

Repurposed Denim Quilted Slippers Tutorial

REPURPOSED DENIM QUILTED SLIPPER TUTORIAL - FROM JUNK JEANS TO HEART-ADORNED FOOTWEAR

(A Guide to US Quilt & Sewing Methods, Measures in cm)

STEP 1: DECONSTRUCTION



1A. Select old denim. Disassemble seams and pockets. Keep large panels for upper & sole templates.

STEP 2: PATTERN & FABRIC PREP



2A. Transfer patterns to denim (cm scale, e.g., Sole: 26cm, Upper: 30cm seam-to-seam).
2B. Apply fabric stabilizer to the back of denim pieces.

STEP 3: DECORATION (APPLIQUÉ & QUILTING)



METHOD 1: APPLIQUÉ



Attach felt heart (cm e.g., 4cm wide) using a zig-zag or satin stitch.

METHOD 2: QUILTING/KANTHA STITCHING



Apply batting layer. Quilt layers together using running stitch for texture and strength.

MATERIALS



Pro Tip: Check foot size & add 1cm seam allowance.



STEP 4: UPPER ASSEMBLY (ZIPPER INSERTS)



4A. Install the 15cm denim-blue zipper.
4B. Fold edges for a clean finish.

STEP 5: FINAL ASSEMBLY



5A. Right-sides together, stitch upper to sole.
5B. Turn slipper right-side out. Ensure all seams are neat.

STEP 6: COMPLETED SLIPPERS

FINISH PRODUCT - A CUSTOM PAIR.



LEGEND: SEWING & QUILT METHODS USED (US CONTEXT)

 <p>Zig-Zag Stitch Used for securing appliqué heart edges.</p>	 <p>Satin Stitch Alternative for clean appliqué borders.</p>	 <p>Kantha/Hand-Quilting Running Stitch For decorative texture & securing batting (Quilting).</p>	 <p>Zipper Foot & Insertion Essential for precise zipper attachment.</p>	 <p>Repurposing/Upcycling Core method: transforming discarded textiles.</p>
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From Old Jeans to Heart-Adorned Cozy Footwear

Turn worn-out denim jeans into a beautiful pair of quilted house slippers with decorative heart appliqué and zipper details. This beginner-friendly tutorial follows common US sewing and quilting methods and uses measurements in centimeters for consistency.

Perfect for upcycling projects, handmade gifts, cozy winter footwear, or learning basic quilting and appliqué techniques.

Materials and Tools

Before starting, gather all materials and sewing supplies.

Main Materials

- 1 pair of old denim jeans
- Felt scraps in pink, red, or white for hearts
- Cotton batting or quilt batting
- Fabric stabilizer or interfacing
- Sewing thread (matching denim color)
- 2 zippers, approximately 15 cm each
- Optional lining fabric for extra comfort

Sewing Tools

- Sewing machine
- Fabric scissors
- Pins or clips
- Measuring tape or ruler
- Tailor's chalk or fabric marker
- Iron and ironing board
- Hand-sewing needle
- Zipper foot attachment
- Rotary cutter and cutting mat (optional)

Step 1: Deconstruct the Old Jeans

The first step is preparing the denim fabric.

Lay the jeans flat on a table and inspect all usable sections. Medium-weight denim works best because it is durable but still flexible enough for slippers.

Carefully cut:

- Along the inseams
- Around pockets
- Along outer seams

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Remove thick seam areas that may be difficult to sew through later.

Try to preserve:

- Large flat fabric panels
- Areas without heavy wear
- Sections without holes or stretching

You will use:

- Larger denim sections for slipper uppers
- Stronger sections for soles
- Smaller scraps for decorative accents if desired

Recommended Fabric Size

Keep at least:

- One denim panel around 30 cm × 30 cm for uppers
- One stronger panel for sole pieces

Press all denim pieces flat with an iron before moving to the next step.

Step 2: Create the Slipper Pattern

You can either:

- Trace an existing slipper
- Use your own foot as a guide
- Draft a simple pattern manually

Sole Pattern Measurements

Recommended example size:

- Length: 26 cm
- Width at widest area: 6–10 cm depending on shoe size

Upper Pattern Measurements

Recommended upper width:

- Approximately 30 cm seam-to-seam

The upper should curve comfortably over the top of the foot.

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Seam Allowance

Add:

- 1 cm seam allowance around every pattern piece

This is very important for proper fit after sewing.

Pattern Pieces Needed

Cut:

- 2 upper pieces from denim
- 2 sole pieces from denim
- 2 batting sole layers
- Optional lining pieces

If making padded slippers, also cut batting for upper sections.

Step 3: Apply Stabilizer and Batting

Denim can stretch slightly during sewing, especially when quilting.

Fuse or attach fabric stabilizer to the back side of the denim upper pieces using an iron.

Then layer materials in this order:

1. Denim outer fabric
2. Batting
3. Optional lining

Pin or baste layers together so they do not shift.

Step 4: Add Decorative Heart Appliqué

This is where the slippers become unique and decorative.

Cutting the Hearts

Use felt scraps to cut hearts in different sizes.

Suggested sizes:

- Small hearts: 2–3 cm
- Medium hearts: 4–5 cm
- Large hearts: 6–7 cm

Mix colors such as:

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- Red
- Pink
- White

Positioning the Hearts

Place hearts on the denim upper before sewing.

Try arranging them asymmetrically for a playful handmade appearance.

Once satisfied with placement, pin each heart securely.

Step 5: Sew the Appliqué

Attach each heart using one of the following sewing methods.

Zig-Zag Stitch

Best for:

- Beginners
- Stretch durability
- Rustic handmade look

Sew slowly around the edge of each heart.

Satin Stitch

Best for:

- Smooth decorative finish
- Professional-looking appliqué

A satin stitch is a very dense zig-zag stitch sewn closely together.

Take your time around curves to avoid puckering.

Step 6: Quilt the Fabric Layers

Quilting adds:

- Warmth
- Structure
- Texture
- Comfort

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Quilting Method

Use:

- Running stitch
- Kantha-inspired hand quilting
- Straight machine quilting

Sew parallel lines across the slipper upper.

Spacing suggestion:

- 1–2 cm between quilting rows

You may quilt:

- Horizontally
- Diagonally
- In curved patterns

Be sure all fabric layers remain flat while stitching.

Step 7: Prepare and Insert the Zipper

The zipper is both decorative and functional-looking.

Zipper Length

Use:

- 15 cm denim-blue zipper

Placement

Center the zipper along the top front area of each slipper upper.

Installation

Using a zipper foot:

1. Fold raw denim edges inward
2. Pin zipper in place
3. Sew carefully along both zipper sides

Keep stitching straight and symmetrical.

Press lightly with an iron after sewing.

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Step 8: Assemble the Upper

Fold the upper section gently into shape.

If needed:

- Sew side seams
- Clip curved seam allowances slightly

Do not cut through stitching.

Test the shape by placing it over your foot before attaching the sole.

Step 9: Attach Upper to Sole

Place:

- Right sides together

Align:

- Center front
- Heel area
- Side edges

Pin carefully all around.

Sewing the Sole

Sew slowly around the perimeter using:

- 1 cm seam allowance

Denim can become thick in some areas, so sew carefully and evenly.

For extra durability:

- Reinforce toe and heel areas with a second stitch line

Step 10: Turn the Slippers Right Side Out

After stitching:

1. Trim excess seam bulk
2. Clip curved edges carefully
3. Turn slippers right-side out

Use a blunt tool or chopstick to gently push corners and rounded areas outward.

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Shape the slippers with your hands.

Step 11: Finish the Edges ✨

Inspect all seams carefully.

Optional finishing methods:

- Topstitch around opening
- Add bias binding
- Hand-finish raw interior seams

Press the finished slippers with steam for a polished appearance.

Step 12: Final Fit and Comfort Check 🏠

Try the slippers on indoors.

Check:

- Sole comfort
- Toe space
- Seam smoothness
- Stability while walking

If desired, add:

- Non-slip sole fabric
- Puffy lining
- Extra batting
- Memory foam inserts

Sewing Techniques Used in This Project 🧵

Zig-Zag Stitch

Used for:

- Securing appliqué edges
- Preventing fabric fraying

Satin Stitch

Used for:

- Decorative appliqué borders
- Dense edge finishing

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Kantha or Running Stitch Quilting

Used for:

- Decorative texture
- Securing batting layers

Zipper Foot Attachment

Used for:

- Accurate zipper installation

Upcycling Technique

Transforms discarded jeans into functional handmade footwear.

Helpful Tips for Beginners

Choose the Right Denim

Medium-weight denim is easiest to sew.

Avoid:

- Extremely thick work jeans
- Stretch denim with too much elastic

Needle Recommendation

Use:

- Denim needle size 90/14 or 100/16

Thread Recommendation

Polyester thread is strong and durable for slippers.

Prevent Slipping

Attach:

- Rubber grip dots
- Non-slip fabric
- Silicone sole paint

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Wash Before Sewing

Always wash old jeans first to:

- Remove dirt
- Prevent shrinking later

Optional Creative Variations 🎨

You can personalize your slippers by adding:

- Patchwork denim panels
- Embroidery
- Floral appliqué
- Initials or names
- Contrast stitching
- Faux fur lining
- Decorative buttons

Finished Result 👣❤️

You now have a handmade pair of quilted denim slippers created entirely from repurposed jeans. They are warm, durable, eco-friendly, and uniquely customizable.

This project combines:

- Sewing
- Quilting
- Appliqué
- Upcycling
- Basic footwear construction