

Pocket Diaper Instructions



Why, with the really cool AIOs and fitted diapers out there, would someone want pocket diapers? Aren't they more work to put the soaker in and take it out? Well, yes, pocket diapers take a little more work than standard AIOs or fitted diapers, but the benefit of pocket diapers comes in to play in the dryer. Since you use a removable trifold soaker, pocket diapers dry in half the time (or less) than their standard counter parts.

These instructions are for an AIO pocket diaper. This means that the outside fabric will be of a waterproof fabric such as PUL or Windpro fleece. Once stuffed and put on the baby, no diaper cover is needed. You can, however, make fitted pocket diapers, using absorbent fabrics for both the in and outside of the diaper. Simply cut both layers from the fitted diaper cutting lines and sew them as directed below, but don't worry about having the outer fabric curl in at the leg areas.

Materials:

- * Waterproof fabric - PUL, waterproof polyester fleece, etc. In my example, I am using a PUL print purchased from Janelle's PULs (<http://www.janellespuls.homestead.com/homepage.html>)
- * Diaper inner fabric- you can use an absorbent fabric such as flannel or sherpa or you can use a wicking fabric, like microfleece or suede cloth, to make the inside of the diaper. See Info page for more information. I am using Sew Comfy flannel from JoAnn's Fabric.
- * 3/8" Elastic – ¼" elastic may be more appropriate for newborn sized diapers. I'm using StretchRite elastic available practically everywhere.
- * Fasteners – Aplix, TouchTape, snaps, whatever. I'm using 2" wide loop Aplix for the front (6" for newborn, 7" for little, and 8" for big) and 1½" hook and loop Aplix for the wings.
- * Thread, needles, sewing machine, scissors, rulers, wash away marker, possibly other general sewing stuff.

1. Prepare the pattern as directed for making an AIO diaper, only add seam allowances (I prefer $\frac{3}{4}$ ") all around. Extend the pattern out $\frac{1}{2}$ " (in addition to the $\frac{3}{4}$ " seam allowance) between the back elastic marks as shown in the photo below. You will need to make the extension wider than the back elastic marks for the newborn size, or the opening will be too narrow to stuff the diaper.



2. Cut the waterproof fabric from the AIO diaper pattern and the inner fabric from the fitted diaper pattern. Transfer the elastic marks and front fastener marks onto the fabrics.



3. Sew the $\frac{3}{8}$ " elastic to the back extension of both the outer and inner diaper layers. Leaving about an inch of elastic beyond the end of the extension will give you sometime to hold onto as you sew it down. Tack the elastic down to the end of the extension by using a multi-step zigzag stitch (aka triple-step zigzag stitch) and a 0 stitch length. Stitching a few times over the elastic and then moving the needle a scant $\frac{1}{8}$ " away and stitching again will hold it very securely. Then set the machine for a standard medium width zigzag with a medium to long length. Stretch the elastic as much as you can as you stitch it down. When you come to the end of the extension, tack it down as described above. Trim the elastic even with the extension.



4. Fold the extension toward the wrong side of the fabric and stitch it down to cover the elastic. You will have to stretch the elastic as you do this. Use a straight stitch of medium length to do this. If your fabric won't ravel (such as sherpa, fleece, PUL, suede cloth, etc.), then you can simply fold it over and stitch it down. If, however, your fabric will ravel (such as flannel) you must fold the raw edge under as you fold the extension down, so that it will be enclosed. This is tricky, but made easier by being sure to sew the elastic to the extension (step 3) a little bit down from the edge.



5. Apply the fasteners to the front of the outer diaper fabric. I once recommended using a zig zag stitch to sew Aplix or OuchTape on, but have found that using a straight stitch reduces the wear and tear on the fabric as the diaper is opened and closed. Stitch around the loop tape, using a short to medium length straight stitch, just inside the fuzzy portion.

OR

Apply socket snaps as positioned on the pattern. You may need to reinforce the snap area with additional fabric.



6. Position the diaper layers right sides together and sewn around, starting and stopping right at the place in the back where the elastic has been attached. You will need to match up the raw edges of the layers, even though the outer layer is wider in the leg area. This will take a little finagling, but isn't too difficult. Trim the seam allowances of the wings and front corners to approximately $\frac{3}{8}$ ". This will make these areas smoother when turned right side out.



7. Attach the elastic to the leg areas of the diaper. First, stretch the elastic from one leg elastic mark to the other (on the same side). Mark the elastic and measure. This is how long a piece of elastic you need for the elastic you are using. Since the amount of stretch can vary from one elastic to another, even if using the same brand, it is best for me not to tell you a specific length to use but rather for you to measure yourself. Tack the elastic at the leg elastic marks ****on the seam allowances only****. Use the tacking method I described in step 3.



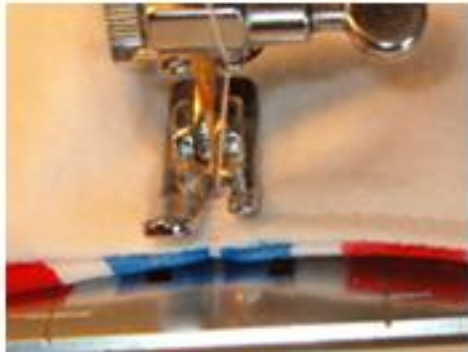
8. Turn the diaper right side out. Often, the stitching is too close to the back elastics for them to lay flat when turned right side out. Simply snip the stitching there, if necessary, to allow them to lay flat.

Begin topstitching the diaper. Start at the back elastics, tacking both ends together by stitching back and forth over the ends perpendicular to them. Then continue around the diaper topstitching approximately $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the edge. I'm using my straight stitch foot edge as a guide. Use your fingers to roll the outer waterproof fabric slightly to the inside. This will minimize the possibility of wicking wetness outside the diaper.



9. As you approach the leg areas of the diaper, you must roll the outer fabric in quite a bit. Since you cut the outer fabric wider in this area (as per the AIO pattern), this won't be hard. You will need to play around with both sides, to get the amount of rolling in even, but it is approximately 1" at the widest part (the middle of the leg area). The little size diaper will be approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ " and the newborn will be slightly smaller than that.

Feeling with your fingers, stop with your needle in the fabric when you come to the leg elastic. Stitch back and forth over the end of the elastic, perpendicular to the edge of the diaper, and stop approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ " to 1" away from the diaper edge. Stitch along here, forming a casing for the elastic being sure NOT to stitch over the elastic. You must stretch the elastic as you do this. When you come to the opposite end of the elastic, stitch back and forth over it as at the other end and then continue to topstitch around the diaper as before. End your topstitching as you began it by stitching back and forth over the ends of the back elastic.



10. Attach the fasteners to the diaper wings.

If using Aplix or TouchTape, I recommend $1\frac{1}{2}$ " long pieces, $1\frac{1}{2}$ " wide for size big diapers and 1" wide for size little and newborn. I have found that using $\frac{1}{2}$ " wider loop tape in the front of the diaper ensures that the hook tape has a bigger area to grip and is less likely to scratch the baby's tummy or thigh. Be sure to sew pieces of loop tape next to the hook for folding back during washing. Use a straight stitch sewing just inside the hook or loop and not on the edging. One note, be sure the edging of the hook tape runs parallel to the edging of the loop tape as they won't stick together as well otherwise.

Apply the loop tape or snap sockets to the outside of one diaper wing, if desired, to allow the wings to cross over. This is necessary for the diaper to fit the full range of sizes, but not necessary for the diaper to work.



11. Stuff the diaper. I simply use microfiber towels available in the automotive department of many stores. One, folded in thirds, for daytime use and two for nighttime. You can make soakers from other materials as well. Things that don't ravel, such as burley knit terry and hemp fleece, are particularly easy to use. Simply cut into rectangles, fold in thirds, and stuff in the diaper. No sewing needed.



FINISHED DIAPER!



Same diaper on a ~35 lbs toddler and a ~14 lbs infant.