

# DIY Rustic Denim Placemat Tutorial

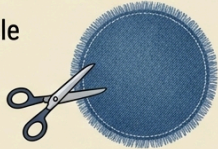
Create a beautiful rustic denim placemat using old jeans and colorful fabric scraps! This project combines denim recycling, raw-edge appliqué, and patchwork-style hearts to create a cozy farmhouse look that is perfect for everyday dining, seasonal décor, or handmade gifts.

This tutorial is beginner-friendly and explains every step carefully so anyone can complete the project from start to finish.


## DIY RUSTIC DENIM PLACEMAT TUTORIAL

- 1. CREATE THE JEANS BASE**


Cut a 38cm diameter circle from old denim jeans (allow for frayed edge).  
(Medida: 38cm diâmetro)


- 2. PREPARE HEART APPLIQUÉS**

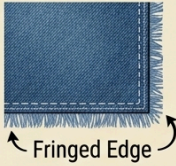
Cut assorted fabric scraps into heart shapes (approx. 5-10cm).  
(Medidas: 5cm - 10cm)


- 3. SECURE & STITCH HEARTS**

Arrange hearts on denim.  
*\*Use a glue stick or pins.\**  
Stitch around each heart.  
*\*Method: Raw-Edge Appliqué.\**


- 4. FINISH THE EDGE**

Sew a top-stitch 2cm from the edge. Wash to fray the outer fringe.  
(Medida: 2cm da borda)



### KEY USA QUILT & SEWING METHODS

- A. RAW-EDGE APPLIQUÉ**  
Stitching hearts directly to base.
- B. SCRAPPY QUILTING**  
Mixing different fabrics.
- C. TOPSTITCHING**  
A visible, decorative stitch.
- D. STITCH-AND-FLIP**  
Joining pieces for backing.
- E. FRAYED-EDGE DISTRESSING**  
Creating the fringe.

## Materials and Supplies You Will Need

Before starting, gather all your materials so the sewing process becomes easier and more enjoyable.

### Fabrics

- Old denim jeans
- Assorted cotton fabric scraps for hearts
- Optional backing fabric

## **Sewing Supplies**

- Sewing machine
- Denim needle or universal needle
- Matching or contrasting thread
- Fabric scissors
- Small embroidery scissors
- Pins or sewing clips
- Glue stick for fabric or fabric adhesive spray
- Iron and ironing board
- Chalk or washable fabric marker
- Heart template paper
- Ruler or measuring tape

## **Finished Placemat Size**

- Denim circle diameter: approximately 38 cm (15 inches)
- Heart appliqués: approximately 5–10 cm (2–4 inches)

The final size may vary slightly depending on seam allowances and frayed edges.

## **Understanding the Sewing Techniques Used**

This project uses several quilting and sewing techniques that give the placemat its rustic appearance.

### **Raw-Edge Appliqué**

The hearts are stitched directly onto the denim without turning under the edges. The edges may fray slightly over time, adding texture and charm.

### **Scrappy Quilting**

Different fabric scraps are mixed together to create a colorful patchwork effect.

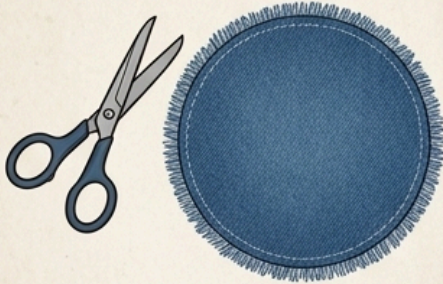
### **Topstitching**

Visible stitching is sewn near the edge for decoration and durability.

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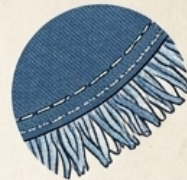
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Joining pieces for backing.



**E. FRAYED-EDGE DISTRESSING**  
Creating the fringe.

## Frayed-Edge Distressing

The denim edges are intentionally frayed to create a rustic farmhouse style.

### Step 1: Prepare the Denim Base

The denim base forms the foundation of the placemat.

#### Choose the Denim

Select old jeans with large flat sections. Medium-weight denim works best because it is sturdy but still easy to sew.

Avoid:

- Extremely stretchy denim
- Very thick seams
- Torn or weak fabric areas

Wash and dry the jeans before cutting to prevent future shrinking.

#### Cut the Denim Circle

Lay the denim flat on a cutting surface.

Using a ruler or measuring tape:

- Draw a circle measuring 38 cm (15 inches) in diameter.
- You can use a large plate, bowl, or homemade cardboard template to trace a perfect circle.

Carefully cut the circle using fabric scissors.

#### Leave Extra Space for Fraying

Do not worry if the circle is not perfectly smooth around the edges. Small irregularities add rustic charm.

Leave about:

- 1–1.5 cm around the edge for fraying later.

#### Optional: Add a Backing Layer

If you want a thicker placemat:

- Cut another denim or cotton circle the same size.
- Place wrong sides together.
- Baste around the edge temporarily.

This creates extra structure and durability.

## **Step 2: Create the Heart Templates**

Now it is time to prepare the decorative appliqué hearts.

### **Draw the Hearts**

On paper or cardstock:

- Draw several heart shapes in different sizes.
- Hearts should measure approximately 5–10 cm (2–4 inches).

Create:

- Small hearts
- Medium hearts
- Large focal hearts

Having multiple sizes creates a more balanced design.

### **Cut Out the Templates**

Carefully cut around each paper heart.

These templates will help you trace consistent shapes onto fabric scraps.

## **Step 3: Choose and Prepare Fabric Scraps**

This step gives personality and color to the placemat.

### **Select Coordinating Fabrics**

Choose fabrics with:

- Plaids
- Florals
- Polka dots
- Gingham
- Patchwork prints

- Warm rustic colors

Mixing patterns creates the classic scrappy quilt appearance.

Good color combinations include:

- Red and blue
- Yellow and orange
- Cream and floral prints
- Navy and plaid

## **Iron the Fabric**

Press all fabric scraps flat before cutting.

Wrinkled fabric can distort shapes and make stitching uneven.

## **Trace the Hearts**

Place the templates on the wrong side of the fabric.

Trace around them using:

- Fabric chalk
- Washable marker
- Pencil

Cut out all heart shapes carefully.

## **Step 4: Plan the Placemat Design**

Before sewing, arrange the hearts on the denim base.

## **Experiment With Layout**

Place the hearts on the denim circle and move them around until the arrangement feels balanced.

Tips:

- Place larger hearts near the center
- Fill empty spaces with smaller hearts
- Slight overlapping creates dimension
- Mix colors evenly across the placemat

Do not overcrowd the design.

The denim background should still remain visible.

## Take a Photo

Once you are happy with the arrangement:

- Take a quick photo with your phone.

This helps you remember the layout while sewing.

## Step 5: Secure the Hearts ✨

Before stitching, secure all pieces in place.

### Option 1: Use a Glue Stick

Apply a small amount of washable fabric glue stick to the back of each heart.

Press gently onto the denim.

This method keeps the hearts flat and prevents shifting.

### Option 2: Pin the Hearts

Use sewing pins or clips to secure the hearts.

Pin carefully so the fabric does not wrinkle.

## Step 6: Stitch the Hearts Using Raw-Edge Appliqué

This is the main decorative step of the project.

### Set Up Your Sewing Machine

Use:

- Straight stitch  
or
- Narrow zigzag stitch

A denim needle is highly recommended.

Thread colors can:

- Match the fabric  
or
- Contrast for decorative effect

## **Begin Sewing**

Start with the center hearts first.

Slowly sew around the edges of each heart.

Sew approximately:

- 3–5 mm from the raw edge.

Take your time around curves.

## **Sewing Curves Smoothly**

As you sew:

- Stop with the needle down.
- Lift the presser foot.
- Rotate the placemat slightly.
- Lower the foot and continue.

This technique helps create smooth rounded heart shapes.

## **Embrace Imperfection**

Do not worry if:

- Edges fray slightly
- Stitching looks handmade
- Fabrics shift a little

Rustic projects look more charming with organic texture.

## **Step 7: Add Decorative Stitching Details**

To enhance the handmade quilted appearance, add extra topstitching.

## **Decorative Options**

You may:

- Sew double stitch lines
- Use contrasting thread
- Add tiny embroidered details
- Outline certain hearts twice

These details make the placemat look more artistic and professional.

## Step 8: Finish the Outer Edge

The frayed denim edge is one of the most beautiful features of this placemat.

### Sew a Circular Topstitch

Using a straight stitch:

- Sew around the placemat approximately 2 cm ( $\frac{3}{4}$  inch) from the outer edge.

This stitching line stops the fraying from going too far inward.

Sew slowly and evenly around the circle.

### Create the Frayed Edge

Using scissors:

- Carefully clip small cuts around the outer edge if necessary.

Then:

- Rub the edge gently with your fingers.
- Brush lightly with a stiff brush.

You can also wash the placemat to encourage natural fraying.

The denim threads will soften and create a rustic fringe effect.

## Step 9: Clean and Press the Placemat

After sewing:

- Trim loose threads
- Remove visible markings
- Press the placemat with an iron

Use steam carefully around the appliqu  sections.

## Step 10: Optional Quilting Enhancements

If desired, you can add more texture.

Ideas include:

- Quilting lines across the denim
- Hand embroidery
- Decorative buttons
- Lace trims
- Patchwork borders

These additions personalize the project even more.

## Washing and Care Instructions

To keep your placemat beautiful:

### Washing

- Machine wash cold
- Gentle cycle recommended
- Wash separately the first time

### Drying

- Air dry for best results  
or
- Tumble dry low

### Important Note

The frayed edges will continue softening after each wash, enhancing the rustic appearance.

## Styling Ideas for Your Placemat

These placemats look beautiful:

- On farmhouse tables
- In rustic kitchens
- During holidays
- At brunch tables
- In cozy cottage décor

You can also make matching:

- Table runners
- Coasters
- Mug rugs
- Denim quilts

## **Beginner Tips for Success**

### **Sew Slowly**

Denim can shift if sewn too fast.

### **Use Sharp Needles**

A fresh needle creates cleaner stitches.

### **Test Stitching First**

Practice on scrap denim before sewing the final placemat.

### **Mix Fabrics Creatively**

The more variety in prints and colors, the more charming the project becomes.