

Practical projects

Great ideas and tips from PBO readers

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A sailcloth overmitten helps to keep your tiller hand warm



A helmsman's overmitten

Peter Kersey makes his own winter hand warmer

How often, when helming early in the season or on a night watch, have you had one warm hand in a pocket and one cold one on the tiller? Despite thick gloves that suffice at other times when helming that hand always gets cold!

A solution to this problem is



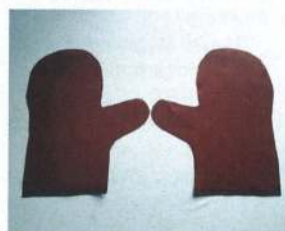
1 Dress as you would be when helming wearing an oilskin jacket and a large glove, then lay your hand and forearm on a suitable piece of card. Draw round the hand and forearm leaving a generous margin – it's very easy to make it too small.

an over mitten that keeps the wind and the majority of spray and rain off the inner glove.

The sail cloth mitten as made here is identical top and bottom so can be used on either hand. The sequence of photographs show the steps that I used to make the mitten.



2 Allow an extra centimetre for a seam then cut out around the marked line and place the card on the sailcloth. When placing your template try to ensure the weave of the cloth runs in the same direction for both halves of the mitten.



3 Draw round the card shape and then turn it over and draw round it again – by turning it over you'll ensure both outside surfaces of the finished glove will be from the same side of the sailcloth and therefore look the same.



4 Cut the two halves of the mitten from the cloth then pin together several places. The mitten will be turned inside out when sewn, so don't forget to ensure the final, outside, surfaces are placed back to back at this stage.



5 Sew together along your 1cm seam line, removing the pins as you go. I use a basic hand-operated Singer sewing machine advertised in our local paper and bought for just £10. I've used sailmakers thread but normal polyester thread will do just as well.



6 It's a good idea to sew a few stitches in one direction, then turn the material around to sew back over your stitches before carrying on right round the edge of the mitten. Doing the same at the end helps prevent the stitching coming undone later.



7 Turn the mitten inside out and there you have it, a wind- and showerproof helming mitt!