

Notes for making the “A.B. Mask—For a Nurse by a Nurse” Pattern

First things first: before you start making masks, you should preshrink your fabric. Wash it in the hottest water your washing machine has and rinse twice. Wash light fabrics separate from darks. Use a color catcher because that hot water will stream out a bunch of dye. Dry on hot, too. Trim the strings and then iron. In theory the masks should be washed once a day so you want to get the shrinking done first.

Notes to go along with each step of the process.

1. Print the pattern. I had no problem with this, except I should've printed on cardstock instead of printer paper, just for durability.
2. Fold fabric. Quilting cotton stretches more on the width side (selvedge to selvedge) than it does on the length size (cut edge to cut edge), so if you are using odd sizes of fabric, see which side stretches the most, and fold so the stretch goes *across* the width of the mask, rather than the height.
3. Cut binding and ties. I cut my binding strips 1.75 inches instead of 1.5. I know...a quarter inch doesn't seem like that much but for me it made it much easier to make the ties. Also, if you can use larger yardage so you can cut width of fabric strips, it does make it easier!
4. Refold and cut mask face. I folded my fabric twice so I could cut four pieces at once. You can use scissors or a quilting ruler and a rotary cutter, up to you. I skipped the step of cutting out the notches. I marked it with a marking pen instead. Also, I have no idea what the difference is between a “taco” style fold and a “burrito” style fold...tortilla shells are all round.
5. Stack and sew. I have a hard time knowing exactly where to turn at the points, so I just marked a line 1/2 inch from the edge.
6. Iron in pleats. I have no idea if I'm doing this step right. I THINK the fold should go up, toward the top point, but if you look at the picture of the folded pattern, it seems like they point down. I've made it both ways...I continue to think the fold goes up. But I am happy to be corrected if I'm wrong.
7. Sew pleats in place. Careful not to hit the pins with your sewing machine needle. Just saying.
8. Mark and sew darts. When you sew the darts in, use the denim stitch on your machine. This is the stitch that does three stitches close together; on Bernina machines it is stitch #6.
9. Trim excess. The photo shows these cuts being made with pinking shears. If you don't have those, regular scissors are just fine! (I might really now want to buy a nice heavy pair of pinking shears. My mom used to have a pair that fascinated me when I was a kid. Wonder what happened to them.)
10. Prepare the binding. If you cut width-of-fabric strips in step three, you don't have to sew seams! Also, the smaller pieces (the one you cut in half) don't need to be 10 inches, only about 4 inches long.
11. Attach side binding. Sew toward the folds of the pleats to avoid sewing them down the wrong way.

12. Finish side binding When you sew it down to the front, again sew toward the pleats; that way your presser foot doesn't get caught in the folds. Try to make sure the fabric edge covers the stitching lines you already stitched (also, if it doesn't, don't sweat it).
13. Attach top/bottom binding. Fold the binding strip in half (end to end) and iron the fold. Then, line up that fold with the dart from step 8. This way your ties will be even.
14. Finish top/bottom binding and ties. If you folded in half on step 13, you can skip trimming the ties to make them even, as they already will be. However, I trimmed the corners off the edges of the ties because it makes sewing the ends easier. When you sew the binding strips on, make sure to back sew once over the dart spot, just for added strength. Take this step slow at first, because it's kind of tricky to get such a small strip in the right spot. Double check that you didn't miss sewing both edges once you're done; if you did, just sew it again.