



Pattern of the Month – May 2016 "Little Gathered Basket"

by Evelyn George

It only takes a few scraps of fabric and batting to make a cute little basket, perfect for holding candies or small sewing things. I tried several different techniques for making these, and here's my favorite. With or without a handle, wouldn't one (or a set) of these make a charming and useful gift?



Cut two 8" circles of fabric (one for outside, one for lining), and one 8" circle of batting (I cut around a bowl with my rotary cutter--don't tell!) Also cut one 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 14" rectangle of fabric for the binding. (Leftover pieces of folded quilt binding could be used.)



Layer circle of batting between circles of fabric, with **both right sides out**. Pin to hold layers together.

With a long double thread, run a gathering stitch around circle through all layers, $\frac{1}{4}$ " from raw edges. Don't knot; leave ends of thread for pulling gathers. Mark the four quarters of the circle by folding it and marking with pins. Pull ends of thread to gather basket.



Stitch short ends of binding strip together, press seam open. Press in half lengthwise (as for a quilt, but you're making a closed circle of binding). Mark the circle of binding in quarters, by folding and marking with pins. Place binding circle inside basket. Pin raw edges of binding to raw edges of basket, matching at quarter marks. Pull on both ends of basting thread to gather basket to fit binding. When gathers are evenly adjusted, tie basting threads to keep from loosening.



At the sewing machine, stitch binding to basket using a generous quarter inch seam, just a little more than the basting stitches; remove pins as you go along. Then fold binding over to outside and stitch down by hand. (If binding won't cover all the stitches, it may be necessary to trim the raw edges a little.) The basket is actually reversible now, so you can turn it to have either fabric be on the outside.



If desired, make a little handle and stitch or glue it on, perhaps adding buttons or flowers on the ends.

This basket came out 2" tall x 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide. Make larger or smaller ones with different size circles, adjusting the length of the binding strip as needed.

