

-Nesting Cubes-



# Nesting Cubes

Handmade toys are the best kind that you can give your own children, and they make loving gifts for expectant friends and family members. Because these are sweet and soft, they are particularly good newborn toys. Choosing colors and patterns high in contrast will help occupy even the newest baby as his eyes develop. Building, stacking, and hiding objects are all favorite skills for babies as they grow into becoming clever little toddlers. This set of Nesting Cubes helps baby begin to master those skills, and fun ribbon loops make grasping and playing easier. The sewing itself is quite simple, and you'll have some lovely handcrafted décor for your baby's nest. The more cubes you make, the higher the tower will grow, and the more giggle-y the tumbling down will be.

## Materials

Light- to medium-weight woven cotton fabric:

- 10 squares of fabric measuring 8" × 8"
- 10 squares of fabric measuring 7" × 7"
- 10 squares of fabric measuring 6" × 6"
- 10 squares of fabric measuring 5" × 5"
- 10 squares of fabric measuring 4" × 4"
- 10 squares of fabric measuring 3" × 3"

Various scraps of ribbon

2 yards of heavy-duty, double-sided fusible interfacing

Spool of coordinating thread

Hand-sewing needle

### Finished Dimensions:

7" square cube, 6" square cube, 5" square cube,  
4" square cube, 3" square cube, 2" square cube

### My Color Notes

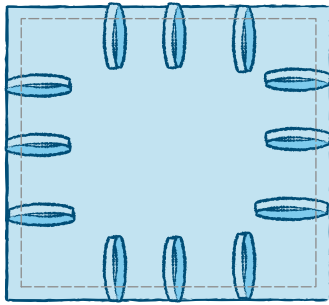
My choices for the fabrics for these fun stacking and nesting cubes were completely determined by giving baby lots of exciting color and plenty of fussy patterns to look at while playing with the cubes.

## Measure and Cut

- 1 Cut the fabrics of your choice, squared on the fabric's grain-line, in the measurements listed in the materials list on the left. Doing so provides enough pieces to make six cubes ranging from 2" to 7" in size. Also, keep in mind that each cube requires five squares for the outer cube and five squares for the inner cube, in case you'd like a contrasting fabric on the inside.
- 2 For each cube, cut five squares of heavy-duty, double-sided fusible interfacing in a measurement that is 1" shorter than the fabric squares for that cube in both directions. For instance, cut interfacing squares that are 7" × 7" for the fabric squares that are 8" × 8", and so on, until each set of fabric squares has a set of five interfacing squares.
- 3 Cut several 2½" lengths of ribbon for the top edge loops.

## Sew the Inner and Outer Cubes

- 4 On the right side of the 8" square of outer fabric that you would like to be the top of the cube, mark a ½" border all around the edges with a fabric marker or fabric chalk.



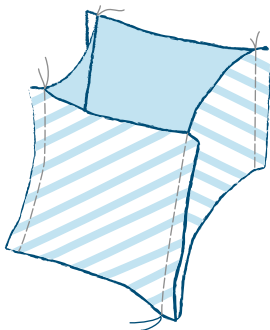
Step 5

**5** Fold as many 2½" ribbon lengths as you'd like to use in half, and align their cut ends with the edge of the marked 8" square on the right side. Pin in place on each side, and then machine-baste the loops in place around the square on the marked border line. This will be the outer top of the 7" cube.

**6** Center a 7" square of fusible interfacing on the wrong side of the outer top, which should fall right on the basting lines. Hold it in place as you flip the pieces over so that you can press from the right side to fuse the layers together. Set them aside.

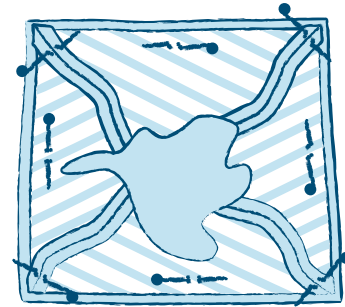
**7** With right sides together and using a ½" seam allowance, sew two of the 8" squares of outer fabric together down one side.

**8** Continue to join the remaining two 8" outer squares to the two joined squares side by side in the same manner as Step 7.



Step 9

**9** With right sides together and a ½" seam allowance, join the two ends of the row of four outer squares together so that you make a tube. Press all seam allowances open.

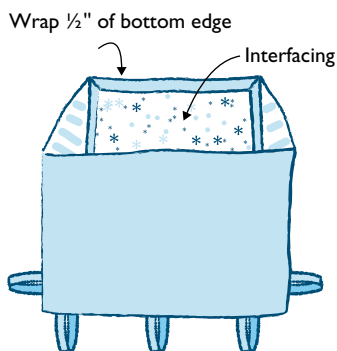


Step 10

**10** Lay out the outer top piece (the one with ribbon loops) with right side facing up. With right sides together, align the bottom edge of one section of the joined outer sides to one edge of the outer top piece, and begin pinning in place all around to join the inner sides to the inner bottom. (You can make some small snips into the side edges near the side seams, no longer than about a ¼" or so, to ease fitting the sides onto the top.) Be sure the seams of the outer sides are at each of the four corners. Let the rest of the outer sides fall in a bit toward the center to keep it out of the way as you prepare to sew.

**11** With a ½" seam allowance, begin sewing the outer sides to the outer top at any corner as a starting point, which should also be right in the middle of a side seam. (Your stitch line should be just to the outside of the interfacing and not through it.) As you continue around the square, stop at each corner ½" away from the edge and take a turn with your needle down. Finish this seam by overlapping the beginning of your stitches.

**12** Clip the seam allowance corners of the outer cube and turn it right side out. Press the top seam allowances toward the outer sides.



Step 13

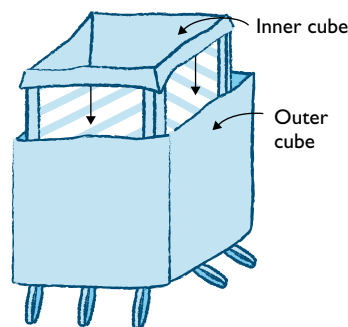
**13** One by one, place the four remaining pieces of interfacing onto the wrong sides of the outer sides, fitting them snugly up against the top edge. Wrap  $\frac{1}{2}$ " of the bottom edge of the outer sides around the interfacing edge, and press from the right side. Continue until all sides have interfacing fused, and you have a cube formed.

**NOTE:** Once you are working with the smaller-size cubes, it becomes difficult to use the narrow end of the ironing board to do your pressing. So you might switch to using a rolled-up hand towel on the inside of the cube to provide some resistance as you press.

**14** Repeat Steps 7–12 with five of the remaining 8" inner squares to make the inner cube. You can make your seam allowances just barely past the  $\frac{1}{2}$ " mark as you sew, but not as deep as  $\frac{3}{8}$ ". This will help the inner cube fit a little better into the outer cube once the interfacing is between the two layers. Clip the seam allowance corners and trim the seam allowances around the top piece down to about  $\frac{1}{8}$ ". Leave the wrong side facing out.

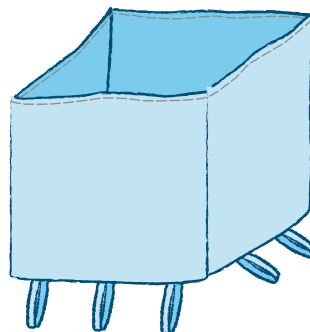
**15** Fold  $\frac{1}{2}$ " of the bottom edge of the inner sides toward the wrong side, and press a crease around the entire bottom edge.

## Assemble the Cube



Step 16

**16** With wrong sides together, place the inner cube inside the outer cube, matching the side seams, and smoothing the corners until the two cubes fit well together and their bottom edges are aligned.



Step 17

**17** Using a scant  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance, topstitch through all layers of the bottom edge of the cube all around the perimeter. Press well from the inner and outer cube on all sides to fuse the interfacing well.

**NOTE:** Once you are working with the smaller-size cubes, it becomes difficult to machine-sew the bottom edges together. You can therefore hand-sew a blind stitch at the bottom edges instead. And again, because of the small cube size, you might also switch to using a rolled-up hand towel on the inside of the cube to provide some resistance as you press.

**18** Because it's difficult to reach your iron all the way up into the top corners of the cube to fuse all the layers at the corners, it's a good idea to hand-tack the corners in place. To do this, double-thread and knot a hand-sewing needle.

Then enter the needle into one of the inner top corners and come out of the top corner on the outer side. Make a few small stitches, in and out, to tack the corners together and knot the thread. Hide the thread tail between the layers, and then clip the threads close to the surface. Repeat this process with each of the remaining three corners.

**19** Repeat Steps 4–18 with each set of five inner squares, five outer squares, and five interfacing squares to create various sizes of cubes for your nest.

