

Recovering a Drop-in Chair Seat

From plain and boring... To stylish and sophisticated



Recovering your dining room or kitchen chairs is one of the easiest and most rewarding projects you can take on to refresh your home. With just a couple yards of fabric and very little effort you can transform a worn out set of chairs into something to be proud of!

Fabric Place Basement is the perfect place to find the perfect fabric. With a broad range of colors, prints and prices, there is something for every interior from classic and traditional to sleek and modern and everything in between. Be sure to consider your lifestyle when choosing a fabric. If spills are a concern, consider indoor/outdoor fabrics or easy-care vinyl. If your chairs are used a little less frequently, the choices are virtually endless. A can of fabric protecting spray is all you need to keep your upholstery fresh and clean.

Materials/Supplies:

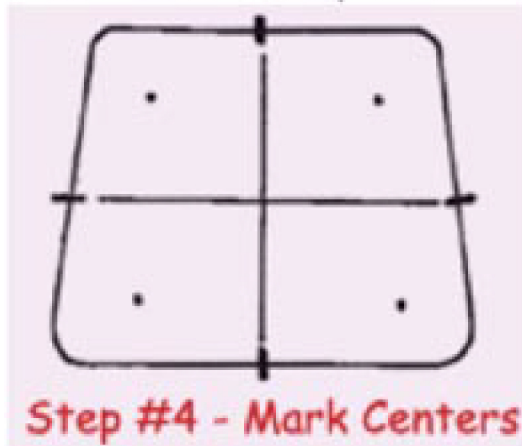
- Screwdriver
- Staple gun
- 1/4" staples
- Scissors
- Tape measure or ruler
- Pencil or Tailors chalk
- Needle nose pliers
- Hammer
- Hi-density foam (1"-2" thick for most seats)
- Dacron batting to soften the sharp edges of high density foam and add loft.
- Scrim, muslin or light weight cardboard to cover the underside once the reupholstering is finished.



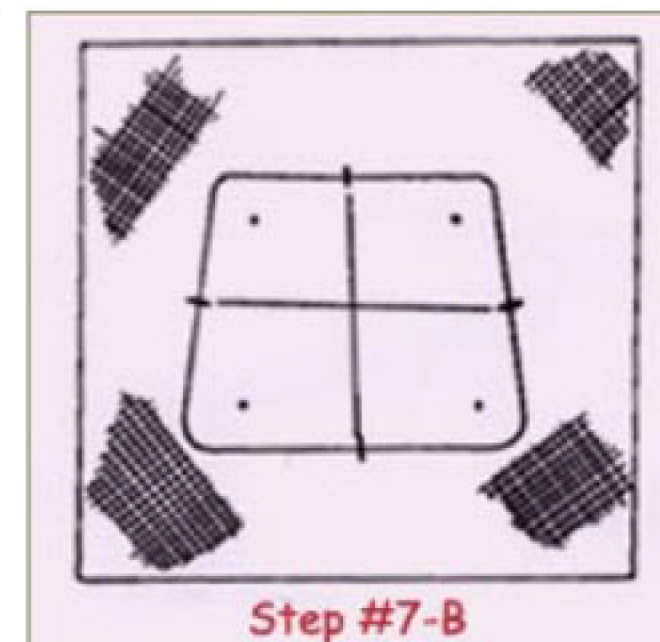
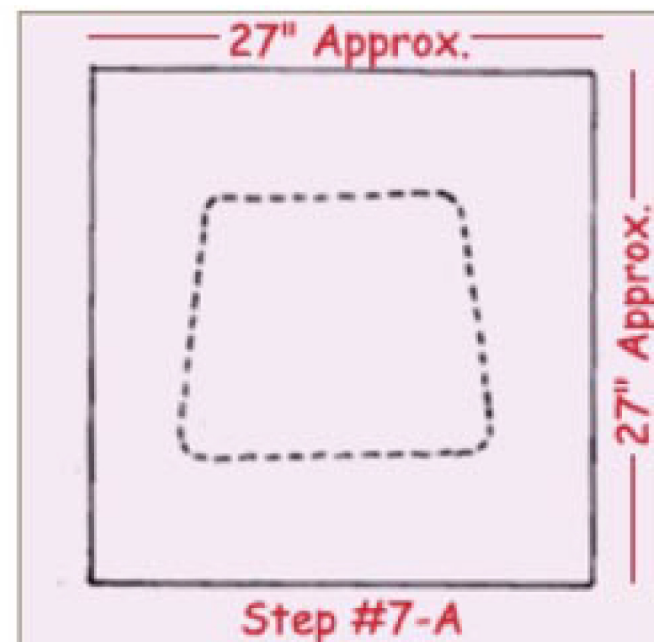
Step-By-Step Seat Recovering:

1. Remove the old chair seat from the chair. Typically, you will unscrew base at corners to remove chair seat from the frame.
2. Remove all staples holding the old fabric on to the seat.
3. Inspect the foam to determine whether it needs to be replaced. If the foam is still springy and not crumbling, you can simply add a new layer of Dacron batting. Otherwise, make a template of the chair seat or bring the old foam with you to Fabric Place Basement and we will cut new pieces for you.
4. Determine how much fabric is needed for your chairs. Most upholstery fabrics are 54" wide. When you use solid color or very small patterned fabric, a 3/4 yard piece of fabric will yield two 27"-square seat covers, cut side-by-side. If you choose a larger design repeat, you may need more yardage to allow for centering and matching.

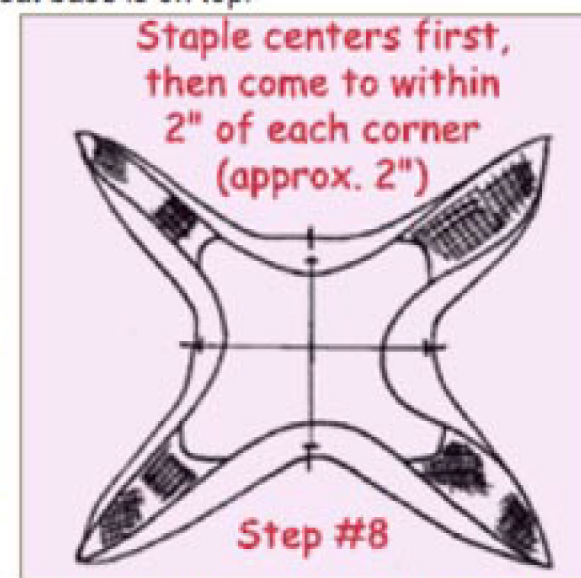
To center a design, cut a paper template the shape of your seat, lay it over the design you are centering and mark before cutting with tailor's chalk. Be generous. You will need enough fabric to reach over the padding materials and enough extra to hold while you staple. With tailor's chalk, mark the chair front and back on the wrong side of each fabric square before cutting, to make sure you're keeping fabric naps and directional designs running in the same direction. Cut your chair seat fabric.



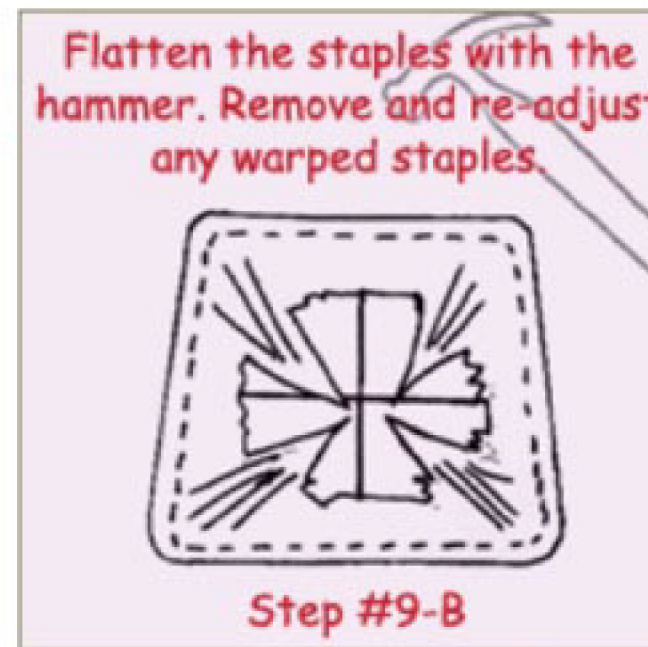
5. Place seat bases underside up. Measure depth and width; then divide each number in half to determine center measurements. On each seat base mark centers and "clock" positions: 12:00, 3:00, 6:00 and 9:00. Use a ruler and marker to draw lines connecting 12:00 to 6:00 and 3:00 to 9:00.
6. Put the foam on top of each seat base. (Option: Glue foam to base.) Lay the batting on top of the foam and smooth it over the edges to the underside of the seat base. Trim away the excess batting.
7. Put your fabric over the batting and foam layers. If the seat has a definite front and back, be sure to place the fabric in the proper direction. Check fabric placement.



8. Carefully flip all layers over so the underside of the seat base is on top.



9. Begin stapling your fabric to the seat base, using "clock positions" markings as a guide. Do centers first, followed by a couple staples on each side of centers. Continue until you are 2"-3" from each corner. Keep a consistent pressure and tension on the fabric while stapling. If any part looks too tight or baggy, remove staples, adjust and re-staple the fabric. Keep the row of staples the same distance from the seat base edge. Stay clear of the screw holes.



10. Put a staple in the center of the fabric at each corner. Make a series of small, uniform pleats or tucks on either side of that centered staple to keep the top side looking smooth. Staple each pleat as you make it. Remove and re-staple as needed.



11. Go over all the staples with a few taps of the hammer to be sure all staples have embedded into the seat base. Replace any warped or mangled staples.
12. Trim your fabric down to within 1" of the row of staples.
13. Cover the staples and raw edges with scrim, muslin or light weight cardboard, cut slightly smaller than your chair seat.
14. Repeat these steps for each chair seat. Step back and admire your work!