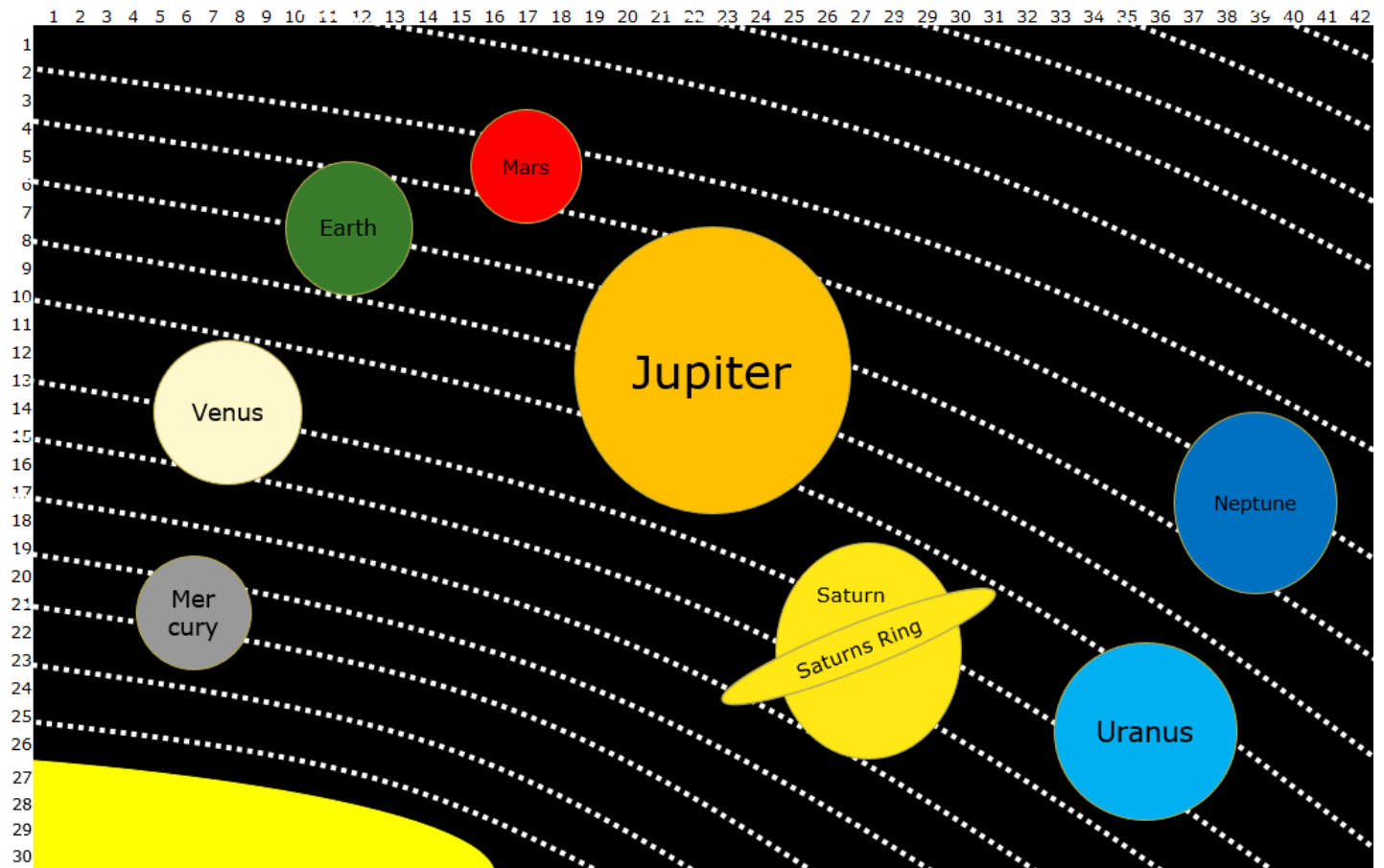# How to Make a Sensory Planet Quilt

These instructions are for a sensory baby quilt measuring ~30"x42".

Material List:

17" Sun Material

5" Mercury Material

7" Venus Material

6" Earth Material

5" Mars Material

11" Jupiter Material

9" Saturn Material

12" Saturn Ring Braid

8" Uranus Material

7" Neptune Material

1 yard Background

1 yard Backing

2/3 yard Binding Material

1 yard 90" 80/20 Batting

Black thread (for quilting)

Silver Thread (for quilting)

Thread to match each planet

2 yards 1-sided fusible interfacing

Tools List:

Fabric Scissors

Sewing Machine (walking foot optional)

Rotary Circle Cutter (optional)

Self-Healing Mat

Rotary Cutter

Iron & Ironing Board

Basting Spray or Pins

Safety Pins

Step 1: Find the Fabrics

A sensory quilt is meant to expose babies to multiple patterns and textures. I chose a nice flannel as the backing material, a solid black cotton for the background, and a different texture corresponding to each planet. Be warned any of the soft materials will shed like crazy as you cut them, and I highly recommend getting enough stabilizer/interfacing to make cutting and sewing non-cotton materials easier.

Note: This pattern assumes at least a 42" width of the backing and background materials. If yours isn't that wide, you'll need to buy at least 44" lengths (instead of 36" lengths) of the backing and background materials.

All of my fabrics came from Joanns. I used the following lengths (links provided at crazychickdiy.com)

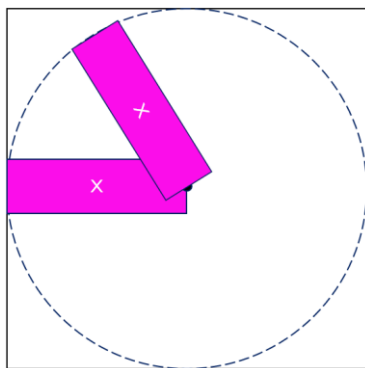| Area	Material	Length (inches)
Background	Kona Black Cotton	36
Sun	Anti-Pill Plush Fleece	17
Mercury	Soft & Minky Fleece Fabric Solids - Castlerock	5
Venus	Wubby Brown-Tipped Fleece	7
Earth	Metallic Velvet Burnout Fabric - Botanical Garden	6
Mars	Silky Furry Fleece	6
Jupiter	Sew Sweet Ribbon Ruffled Velvet Fabric - Gold * Ivory	11
Saturn	Tissue Lame Fabric - Gold	12
Saturn Ring	Simplicity Metallic Braided Trim 0.44" Gold	12
Uranus	Flannel Back Satin Fabric	8
Neptune	Soft & Minky Fleece Fabric - Dots Skydiver	7
Backing	Kitties in Space	36
Binding	Nursery Flannel Fabric Good Night Stars	24

Step 2: Cut Out the Planets

Cut out interfacing slightly smaller than your lengths of fabric. For example, Mercury is 5" diameter, so cut out a 4.75" x 4.75" square of interfacing. Follow the instructions on the interfacing and secure it to the wrong side of each planet. Use a rotary circle cutter and cut out each planet from edge to edge of the interfacing (so Mercury is actually 4.75"). If you don't have a rotary circle cutter (available for ~$20 on Amazon or ~$30 at Joanns), follow the instructions in Step 3.

Area	Diameter (inches)
Mercury	5
Venus	7
Earth	6
Mars	6
Jupiter	11
Saturn	12
Saturn Ring	12
Uranus	8
Neptune	7

The sun is different than the circular planets as it is a triangle in the bottom corner of the quilt. My sun is a triangle approximately 2" tall and 17" wide.

Step 3: Cutting Circles with Scissors

If you don't have a rotary circle cutter, follow this step for each planet. Otherwise, skip to step 4.

For each interfaced fabric square, mark the center on the interface side (black circle in the figure). Measure the distance from the center to the edge of the interfacing (X in the figure). Using a ruler, mark X distance from the center point all the way around the circle. Connect each of the dashes until you have a smooth circle, and then cut out the circle using scissors.

Step 4: Baste the Planets

Iron your background material so it is smooth with no creases or wrinkles. Lay it out on a flat circle and align your planets. Use basting spray or pins to temporarily secure your planets to your background material.

Step 5: Attach the Planets

Each of the planets are attached to the quilt as an applique. I chose thread that matched each planet, but you could also play around with the thread and do contrasting, or complimentary colors. My favorite applique stitch is the blanket stitch, but you can use your favorite.

Step 6: Pin the Quilt

Iron your backing material and lay it wrong side up on a flat, hard surface. I intended this quilt to double as a playmat, so I doubled up the batting (two layers). This will make it harder to sew but isn't an issue for my machine as long as I have a sharp needle. Lay the batting down on top of the backing material and smooth flat. Finally, lay the quilt top on top. You've now created a quilt "sandwich". If you're having difficulty with the layers shifting as you lay it out, you can try lightly basting each layer. A lot of quilters recommend starting at the center and pin outwards, but I had a hard time getting the safety pins through all the layers, so I started at one end and worked my way across. Pin every ~5", ensuring there are no wrinkles in the fabric. Make sure you don't stretch out your fabric either, as this will cause it to lay funny once it's been washed and shrinks back. If you're having difficulty with your straight safety pins, they make curved ones that making pinning a quilt much easier.

Step 7: Quilt It

I machine quilted mine, but you could also tie quilt this. I don't have the patience to tie-quilt, but there are plenty of tutorials online. I stitched a line through all layers every one inch, alternating between silver and black threads. The silver thread is embroidery thread and tends to be more fragile than what I typically quilt with, so I alternated rows to help the strength of the quilt.

Step 8: Bind the Quilt

Binding is the step many quilters hate. Every quilter I know has a pile of un-bound quilts. The traditional way to bind a quilt is to machine sew on one side, and then hand sew the opposite side. I do not have the patience for this, so I machine bind my quilts. There are several excellent tutorials out there for binding quilts, so I won't go into great detail here.

Note: If you use flannel backing and doubled up batting like I did, a standard 2.5" binding strip isn't wide enough. Use 3" instead. I used 2.5" and had to really yank it around the edges which left it uneven.

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