

How to Sew a Shawl

Each shawl made by Community Clickers for UNC Hospice in Pittsboro is composed of two (2) strips of blocks that are nine (9) blocks long for a total of 18 blocks plus one additional (“hospice house”) block for a pocket. Blocks for the body of the shawl are lined up with 9” sides touching. Adjacent blocks are pinned together at the top and bottom on the 9-inch sides to form a strip of blocks.



This picture shows a single strip of blocks with each block pinned to the next along 9-inch sides. The order of the blocks was carefully selected by a Community Clickers design team based on color, texture, and small differences in size along the 7-inch edges.

Both strips that make up the design for a single shawl are displayed side-by-side in this picture. The strips are NOT pinned together on the 7-inch sides until after the 9-inch sides have been sewn together.



When completed, each shawl has a “hospice house” block sewn on one end as a pocket (shown later in the instructions). The end of the shawl that will NOT have the pocket has a label attached to each strip. The labels are attached to the top (right) side of the blocks. **KEEP THESE LABELS ATTACHED TO THE BLOCKS THROUGHOUT THE SEWING PROCESS.** The other side of the blocks is the back side of the shawl. Each label has an arrow that indicates which 7-inch side is on the outside edge of the strip. Sew the blocks together on the wrong side of the shawl (the side opposite from where the label is attached) and from the outside edge towards the inside edge (center of the shawl) whenever possible.



Use the mattress stitch (shown above, <http://www.mooglyblog.com/mattress-stitch-seaming/>) or the whip stitch (<http://www.mooglyblog.com/whip-stitch-seaming/>) to sew blocks together. Having the blocks placed flat on a table as the seams are being sewn helps produce a flatter seam. Some blocks may differ slightly (but not by a large amount!) from 9 inches may need to be stretched or scrunched a bit as they are sewn to their adjacent blocks.

After all of the blocks in each strip have been sewn together, align the two strips side by side along their 7-inch inner sides and pin them together so that the center seam can be sewn. Be sure to put the existing (9") seams in each strip opposite each other (as shown below) when pinning the strips together. It helps to pin the strips at the seams.



Sew the center seam of the shawl together one block at a time on the back of the shawl using the same techniques that were used to sew blocks into the two strips. Weave in the loose ends along the seams or outer edges after the center seam is finished. Begin by pulling the loose end of yarn in one direction through a seam or edge with a needle; then turn the needle to pull the yarn in the opposite direction. Pull the yarn in the loose end slightly to tighten it before cutting the end off.



After all of the loose ends have been woven into the edges and seams of the shawl, pin the pocket to the RIGHT side of the shawl on the opposite end from (but same side as) the labels. Align the bottom of the pocket block with the edge of the shawl. Align the bottom of the heart and the tip of the roof of the house along the center seam of the shawl



Use the whip stitch to sew three sides of the block on top of the shawl leaving the top of the block open to form the pocket.



The sewn shawl used for these examples is shown on the left below. Sewn shawls should be returned to the Community Clickers with the labels and the pins attached. A crocheted border will be added as was done for these completed shawls that were delivered to UNC Hospice in Pittsboro in May 2017.

