

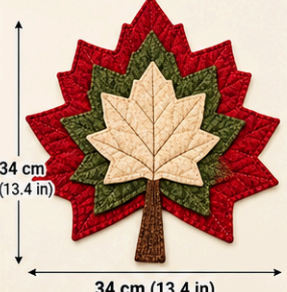


Fabric Maple Leaf Placemat Tutorial

A beautiful and easy sewing project for fall and Thanksgiving!



Finished Size



34 cm (13.4 in)

Materials

Fabric A Red 30 cm x 30 cm
Fabric B Green 24 cm x 24 cm
Fabric C Cream/Beige 18 cm x 18 cm
Fabric D Brown (stem) 8 cm x 12 cm
Backing fabric 35 cm x 35 cm
Batting 35 cm x 35 cm

Tools


Fabric scissors


Pins or clips


Sewing machine


Iron


Marking pen or pencil


Ruler

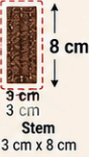
1 Prepare the Templates

Print or draw three maple leaf templates in the sizes below. Add 1 cm seam allowance around each template.


Large Leaf (outer)
 34 cm x 34 cm


Medium Leaf (middle)
 26 cm x 26 cm


Small Leaf (inner)
 18 cm x 18 cm


Stem
 3 cm x 8 cm

2 Cut the Fabric

Cut the pieces using the templates.


1 x Large Leaf (red)
 34 cm x 34 cm


1 x Medium Leaf (green)
 26 cm x 26 cm


1 x Small Leaf (cream)
 18 cm x 18 cm


1 x Stem (brown)
 3 cm x 8 cm

4 Make the Stem

Fold the stem piece in half lengthwise, right sides together. Sew and turn right side out. Press and topstitch.






5 Quilt the Leaves

Quilt each leaf following the marked lines. You can use a straight stitch on your sewing machine.



7 Stitch Around the Leaves

Sew around each leaf close to the edge. This secures the layers and gives a beautiful finished look.



8 Add Batting and Backing

Place backing fabric right side down, then batting, then the leaf top. Pin or baste. Sew around the outer edge, leaving a small opening. Turn right side out and hand stitch the opening closed.



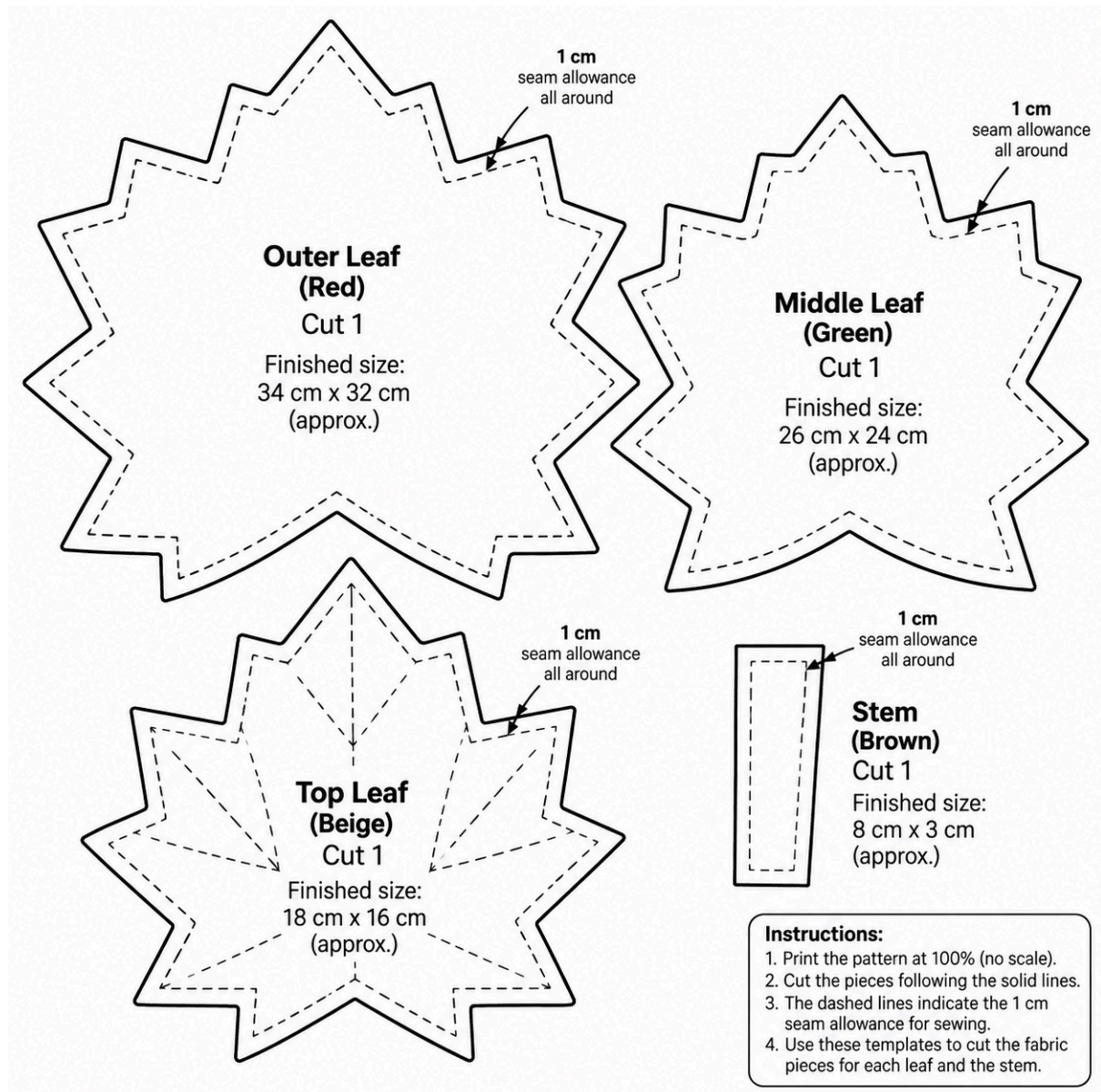
9 Final Touches

Give a final press and check all the stitching. Your beautiful maple leaf placemat is ready!



Main Sewing Methods Used

-  Straight stitch (for sewing and quilting)
-  Topstitch (for decorative stitching)
-  Seam allowance (1 cm)
-  Turning right side out
-  Layering and basting
-  Quilting lines (leaf veins)



Fabric Maple Leaf Placemat Tutorial – Step-by-Step Sewing Guide for Fall and Thanksgiving 🍁

The Fabric Maple Leaf Placemat Tutorial is a beautiful sewing project that combines colorful autumn fabrics, decorative quilting, and layered maple leaf shapes. Inspired by the warm colors of fall, this handmade placemat features three overlapping fabric leaves in red, olive green, and cream,

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finished with a brown fabric stem. It makes a charming decoration for Thanksgiving dinners, autumn gatherings, or everyday seasonal table settings.

This tutorial follows the design shown in the reference image, including the fabric measurements, leaf templates, cutting instructions, quilting lines, layering techniques, and finishing methods. The finished placemat measures approximately 34 cm × 34 cm (13.4 × 13.4 inches), making it suitable for decorating a dining table, side table, or kitchen counter.

Whether you are a beginner learning basic sewing techniques or an experienced quilter looking for a creative seasonal project, this guide explains the process from beginning to end. You will learn how to prepare the templates, cut the fabric, quilt decorative leaf veins, assemble the layers, attach the stem, and finish the placemat with neat stitching.

Step 1: Gather Your Materials and Sewing Tools

Before beginning your fabric maple leaf placemat, organize all the necessary materials. Preparing everything in advance makes the sewing process easier and helps ensure that the different leaf layers fit together correctly.

Finished project measurements

- **Finished width: Approximately 34 cm (13.4 inches)**
- **Finished height: Approximately 34 cm (13.4 inches)**
- **Large red leaf: 34 cm × 34 cm**
- **Medium green leaf: 26 cm × 26 cm**
- **Small cream leaf: 18 cm × 18 cm**
- **Finished stem: Approximately 3 cm × 8 cm**

The finished dimensions are approximate because the outer leaf has pointed edges and the final size depends on the template and seam allowances.

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Fabric materials

Material	Color	Suggested size
Fabric A	Red cotton fabric	30 × 30 cm
Fabric B	Olive green cotton fabric	24 × 24 cm
Fabric C	Cream or beige cotton fabric	18 × 18 cm
Fabric D	Brown cotton fabric for stem	8 × 12 cm
Backing fabric	Cream or coordinating cotton	35 × 35 cm
Batting	Thin cotton or polyester	35 × 35 cm

Important measurement adjustment: The reference chart lists red and green fabric pieces smaller than their corresponding finished leaf templates. To make the illustrated 34 cm and 26 cm leaves without piecing, use fabric large enough to accommodate each template and its seam allowance.

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For this version, prepare approximately 38 × 38 cm of red fabric, 30 × 30 cm of green fabric, and 22 × 22 cm of cream fabric. The original chart's smaller pieces can be used if you scale the templates down or piece fabric together.

For the three-dimensional layered appearance, you may also prepare lightweight fusible interfacing or additional thin batting for the upper leaves. These materials are optional but can make the finished project look more structured.

Sewing tools

You will need:

- Sewing machine with a straight-stitch setting
- Fabric scissors or rotary cutter
- Fabric marking pen or washable pencil
- Measuring ruler
- Sewing pins or fabric clips
- Iron and ironing board
- Matching or contrasting sewing thread
- Hand-sewing needle
- Paper, pencil, and scissors for preparing templates

Recommended fabric: Quilting cotton works especially well because it is easy to cut, press, stitch, and layer. Autumn floral prints, textured cotton, and tone-on-tone fabrics can add visual interest without distracting from the maple leaf design.

Step 2: Prepare the Maple Leaf Templates

The first important step is preparing the three maple leaf templates that will determine the overall appearance of your placemat.

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The design uses three similar maple leaf shapes in different sizes. Each leaf has a pointed top, several angular side points, and a slightly curved lower edge where the stem connects.

Template dimensions

Template	Size	Position
Large maple leaf	34 × 34 cm	Outer red layer
Medium maple leaf	26 × 26 cm	Middle green layer
Small maple leaf	18 × 18 cm	Inner cream layer
Stem	3 × 8 cm finished	Bottom center

These measurements describe the approximate overall dimensions of each leaf, not the length of every individual point.

How to draw the templates

1. Prepare the paper. Place a large sheet of pattern paper on a flat surface. Draw a vertical centerline to keep the leaf symmetrical.
2. Mark the dimensions. For the largest leaf, create a reference area measuring 34 cm wide and 34 cm tall. Mark the top, bottom, and widest side points.

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3. Draw the central point. At the top of the centerline, draw the tall, pointed upper section of the maple leaf.
4. Add the side points. Draw several angular points extending outward on both sides. The leaf should have the recognizable shape of a traditional maple leaf, with smaller upper points and broader lower points.
5. Shape the bottom. Bring the lower sides inward toward the center to form the base where the stem will attach.
6. Create the smaller templates. Repeat the shape at approximately 26 cm and 18 cm, keeping the same general proportions.

The reference illustration shows a dashed outline around each template indicating a 1 cm seam allowance. Add this allowance outside the intended finished outline wherever the pieces will be sewn and turned.

For the most accurate result, label each template with its size, fabric color, centerline, and cutting instructions.

Helpful template tip

Fold the paper vertically before cutting the leaf shape. Cut through both layers to create a symmetrical design. Unfold the paper and check that all the points are evenly positioned.

Because maple leaves have several narrow points and inside corners, avoid making the angles excessively sharp. Slightly wider points are easier to sew and turn neatly.

Step 3: Cut the Fabric Pieces

After preparing the templates, it is time to cut the fabric.

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Start by pressing all fabric pieces to remove wrinkles. Smooth fabric helps prevent inaccurate cutting and uneven seams.

Cutting the three maple leaves

Large red leaf: Place the largest template on the red fabric. Trace around the cutting line using a fabric marking pencil. Cut one red maple leaf shape.

Medium green leaf: Position the medium template on the olive green fabric. Trace and cut one green maple leaf shape.

Small cream leaf: Place the smallest template on the cream or beige fabric. Trace carefully and cut one cream maple leaf shape.

Make sure all three leaves have the same orientation so their points will align naturally when stacked.

Cutting the stem

For the brown fabric stem, prepare a rectangle measuring approximately 8 cm × 12 cm, as listed in the reference materials.

The finished visible stem should be approximately 3 cm wide and 8 cm long.

The larger rectangle provides enough fabric to fold, stitch, turn, and trim the stem to the desired length.

Preparing the backing and batting

Cut one backing fabric square measuring 35 × 35 cm and one batting square measuring 35 × 35 cm, following the reference chart.

These squares will be trimmed to the leaf shape during the final assembly.

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For the neatest results, leave enough extra fabric around the outer maple leaf shape while assembling the layers.

Cutting accuracy tips

Use sharp fabric scissors and cut slowly around the pointed sections.

Avoid stretching the fabric while cutting, particularly around diagonal edges.

If you plan to turn the edges of all three leaves under, allow sufficient extra fabric beyond their finished outlines. If you prefer raw-edge appliqué, the upper leaves can be cut to their exact decorative shapes and secured with dense edge stitching.

The tutorial below uses finished edges for the upper leaves and a turned outer edge, creating a durable placemat with a clean appearance.

Step 4: Mark the Decorative Leaf Veins

One of the most attractive features of this project is the decorative stitching that resembles natural maple leaf veins.

The quilting lines give the fabric texture, highlight the pointed shapes, and make the three leaves look more realistic.

Drawing the main vein

Lay the cream leaf flat with the right side facing upward.

Using a washable fabric marker, draw a straight or slightly curved line from the lower center of the leaf toward its uppermost point.

This becomes the central vein.

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Drawing the side veins

Starting near the centerline, draw diagonal lines toward the main points on both sides.

The pattern should resemble a branching structure.

Repeat the process for the red and green leaves.

Recommended vein pattern

Each leaf should have:

- **One main central vein**
- **Two or three diagonal veins extending to the left**
- **Two or three diagonal veins extending to the right**
- **Optional shorter branching veins near the outer points**

Try to keep the markings balanced, but remember that natural leaves are not perfectly symmetrical.

Preparing for quilting

To create the quilted texture visible in the reference image, place a small piece of thin batting behind each decorative leaf before stitching.

For the green and cream leaves, you can make a finished-edge leaf unit by placing the leaf fabric right sides together with a matching backing piece, sewing around the perimeter, and turning it right side out through a small opening. Insert thin batting before closing the opening, or position it during construction.

Press gently and make sure the leaf points are smooth before quilting.

Step 5: Sew and Finish the Brown Fabric Stem

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The brown stem gives the placemat its recognizable maple leaf appearance and adds a contrasting detail to the bottom of the design.

Folding the fabric

Take the brown fabric rectangle and fold it lengthwise, placing the right sides together.

Align the long edges and secure them with pins or clips.

Sewing the stem

Using a straight stitch, sew along the long open edge with a 1 cm seam allowance.

Backstitch at the beginning and end to secure the seam.

Leave the short ends open for turning.

Turning right side out

Carefully turn the fabric tube right side out.

Use a blunt turning tool to help push the corners into shape without damaging the fabric.

Position the seam along the back of the stem.

Pressing and topstitching

Press the stem flat with an iron.

Sew a straight line close to each long edge, approximately 2–3 mm from the edge.

This topstitching helps the stem maintain its shape and adds a decorative detail.

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Trim the stem to approximately 8 cm in visible length, leaving additional length at the top if needed for secure attachment beneath the leaf layers.

Set the finished stem aside until the assembly stage.

Step 6: Quilt the Three Maple Leaves

Now it is time to stitch the decorative veins onto each leaf.

This step creates the textured, dimensional appearance shown in the finished project.

Setting up the sewing machine

Install a universal sewing needle suitable for quilting cotton.

Choose a straight stitch with a length of approximately 2.5 mm.

Thread your sewing machine with a color that coordinates with the fabric.

For example:

- Red thread for the outer red leaf
- Olive green thread for the middle leaf
- Beige or cream thread for the inner leaf

You may also use a slightly darker thread to make the veins more visible.

Quilting the central vein

Place the prepared leaf under the presser foot.

Begin at the lower center of the leaf and sew slowly toward the top point, following the marked line.

Maintain a consistent stitching speed.

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At the top, secure the thread and trim the ends.

Quilting the side veins

Return to the central area and stitch outward along each diagonal marking.

Work from the center toward the leaf points whenever possible.

Pivot carefully at intersections if needed.

Repeat until all the major veins are stitched.

Quilting the red and green leaves

Follow the same method for the medium green leaf and large red leaf.

Because these leaves are larger, you may add a few extra decorative branches.

Avoid excessive quilting near the narrow points, where too many stitches could cause puckering.

Pressing the quilted leaves

After quilting, gently press each leaf using the appropriate iron temperature for your fabric.

Do not drag the iron across the stitched surface. Instead, lift and lower it carefully to preserve the raised quilting texture.

If using batting, a pressing cloth can help protect the decorative stitching.

Step 7: Assemble the Three Fabric Leaf Layers 🍂

The next stage brings all the individual components together.

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The goal is to create a balanced layered design with the red leaf on the bottom, green leaf in the middle, and cream leaf on top.

Positioning the red leaf

Lay the large red maple leaf flat on your work surface with the right side facing upward.

Smooth the fabric and make sure all the points are visible.

This leaf forms the main outer border of the placemat.

Adding the green leaf

Place the medium green leaf in the center of the red leaf.

Align the vertical centerlines.

Adjust the position so the red fabric remains visible around the green leaf.

The layered points should follow the same general direction, creating a repeating maple leaf silhouette.

Pin or baste the green leaf in position.

Adding the cream leaf

Center the small cream leaf on top of the green leaf.

Make sure the lower center of the cream leaf aligns with the center of the other two layers.

The cream leaf should remain fully visible while leaving a green border around its edges.

Pin carefully to prevent shifting.

Positioning the stem

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Slide the upper end of the brown fabric stem underneath the lower center of the leaf arrangement.

The stem should extend downward from the base of the maple leaf.

Secure it with pins or temporary basting stitches.

Checking the arrangement

Before sewing, stand back and inspect the design.

Check that the red, green, and cream leaves are evenly spaced and that the stem is centered.

Make adjustments until the layered arrangement resembles the reference image.

Step 8: Stitch Around the Leaf Layers

Once the leaves are arranged, stitch around their edges to secure them together.

This stage also emphasizes the decorative outlines.

Stitching the cream leaf

Begin with the smallest cream leaf.

Using a straight stitch, sew approximately 2–3 mm from the finished edge.

Follow the entire leaf shape, sewing slowly around each point.

When you reach an inside corner, stop with the needle down, lift the presser foot, rotate the fabric, and continue sewing.

Stitching the green leaf

Next, sew around the medium green leaf.

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Keep the cream leaf positioned away from the needle whenever possible so you do not accidentally catch unwanted areas.

Stitch close to the green leaf's finished edge, securing it to the red layer.

Securing the stem

Sew across the portion of the stem hidden beneath the leaves.

You may also add a short line of topstitching near the base of the maple leaf to reinforce the attachment.

The stem should remain flat and securely attached.

Decorative stitching option

For a more detailed appearance, add a second line of topstitching approximately 5 mm inside the first.

This technique creates a subtle decorative border and makes the leaf shapes stand out.

If your fabric edges are intentionally left raw rather than turned under, use a narrow zigzag or satin stitch to prevent fraying.

Step 9: Add the Batting and Backing Fabric

The final assembly stage gives the placemat its finished structure.

The reference diagram shows the backing fabric placed right side down, batting added, and the decorative leaf positioned on top.

For a clean, turned-edge finish, use the following sewing order.

Preparing the layers

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Lay the batting on your work surface.

Place the completed decorative leaf unit over it and cut the batting to match the outer leaf shape, allowing for the seam construction.

Then position the backing fabric against the front leaf with right sides together.

The stem should be tucked safely between the front and backing layers so its free end will extend outward after turning.

Pinning the layers

Align the backing with the outer red leaf.

Pin around the perimeter, paying special attention to the pointed sections.

Make sure the upper leaf layers remain flat and away from the perimeter seam wherever possible.

Sewing the outer edge

Sew around the outer maple leaf using a 1 cm seam allowance.

Follow the shape carefully.

Leave an opening approximately 8–10 cm long along a relatively straight lower edge for turning.

Use a shorter stitch length near the sharp points to improve accuracy.

Trimming the seam allowances

Trim excess backing fabric and batting.

Reduce bulky seam allowances where necessary.

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Clip carefully into the inner corners, stopping before the stitching line.

At the outer points, trim the seam allowance diagonally to reduce bulk without cutting the stitches.

Turning the placemat

Turn the entire placemat right side out through the opening.

Gently push out the maple leaf points with a blunt turning tool.

Do not use sharp scissors to force the corners outward because this could puncture the fabric.

Smooth the edges with your fingers and press gently.

Closing the opening

Fold the raw edges of the opening inward by approximately 1 cm.

Close the opening using a small ladder stitch by hand, or sew close to the edge with your sewing machine.

Make sure the opening is fully secured.

Construction note: If your leaf units already contain thick batting, use lightweight batting for the final outer layer to avoid excessive bulk at the points.

Step 10: Complete the Final Topstitching and Pressing



Your maple leaf placemat is almost finished.

The last step is to reinforce the outer edge, check the quilting, and give the entire project a final press.

Topstitching the outer leaf

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Set your sewing machine to a straight stitch.

Sew approximately 3–5 mm from the outer red leaf edge.

Follow the entire perimeter, carefully turning at each point.

This stitching helps hold the backing in place and gives the placemat a professional finish.

Checking the quilting

Inspect the decorative stitching on all three leaves.

Make sure there are no loose threads, skipped stitches, or areas where the fabric has shifted.

If necessary, reinforce any loose sections with additional stitching.

Final pressing

Place the placemat on the ironing board.

Use a pressing cloth if the fabric is delicate or the batting is sensitive to heat.

Press gently, working from the center outward.

Avoid flattening the quilted texture too much.

Final appearance

Your completed placemat should feature a large red maple leaf forming the outer border, a smaller olive green maple leaf centered on top, and a cream maple leaf displaying clearly defined decorative veins.

The brown stem should extend neatly from the lower center.

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The result is a 34 cm × 34 cm fabric maple leaf placemat, inspired by the autumn and Thanksgiving design shown in the tutorial graphic.

Step 11: Understand the Main Sewing Techniques

This project uses several important sewing techniques that are useful for many quilting and fabric appliqué projects.

Sewing technique	Purpose
Straight stitch	Joining fabric and sewing quilting lines
Topstitching	Reinforcing and decorating finished edges
1 cm seam allowance	Providing room for sewn seams
Turning right side out	Concealing raw edges
Layering and basting	Holding the three leaves in position
Quilting leaf veins	Creating texture and decorative detail

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**Hand ladder
stitch**

**Closing the turning opening
neatly**

Tips for beginners

Practice sewing around pointed shapes using scrap fabric before working on your final leaves.

Take your time when turning corners, because accurate stitching is especially important for maple leaf designs.

Use plenty of pins or clips to prevent the layers from shifting.

Always test your iron temperature on a small fabric scrap.

If the fabric begins to wrinkle while quilting, reduce the presser-foot pressure if your machine allows it, or use a walking foot.

A walking foot can be especially helpful when sewing through several layers of cotton and batting.

Step 12: Care for and Decorate With Your Finished Placemat

Once completed, your handmade maple leaf placemat can be used in several ways.

Place it at the center of a Thanksgiving table beneath a decorative bowl or autumn centerpiece.

Use it as a seasonal accent on a kitchen counter or wooden side table.

Create a matching set using different autumn color combinations.

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For example, you can replace the red outer leaf with burnt orange, use mustard yellow for the middle leaf, or choose a soft beige for the inner leaf.

Washing and maintenance

If all fabrics and batting are washable, clean the placemat using a gentle wash cycle with cold water.

Use mild detergent and avoid harsh bleach.

Lay flat to dry or use a low-heat dryer setting if the materials permit.

Press gently after washing to restore the shape.

Avoid placing extremely hot cookware directly on the placemat, especially if it contains polyester batting. This project is a decorative placemat, not a heat-resistant trivet.

Frequently Asked Questions About the Fabric Maple Leaf Placemat

1. Is this maple leaf placemat suitable for beginners?

Yes. Beginners who are comfortable using a sewing machine can complete this project. The most challenging parts are cutting the pointed leaf shapes and sewing neatly around the corners. Practicing on scrap fabric can make these steps easier.

2. What is the best fabric for this project?

Quilting cotton is an excellent choice because it is stable, easy to press, and available in many autumn colors and prints. Medium-weight cotton fabrics also work well.

3. Can I make the placemat larger?

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Yes. You can enlarge all three templates proportionally. For example, increasing the outer leaf to 40 cm wide will create a larger decorative placemat. Remember to increase the fabric and batting dimensions accordingly.

4. Do I need batting for every leaf?

No. You can use batting only in the main placemat layer. However, adding lightweight batting beneath the decorative leaves creates a more dimensional quilted appearance similar to the reference image.

5. Can I sew this project by hand?

Yes. Use a small running stitch or backstitch for construction, and hand-quilt the decorative leaf veins. Hand sewing will take longer but can produce beautiful results.

6. How do I keep the maple leaf points sharp?

Trim excess seam allowance at the points, clip carefully into inside corners, and use a blunt turning tool. Press each point gently after turning.

7. Can I use fabric scraps?

Absolutely. This is an excellent project for using leftover quilting cotton. You can also piece together smaller scraps to create each leaf before cutting the final template.

8. How long does the project take?

A beginner may need approximately 4–6 hours, including template preparation, cutting, quilting, and finishing. Experienced sewists may complete it in less time.

9. Can I use this design for other sewing projects?

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Yes. The same layered maple leaf design can be adapted for table runners, wall hangings, decorative cushions, seasonal quilt blocks, and fabric ornaments.

10. What colors work best for a Thanksgiving maple leaf placemat?

Traditional fall combinations include burgundy, olive green, cream, burnt orange, mustard yellow, and brown. The red, green, and cream combination shown in the reference image creates a particularly attractive contrast.

Conclusion: Enjoy Your Handmade Fabric Maple Leaf Placemat 

The Fabric Maple Leaf Placemat Tutorial is a creative way to celebrate autumn through sewing and quilting. By combining three carefully shaped fabric leaves, decorative vein stitching, soft batting, and a contrasting brown stem, you can create a beautiful handmade decoration that brings warmth and seasonal character to your home.

This project also provides valuable practice with fabric appliqué, decorative quilting, layered sewing, topstitching, and finishing pointed edges. Once you have completed your first maple leaf placemat, you can experiment with different fabrics, colors, and sizes to create an entire collection of matching fall decorations.

With a little patience and attention to detail, your finished maple leaf quilted placemat will become a lovely addition to your Thanksgiving table and a handmade piece you can enjoy throughout the autumn season.