



2024 Retirement Community Project Packet

Comforting Homeless Pets ~ One blanket at a time!

We're glad your community wants to help!

We sincerely appreciate your interest in having your community make blankets to comfort homeless pets. This packet has all the information you'll need to start planning your blanket making event!

Who we are...

Comfort for Critters donates free, handmade pet blankets to animal shelters across the US. We donate between 1,500 and 2,000 blankets each month to over 400 animal shelters in every US state! These blankets are made by our amazing group of volunteers, who come from all parts of the US as well.

Why blankets?

An animal's life can be challenging when they find themselves in an animal shelter. Despite heroic efforts by the staff and volunteers, it's extremely stressful as they lose their home, are moved from cage to cage, and are subjected to new sights and sounds on a daily basis.

Having something to call their own, which provides warmth year-round (even against A/C in the summer), familiar smells and a soft touch, can make all the difference.

Once the animal is adopted, this comfort object is a cushion against the (wonderful) stress of getting to know their new surroundings and forever family. Once again, their blanket provides something comforting and familiar!

**As of 12/31/2023 we have
donated over 181,000 free
blankets to animal shelters!**

*May God bless you, as you bless others,
Linda*

Meet Anna...



Anna, pictured above, was adopted from the DuPage Animal Shelter in Wheaton, IL, and inspired her new mom to start "Comfort for Critters" in 2007 to help all the pets she couldn't adopt that day.

Great group project!

If you're interested in a super-easy, super-social and super-fun project, pet blankets are it! Crafting "tied-fleece" blankets is the perfect way for your residents to make a difference to shelter pets. Of course if people in your group can knit or crochet, that's a great way to make blankets as well. However, even non-crafters will enjoy making the fleece blankets.

If you're interested in an outing for your residents, dropping the blankets off at a nearby shelter would be ideal. If you call ahead you can often get a tour of the facility! Otherwise someone on staff can easily drop off the blankets whenever it's convenient!

CFC blankets provide a lifetime of comfort. They are also a message to the shelter, and to the pet, that they are loved and are not forgotten!



What you'll need for fleece blankets...

These blankets require minimal supplies and work up quick. Here's the shopping list of what you'll need for your group.

Fleece—Fleece fabric is typically 54" wide, so you'll need about 2 feet of fabric for every blanket you plan to make. Look for sales and remnant bins at big box retailers, fabric stores or online.

Scissors—Not everyone will need them all at once, but you should have a pair for every other person or so.

Measuring tape—Just one will be needed to measure out the material.

Bag or box to hold the finished blankets—You can also use this to mail the blankets, or drop them off, to your local shelter.

Instructions—Please use page 4 of this packet for participants. Making blankets is super-easy, but it's best to have a instruction sheets for those who may need them!

Easy steps...

#1 Pick a day and time and announce the event to your residents. It can be as simple as an email, or a formal invitation. Be sure to choose which shelter you'll support, so you can let participants know this as well. Point them to our website (www.ComfortForCritters.org) to learn more about our mission. You're welcome to use any of the content (text or pictures) for the announcement!

#2 Purchase the materials outlined above. You'll also need a meeting space so that everyone has somewhere to sit. If you're making fleece blankets you'll need a single, shared table for cutting the blankets to size.

#3 Include some extras such as background music, snacks and beverages. Also be sure to have a camera handy to take some candid shots.

#4 Hold the event and have fun! 2-3 hours should be sufficient time for everyone to create their blanket. Knit/crochet blankets may take a bit longer, depending on the pattern being used.

#5 Deliver the finished creations to your local shelter, at your convenience. Please also let Linda know so that she can update her records (Linda@ComfortForCritters.org).

#6 Write up an article for your newsletter, website, or just provide a few details to Linda and she'll create an article for the CFC newsletter (which you're welcome to share).

What you'll need for knit or crochet blankets...

If someone plans to knit or crochet the blankets, just have them bring their favorite yarn, hooks/needles and pattern. They'll likely have these materials already in their knitting/crochet bag!

Blankets should be about 20"x20", and our website has many free & easy patterns to make the perfect knit or crochet pet blanket!





Tips for a successful event ...

We've had many groups make blankets! It's an activity that's enjoyed by everyone, regardless of their skill level!

They have shared these tips with us, to pass along to future planners...

- ◆ As soon as you decide to host the event, secure your location and start spreading the word. Remind potential participants, at least weekly, up until the day of the event.
- ◆ Many fabric stores offer discounts for buying fleece or yarn in bulk. Plan ahead by getting a participant count and purchase all your materials at once, at a discount.
- ◆ If you're making fleece blankets, precutting the fabric into sets of squares/rectangles helps a lot. Then participants know what size to make and can dive right into cutting the fringes.
- ◆ Solid-colored fleece is usually cheaper than patterned fleece, so pair one piece of solid with a color coordinated patterned piece to save a bit of money. You can also use two pieces of solid fleece for additional savings. Pairing two contrasting colors makes a lively blanket!
- ◆ Have boxes ready for completed blankets.



Reach out to CFC for more information & help...

If you're in the area of Glen Ellyn, IL feel free to contact me for **free yarn, hooks/needles and fleece**. I'm always happy to share whatever I have! In addition, if there's **currently not a participating shelter near you**, I'd be happy to sign one up. Just let me know your zip code, and I'll get to work.

If you'd like your group covered in our newsletter and website, just send me a few pictures and some details on the event (when, where, who, how many, etc.) and I'll **put together an article on your event!**



Once again, **thank you** for wanting to make a difference in the lives of animal shelter pets. One blanket might not change the world...but it **will change the world for one lucky "critter"!**

Linda Kozlowski ~ Founder & Owner
3s139 Sequoia Drive ~ Glen Ellyn, IL 60137
ComfortForCritters.org ~ Linda@ComfortForCritters.org



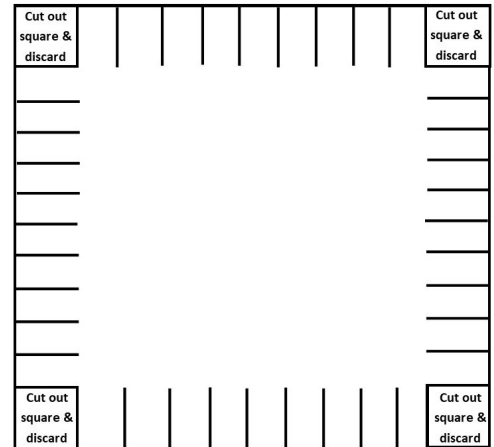


How to Make Tied-Fleece Blankets

Start with two pieces of fleece, cut to be the same size. Any size will do as long as it's square or rectangular. Put one piece on top of the other, lining up the edges so they are even. It's doesn't need to be exact, just close!

Now you are ready to cut your *fringes*. Make 3-4 inch "cuts" into both fleece pieces along all four sides (check out the diagram at right). The cuts should be spaced about 1 inch apart. You'll end up with a 3-4 inch square cut out of each corner (see diagram).

Starting on one side tie the two pieces of fleece fringes into a knot (you'll be using one fringe from each piece of fleece). Once you get all four sides "tied", just stretch each side a bit to make it more square. It helps keep the blanket to a great size if you trim the fringes to be only about two inches in length. *That's it – you've made a tied-fleece blanket, which a homeless pet will love for a lifetime!*



Sizes: A typical blanket size for a cat is 20" square & 30" for a dog (not including fringes).

How to Make NO-Tie Fleece Blankets

Start with two pieces of fleece, cut to be the same size. Any size will do as long as it's square or rectangular. Put one piece on top of the other, lining up the edges so that they are even. It doesn't need to be exact, just close!

Now you are ready to cut your "fringes". Make 3-inch "cuts" into both pieces of fleece along all four sides. The cuts should be spaced about 1 inch apart. You'll end up with a 3-inch square cut out of each corner (see diagram at top).

Starting on one side, flip all the fringes up. Next, make a very small (1/3") slit where the fleece is folded at the base of the fringe (see first photo, below). Cut through both layers. Don't make the slit too big, or you'll end up with holes along the perimeter after the next step!

Now tuck the ends of the fringe through the slit you just made (see second photo) and then pull the fringe down and tight (see third photo). Do this for all the fringes around all four sides.

That's it! You've made a fleece blanket without tying a single knot! This method is a bit easier on the hands, when you're making many blankets in a row. It's also faster and makes a more comfortable blanket for the pet, since it doesn't have a row of knots along the perimeter. *The resulting soft and comfy blanket will be loved for a lifetime!*

