



NEW SQUEEZE

Freshen up your bathroom with The Modern Crafter's needle punch bath mat



HOW TO MAKE A BATH MAT

MATERIALS

- Chunky-weight yarn, 100g per ball; two balls of each in mint green and red, and one ball of each in white and blue
- 70 x 110cm (27½ x 43¾") backing fabric (we used linen)
- Stretcher bar frame, 50 x 90cm (19¾ x 35½")
- Oxford Punch Needle, size 10
- Staple gun
- Staple remover
- Masking tape
- Marker pen
- Yarn needle

Looking to add some skills to your crafting portfolio? Let us introduce you to needle punch – your new favourite hobby. Not only is this template easy to follow, the fun design will totally transform your bathroom. Kitsch mats are everywhere right now, so here's your chance to put your own spin on the trend.

When needle punching, keep the needle as close to the fabric as possible by skimming it over the surface. Lifting it too high as will release the yarn, and create that lovely loopy texture on the reverse of your work, rather than the front.

01 Slot the stretcher bars together to make the rectangle frame, then fold and stretch the backing fabric over the frame **and staple gun** in place. Pull the fabric as taut as possible as you go, working on one side at a time.

02 Tape the template on page 81 onto the wrong side (WS) of the fabric, then use the marker pen to

trace the design onto the right side (RS). Remove the template, then flip the frame so the fabric sits WS up. Trace **the original outline** of the design again so it appears clearly on the back – the piece will be worked from the WS of the fabric, so it's important to see the design from this side.

03 Thread the end of the first yarn colour through the eye of the punch needle from the slot side. Pull the ball end of the yarn to rest **in the slot** at the bottom, then pull the top of the yarn up and back again until the yarn is flush in the slot. Make sure to leave a 2.5cm (1") yarn tail hanging from the eye of the punch needle.

04 Holding the punch needle like a pencil, with the slot side facing up, punch the needle down into the cloth along the outline of the first shape, **until the handle** touches the cloth. Pull the needle back up slowly until you see the tip of the needle, skim it over the fabric, then punch back into the fabric,

following the line. Repeat along the outline, making sure the stitches just touch each other. Keep the stitches the same length as you work, roughly 0.5cm (¼") long.

05 Once the outline of the shape is complete, work a second row just inside the first, staggering the stitches **as if laying bricks** – this helps to reduce the gaps between stitches. Repeat until the remaining area has been filled. To start a new ball of yarn, or to change yarn colours between sections, push the punch needle into the fabric, cut the yarn at the tip of the needle, then hold onto the yarn while pulling the needle back up. Rethread the needle as per Step 3.

06 Repeat to fill in the red, mint green and white sections, leaving the blue section until last. Stitch the white lettering first, making sure to only punch two rows to complete the lettering. Outline the remainder of the section in blue, **working carefully** at the areas around the lettering.



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07 Turn the frame RS up and trim all the yarn tails to **the same height** as the loops. Using the staple remover, carefully remove the fabric from the frame.

08 Place the punched fabric WS up, then cut around the design leaving a 4cm (1.5") border. Using a length of matching yarn, insert the needle down into the fabric next to the outer **punched border** and pull the yarn through, leaving around 2.5cm (1") of yarn. Fold this piece of yarn to the side and bring the needle up and over the fabric, folding it back and whipstitching over the fabric and yarn end to secure in place.

09 Continue to whipstitch around the edge of the needle punch – the fabric **will fold over** as the yarn secures it in place. Keep the stitches close together and work around the shape, switching yarn colours when necessary. To secure the end of a yarn length, take the needle back under the previous whipstitches by roughly 2.5cm (1"), then trim any visible yarn.

MEET THE MAKER THE MODERN CRAFTER



Sisters Rachel and Siobhan are the duo behind The Modern Crafter, and offer a range of modern craft kits for beginners and beyond, as well as hosting craft workshops. Find out what they're up to on Insta @the_modern_crafter. www.themoderncrafter.co.uk

