

# How to Make a No Sew Bow

Explore this Article ■ [Crafting a Basic Fabric Bow](#) ■ [Making a Simple Ribbon Bow](#)  
■ [Creating a Bow with Tails](#) ■ [Things You'll Need](#) ■ [References](#)

Co-authored by **Amy Bobinger** and **6 contributors**

Last Updated: May 17, 2021

Bows are an essential accessory for many little girls, and they can be an adorable addition to a number of your favorite crafts. However, buying pre-made bows can start to get pricy, and many bow tutorials involve using a sewing machine. Luckily, if you've ever wanted to learn how to make a no-sew hair bow out of ribbon or how to make fabric hair bows for babies, you're in luck—these no-sew bows are simple, inexpensive, and almost too cute!

## Things You'll Need

### ■ Fabric Bow

- ☐ Fabric
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Measuring tape or ruler
- ☐ Iron
- ☐ Hot glue gun or double-sided fabric tape

### ■ Ribbon Bow

- ☐ Grosgrain ribbon
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Lighter
- ☐ Hot glue

### ■ Bow with Tails

- ☐ Fabric
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Hot glue or double-sided fabric tape
- ☐ Straight pin or needle
- ☐ String

## Method 1 of 3: Crafting a Basic Fabric Bow



**1** Cut a larger piece of fabric for the bow and a smaller strip for the center. The size of the larger piece of fabric will depend on the size bow you want, but about 2 in × 3 in (5.1 cm × 7.6 cm) should be enough for the center of the bow. For the larger piece, measure and cut:

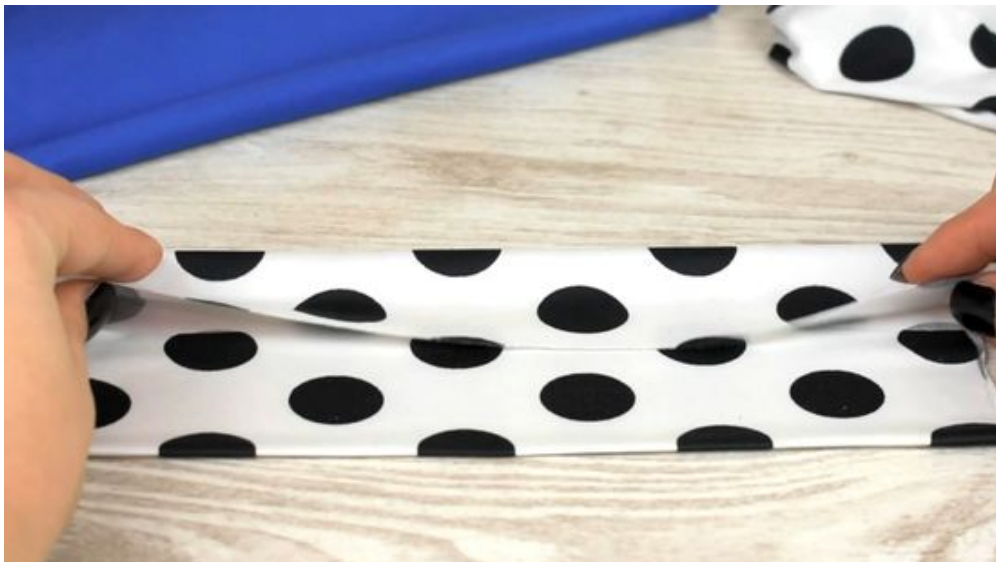
- 5 in × 5 in (13 cm × 13 cm) to make a 2 in (5.1 cm) bow.
- 9 in × 7 in (23 cm × 18 cm) to make a 4 in (10 cm) bow.
- 11 in × 8 in (28 cm × 20 cm) to make a 5 in (13 cm) bow.
- 13 in × 9 in (33 cm × 23 cm) to make a 6 in (15 cm) bow.
- 17 in × 11 in (43 cm × 28 cm) to make an 8 in (20 cm) bow.

**Tip:** Choose any color and pattern you want for your fabric. Use a heavier fabrics like starched cotton to create a stiffer bow, or thinner materials like satin to make a floppy bow.



**2 Fold the bigger piece of fabric in half longways and crease it.** Arrange the large piece of fabric so the longer edges are on the top and bottom and the shorter edges are on the sides. Then, bring the bottom half of the fabric up to the top edge and press down on the fold to make a neat crease.<sup>[1]</sup>

- There's no need to iron this crease as long as you can see it when the fabric is unfolded.



**3 Unfold the fabric, then fold the top and bottom so they slightly overlap.** Lay the fabric flat again and check to make sure you can see the crease in the center. Then, bring up the bottom edge again, this time folding it just enough to overlap the crease you made by about  $\frac{1}{2}$  in (1.3 cm). Fold down the top edge, as well.<sup>[2]</sup>

- Use your fingers to hold these folds in place. Using glue here might make your bow too stiff when it's finished.



**4 Fold the strip of fabric in half shortways, then iron the folds.** Take the right edge of the fabric and fold it toward the left, lining up the edges neatly. Press the crease down with your fingers, then iron the front and back of the fabric on low heat.<sup>[3]</sup>

- While ironing the piece isn't absolutely necessary, it will make the finished bow look much neater.
- When you're finished ironing, set this piece of fabric aside for a few minutes.



**5 Fold the smaller piece of fabric in thirds longways, then iron it.** Take your smaller rectangle of fabric, then fold the bottom to about 2/3 of the way up the width. Fold the top down to the new bottom edge, then iron the creases on low heat.<sup>[4]</sup>

- Ironing will help this piece of fabric hold its shape, even without glue or stitching.



**6 Unfold the large piece of fabric, then fold the ends in toward the center.** Take your larger fabric square and undo the center fold. You should have a long rectangle with a vertical crease in the center. First, fold the left side in toward the center, then do the same with the right side.<sup>[5]</sup>

- If you'd like, you can secure these ends with a small dot of glue. However, you can also hold them in place with your fingers if you'd prefer to use less glue—you'll secure the ends in a later step.



**7 Accordion fold the fabric in the center 3 times.** Holding the ends of the bow in place, fold down the top 1/4 or so of the very center of the bow. Then, make another fold toward the back of the bow at about the halfway mark, and fold the fabric back toward you about 3/4 of the way down.<sup>[6]</sup>

- The fold should resemble a folded fan or an accordion, and you should start seeing the shape of a bow.
- For very large bows, you might prefer to use 4 or 5 accordion folds.





**8 Place a dot of hot glue in each of the creases of the accordion fold.** First, place a small dot of glue in the top and bottom folds that are facing you. Then, flip the bow over and put another drop of glue inside the fold in the center. Pinch the center of the bow for 15-30 seconds to keep the sides together while the glue dries.<sup>[7]</sup>

- If you'd prefer, you can use double-sided fabric tape instead of hot glue. Just cut small pieces that will fit inside the folds.<sup>[8]</sup>



**9 Glue one end of the smaller strip to the center of the bow.** Place a dot of hot glue in the center of the bow, then press the end of your thinner rectangular strip to the glue. Wrap the thinner strip all the way around the center of the bow. Trim off any excess, then glue down the other end to finish your bow!<sup>[9]</sup>

- To make the center piece look neater, place a small drop of glue underneath the top folded layer, as well. This will keep the unsecured corner from lifting away from the bow.
- Try attaching your bow to a barrette or alligator clip to make a hairbow, or glue it to a longer strip of fabric to make a cute bow tie!<sup>[10]</sup>

## Method 2 of 3: Making a Simple Ribbon Bow



**1 Cut one long strip of grosgrain ribbon and one shorter piece.** The finished bow will be about half as long as your strips of fabric. For instance, if you want to make a 4 in (10 cm), you'd cut your ribbon to be 8 in (20 cm). A 2 in (5.1 cm) strip of ribbon will be plenty for your shorter piece.<sup>[11]</sup>

- The width of your ribbon will determine the width of your bow. 1.5 in (3.8 cm) is a good option for most bows, but you could use thicker ribbon for a larger bow, or multiple loops of a thinner ribbon if you'd prefer!



**2 Seal the ends of your ribbon with a lighter to prevent fraying.** Strike your lighter, then lightly pass the flame under the edges of your ribbon. Don't leave the flame in one place for too long—move it back and forth rapidly to ensure you don't scorch the ribbon. One quick pass should be enough to seal the ends.<sup>[12]</sup>

- If you're a kid, be sure to ask for an adult's help for this step!



**3 Put a vertical line of hot glue in the center of the long ribbon.** Being careful not to burn yourself, draw a thin strip of hot glue down the center of the ribbon from top to bottom. Don't make the line too thick, though, or the excess might be visible on your finished bow.<sup>[13]</sup>

- If you need help finding the exact center of the ribbon, fold it in half from left to right, then crease the fold. When you unfold the ribbon, the line will be in the center.



**4 Fold the left and right edges in and press them into the glue.** First, take one side of the ribbon and line it up with the glue. Try not to cover all of the glue, though—both edges need about the same amount of glue to be secure.<sup>[14]</sup>

- Work quickly, since hot glue doesn't take long to dry.
- Once you've glued down the left and right edges of the ribbon, you should start to see a bow shape emerging.

**Tip:** If you accidentally cover all of the glue, just use a new strip for the other side. However, the more glue you use, the more likely it will be to show when you're finished, so try to use it sparingly.





**5 Create 3 accordion folds in the center of the bow.** Fold the top and bottom quarters of the ribbon in toward you. Then, fold the center of the ribbon away from you. This should create an accordion-style fold that goes forward, back, and forward again.<sup>[15]</sup>

- This will help give your no-sew bow the characteristic gather in the center.



**6 Place a drop of glue inside each of the accordion folds.** To ensure your bow holds its shape, place a small drop of glue in each of the 3 folds you just made. This will finish creating the shape of your bow.<sup>[16]</sup>

- Be especially careful not to use too much glue here, or it could make your bow too stiff.

**Want to make a double bow?** Fold a second ribbon the exact same way as you did the first. Then, glue both bows together in the center, so they're lined up long side to long side.<sup>[17]</sup>



**7** **Glue the small strip of ribbon around the center of the bow.** Place a small dot of hot glue on the underside of your bow, right in the center. Then, press the end of your smaller strip of fabric to the glue and wrap it snugly around the accordion pleats you made. Trim off any excess, then glue the other end in place to complete your no-sew bow! <sup>[18]</sup>

- Fabric bows make adorable hair accessories, but you can also use them to decorate crafts, jewelry, and gifts!

Method  
3

### Method 3 of 3: Creating a Bow with Tails



**1** **Cut a strip of fabric 3x longer than the size bow you want.** If you're curious how to make fabric bows with tails, it couldn't be easier! Just start with a large piece of fabric with a length that's about 3 times longer than you want the finished bow to be. The width should be about 3 times wider than your finished bow, as well. <sup>[19]</sup>

- For instance, if you want a bow that's 5 in (13 cm) with tails that are 3 in (7.6 cm), you'd cut a piece of fabric that's 15 in × 9 in (38 cm × 23 cm).

**Tip:** If you want a stiffer bow, apply iron-on interfacing to the underside of the fabric after you cut it. Just cut the interfacing to about the same size as your fabric rectangle, then iron it in place.



**2 Fold the top and bottom edges down to the middle and glue them.** Place the fabric so the longer side is in front of you, then run a thin line of glue all the way along the top and bottom of the material. Fold the top edge down to the center of the fabric and press it down, then fold the bottom edge up to the center in the same way.<sup>[20]</sup>

- If you'd prefer, you can use double-sided fabric tape in place of hot glue.
- Allow the glue to dry for about 30 seconds before you move on.



**3 Make a vertical fold in the middle of the fabric, then pin the new center.** Bring the right side of the glued fabric all the way over to the left side and line up the edges. Then, take a straight pin or a needle and push it through all of the layers of the material and back up again.<sup>[21]</sup>

- This will hold the sides together as you shape the bow.
- You can tie a piece of string around the bow instead of using a pin, if you'd prefer.





**4 Open the folds in the fabric without removing the pin.** Lay the fabric so both raw edges are laid flat—one on the left and one on the right. In addition, rearrange the center fold so the pin stays in the center, with folded bow loops on either side.<sup>[22]</sup>

- Once you see a basic bow shape, you can remove the pin from the fabric. Just hold it in place with your fingers in the meantime.
- The raw edges of the fabric will form the tails of your bow.



**5 Tie a piece of string around the center of the bow to secure it.** After you remove the pin, wrap a piece of string around the center of the bow several times. Pull the string taut as you do this to create a defined center for your bow. Knot the ends of the string securely when you're finished.<sup>[23]</sup>

- You'll cover this string in the next step, so it doesn't matter what color it is or how neatly you tie it.





**6** **Glue a small strip of fabric around the center of the bow.** To cover the string, cut a small piece of fabric that matches your bow. Place a drop of glue on the underside of the bow in the center, then press the end of your fabric to the glue. Wrap the strip all the way around the bow, trim the excess, and glue down the other side.<sup>[24]</sup>

- The width of your fabric strip can vary depending on your preference, but about  $\frac{3}{4}$  in (1.9 cm) and 2 in (5.1 cm) should be fine.
- For a more subtle look, use the same fabric as the rest of your bow. However, you can create a cute contrast by using a different, complementary color, if you prefer.
- To make a no-sew sailor bow, attach a barrette or an alligator clip to the back of your bow when it's finished!

## Video [Read Video Transcript](#)

---

<https://www.wikihow.com/video/8/86/Make+a+No+Sew+Bow+Step+0.1080p.mp4>

## References

1. ↑ <https://youtu.be/rMFree2Cyvo?t=91>
2. ↑ <https://youtu.be/rMFree2Cyvo?t=106>
3. ↑ <https://youtu.be/rMFree2Cyvo?t=134>
4. ↑ <https://youtu.be/rMFree2Cyvo?t=157>
5. ↑ <https://youtu.be/rMFree2Cyvo?t=175>
6. ↑ <https://youtu.be/22mWTAZEswU?t=27>
7. ↑ <https://youtu.be/rMFree2Cyvo?t=217>
8. ↑ <https://sweetredpoppy.com/no-sew-girls-fabric-hair-bows/>
9. ↑ <https://youtu.be/rMFree2Cyvo?t=293>

10. ↑ <https://sweetredpoppy.com/no-sew-girls-fabric-hair-bows/>
11. ↑ <https://youtu.be/upO4FXd7Fmc?t=9>
12. ↑ <https://www.theribbonretreat.com/custom/modules/FreeProjects/PDFSealingRibbonEnds.pdf>
13. ↑ <https://youtu.be/hX0pmMVZKoM?t=17>
14. ↑ <https://youtu.be/hX0pmMVZKoM?t=37>
15. ↑ <https://youtu.be/upO4FXd7Fmc?t=48>
16. ↑ <https://youtu.be/upO4FXd7Fmc?t=58>
17. ↑ <https://youtu.be/upO4FXd7Fmc?t=100>
18. ↑ <https://youtu.be/upO4FXd7Fmc?t=126>
19. ↑ <https://sewguide.com/make-a-big-bow/>
20. ↑ <https://sewguide.com/make-a-big-bow/>
21. ↑ <https://sewguide.com/make-a-big-bow/>
22. ↑ <https://sewguide.com/make-a-big-bow/>
23. ↑ <https://sewguide.com/make-a-big-bow/>
24. ↑ <https://sewguide.com/make-a-big-bow/>

## About This Article



Co-authored by:  
**Amy Bobinger**  
wikiHow Staff Writer

This article was co-authored by wikiHow staff writer, **Amy Bobinger**. Amy Bobinger has been a writer and editor at wikiHow since 2017. She especially enjoys writing articles that help people overcome interpersonal hurdles but frequently covers a variety of subjects, including health and wellness, spirituality, gardening, and more. Amy graduated with a B.A. in English Lit from Mississippi College in 2011 and now lives in her hometown with her husband and two young sons. This article has been viewed 29,986 times.

★ ★ ★ ★ ☆  
10 votes - 52%

Co-authors: **6**  
Updated: **May 17, 2021**  
Views: **29,986**

Categories: [Featured Articles](#) | [Crafts](#)

<https://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-No-Sew-Bow>

The text and visual content in this PDF is intended only for your personal, non-commercial use. Any commercial reproduction of the contents of this document without the express written permission of wikiHow, Inc., is prohibited.