


Ruffled Heart Valentine Dress (Made from recycled Tshirts)

by Ashley

Jan 26 2012

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My kids had such fun last fall with a holiday EVERY MONTH.....they're going through withdrawal this month. They keep asking me when the next holiday is going to be. Well little munchkins, Valentine's Day is on its way. No worries, more excitement/treats/traditions are coming right up. So let's celebrate with a little Valentine's attire. 

First up, my 5 year old girl. (I'll show you a little something for my little guy and baby girl in the next few days.)

EDITED: In case you need a couple other Valentine's Day Clothing ideas.....here are a few.

(Click on each image to visit tutorial.)

She loves dresses and skirts. That's it. So I made her another one to add to her collection.

(And nope, I didn't even use my serger once. This was all made on my standard sewing machine.)**

And since this dress is made completely from thrifted women's Tshirts.....this dress **only cost me a few dollars.** (The thrift store was having a half off sale. Half off a dollar or two? Sold.)





Ruffled heart dress

made from OLD T-SHIRTS
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Once I sewed up the last seam and told her that I just finished her 'Valentine's Day Dress'.....she shrieked. And then asked me, "Mommy, is Valentine's this day or the tomorrow day?" Ummmm, well, just about 20 more days. It'll be here in no time, Little Miss.



This girl loves purple and pink equally. So that big ruffly heart made her grin.



I know we don't **need** a new outfit for every holiday.....but for some reason, it makes the whole day **a lot more fun.**



And since her momma can't stand not making new things, especially out of **clothing outcasts**.....she got a new outfit.



I decided to use color blocking with my heart but you could use all one color or even use the same color (like red on red) for a great monotone look. And if you already have a plain shirt or dress that fits your little girl nicely.....you can save yourself some time and skip making the actual dress and just add on the heart. That would really speed things up. But if not, go for it and make the whole thing from scratch. What have you got to lose? (A few old Tshirts?)



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So, for only a few dollars (unless you have all the right colors you need right in your closet/stash).....you can cut up some old knit shirts and make your little lady just as happy as this one.



I hope simple things like ruffled hearts, always bring a smile to your face, little lady.



Would you like to make a ruffled heart dress of your own?

***If you are adding a heart to an existing dress or shirt, you can skip ahead a few steps. Keep in mind that you will need to adjust your fabric a little bit as you're sewing so that you don't sew through the back layer of your shirt/dress.....but you can still do it.

First of all, you'll need some knit for this dress. Knit at the stores is limited, so I always dig through my closet or our donation pile first. If I can't find the colors I need, I head to the thrift store and look for stretchy Tshirts that I think will work well. When digging through shirts, try and find stretchy Tshirts that aren't heavy and stiff like men's plain Tshirts. Find some that are lighter and have some good stretch and shape to them. If you're at the store.....look for some Jersey Knit that follows these same descriptions. My pile of knits are all women's tshirts. I looked in the XL section, to give me more fabric to work with. The grey shirt is what I decided to use for my base color and I made sure that it was the exact length that I needed for my little girl so that I could use the neckline and the bottom hem for the dress. That will save you a lot of time and grief if you can use both. (So, if you're making a dress for a smaller child, look for a size small shirt that's shorter. Make sense?)



So first, I used a Tshirt that fits my little girl as a guide and then cut the main shape of the dress. (*****If you haven't done this much, it's easiest to make paper patterns first and be sure they are the size you need before cutting into your fabric. I don't use paper patterns much anymore but I have had lots of practice. But even still, I still sometimes mess up and wish I would have taken the time to make a paper pattern.**)

Be sure that the neck line on the front piece and the back piece comes together at both sides and that the shoulder section along the top is the same width on the front piece as it is on the back piece. (**Need more help and description? Visit the re-purposing section of my blog [here](#) to see other ideas.**)

Then angle out the sides of the dress to an A-line, to give the dress some more room. **Be sure to add extra fabric on all edges for your seam allowance.**



Then make your sleeves from the sleeves of the shirt by using her original Tshirt as a guide. Be sure to add extra fabric for your seam allowance. (Make sure the curve of the sleeve is the same length as the length of the curve of the arm opening on the dress piece.)



Next, cut a heart shape out of the front piece of the dress.



And then use the shape you cut out as a guide to cut a new heart out of some woven cotton fabric (which doesn't stretch and will make this next part a lot easier). Be sure to cut the heart out about 3/4 of an inch

bigger around all edges.



Then cut several strips out of your Tshirts (or knit fabric), whatever size you'd like. My strips were about 3/4 of an inch wide....but this can vary, depending on taste and the size of heart. And for the length, make them about 2-2.5 times longer than the area that they will be sewn to. So if your heart is 7 inches wide at the top, make your strip about 14 – 18 inches long. Then start gathering in your strips and sew them right down to your heart, sewing right on top of the basting stitch that gathered up your strip. (Need help with gathering? Click [here](#).)



Once all your strips are sewn down, trim off the extra fabric around the edges of your heart.



Then slide your heart to the inside of your shirt so that it peeks through the heart window. Then pin it in place, being sure that you aren't stretching the heart opening at all.



Then sew all the way around the heart, attaching it to the front section of the dress. Then sew another seam right next to the first, securing it in place. Make sure that you are catching the edges of the heart underneath as you're sewing. (TIP: While sewing around the heart, your top fabric will most likely stretch. Sew very slowly and lift and lower your presser foot often. Using a needle to help keep the top fabric in place and guiding it under the needle really helps.)

Here's a view from the front and back of heart, sewn onto the front dress piece. Done.



Using a straight stitch, sew your front and your back piece together at the shoulders, with right sides together. (Use whatever seam allowance you gave yourself when originally cutting the pieces out.) Then zig-zag the edges. Do the same to both shoulders.

****TIP: While sewing with knit, if your fabric is bunching or pulling a bit, increase your stitch length just a bit. And also lift up your presser foot and adjust often.**



Now open up the dress to the RIGHT side and pin your sleeve to your dress, RIGHT side down. Match up the the curve of the sleeve to the to the arm hole opening on the dress. Pin in place. (Sometimes

stretching the edge of the sleeve or the dress to make them match up correctly, will help.)



Sew both in place and then zig-zag.



Now, fold the dress together and match up the side seams. Always start at the sleeve and then continue along to the side to the bottom, in one continuous seam. Do the same to both sides. Then zig-zag the raw edges.



Now, don't forget to turn right side out and iron and steam your seams open. (Don't pull and stretch while ironing. Just lift and press down.) This will help any minimal stretching or rippling that occurred while sewing.

And that's it.

A sweet little Ruffled Heart Dress.



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