

Sewing with Specialty Fabrics for Halloween

Felt

Lots of great costumes can be made with felt!

- Felt is very easy to sew and Acrylic felt is inexpensive and perfect for costumes. It is 72" wide and does not ravel so hemming is not necessary. Felt is non-woven and does not have any give, so you will need to pay close attention to the pattern you are using to make sure that felt will work for your project.
- Consider sewing flat-felled seams where you can. Traditional seams that need to be pressed open should be avoided. If pressing or ironing is needed, use a pressing cloth and a low temperature so that the felt does not scorch. If you are putting an appliqué on your costume consider gluing it in place rather than using fusible web.
- Be sure to start with a new size 12 sewing machine needle and plan to change needles before you move on to your next project as felt can quickly dull your needle.

Satin

Satins are just right for Capes of all kinds, Fairies and Princesses!

- Satin is not difficult to sew with, but a little bit more of a challenge for the novice sewer. It does ravel, so using an overcast stitch to finish your seams after they are sewn is a good idea, if you are not using a serger.
- Satins are usually acetate or polyester so be sure to use a permanent press temperature setting on your iron.
- Use silk pins that will leave smaller holes in your fabric and a sharp fine tip sewing machine needle size 8 or 9. Polyester thread is also a good idea.



Fur

It's fun to make costumes with faux fur if you know a few tricks!

- When cutting patterns from fur, try to cut through the knit backing and avoid cutting the pile. This way you won't get as much hair all over you (and everything else.).
- You will be cutting each layer of the fabric individually (don't try to cut through 2 layers like your pattern may instruct you to) be sure to flip the pattern over though, or you will end up with two of the same piece!
- Before sewing the pieces together, trim the fur in the seam allowance to make the seams less bulky. After sewing, use a small comb to pull the hairs out of the seam for a natural look.
- If you don't want to make an entire costume from fur, try just making a hood with ears for the head and fur mitts and shoe covers for hands and feet. A great look for any one that wants to be an animal!

Cuddle (or Minkie)

Cuddle can be a great substitute for fur!

- Since it is a knit, it must be stitched with a ball point needle.
- Use a lot of pins and stitch from the center of the pattern piece to the outside edge in one direction, then repeat in the other direction. This should help keep the fabric stable while sewing. If your machine has a walking foot this works well too!



Happy Costuming!



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