



Winner Designs Towel Topper Tips & Tricks

No Slipping ~ No Kidding!

By Linda Winner

www.winnerdesigns.com



Towel Toppers are such a fun, easy way to update your kitchen. And, even better, they're great to make to give or sell to others!

If you haven't made these yet, watch out as they can be a bit addictive~

If you are a 'fly by the seat of my pants' person, then use this only as needed. If you're a "I've got to think through every detail" kind of person, then here's your dissertation! I could write a book on these but I hope you can find some helpful tips. Check out my videos as the visuals can be helpful, too.








The chart features my No Slip Towel Topper Templates that make creating so much easier and so much fun! Click on the links or head to www.winnerdesigns.com. I have 2 new styles (the Rounded Rectangle and the Box Bag) that are the easier ever! (Plus, I have more Towel Topper Template Styles coming, too!)

I also offer [Towel Topper Kits](#) that contain the fabric and towel. It takes the design work out of the equation; you'll still need one of my templates. Don't want to buy the template or don't even have a cutting mat & rotary cutter? My [Take-n-Make Kits](#) might be just the thing as I've done the cutting of the Topper for you!

No Slip Templates for Towel Toppers:

Name	Apple Core V1	Apple Core V2	Mask Keeper	Tab Top
Template Sample				
Overview	Just a bit smaller than V2	Optional Fussy Cut Frame makes it easy to feature a part of your fabric.	Optional Fussy Cut Frame makes it easy to feature a part of your fabric. Or make cute zipper case!	Similar to traditional towel topper but I like the curves
Fabrics	Outer fabric shows more than lining fabric	Outer fabric shows more than lining fabric	Outer fabric shows more than lining fabric	2 coordinating fabrics
Towel	Half a towel	Half a towel	Half a towel	Half a towel
Interfacing	SF101 on outer fabric, optional for lining fabric	SF101 on outer fabric, optional for lining fabric	SF101 on outer fabric, optional for lining fabric	SF101 on outer fabric, optional for lining fabric
Closure	Button/Buttonhole, Snap, Velcro	Button/Buttonhole, Snap, Velcro	Button/Buttonhole, Snap, Velcro	Button/Buttonhole or Snap
Difficulty	#4 Curved opening make it harder to add the towel but still easy!	#4 Curved opening make it harder to add the towel but still easy!	#3 Easiest of the curved options	#2 Easy to make!
Video	Feature your Fabrics with this Fun Towel Topper! - YouTube	Feature your Fabrics with this Fun Towel Topper! - YouTube	So Simple, So Quick Towel Topper - YouTube	Quick, Cute Tab Top Towel Topper - YouTube

Name	Dress V1	Dress V2	Box Bag (new design; not new template!)	Rounded Rectangle (new)	¾ Oval
Template Sample					
Overview	Steeper curves for fitted dress shape. Might need to trace curved areas at side & neck then cut with rotary cutter & scissors	Gentle curves for easier cutting & sewing Still may need to trace around curves & cut with both cutter & scissors	Box Bag Template with 1 ½" off bottom (shown) or use all of template & have more folded over & even down on towel	Easiest & fastest Topper ever!	Ties onto door or handle. Perfect for your fridge!
Fabrics	Outer fabric shows more than lining fabric	Outer fabric shows more than lining fabric	Need 2 coordinating fabrics	Need 2 coordinating fabrics	No lining fabric Front & back Fabric are the same
Towel	Cut towel in half. Use pretty part for front of dress & other for back.	Cut towel in half. Use pretty part for front of dress & other for back.	Half a towel	Half a towel	Half a towel
Interfacing	SF101 on outer fabric, optional for lining fabric	SF101 on outer fabric, optional for lining fabric	SF101 on outer fabric, optional for lining fabric	SF101 on outer fabric, optional for lining fabric	SF101 or not based on fabric
Closure	Sew ribbon on front; sew ribbon on back & tie on sides. Or sew ribbon on front & tie in bows. Add Velcro inside.	Sew ribbon on front; sew ribbon on back & tie on sides. Or sew ribbon on front & tie in bows. Add Velcro inside.	Button/Buttonhole, Snap, Velcro	Button/Buttonhole, Snap, Velcro	Ties are sewn into the top.
Difficulty	#5 Bit of a learning curve but still easy with my video	#5 Bit of a learning curve but still easy with my video	#1 Simple, fast!	#1 Simple, fast!	#2 Easy depending on embellishments
	Cute & Easy Dress Towel Topper - YouTube	Cute & Easy Dress Towel Topper - YouTube	No video yet but super easy to do!	No video yet but super easy to do!	No video but another easy one!

***Difficulty – I've ranked them from easiest to hardest but hardest doesn't mean hard. They are all easy to do with a bit of practice!**

When making Towel Toppers, here are some things to think about:

1. What takes the lead? The towel, the topper fabric or the style of the Topper?
2. What materials do you need?
3. What supplies do you need?
4. What about the Closure Method?
5. What about Interfacing?
6. Topper Questions
7. What if I'm not a confident sewer or short on time? Which is easiest?
8. Sewing the Curved Opening
9. Towel Placement
10. Ready to Sew
11. Closure Concerns

1. Gather your tea towels and fabrics. Which will take the starring role - the towel, the topper fabric(s) or the style of the Towel Topper?

Most towel toppers use an outer and inner cotton fabric for the 'topper' part and half of a towel (except the Dress Topper) that will be sewn inside the topper.



Look through your gathered towels and fabrics. You probably have a towel or a fabric that 'speaks' to you – a fabric that you'd love to show off or matches your kitchen or maybe a funny towel that you want hanging on your stove!

Let that one take the lead and base everything else around that.

If it's a towel with a saying or a busier pattern, find 2 cotton fabrics that coordinate but don't overpower the towel. I like polka dots, plaids, stripes or a something with some texture (batiks even). A solid may fall flat when completed. Depending on the style of the Towel Topper, you may only have 1 fabric showing or you may need 2 coordinating fabrics where both will show.

If you're not sure what you like, go to Google, Pinterest or Etsy for ideas of what is appealing to your eye. Before cutting, use the camera on your phone to take pics of your options to see how your choices look.



If it's a more subtle towel then choose a focal fabric for the topper or something subtle to match your kitchen or bathroom.

If you have a fabric that you want to take the lead, look for a towel that goes with it but doesn't compete. A solid might fall flat so use your phone to take a pic.

2. What materials do you need?

A towel: I like thinner towels like a tea towel because they are easy to cut, pleat or fold or gather and to sew once inside your topper. Plus, they typically have cute sayings. You can use a thicker towel but they are much harder to fold and stitch when inserted into the topper. You could use towels made for gathering dust and lint. You could even make your own from terry fabric but that adds an extra step of finishing the edges.



Outer fabric, Lining fabric: Quilting cotton works best but you could use a Home Dec Fabric for the outer fabric.

These are great scrap busters! Determine the amount you need by using the template as a guide. Pay attention to whether the fabric needs to be folded (Apple Core, Mask Keeper, and Dresses do. The others don't.) Notice the seam on the green? I used smaller scraps but added 1/4" of fabric when cutting. Play with fabrics to see which you like for the outer versus the lining.

Iron-on stabilizer/interfacing: I like SF101. This is probably not necessary if using a Home Dec fabric. (see additional notes on Interfacings)



A closure: Most towel toppers fold over a bar or handle in your kitchen so you'll need a way to keep it in place. Some towel toppers can tie onto something like the door handle to your fridge but I won't be addressing this type of topper here - other than to show off my little Bunny Topper in the chart!

For the Towel Topper Styles we're looking at you'll need one of these:

- a button with a buttonhole (plus a sewing machine with buttonhole capabilities)
- or a sew in snap sewn in by hand or a metal or plastic snap applied with a Snap Tool
- or Velcro (several inches of sew-in not adhesive Velcro)
- or a button sewn on and attached with an elastic loop - (think hair elastics like I use for my Coffee Cozies!)
- for the Dress Topper, you won't need any of the above. Instead, you'll need two pieces of ribbon or binding, one that you'll sew on each side of the dress.

3. What other supplies do you need?

Basic Sewing supplies- sewing machine (with buttonhole feature if wanted), iron, ironing board, pins rather than clips, any closure tools listed above, etc. Be sure to check out my list of Handy Tools at the end.

4. What should I consider when choosing the method of closure?

Are you comfortable using your buttonhole on your sewing machine (if you have one)?

Do you have a Snap Tool and do you know how to use it? If yes but no, check out my [video](#) here.

Will Velcro work for the style of the Topper? It works better on some styles than others.

If placing a buttonhole or snap, make sure you're not covering up some part of the fabric that you really like!

5. Do you interface both the Outer Fabric and Lining Fabrics?

If using Home Dec fabrics, then you probably won't need an interfacing.

But most Towel Toppers are made with quilting cotton fabrics, so an interfacing like [Pellon SF101](#) is helpful and necessary.

Typically, I iron on SF101 to my Outer fabric only and before I do any cutting with the template.

I don't add SF101 to my Inner Fabric. But I don't actually use my Towel Toppers (they are for looks only!). If you're going to use them and they'll be washed often, add SF101 to both fabrics, especially when making a larger style like the Tab Top, Box Bag style or the Rounded Rectangle.

Follow manufacturer's directions for adding the stabilizer.

6. Topper Questions

Will both the outer fabric and lining fabric show or just the outer fabric?

For the Apple Core, Mask Keeper and Dress, the outer fabric will really be the only one that people will notice.

For the Tab Top, Box Bag and Rounded Rectangle, you can have some fun playing with the two fabrics to see what you like best!

Is the outer fabric you're wanting to use directional? If yes, can it still be used?

If you've got a directional fabric you want to use, you'll need to decide if you care that the back side won't be going in the right direction. If you don't, cut away! If you do care, you can piece your fabrics where the fold would be like in my green example above. Just add 1/4" extra when cutting out. If you do this on one fabric like the outer but not the lining, you'll want to make sure that you've cut and stitched them so they line up.

How do you place a part of your fabric exactly where you want it on the topper?

You can eyeball your fabric then place the template. Or you can use my optional Fussy Cut Frames for the Mask Keeper and the Apple Core V1, V2.

Keep in mind that the Box Bag, the Rounded Rectangle and the Box Bag toppers will all be folded over and even how far you fold them will make a difference in what part of the fabrics will show.

The Dress would be a good one for fabric placement but there is no Fussy Cut Frame as they are designed to be placed on the fold of the fabric. You could make a fussy cut frame out of cardboard or plastic if this is really needed. Or you can call me and I can make it for you!



7. What if I'm not a confident sewer or I'm short on time? Is there one style Towel Topper that is easier or quicker than another?

All of my Towel Toppers are pretty easy to do, especially if you watch my videos. But there are definitely several styles that are quicker/easier than others.

A straight opening where you insert the towel is going to be the easiest – that means the Rounded Rectangle and the Box Bag are the easiest with the Tab Top being the next easiest. The Tab Top has curves at the top so you'll just need to take time when sewing, snipping the curves, turning and pressing.

The curved bottom where you insert the towel is a little harder to do but is still not too difficult.

8. Is there a trick for doing the curved opening area like on the Mask Keeper and the Apple Core Topper?

The curved bottom where you insert the towel is a little harder to do but try this trick not shown in the video!

You'll be inserting the towel into the curved area so normally you would leave this unsewn.

Instead, increase your stitch length to as long as possible and sew the curved area closed.

Decrease your stitch length to normal and sew the two sides. Do not snip any seams yet!

We'll work in the wrong side of your fabric at just the sewn area that will become the opening. With an iron and a

tool like [Phillip's Handmade Stiletto](#), press back the seam. Work on one side of the seam then the other. Use the stitches as your guide.

When you have nice, consistent curves on both sides, give everything a good press. Then use a seam ripper, tweezers or precision scissors

to pick out those stitches, being careful to not damage the fabric. With either the iron or stiletto, press the seams so they lay back nice and pretty.

You can leave as is or, at your sewing machine, increase your stitch length and edge stitch each side down individually, creating a nice opening for your towel later.

Still working on the wrong side of your fabric, decrease your stitch length to normal and stitch the other end of the towel topper.

With sharp scissors or pinking shears, snip, nip or trim excess, especially at the sewn curved areas.

Carefully turn your topper right sides out from the now open curved edge, making sure not to stretch the fabrics.

Give it a good shape and press well.

I know this seems cumbersome but it will give better results. And with practice, you'll be a pro in no time!



9. Towel Placement

Will you need the full towel or just half?

The Dress Topper is the only one where you will need the complete towel. But like all of the other styles, you'll still want to cut your towel in half. For the others, you'll put away the other half for a later project. For the Dress Topper, you'll use it for the back of the dress.

How should I cut my towel?

Fold towel in half, lining up edges as evenly as possible. Give it a good press, emphasizing the folded area. Using scissors or a rotary cutter, open up the towel and cut in half using your pressed line as a guide. Or for consistency, use one of my [No Slip Ruler](#)s. Save the second half for later. Or better yet, make 2 Towel Toppers at a time so you have a set!

Gather, pleat or fold the towel?

Sometimes this is personal preference and sometime the towel will tell you what is needed. If it's got a large saying or graphic, that will dictate what needs to be done. Use it as a guide for placement.

If you've got a plain towel and like the look of gathering, you can do this with a hand needle and embroidery thread.

Do you want it to fan out go straight up and down? Play with various options to see what you like.

Once you have an idea, use a tool like a Sewing Gauge or my Box It, Square It, Place It Templates to help with consistency or just eye ball it!



Flaired



Straight Up & Down



Straight on the Back



Or show off the design



Towel is too small



Make the changes to fit



All good here



and here!



Pin, pin, pin



Check the back



Pin some more!



Check to see that it is hanging straight!

Whatever you do, pin, pin, pin everything in place. BUT... don't stitch it in place because you'll most likely need to adjust when you're ready to insert it into the topper.

How will you insert the towel inside the topper?

The eyeball method works pretty well here. Create folds or pleats with the topper nearby.

We'll first look left and right and guesstimate if it will fit inside. Don't make it too small as you have gaps on the left and right.

With it still pinned, slip the towel inside. Try to have the sides of the towel line up evenly with the edges of the topper. Re-pin if needed.

Next, flip it over so that you can see that the middle of the towel is tucked all of the way inside. Depending on the way you pleated or folded it may be dipped at the middle quite a bit.

You don't want to have inches of towel inside but you want to have enough that you don't have to worry about anything popping out from a tug on the towel.

Once you like left to right and how deep the towel is inside, there's one more thing to consider.

If your towel topper is curved like the Mask Keeper or Apple Core, this next step is critical!

Place everything down on your cutting mat and line up the opening area even left to right with a line on your mat. Spread out the towel how it would hang.

Then look to see that it is placed so that it will hang down straight. (I've made several towels that hung cock-eyed because I skipped this step!)

Re-pin if needed.

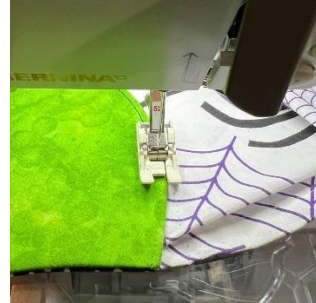
Pin at the area that you'll be sewing to hold everything in place. You should be able to feel that the back and front of the topper are pretty consistent. You'll need to catch the back of the topper so it's important that the front and back are the same. That's where doing the sewing, pressing and un-sewing will really help! If you need to, place a pin into the edge on the top straight through to the back to see if they line up.

10. Ready to Sew

I like to increase my stitch length to around 3.0.

Because you're dealing with a lot of bulk, using a Hump Jumper is really helpful. I can never find mine so I use a folded headband that sits at the same height to get started. Backstitch at beginning and end when sewing. I use the edge of my foot as a guide and try to stay fairly close to the edge. Remember that you will need to be catching the back topper as well so don't go too close! If you're not confident, a decorative stitch can help here!

Once you've sewn the front, flip your project over and check that you catch the topper on the backside. If not, make adjustments and re-do.



11. Closure Concerns

You can choose snaps, a button anywhere from 1/2" to 1" and buttonhole or even Velcro to close all but the Dress Towel Toppers. For the Dress Topper, you'll use 2 ribbons or binding.

Test out your placement by pinning or hand tacking to see if you like it. Orange & Purple sample I pinned the button to see if I liked it.

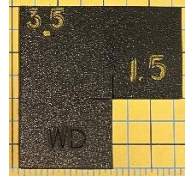
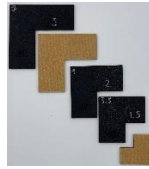
Remember when you were cutting your topper fabric? If you've got a busy patterned fabric, you want to make sure that the snap or button doesn't interfere.



Handy Tools to Have On Hand:

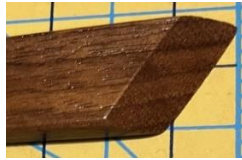
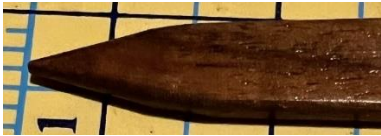
1. Rulers/Templates

[No Slip Ruler](#) to cut the towel in half or to add ¼" seam allowance
[Box It, Square It, Place It Template](#)(s) for placement of folds, button or snap, etc.
[Sewing Gauge](#)



2. Turning and Pressing Tools

[Phillip's Handmade Stiletto](#) – Use pointed end to turn & poke out corners & curves. Use angled edge to press down edges of 'un-sewn' edge of towel topper.



New styles will be added to the website soon!

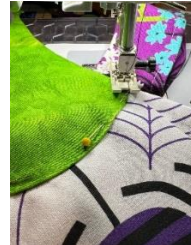
3. Seam Roller

A [Seam Roller](#) can also be a big help to flatten out seams.



4. Hump Jumper or Thicker Fabric

You can use a Hump Jumper but I can never find mine when I need it. I fold over a thick headband I keep nearby - perfect height when sewing thick areas or doing curves and when stitches will be showing on back.



5. ¼" Piecing Foot

If you have a hard time keeping stitches & seams consistent, a specialty foot like a ¼" Piecing Foot comes in handy. But you'll still need your basic sewing foot.



6. Sharp Scissor, Pinking Shears

Use sharp scissors to take little nips or cuts, especially around curved areas. You can also use pinking shears to trim off excess



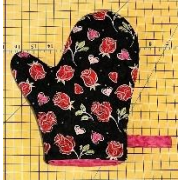
7. Fray Check

Fray Check is always good to have on hand so stitches don't unravel – especially if you're doing buttonholes!



8. Pressing Mitt

With some styles of towel toppers, putting your hand inside or holding the fabric 'just so' is really helpful when pressing. I made a Pressing Mitt with my [Shorty Oven Mitt Template](#). It's just the right size and thickness to be able to do what I want to do!



NOTE: This is my first version. I'm sure I'll be making changes to this. If you find errors or areas where it is not clear, please let me know. I'll be adding this to the [Directions/Projects](#) part of my website and will post any changes or updates there.

Visit www.winnerdesigns.com to see more No Slip Templates. You can find the video for this Towel Topper and 3 others styles at www.youtube.com/lindavideos.

Do you do Facebook? You can find me at www.Facebook.com/LindaWinnerDesigns.com or search "Winner Designs for Sewing & Quilting". I offer giveaways throughout the year so be sure to LIKE my Page and FOLLOW me!

I have 250+ videos so go to www.youtube.com/Lindavideos for more projects. Subscribe to my Channel to be notified when I post something new! Check out my Playlists to see my other templates and many projects.

Thank you for your purchase and support of my Winner Designs business!

I'd love to hear from you so please post on my YouTube Channel and Facebook Page. And I'd much appreciate you spreading the word about Winner Designs and LindaVideos~!

Questions? Contact Linda Winner at Mouserme@yahoo.com or 850-449-0249.