

Lucy Locket's Pocket

“Lucy Locket lost her pocket,
Kitty Fisher found it
Nothing in it, nothing in it
But the binding round it.”

This nursery rhyme was a great puzzle to me when I was small. How could Lucy Locket have LOST a pocket? A pocket, as we all know, is safely sewn on to the garment, either on the outside or hidden in the side seams. But then I found out that in olden times pockets weren't attached to garments at all. They were more like bags which were usually tied round the waist, either with a ribbon or attached to a belt – a bit like what we call 'bum bags' today!



Problem was that it was very easy for thieves, called 'cut-purses', to quickly run past, cut the ties and make off with the pockets. Maybe there was nothing in Lucy Locket's pocket because a cut-pocket had stolen it and emptied it! Eventually people came up with the idea of sewing them to garments.

This patchwork pocket, in The Quilters' Guild Collection, almost certainly was made around 1840. It has a side opening into the main pocket and a small pocket on the front. It would have been tied round the waist with a ribbon, often underneath a dress or coat, which would have had a special opening in the side to reach the pocket.

You can make your own pocket to use today out of cotton scraps and tie it around your waist with a ribbon.

Our version just has one pocket, although you could easily add another one on the front. It also has a ribbon tie so that you can either tie it round your waist or on to a belt. You can sew the pocket either by hand or by machine, although it would be easier by machine. It's best to use cotton patchwork fabric, which is easy to sew.

By Celia Eddy

Make your own Lucy Locket's Pocket

You will need:

25 squares of six or more cotton fabrics—cut 7.5cm X 7.5 cm—for the front of the pocket

Pins, needles, threads and scissors

Sewing machine

One 29cm X 32cm piece of fabric for back of pocket

Two 29 cm X 32cm pieces of medium firm-interfacing

Two 29cm X 32 cm pieces of fabric for lining

Two strips 4 cm wide X 14 cm long for binding the side opening of the pocket

Make the front of the pocket

Step 1: Using the **template**, cut out two pieces of interfacing, two pieces of lining fabric and one piece of fabric for back of pocket.



Step 2: Arrange the squares in rows of five each to make a chequerboard pattern and sew each row together, using a .5 cm seam allowance. Now you will have five strips.

Step 3: Sew the five strips together to make a patchwork panel. Iron well. Pin the **template** to the panel and cut all around.



Step 4: Place a lining piece wrong side up on the table. Place the interfacing piece on top. Lay the patchwork panel right side up on top of the interfacing. Pin all three layers together round the edges.

Step 5: Sew four straight lines down the panel as shown in the picture on the right.



Make the back of the pocket

Step 1: Place the second lining piece wrong side up on the table. Place interfacing piece on top. Place lining fabric right side up. Pin all three layers together.



Step 2: Sew three evenly-spaced lines down the back of the pocket as shown in the picture on the left.

Binding the pocket openings

Step 1: Mark the top and bottom of the side opening with pins using the template.

Step 2: Fold one piece of binding fabric in half longwise, with wrong sides together and press.

Step 3: Pin and stitch it to the **right hand side** of the front panel of the pocket between the pins.

Step 4: Turn the binding to the inside of the pocket and stitch down by hand.



Step 5: Repeat steps 1-4 for the back of the panel. You will pin the binding fabric to the **left hand side** this time.

Joining the back and front of the pocket

Step 1: Pin the back and front of the pocket together with right sides together.

Step 2: Stitch all round the top and sides except the side opening.



Step 3: Use a narrow zig-zag stitch to go round the seam again.

Step 4: Turn the pocket right side out through the side opening and iron, making sure the seams are well pushed out.

Finishing the pocket

Step 1: Stitch a ribbon to the top of the pocket long enough to tie round your waist.

All done!



That's it! Now you can use your pocket to carry some treasure. (But look out for cut-purses!)