole range of toys can be added to each pocket - a yo-yo flower, button, a leaf, a shiny 'coin' (made of metallic cloth), a simple shape, pieces of elastic, hair scrunchy, crushed stuffed toys, etc). This adds to the tactile sensation of fiddling and pulling. See examples below. The pink pocket has a fish on the line. Whatever you put into the pocket should be attached with a stem, line, or leash that is long enough so it can be pulled fully out of the pocket but not lost.

