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Fight the Cold: Homemade Pocket Warmers

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Hat tip to Pheonix for sending over these directions.

Maintaining ideal body heat during the colder months of the year is a vital priority if a person is exposed to freezing temperatures. Survival experts agree that hypothermia begins to occur when the body temperatures begins to drop below 96 degrees F. In spite of the [proper layering techniques](#) ^[1] with winter clothing, those who are out doors for a given period of time may find themselves battling over exposure to cold weather elements. This is mainly due to gaps in clothing that allow air in, or sweating underneath clothing layers, or not being properly dressed for the outdoors.

Disposable hand and feet warmers are a great way to keep the cold at bay. This reasonable preparedness item can be purchased ahead of time to prepare for snow ins from [snow storms](#) ^[2], placed in a vehicle [72 hour kit](#) ^[3], as well as a personal [72 hour kit](#) ^[4]. These nifty disposable heat packs generate heat for up to 8 – 12 hours, and can give a person the additional heat needed to maintain proper body temperature to combat hypothermia and frostbite. The maximum temperature for the hand and feet warmers average to about 126 degrees F to 144 Degrees F (52 C – 62 C).

Direct exposure to these warmers may be too hot to place directly on the skin. Therefore, making a fabric covering to place the warmers into may be more comfortable. These fabric coverings for the warmers are relatively inexpensive, will hold the heat longer, and are extremely easy to make. In fact, a sewing novice can easily make these without a sewing machine.

Pocket Warmer Directions

Items You Will Need:

- Ruler
- Scissors
- Fabric
- Thread
- Sewing pins/safety pins

Directions:

1. Gather the material: Wool, corduroy, cashmere, or pleather.
2. Fold material with wrong side of material on outside.
3. Using a ruler and water soluble marking pencil, measure 5 inch lines horizontally and vertically, making 5×5 inch squares.
4. Place two safety pins or sewing pins on each square of material you intend to cut off. Place a couple of pins on the adjacent side in order to anchor the material. {See Figure 1}



Figure 1

5. Cut the 5×5 inch squares of material.
6. On one side, measure 3.25 inches and place a mark. Do the same for the opposite side. {See Figure 2}



Figure 2

7. Starting at the 3.25 inch mark, sew along the sides and bottom, stopping at the 3.25 inch mark on the opposite side. Trim the bottom corners. {See Figure 3}



Figure 3

8. Remove pins. Fold one side of top flap down at the 3.25 inch mark, secure with pins and sew between the edge of fabric and the previously sewed side. {See Figure 4}



Figure 4

9. Remove pins. Flip the material inside out. {See Fig 5}

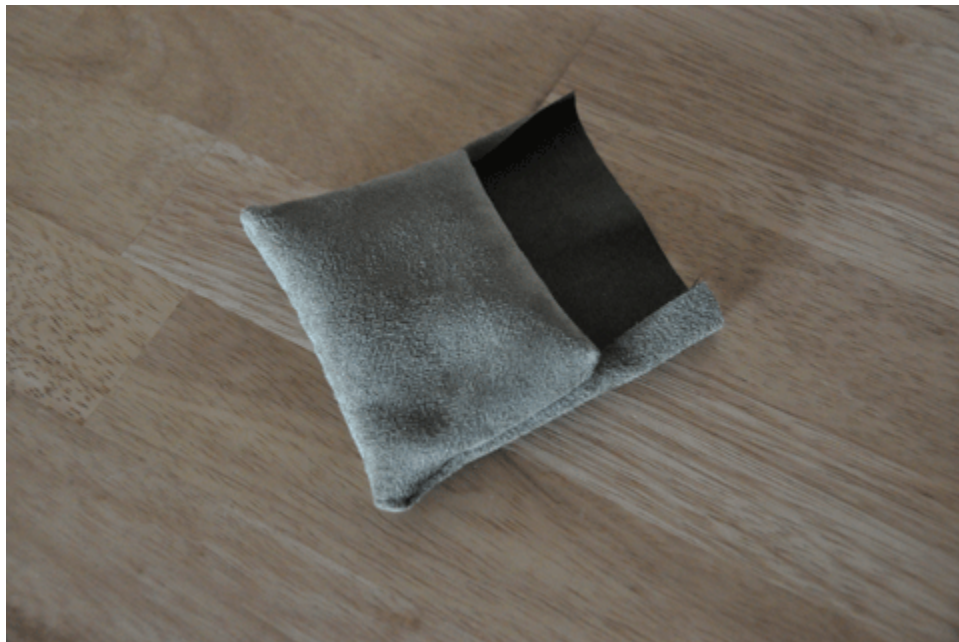
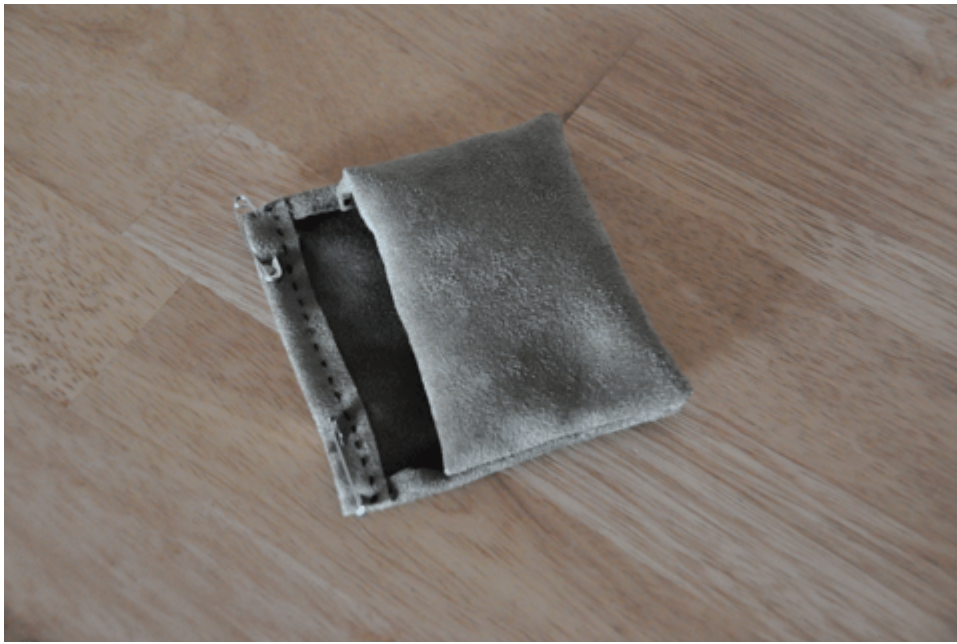


Figure 5

10. Fold top flap approx. 0.5 inches down and secure with pins. Sew bottom edge down. {See Fig 6}

**Figure 6**

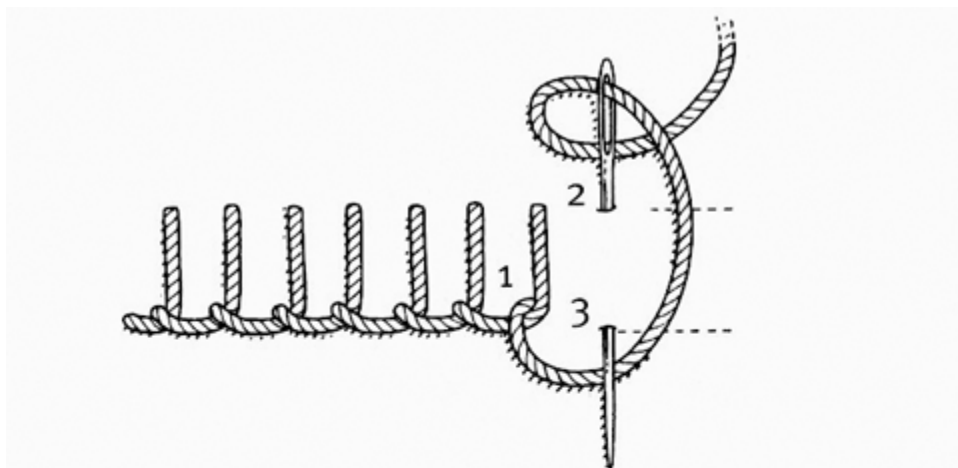
11. Fold flap down, line up side edge, and sew inside material side edge. Do not sew the top or bottom material {See Fig 7}.

**Figure 7**

12. For use, follow directions of instant hand warmer for heat, place inside pouch and enjoy.



Option 1: Blanket-stitch sides and bottom down with embroidery floss {See Fig 9 Below}



BLANKET STITCH If using on a decorative edge, work so that the base of the U falls along edge of fabric. For light-weight fabrics, be sure to stitch through finished edge. Insert needle from wrong to right side, coming out at 1. Insert at 2. Come out again at 3; hold thread under needle with thumb as you pull through.

Option 2: Instead of an instant hand warmer, fill with ceramic pie weights, which hold heat well and are microwave-safe. Make 3×5 inch squares instead. Sew all around the edges, leaving an opening; cut off corners. Turn bag right side out; fill with ½ cup pie weights. Sew gap closed. Blanket-stitch above in Option 1. To warm them, microwave pouch on high for approx. 5 minutes. (Do not microwave longer and do not heat in a conventional oven.)

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[1] proper layering techniques: http://readynutrition.com/resources/are-you-ready-series-emergency-clothing-part-3_27112009/

[2] snow storms: http://readynutrition.com/resources/cold-weather-preparedness_04122009/

[3] 72 hour kit: http://readynutrition.com/resources/vehicle-72-hour-kits_04122009/

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