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November 15, 2011

## HOW TO MAKE A DOLL SLEEPING BAG

Hi Everyone!

Sorry I have been such an absent blogger lately. I am *really* struggling to keep up with everything. I bit off more than I could chew this semester at work. That's always been the story of my life, but this semester, I really, really did it.

I still owe you a post about my trip to Columbus, OH, and we had a great art quilt group meeting the other night. But, first I want to blog something that I am totally excited about.

Sweet Pea is turning 7 years old at the end of this month. Papa Pea isn't much of a birthday party kind of guy. He says they didn't always have them when he grew up, so Sweet Pea doesn't get one every year. We offered to give her one this year (her first one since she was about 1 year old), and she's really excited. We are doing a little sleepover with four of her friends, and she decided she wanted it to be a "bring your favorite doll" theme. I'll blog about all the preparations later.

But, she has been wanting a sleeping bag for her doll (I made it to fit an 18" doll or an American Girl doll), and I thought it would be fun to make one for each of the girls as their "party favor." So, I got to it this weekend, and they turned out so cute!

First, I googled "doll sleeping bag tutorials." I was surprised that there wasn't too much out there on it. There was one pretty good video tutorial from expertvillage.

This is the first clip in the set of instructions. The tutorial is divided into a series of clips, and it's hard to find them all and to sequence them. (You'll have to look for them on [YouTube](#).) I think I found most of them, and I found this style of sleeping bag most close to my taste, and the tutorial was really clear. I based my sleeping bag on this and will show you the steps I used to create it. I want to be clear that I really copied what expertvillage did...this is not my own design. But I thought it might be helpful to have all the steps in one place.

Also, if you feel so inclined, you might want to stop by YouTube and leave her a comment on how nice her tutorial is. I was reading the comments others had left, and I couldn't get over how rude they were. People making fun of her souther accent, calling her doll a "baby doll," her drapes in her living room. Totally appalling, especially considering she is sharing her idea in such a nice way and free of charge. I really can't believe some people.

Anyway...I thank her for her inspiration, and here is what I ended up creating:



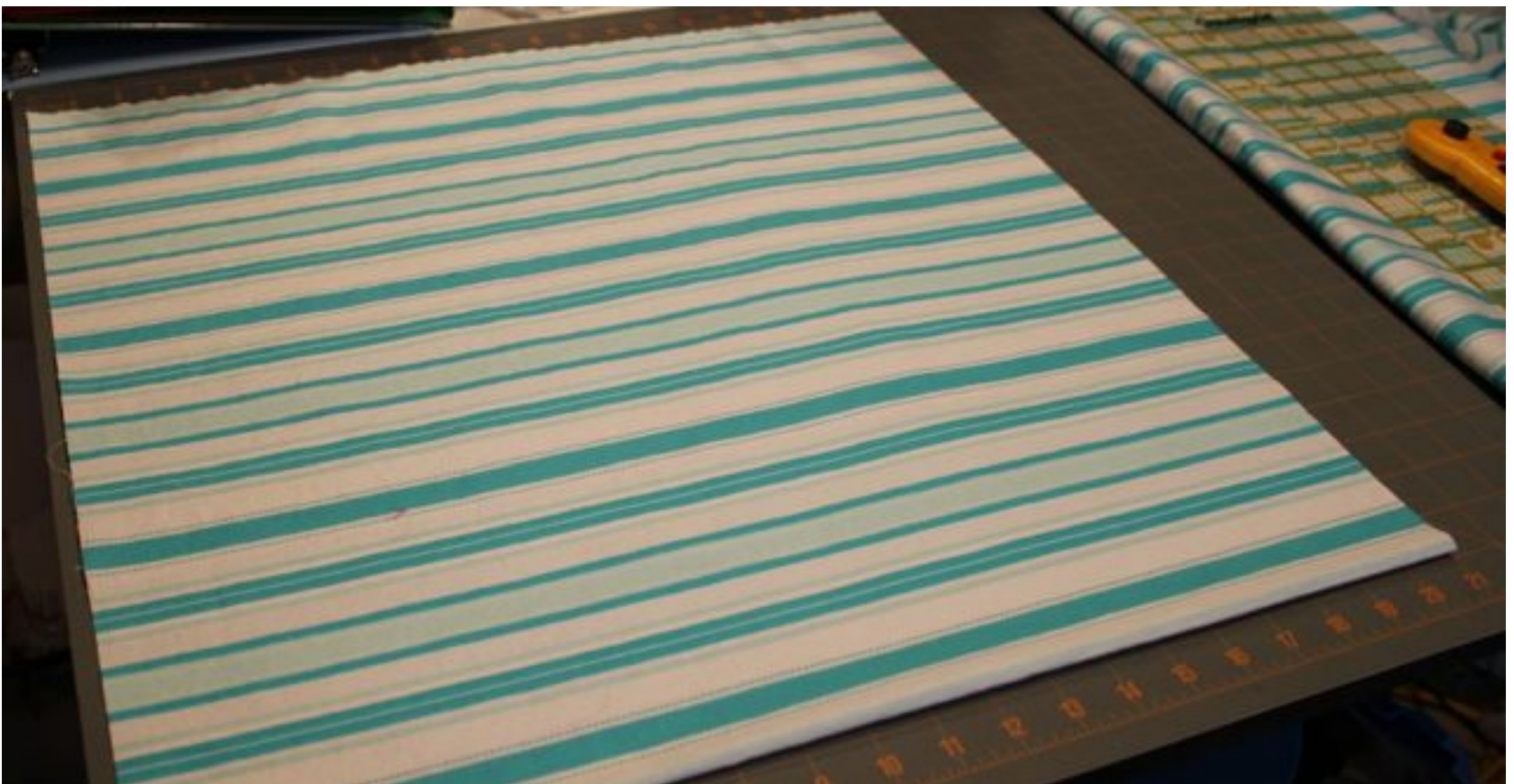


Sweet Pea and I found some cute party invitations in a turquoise and red color scheme, so I ordered a buch more Sugar and Spice fabric (from [The Quilted Fish](#) and [Riley Blake](#)). I totally cannot get enough of this fabric. I used the flower on the outside, the striped ticking look on the inside, and the big polka dot for the pillow.

Here is what I did:

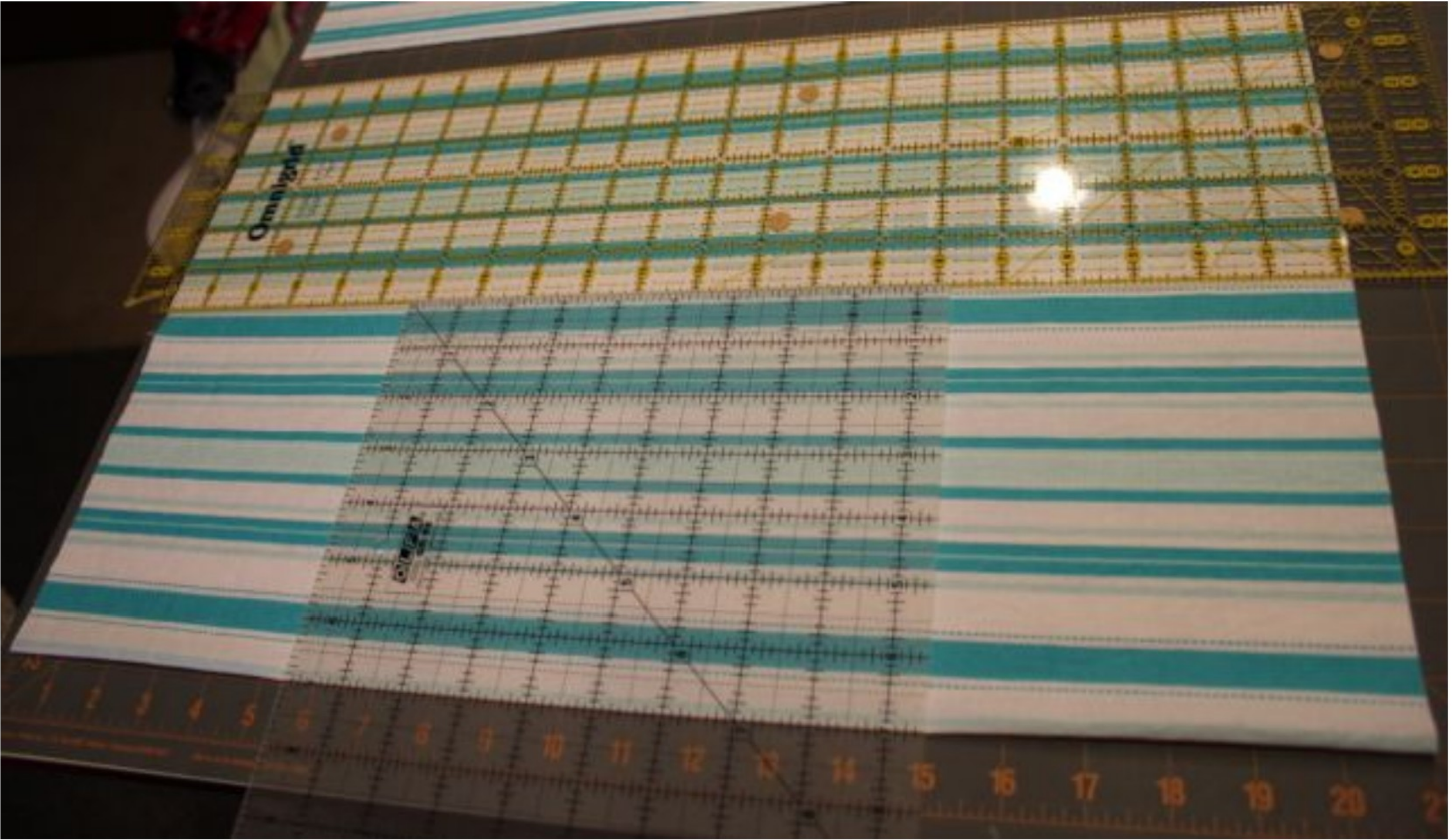


After watching the instructional videos with me, Sweet Pea drew me a picture of how she wanted the sleeping bag to look. She cracks me up. This was on Sunday morning, and she hadn't even brushed her hair yet. Forgive me. Also, my sewing room is also my laundry room, so you'll see laundry in the background sometimes. Sorry. You'll have to deal with it! :-)

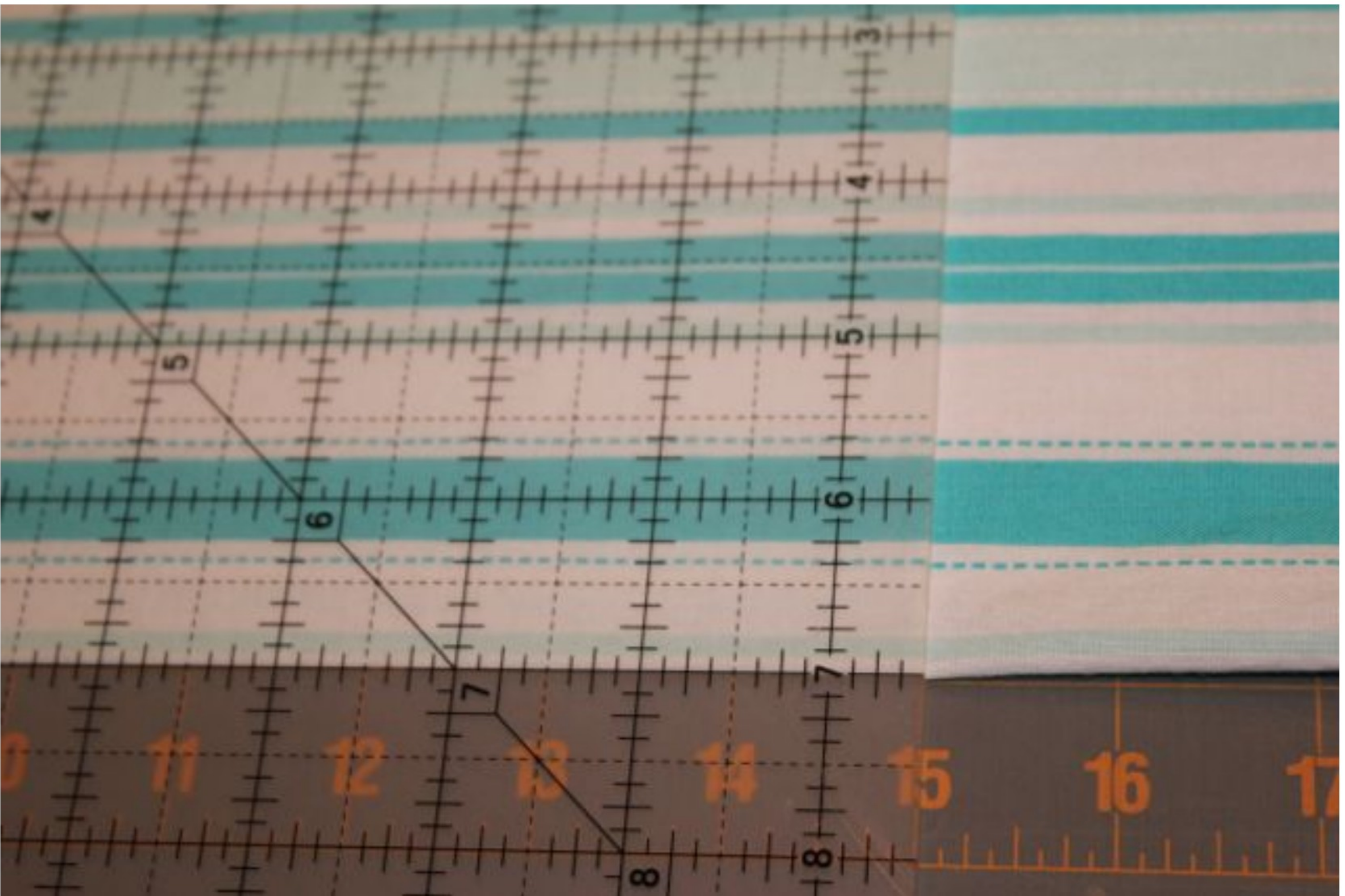




I think I began with approximately 5 yards of fabric. (EDIT: I mean 5 yards of lining fabric AND 5 yards of outside fabric.) So, I folded it selvedge to selvedge and trimmed off the left-hand side. I have the fold lined up with the bottom of my cutting mat, and I cut a length of fabric at the 21-inch mark.



Next I wanted to cut it to be 13" long. My long ruler wasn't this wide...it's only 6" wide. So, I butted up another ruler to it, and aligned the 7" mark along the fold. 7" plus the 6" of my other ruler equals 13".



Here is a close up of how I have my ruler aligned. Notice the folded edge is at the bottom. You don't want to cut off the fold. You are going to cut along the selvedge edge.

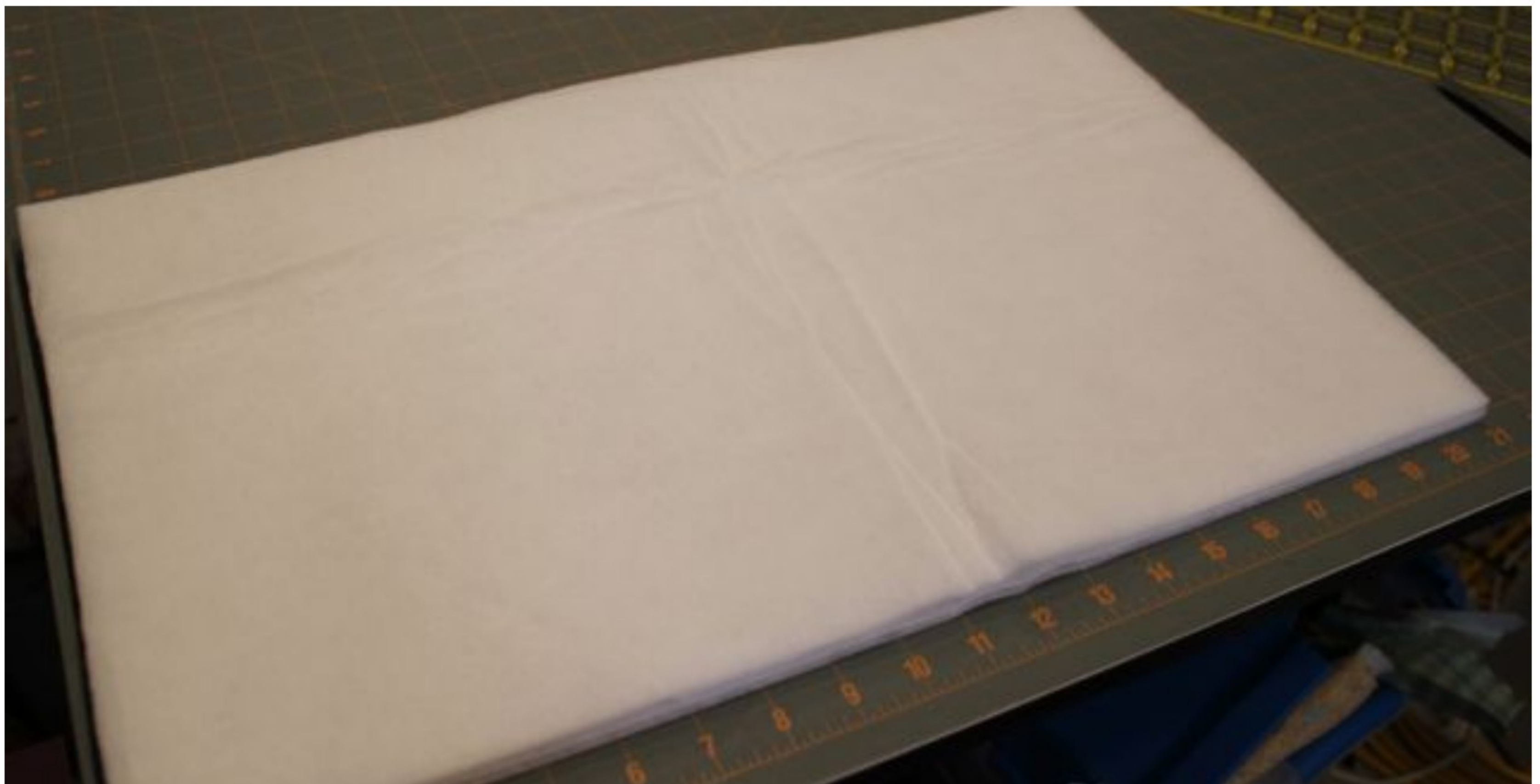


After you cut this, you have a piece that is 13" folded by 21". So, if you opened it up, you'd have a piece that is 26" by 21".



Repeat this process for the fabric you are going to use for the outside of the sleeping bags.

You can save the scraps you cut off on the selvedge edge for the pillow, if you want. I was using a different fabric for the pillow. I'll just save those scraps for another project.





Repeat this step one more time with batting....same measurements. I used a variety of different battings for this. I just used up some of the scraps I had. But you might want to use a fluffier polyester batting if you want it to look even more like a sleeping bag.



I layered these three layers together to form a quilt sandwich. The fabrics are both facing right side out, with the batting in between. I basted simply by spraying some starch on the backside of one fabric, putting the batting down over it, and ironing the together. I then sprayed starch on the batting and layered the other piece of fabric on top, ironing again. This held it together just fine. I put my walking foot on and did some straight line stitching down the fabric. I used my Aurifil, white cotton thread, and it worked like a dream. I think most sleeping bags would have horizontal quilting. I did mine vertical, because that is what way the stripes went, and I could just use my quilting bar to follow a line and quilt. This made it so quick and easy. My quilting lines were as far apart as this quilting bar is from the needle.





After I had quilted it, I folded it in half along that original fold again and marked the halfway point along the 21" side using pins. I marked both the front and back piece here.



I used 1/2" double fold bias tape to finish the edges. I could have made my own, but I was keeping this quick and easy.





Oh, yes, one more thing I did...I didn't want to have to make that bias tape go around a sharp corner, so I rounded the corners of my sleeping bag. I used a lid from a jar in my sewing room and traced around it.



I then trimmed it off. I still have it doubled here, so I trimmed both at the same time so they would match perfectly.





Now open it up, and starting where there is one of the pins, start sewing the bias binding around the first 1/2 side, around the top, and down the other 1/2 side to the next pin. Don't worry about the raw edges on the bias binding. It will get covered up later.



I left my walking foot on for this step. You can see I stitched close to the folded edge.





Easing around the corners is always a little hard for me, but it was okay. I found it helped to pull on the binding a bit to stretch it around the corner so as not to get a tuck.

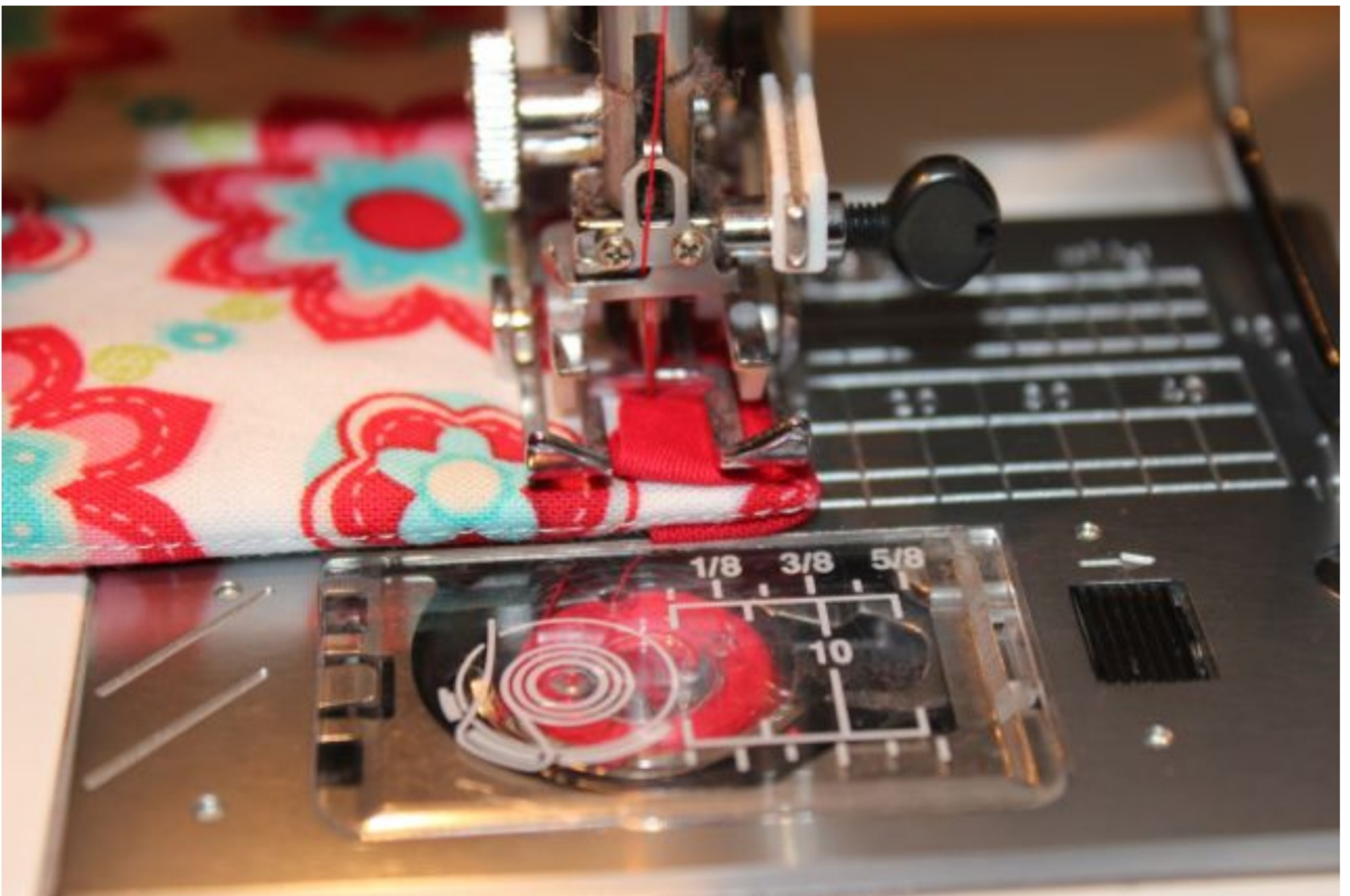


It should look like this when done with this step.



Now, fold it in half (like you did when you first cut it), matching up the two corners that already have the bias trim on them. I sewed the bottom half of the sleeping bag together, with the trim covering both raw edges. I started where the raw edges of the bias were. I folded under the edge of this piece of bias, so as not to have an exposed raw edge. I started a little above the raw edge on the previously-sewn part to cover those raw edges. I sewed down to the bottom, around that last corner, and across the bottom.







As I neared the edge, I cut off the trim and folded it under so as not to have an exposed raw edge, and I sewed all the way to the end.



Here is a close up shot of where this piece of bias started. See how the edge is folded under and covers up the other raw edges?





Above the folded edge is where I sewed the first piece of bias binding. The part below is the second one I sewed, where I sewed the bag closed along the side and bottom.



Sweet Pea wanted a button placed at the point where the sleeping bag opened. I also wanted a bow, but she'd have nothing to do with a bow!



So, I just sewed a couple of buttons on to cover the overlapping point.

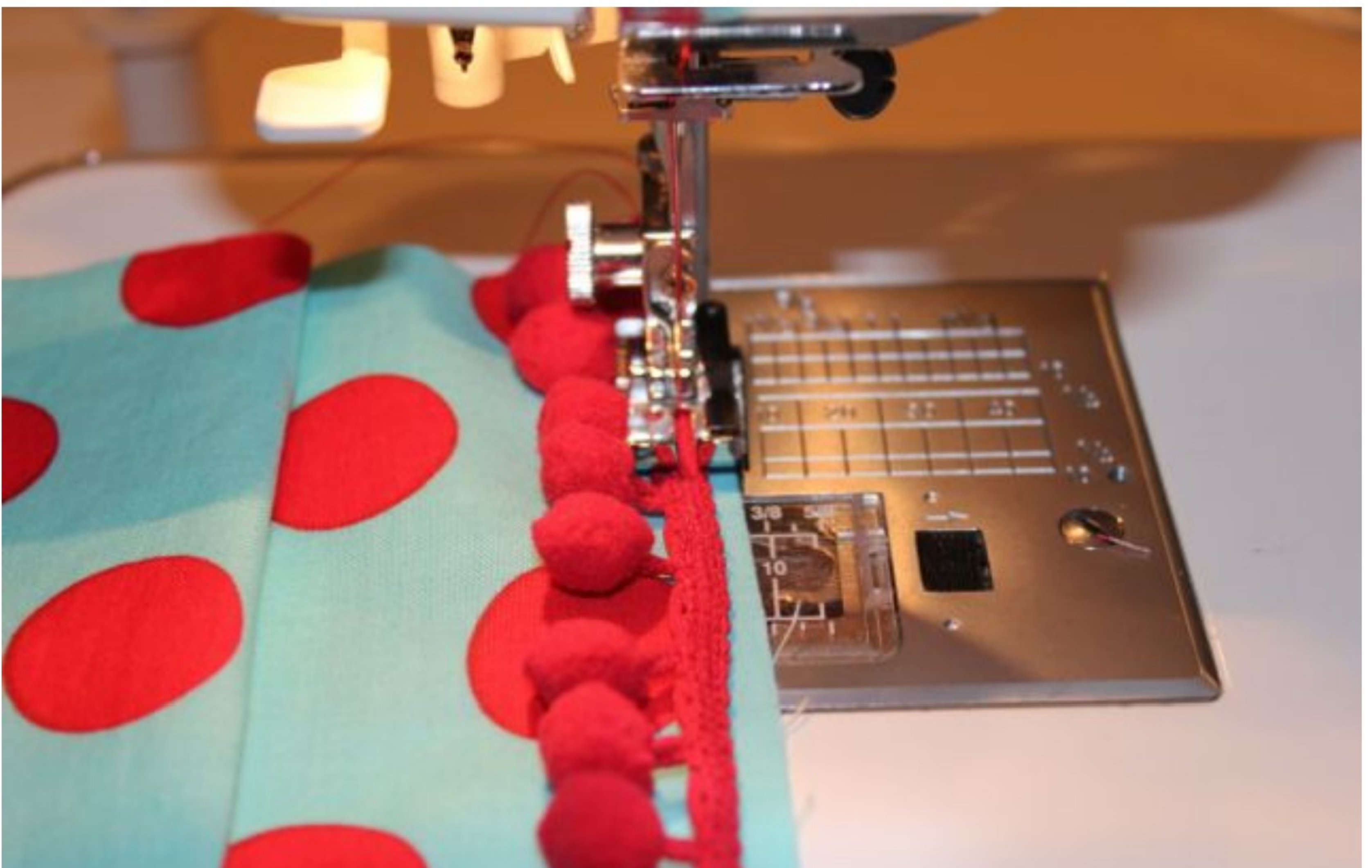




To make the pillow, I cut two pieces of fabric 10.5" by 6.5".



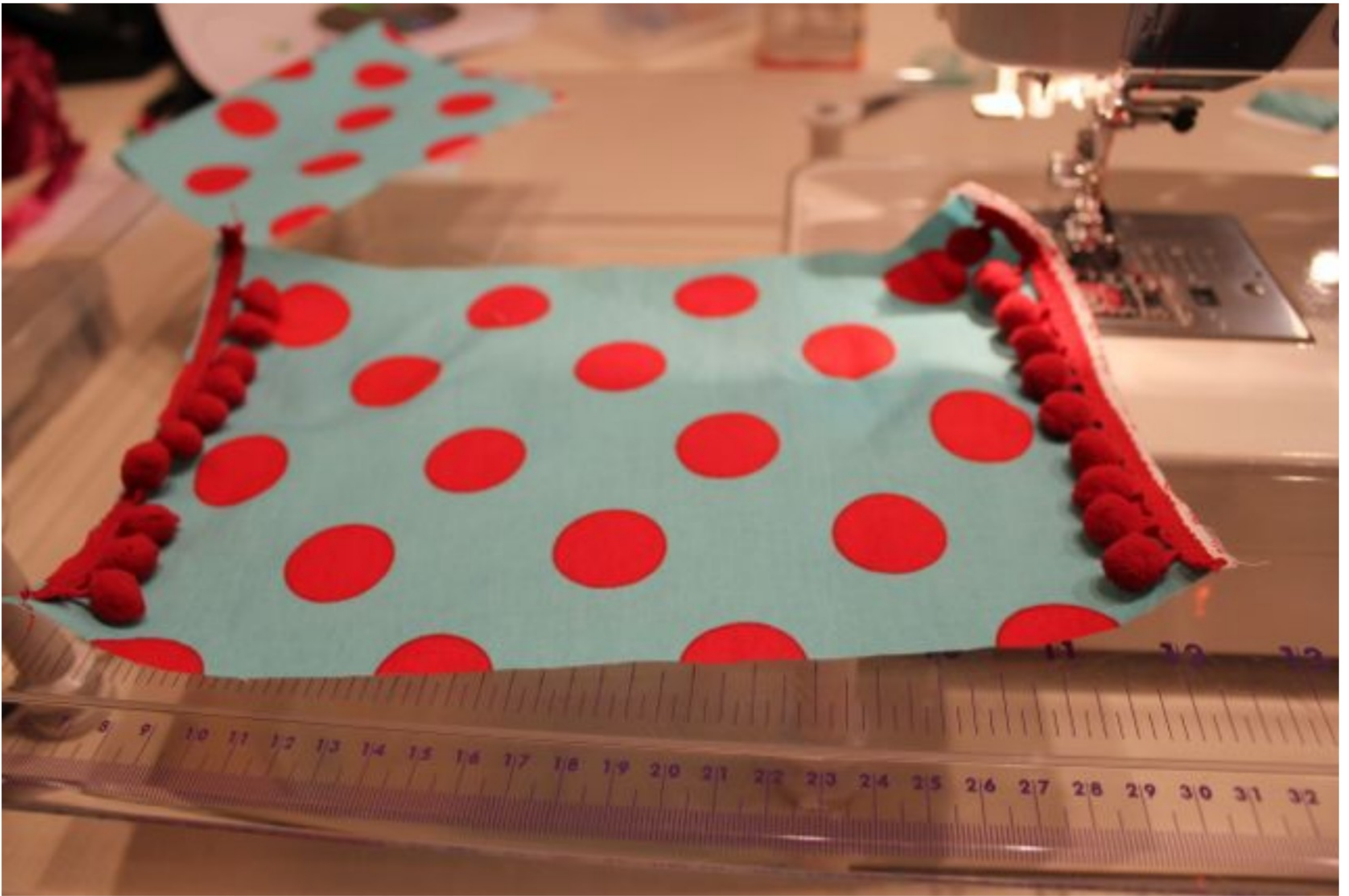
Then, I cut two pieces of trim 6.5" long.







I basted my trim to the short edge of one of the pieces of fabric. This would have been much easier to do with my zipper foot.

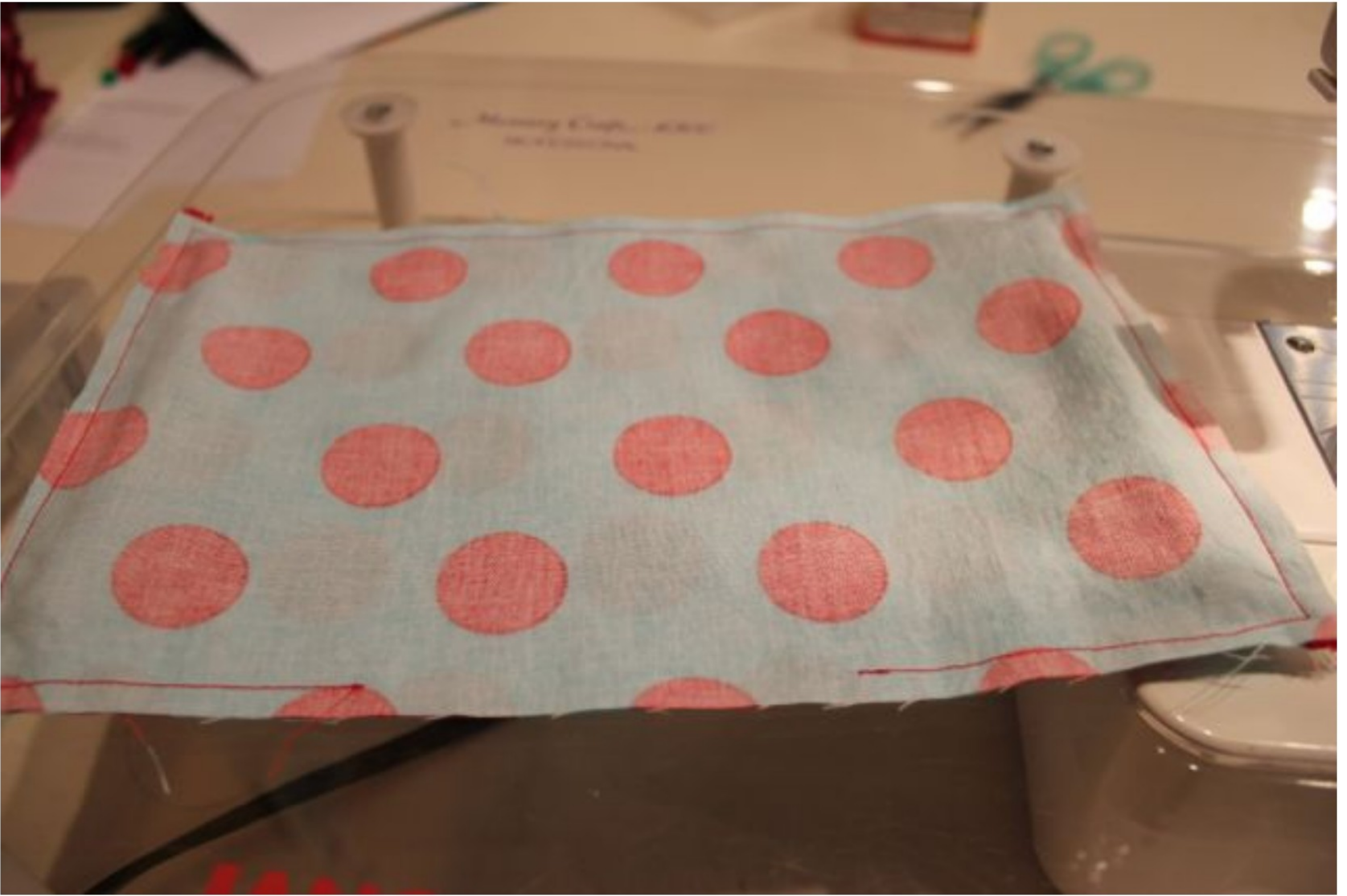


Do that to both sides.





Sandwich the trim in between the two pieces of fabric, right sides together.



Sew all the way around, leaving an opening for turning. It was a little tricky sewing around all the pom poms. I had to cut some of the ones on the edges off to make sewing the corner possible.





Turn right side out and press. Looks like a cute little rug, doesn't it? haha.



Stuff and sew the opening closed.





Viola!



Too cute!



I ran out of red trim and had to use pink on some of the others. It pretty much took one whole pack of bias binding to do one of these. There was enough left over to use as a bow, if you wanted to. That would be cute. On these, I used a little crocheted trim with red, white, and pink pom poms, which I picked up when I was in the garment district with my sister in California. I hope it doesn't cause fights or hard feelings to have some different when the girls are here.





I wrapped the pillow inside and tied it with a bow. This is how they'll get put in the gift bags for the little girls. I made all 5 sleeping bags in about 4 to 5 hours. Not bad. It took me another 3 hours or so to do the pillows. Had I not included the trim on the pillows, it would have gone a lot faster. :-)



I think the girls will really love them. Sweet Pea is already playing with hers. She loves them. I have other fun stuff planned for the party. I'll keep you posted.

I have to run right now. Hope you enjoyed the tutorial. I'll be back later this week with the other good stuff I mentioned earlier!


Until next time,

Mama Pea



## COMMENTS

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That is TOTALLY cute!! Really love it!

Posted by: [Marcia K](#) | [November 15, 2011 at 12:40 PM](#)

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Very great tutorial!

Well, I have to wish your very beautiful daughter a happy seventh birthday! Awwwww. Cherish every moment...they grow up so fast. I hope she has a wonderful birthday party with her friends!

Posted by: [Sue](#) | [November 15, 2011 at 12:44 PM](#)

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So so so cute!!!

Posted by: [Jana](#) | [November 15, 2011 at 12:54 PM](#)

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My hubby says he didn't get any parties either, but I made sure the boys had one every year - mostly we did beach parties, as they're both born in summer. I told them that Christmas is Jesus' day, but their birthdays belong to them, and they should be special!! I love this idea and I love how the sleeping bags turned out, makes me wish I was young again! Happy Birthday to your beautiful little Sweet Pea!!

Posted by: [Allie](#) | [November 15, 2011 at 12:56 PM](#)

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Sweet Pea is going to design her own line of doll accessories before you know it!

Posted by: [Melissa](#) | [November 15, 2011 at 03:31 PM](#)

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I love that sleeping bag. Great tutorial. Had to laugh that Sweet Pea didn't want a bow! I can't believe you got these done. You must be very organized. I don't think I've done a thing since we talked! Now you have inspired me to make one to go with the doll I just purchased for my great granddaughter.

Posted by: [carolld](#) | [November 15, 2011 at 03:54 PM](#)

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Oh my so stinkin' cuteness :)!!! Just precious- so making one of these for Christmas gifts! You rock! Hope things calm down soon :)

Posted by: [Candice](#) | [November 15, 2011 at 04:15 PM](#)

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Great tutorial! What a fun project with Little Pea. Samantha (?) is going to be the coolest American Girl doll at the next slumber party. Hey American Girl dolls should commission Mama Pea and Squirmy Worm Studio and Quilted Fish to make sleeping bags, blankets and pillows!

Posted by: [Aunt Pea](#) | [November 15, 2011 at 06:05 PM](#)

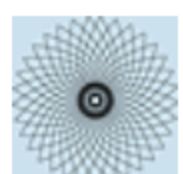
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Stephanie, you are simply amazing!!!

Posted by: [Christine Hollaway](#) | [November 16, 2011 at 12:01 AM](#)

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Well ... this is just adorable! My niece would love one of these for her American Girl doll. Sweet Pea's drawing cracks me up. Get that girl a sewing machine and a stash ASAP. Then she can do the whole project "her way."

Posted by: [Lynn](#) | [November 16, 2011 at 12:51 AM](#)

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What an adorable little sleeping bag. I'm sure it will be very well loved. Great job and thank you for the awesome tutorial.

Posted by: VickiT | November 16, 2011 at 09:58 AM

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Cute! Cute! I wish my girls played with dolls. But they only like the Poly Pocket ones - and I'm not making any thing that small!!

Posted by: Linda in Calif. | November 16, 2011 at 11:53 AM

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Dang! That's cute stuff!

Posted by: Terri | November 16, 2011 at 10:34 PM

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Papa's right. We didn't have b-parties. LAP had one as a kid-I had my first one ever at 60 yrs old. My kids got them every several yrs. I really like this bag and will make one for Bitsy as she just got an 18" doll that I am crocheting clothes for, for Christmas.

Posted by: sisLH | November 17, 2011 at 09:33 AM

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That is the cutest ever! And I loved Sweet Pea's sign - My American Girl Doll sleeping bag my way! Way to go, Sweet Pea. Can't wait to see what she sews up on her own machine! I'm sure she is going to have a wonderful party. (And I'll bet Papa Pea will get a bit charge out of it, too!!)

Posted by: Peg | November 27, 2011 at 09:17 AM

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I was so excited when i found this....my daughter is turning 7 in February and we had the exact same ideal and i was clueless on making a sleeping bag, my first attempt failed miserably. but hey i tried. Thank you so much for posting. Now time to head to the store to by the materials needed.

Posted by: Becca | January 21, 2012 at 04:47 PM

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I just viewed the other videos (out of order) and I'm glad to see yours. I like that you switched it up and sewed the edge binding on the opened part first and then did the side and bottom where it's sewn together. I made that change in my mind and I'm glad to see it will work that way! I will be making a couple of these very soon for a friend's daughter and her best friend. I know they will love them. Thanks for the instructions and the pictures!

Posted by: Laurie | April 02, 2012 at 10:35 PM

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These little sleeping bags are so cute. I love that they have a built-in pillow!

Posted by: Manoj - Searchable PDF Creation Service | April 06, 2012 at 02:57 AM

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It looks like your babydoll has a special haircut! Thank you for the great ideas - my daughter saw this and is going through the fabric bin right now (which is also made up of favorite outfits that don't fit / aren't so pretty any more.)

<http://www.ecotectanalysis.com/>

Posted by: Account Deleted | April 17, 2012 at 08:31 AM

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it's really fantastic. i love this bag and the way of making..

Posted by: sketchupurspace | April 20, 2012 at 06:25 AM

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I like that you switched it up and sewed the edge binding on the opened part first and then did the side and bottom where it's sewn together. I made that change in my mind and I'm glad to see it will work that way! I will be making a couple of these very soon for a friend's daughter and her best friend.

Posted by: Bhashkar\_Sketchup-Model-design | May 08, 2012 at 05:52 AM

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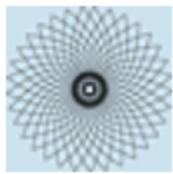
Can I just say that your step by step is absolutely fantastic - watched the village expert videos too. Both are tremendous. I am endeavouring to start making bedding for my nieces dolls for Christmas. I am going to start with two sleeping bags for their younger sisters (x2)... yeap... lots of sewing but your step by step has given me the inspiration I need. Thank you for sharing.





Mine is made - linked back to your step by step here. Loved how they turned out. Thanks for all the help/inspiration.

Posted by: [Deirdre](#) | [January 05, 2013 at 09:20 AM](#)



Thank you so much for this tutorial. This was the best looking doll sleeping bag I found one that didn't involved zippers. My righteighyear old and I workedtogether to make this a birthday present for a classmate who was having an AG party. The friend loved it!

Posted by: [May](#) | [January 30, 2013 at 02:41 PM](#)



Thanks for the great tutorial and I did post a positive comment on original tutorial!

Posted by: [Mary Anne Davis](#) | [February 03, 2013 at 03:01 PM](#)

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