

FIDGET QUILTS

What is a fidget quilt? A small quilt made with different textured cloths and often adorned with buttons, zippers, or other objects to help busy the nervous hands of an Alzheimer's or dementia patient.



Fidget Quilts are made from a variety of textures and objects that dementia or Alzheimer's patients find appealing as their once busy hands search for something to occupy them. As the disease progresses, the hands get more nervous and fidgety. Neuropathy can even set in.

In the latter stages of Alzheimer's, patients have been known to pull on bed linens or clothes – or run their fingers up and down the sheets repetitively. Even though their minds have been impaired, their hands still search for items to manipulate.



The quilt is similar to a toddler's "busy book" with activities like zippers, Velcro, laces, buckles, buttons, gloves, and items – such as stuffed animals – to place inside pockets. Fidget Quilts can be individualized to match a person's interests or personality.

Fidget Quilts come in a variety of themes. These personalized lap quilts can also provide warmth and security for a loved one during a time of uncertainty in their lives.



Tips:

These are utilitarian. Making it a quilt in the traditional sense of the word is not necessary. I've also seen them with pieces sewn on either side so that it can be tied around the back like an apron.



Material for the quilt top: cloths, ribbons, mesh, cut up pieces of felt, any kind of textiles, pictures. Satin or silk are great for the front but are not a good idea for the back. Different textures of fabrics are a good idea as well. It's a good project to use up some of your scraps.

Materials for adorning the quilts might include: zippers, lace, rick rack, velcro, pocket, spools, buttons, ribbon, nuts, washers, crocheted lace, snaps.



Before assembling the blocks, you might want to decide what you want to add as far as velcro, zippers, beads, bobbles, buttons, keys, pockets, rick rack (to name a few) or whatever else you can think of that might keep their hands busy, as you might want to attach them to ribbons or twill tape and sew them into the seams

The size is usually 20 - 24" square although this is not a hard and fast rule. Cut blocks approx. 5 1/2" – 7" square. These quilts do not have to be quilted all over – just in corners and around edges to secure the top to the back.

Flannel or fleece or some other kind of fabric that is non-slip is best for the back. It's soft and warm and stays put better. I've even seen non-slip fabric used for baby shoes.