

A PUMPKIN POT HOLDER FOR YOUR KITCHEN

Pumpkins are often made into spooky lanterns at Halloween.

Here's how to make one that you can use to protect your hands from hot pan handles at any time of year.

The pot holder is made using a technique called raw edge appliqué.

You will need

- A sheet of A4 paper
- Pumpkin template and Potholder template;
- 20 x 20cm square of orange fabric for pumpkin;
- Two 24 x 24cm squares of fabric for pot holder back and front - can be two different fabrics as in sample;
- One 24 x 24cm square of heatproof wadding;
- Approx. 18cm ribbon or tape for hanging loop
- Machine sewing thread and embroidery thread, for blanket stitch.
- Optional: a 10-12cm square of yellow fabric to show through the pumpkin features.

Equipment

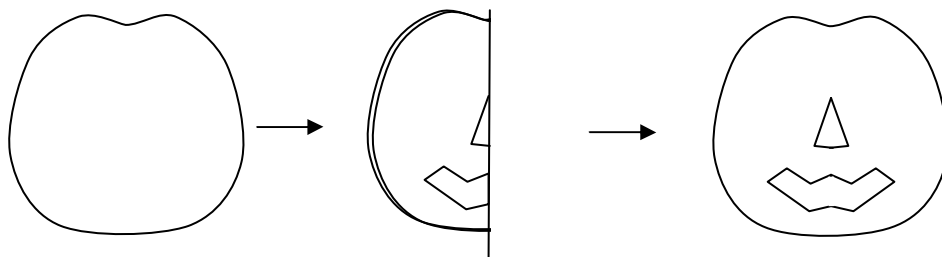
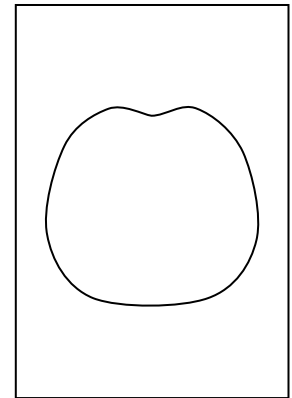
- Sharp paper-cutting scissors
- A pencil.
- Fabric scissors;
- Pins.
- Sewing machine
- Hand sewing needle;
- Nail brush

The pot holder is made in 8 steps

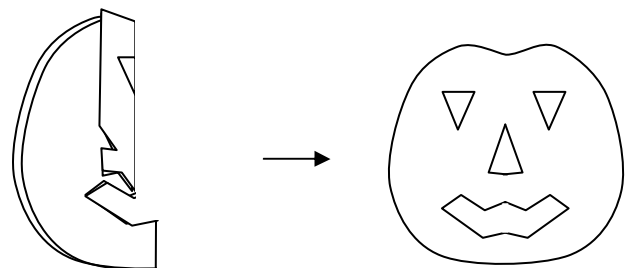
1. Cut out a paper pumpkin using the pumpkin template.
2. Fold it in half, and cut away to make a pumpkin face template.
3. Use this to cut a pumpkin face from orange fabric.
4. Make a loop to hang up the potholder.
5. Use the potholder template to cut out two ovals of other fabric, and one oval of wadding.
6. Layer the wadding between the two pieces of fabric.
7. Place the pumpkin face on top, trapping the hanging loop beneath it.
8. Stitch round the face on the sewing machine.
9. Blanket stitch by hand around the edge of the potholder.

Making the pumpkin face

1. Draw round the pumpkin template onto a piece of A4 paper. Cut it out using paper scissors.
2. Fold the paper pumpkin in half down the middle.
3. Cut a triangle for the nose near the middle and a zig-zaggy mouth below it.

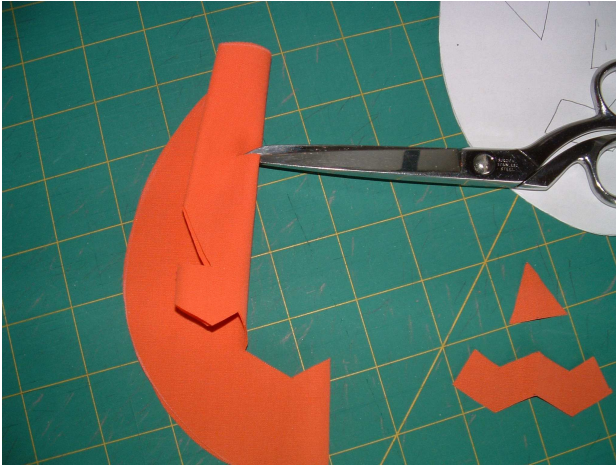


4. Then fold again part way to one side and cut out another triangle for the eyes.
5. Open out the pumpkin, and look at your face. Are you pleased with the shape? If not, try making another one, until you have a template shape that you like. Don't make it too complicated!



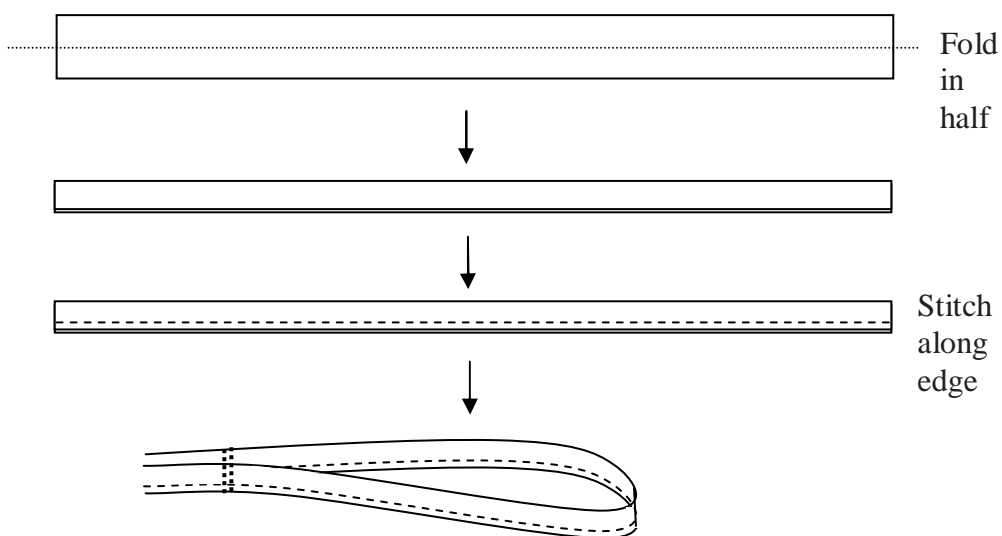
6. When you know that you can cut a gruesome face easily, take a 20 x 20cm square of orange fabric. Pin the paper pumpkin face template onto it.
7. Cut out round the outside very carefully, using sharp sewing scissors. Remove the pins and the template.

- Now cut a face in the orange fabric in just the same way that you practised on the paper one.



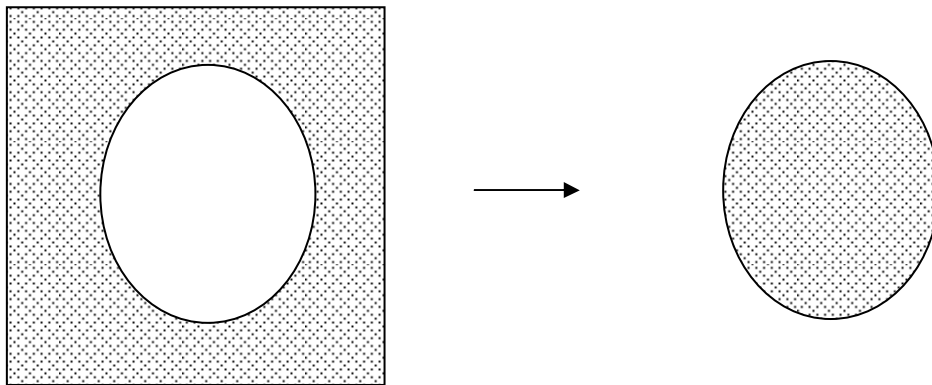
Making a hanging loop

- Cut an 18 cm strip of tape or ribbon for the hanging loop.
- Fold in half lengthwise, and machine sew all layers together.
- Next fold the ribbon or tape in two, bringing the short ends together and sew about 1cm from the raw ends to make a loop.

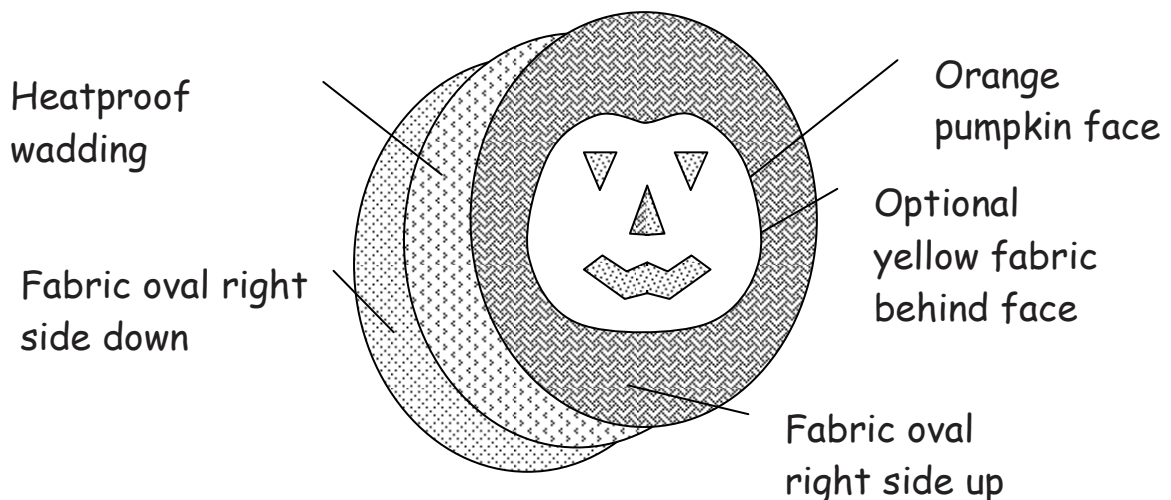


How to assemble the pot holder.

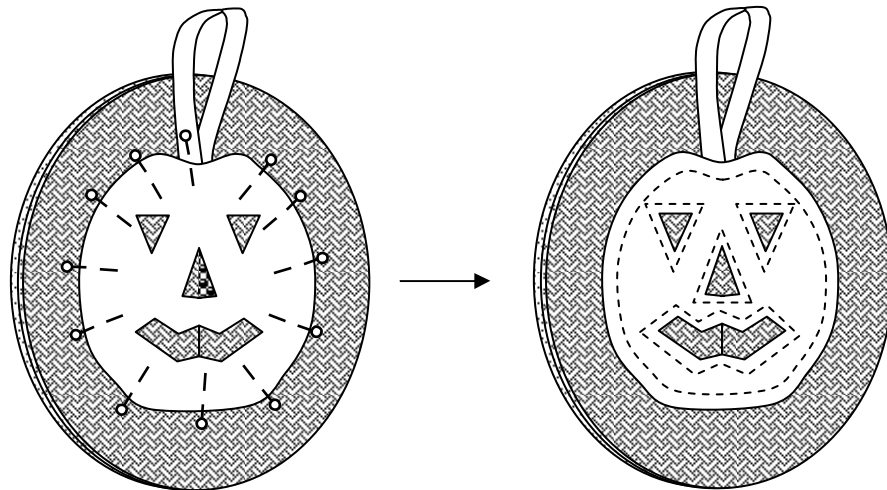
1. Choose two 24 x 24cm squares of fabric for the pot holder back and front - they can be both the same, or two different fabrics as in the sample. Try out the pumpkin face on the colour that you have chosen for the front to make sure that it will show up well.
2. Place the potholder template on your fabric, draw around it, then cut out with sharp fabric scissors. Cut out two from fabric and one of wadding.



3. Stack together the potholder pieces as follows:
 - one piece of fabric for the back, right side down;
 - one piece of wadding
 - second fabric piece for the front, right side up.
 - Optional yellow piece of fabric right side up.
 - Centre the pumpkin face, right side up, over these.



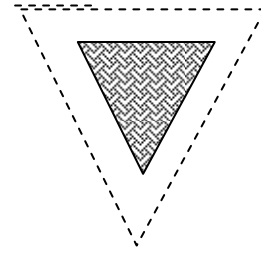
4. Insert the hanging loop between the top layer and the pumpkin face, as shown. If it is near the dip at the top it will look like the pumpkin stalk.
5. Push the raw ends under the edge of the pumpkin by about 2cm to be sure it will be sewn firmly in place presently. Pin firmly in place.
6. Pin the other layers together.



7. Machine sew around the pumpkin face about $\frac{1}{2}$ cm from the cut edge. You are stitching through all the layers, so go slowly. You can use the edge of the foot running along the cut edge as a guide to keep your stitching straight.



8. When you have stitched all the way round, and get back to the beginning, continue stitching for about 2cm to overlap the first stitches. This will stop them coming undone when you cut off the thread close to the fabric.

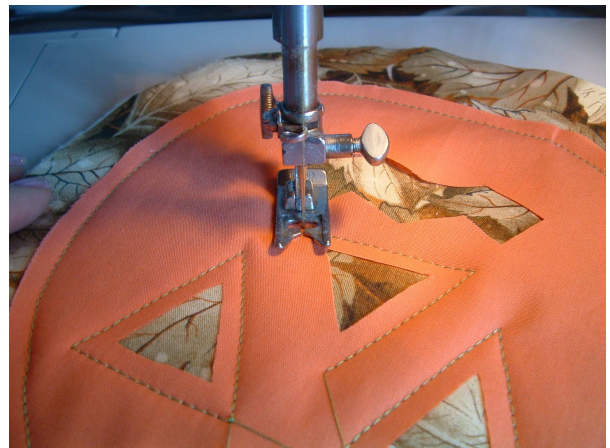


9. Now stitch around the eyes, nose and mouth in the same way. When you need to turn a corner, stop sewing with the machine needle down in the fabric, lift the presser foot and turn the work, to the new position for sewing forward.



10. Look at the pictures to see how you have to stitch quite a way *beyond* the corner of the triangle to be in the right place to stitch the next side. If the edge of the foot is still over the middle of the eyehole when you have turned the corner, turn back, and do a few more stitches.

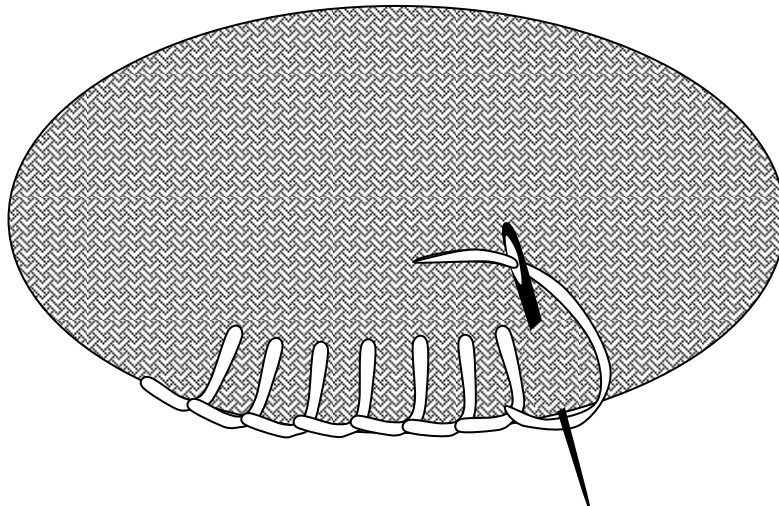
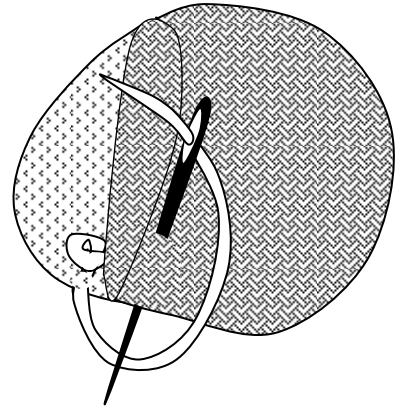
11. Lower the presser foot again, and continue sewing. When all features are sewn, remove the work from the machine.



12. The raw edges will eventually wear fuzzy, particularly when the potholder is washed. If you want to speed this up, brush lightly with a clean nail brush.

Blanket stitching round the outer edge

1. Thread a hand sewing needle with embroidery thread and sew the layers together around the outside edge using a blanket stitch.
2. Start by making a small knot in the end of the thread.
3. Open out the layers a little at the edge, and take a little stitch just through the wadding to trap the knot inside.
4. Come out at the edge.
5. Now put the needle down through all the layers at a place a bit further on, and about $\frac{1}{2}$ cm in from the edge.
6. Come out under the edge, *making sure that the tip of the needle goes OVER the thread.*
7. Pull gently *away from the edge* to tighten the stitch.
8. Continue stitching like this all round the potholder - look at the diagram to help you.



9. The long stitches should bite deeply enough into the fabrics so that they will not pull out easily. The loops should sit round the edge and be as evenly spaced as you can manage. Take care not to catch the hanging loop in accidentally as you go.

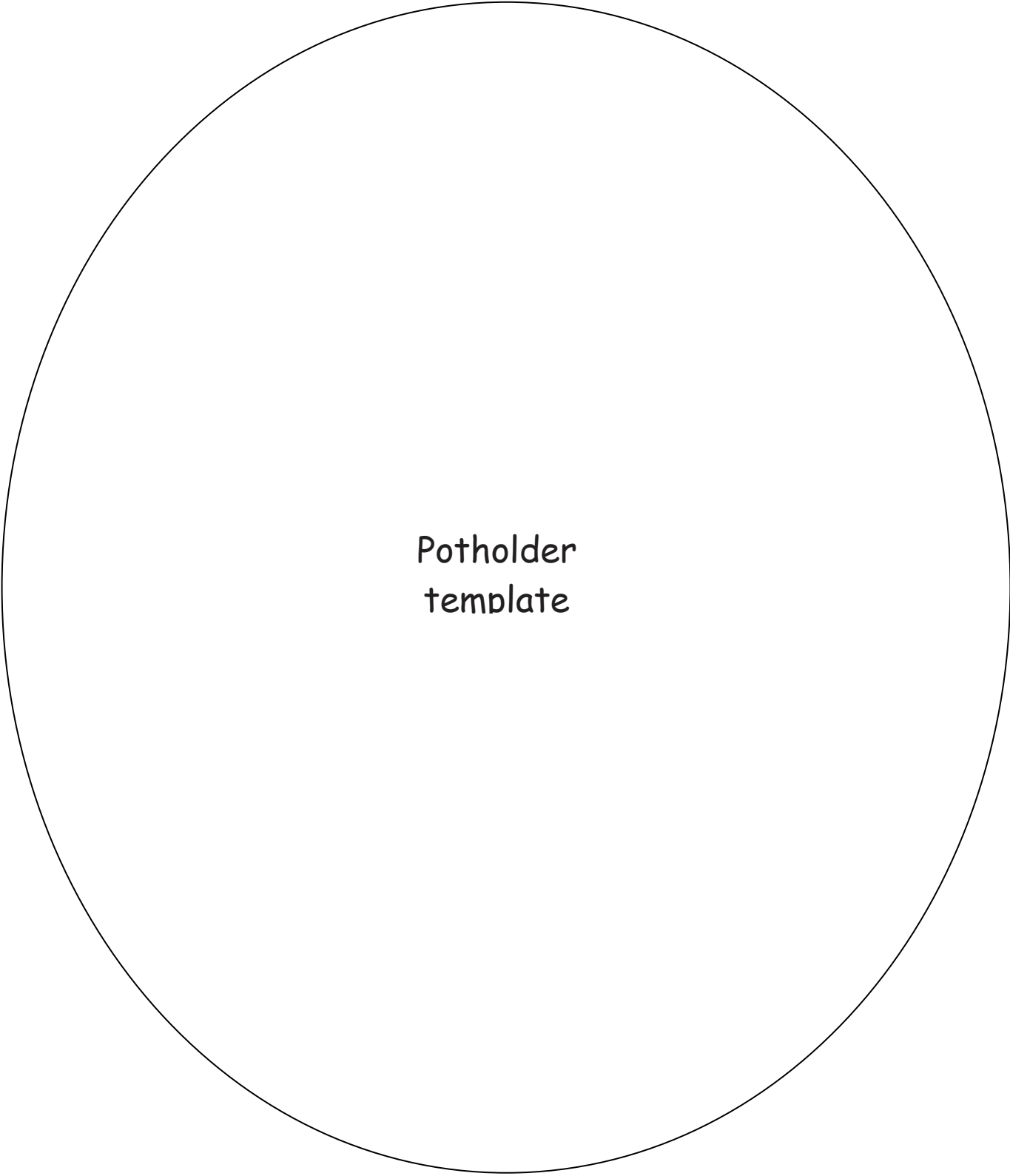
Well done! You've finished! Now you can put your potholder in the kitchen, ready to use.

A few useful hints!!!

- Paper can blunt scissors so please encourage children to use the right scissors for the job.
- Iron fabrics first, if creased. Don't iron the wadding.
- If the sewing machine has a walking foot, use this - It looks very strange, but makes stitching through lots of thick layers easier. Just fasten it on instead of the usual foot, making sure that the forked arm goes onto the needle clamp (the part that sticks out to the side at the right above the needle).
- If you are using an electronic machine, you may be able to set it so that it always stops with the needle *down*. This is useful for this project when stitching around the pumpkin face, as the needle must be *in* the fabric when turning the corners.
- If you put an extra layer of yellow fabric behind the pumpkin face, this looks like a light shining inside.



Pumpkin
template



Potholder
template