

Other Senses

Noise

The crinkle is very effective for both auditory and tactile purposes. If someone has a hearing impairment then the tactile component (bumpier texture) has been noted to catch their attention.

There are two types of noise that add a non-tactile dimension to a touch quilt: the crinkle sound of a potato chip bag, and the tearing sound of unfastening Velcro. Noise seems to please some Alzheimer patients, although it is not suitable for every situation where tactile quilts are used. For example, touch quilts used to help a patient be quiet and not reach out to touch others at a concert. So put it in or not as you feel inclined.

For **Crinkle** - a potato chip bag can be used to make a crinkle sound if the quilt is to be used in a home setting. These bags do not, however, stand up to the commercial washing that most care facilities use. For quilts going to nursing homes you need a plastic coated foil, of the type that is used these days to keep coffee beans fresh. These bags (at time of writing) cannot be recycled. So go to your favorite coffee house. If you see big bags like the one shown here, ask nicely if they will give you some empty bags. They probably will be glad to find a use for them. Whether you use potato chip or coffee bean bags, cut them open and wash them free of coffee remnants, salt and oil. Cut off the plastic vents and any crimped seams so you have a flat sheet of crinkle material. The easiest way to use it is to cut a good sized hunk and sew it to the middle layer of your quilt on the backside of the square with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " [.65cm] seam. **Do not sew them on the front of the block as pieces of the material can rip away from the stitching.**



Velcro Fancy Block

A simple Velcro embellishment that gives a nice tearing sound, is a piece of ½ " [1.3cm] wide fuzz Velcro laid across a background square. Cut a length of grosgrain ribbon greater than twice the block's width. Fold the grosgrain in half. Cut a length of fuzz ½" [1.3cm] wide Velcro the width of the block and sew down onto the block.

Cut a shorter piece of hook Velcro, about 4" and sew to the doubled ribbon 1/2" [1.3cm] from the raw ends. This will keep the hooker Velcro outside of the seam allowance (The hooks would make the seams too thick to sew). Place hooks over the fuzz Velcro so the raw end of the ribbon line up with the edge of the block and sew down. Leave the folded ribbon open so fingers can get inside and pull hard to open with a nice r-r-ripping sound.



Weighting

Some people believe that weighting a quilt gives it an added dimension of calming and comfort — sort of like having a cat purring in one's lap. There is little evidence about the effectiveness (or not) of weighting. It has been observed that some patients respond well to light weight (2 pounds [900g]) and will ignore the tactile items on the quilts. However, weighting can turn quickly into a restriction. With this in mind, in long term care settings, it will take monitoring and many observations in order to use a weighted touch quilt as a calming tool. Therefore weighting is not recommended at this time.