

No Sew Quilt

As hard as the younger generation may find it to believe, shopping malls weren't always an option. Back in the dark ages of retail, people sewed their own clothes. When the fabric wore out, they didn't throw it away – they cut out the usable pieces and used them again. Crazy quilting was all the rage in the Victorian era, and it was an ingenious way to use up fabric scraps while creating a one of a kind piece of art. While most of us don't spend much time sewing by the fire these days, crazy quilting is a fun and easy way for kids to exercise some creativity and connect with the past.

These days, most serious quilters use sewing machines, but for the purpose of this project we'll start with the basics. A crazy quilt is one made from assorted fabric scraps, arranged in a design that pleases the eye but doesn't form any particular pattern. (That's what's so crazy about it.) The pieces are sewn together and then sewn to a piece of muslin backing. Then the whole design is then gone over again with embroidery thread to accentuate the borders. Sound tough? A full crazy quilt might stretch a young child's patience, but one square is just the right size for a doll bed and easy to make.



What You Need:

- Muslin, washed, dried, and cut into a square slightly larger than you'd like the finished quilt to be
- Masking tape
- Assorted fabric scraps
- Needles, thread, straight pins
- Embroidery needle and thread in a bright color
- Buttons and beads (optional)
- Fabric for backing, the same size as the muslin square
- Batting for filling

What You Do:

1. Use the masking tape to create an even "no-sew zone" around the edges of the muslin square. You'll need that blank area when you baste the pieces together for the finished quilt.
2. Arrange the fabric scraps in a pleasing pattern on top of the muslin square, and pin to the cloth. Sew each to the muslin. Messy kid stitches are fine. When the square is complete, go over all the edges of the fabric scraps with embroidery thread. A pro would use formal, highly decorative stitches, but for kid purposes it's enough to have the color. If desired, add buttons and beads.
3. If your child is starting to fidget, you can end here. Remove the masking tape, hem the edges, and you're done. If she's holding out for a real quilt, lay the fabric backing face down on a table, top with the batting, and top with the quilt square (right side up). Sew all edges together. Voila! A finished quilt, in no time flat.