
Upholstered Headboard with Amanda Brown

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

(upbeat music) - One of the best things I've ever upholstered for my house is a headboard. This padded backdrop adds color and texture to an otherwise blank wall, and I can sit for hours watching my favorite movie in bed. With this tutorial, we'll learn how to sew welt cord, mitered corners, and boxing for the perfect tailored fit, and we'll use simple woodworking to cut out a custom shape, and make this queen-sized headboard. We'll even upholster the backside so you can make a matching footboard.

Chapter 2 - Materials

Materials

- To construct this queen size headboard you'll need a full sheet of plywood which we'll cut into five different pieces. It's gonna be 3/4 inch thick. The plywood for the headboard is gonna be 48 inches by 63 inches wide. You'll also need two pieces that are six inches wide by 12 inches tall. And two pieces that are six inches wide by 18 inches tall to construct the legs for the headboard. You can have all these pieces cut at your local hardware store. You'll also need a template for the shape of your headboard. You can use any stiff material to make that template. You'll need a jigsaw to cut out the shape. A sander to sand the edges. To construct the legs you'll need a drill, drill bit and screwdriver attachment. Sharpie and glue. Clamps to hold the wood together and screws which are one inch long to hold the two pieces of wood for the leg together. Pencil, hammer, you'll also need a tape measure, ruler, square and yardstick. You'll need two slabs that are 24 by 82 inches of two inch supersoft foam. And you'll also need four yards of Dacron. Cardboard tack strip, a carving knife for cutting out the foam and spray adhesive for attaching it to the plywood. You'll also need some basic upholstery tools which include pliers, staple remover, staples and staple gun, regulator and a rubber mallet. And all of these can be found at either a hardware store or an online upholstery supply shop. You'll need yellow chalk, your goggles of course and scissors. We have these nail in plastic guides to put into the legs and keep the bottom of the fabric from getting scuffed. And to attach the headboard to your bed frame you'll need bolts that are approximately two inches long and nuts. Four of those and some allen wrenches to tighten those nuts. For this project I'm using this great cotton with a print. I need eight yards of this for the headboard project. If you don't want seams in your headboard consider using a fabric that's non-directional where you can railroad it which means running across this way instead of running off the roll. What's great about this project is you're not putting any weight on it by sitting on the headboard so you can get away with a lot of different types of fabric to upholster your headboard. I would recommend a wide fabric so you don't wind up with seams everywhere. And a medium weight fabric is probably gonna be best for long lasting durability. And to sew everything together we'll need our sewing machine, thread and 14 yards of our 5/32 inch FiberFlex welt cord. You need a single welt cord foot and a lot of home sewing machines will have this as an option and it definitely comes on an industrial sewing machine. The sewing machine foot has a small groove on the left side which cups the cording as you sew. I also like to have either T pins or my hand stapling plier and staples to hold the pieces together as I sew.

Chapter 3 - Create Headboard Shape and Add Padding

Make headboard template and jigsaw wood

- The most fun thing about making a headboard from scratch is choosing the shape of your headboard. If you're working on a headboard for the first time, I'd recommend choosing something that's a more simple shape just until you get your feet wet with woodworking and upholstery. To determine the shape of your headboard you can find all types of pictures online for inspiration. I've chosen a simple arching curve. To make the template for the shape I'm using dust cover, which you can find at any upholstery supply shop. But you could also use a piece of cardboard or paper. Just something big enough so you can trace the shape onto your headboard. To make my template I cut a piece of dust cover the width of my headboard, and I freehanded the shape to the halfway point. Then I cut out the shape on that half of template, flipped over my piece, traced the other half, and cut it all out. And that's how I got this template shape. And we're working with a queen size headboard, which I use 63 inch width for a queen size headboard, just so it's slightly wider than my mattress. If you're making a headboard for another size, measure your bed to determine the size of your headboard. To get this 63 inch by 48 inch piece of plywood I went to my local hardware store and had them cut it to shape. This is great because you don't have to worry about using a big table saw or having those tools. So we're going to lay this template out on the headboard. The great thing about this dust cover is it kind of sticks to the wood, so I don't have to tape it in place. And it doesn't move around as I am drawing. So I'm lining up the edges. I have my top lined up with the top edge of the plywood. With it in place, I'll use a Sharpie to trace the outline of the shape onto the plywood. Let's get out the jigsaw and cut out the shape. As with any power tool or saw, you want to make sure that you follow the manufacturer's instructions for safety and operation. Always wear goggles to protect your eyes. And if you're sensitive to dust, wear a dust mask. With this jigsaw I'm just being really careful to keep my hands and fingers out of the way of the saw, of course. And it's always best to get your blade started before you come into contact with the wood. And that'll help get it into the wood easier. I have my wood clamped to my work surface. And that just keeps this from moving around as I saw, which is really important. We don't want the wood moving around as we're sawing. I'll just go ahead and cut out the shape. You want to work on your piece of wood where it's most comfortable for you. So position your body and move around the shape of the board until you have the whole piece cut out. I also like to hold the part that's sticking out over the table with my non-dominant hand. And that just kind of helps steady the wood as well. And always make sure that wherever you're cutting is away from your tabletop surface. You don't want to come into contact with that as you're cutting. Most of these little imperfections can be sanded off. So don't worry too much about that. But if you have a corner that just didn't come off on the first round, you can go back and perfect that. We'll repeat the same steps to do the other side of the headboard. Next we're going to sand off the splinters and raw edges. So I have a small handheld sander. You can do this with sandpaper, but it's going to take you a while. So I recommend having an electric sander for this. And I'm using a coarse sandpaper. An 80 grit should be a good grit for sanding this kind of thing. I like to sand off any sharp corners, and that keeps the fabric from rubbing through on those sharp points. I'm going to remove this clamp so I can get to this last edge here. And we need to flip the board around so the other side is hanging off and we can sand the bottom edge. So we're sanding all the edges, even the ones we didn't cut. We're going to move onto constructing the legs and attaching them to the headboard.

Construct headboard legs

- We're constructing the legs for the head board. These legs are made up of two pieces, which you

will also have your hardware store cut for you out of the left over plywood from your headboard. So the pieces that I have are six inches wide by 12 inches tall, and six inches wide by 18 inches tall. We're making a 60 inch tall headboard, but if you want to make your headboard taller or shorter, you can vary the size of the smaller piece to increase or decrease the height of your headboard. The width of the boarder on my headboard is six inches which is why I've chosen a six inch width for the legs of my headboard. As you can see, I've already put one together here and this is a really easy construction. We're just gonna glue the two boards together, and we're going to pre-drill holes and then screw them together with one inch screws. So, apply some glue to both boards. So we've got the two pieces together. I'm gonna carefully move this to the end of my headboard, and clamp this in place. I'm not permanently attaching this at this point, I'm just using my headboard to hold this while I attach some screws to these two pieces. Make sure all your edges are aligned. We're going to pre-drill our two bottom holes. And then we'll use our one inch screws to permanently attach them together. You don't have to perfectly attach these screws in a certain place, just try to evenly space them between the right and left sides of the foot. We'll flip this around and do the other two screws. We're gonna pre-drill and attach the screws Just as we did before. We can take that off. I'm using these quick grip clamps, which are really easy to use with one hand, 'cause they just have a handle that pumps. So I highly recommend these for your woodworking projects. I'm gonna apply glue to this longer piece of wood. I'm going to flip it over and attach the longer piece to the front side of the headboard. We'll clamp this in place. Make sure the edge of the leg is even with the edge of the headboard. Pre-drill four holes into the leg for the screws. Attach your screw driver attachment, and insert the screws. We're using the same one inch screws to attach the leg to the headboard. And repeat the same steps to attach the other leg.

Add foam and batting

- Wee need to attach the foam to our headboard but first we'll need to determine the shape of the foam that goes on the headboard. To do this, we'll get our template out from the first step of cutting out the shape in the plywood, and we're going to measure in six inches all the way around the template and cut that out to get the interior shape of the foam. I have my ruler, and a piece of chalk, and I'm gonna go around and measure in six inches, from the outside edge of the template. On the curved part of the template I'm gonna do extra lines just so I have plenty of notches to keep me lined up with my six inch border. Now go back and connect these lines. Just to check your freehanded line do a spot check of your freehanded line to make sure that it closely matches the outside edge of your template, and then go back with your scissors and cut the interior shape out. You can set the border to the side, we'll use this later when we cut out or fabric. I've measured my head board and I know from the top of this part, without the border is 38 inches to the leg. So if I subtract six inches for the `border we just removed, I have 32 inches. So I'm gonna write that on here. 32 inches from here to the leg. So when I trace this shape on the foam I'll make sure that I have 32 inches of foam, from this point to the bottom edge of the foam. I'm using two inch, soft density foam, since we're not sitting on the head board, we just need a soft density foam, so it squishes as we lean back against it. And the foam is not wide enough to do the entire head board, so I'm gonna glue to edges together, to ake the height of the foam that I need. So we'll do this by aligning the edges. We'll use foam and fabric spray adhesive to attach the edges of the foam together. You can find this at an craft store or upholstery supply shop. Spray the adhesive to both edges of the foam, and be really careful not to get it on your work surface. Let that get tacky, just let it dry for a few seconds. We'll flip the top piece over, next to the bottom piece. We'll just press the foam together,

to get that connection nice and stuck, and use the interior part that we cut out, to trace the shape for the foam for the head board. And remember from cutting this out, that my measurement from here to the bottom of the head board is 32 inches. So I'll use my yard stick to line that up. That's about right. Now do the opposite side. Measure ... I'm gonna use the sharpie to trace the outline in the foam. Now I'm gonna use my straight edge to make this vertical line. Okay. We have the shape all drawn out, we'll use an electric carving knife, which is probably something you already have in your cupboard at home, to cut out the shape of the foam. It's really best to have an electric knife, a bread knife is gonna be a little to difficult, to cut the shape out with, and the key to using the carving knife, is to keep the blade perpendicular to the top surface of the foam. You don't want to angle it to one side of the other, or it creates a weird edge. (knife whirring) I'm gonna go ahead and cut this chunk off. (knife whirring) Using the carving knife takes a little practice, so if you get a, kind of, choppy edge, don't worry about it, foam is really forgiving, and we still have another light layer of padding before the fabric goes on. So we have one more step to the foam, and since I'm using a really light colored fabric, I'm going to make the top side of my foam the other side, I don't want this dark sharpie line showing through my fabric. So I'm gonna flip this over, we're going to attach what I like to call band aids to the seem, just to help reinforce this seem, and keep it from coming apart. So I've cut out strips, and this can be made out of any scrap fabric, I chose a white fabric because the fabric I'm using on my head board is light colored, so I want this to be as discreet as possible, but if you have a dark fabric or a really thick fabric, you can use any scrap fabric for this. I'm gonna place this next to the seem, I'm spraying spray adhesive on the foam and on the band aid. (adhesive spraying) We'll let this get tacky, and then we'll flip it and patch it to the seem. This will reinforce that seem in our foam and keep it from coming apart. I'm gonna repeat this for the other side. (adhesive sprays) We can cut off this excess fabric. We're gonna use a spray adhesive to attach the foam to the head board. And we'll do the same as before, where we spray to the foam and also to the head board and then we'll stick the two together. I'm just gonna work half at a time. (can spraying) Now line this up with this bottom edge, keep it in place, when you're working with spray adhesive make sure you work in a well ventilated space because it can get a little fume-y. We'll use dacron to pad the top of the foam, and this dacron you can find at most craft stores, and definitely upholstery supply shops. It's made out of polyester, it's also known as a batting, and it adds just a smooth layer over the foam, to create a nice smooth layer for the fabric before we put that on. This particular dacron is 54 inches wide, which is a good size for a head board project. I'm going to use the spray adhesive ... On the foam. And then I'll just roll the dacron out and attach it to that surface. I'll make sure the dacron covers the entire surface of the foam. And then we'll trim the dacron even with the edge of the foam. And just continue trimming all the way around the perimeter of the foam.

Chapter 4 - Upholstered Headboard

Trace and cut headboard fabric

- We need to cut out the fabric for the main part of the headboard. I've taped my fabric to my work surface to keep the patterns square as we trace and cut. With a pattern that has a really small repeat like this one, it may be necessary to tape the fabric to keep the pattern straight. And I use a long straightedge to check to see how straight the pattern is before I tape it. We can make some adjustments as we're stapling the fabric to the headboard, but we'll need to leave several extra inches so we can make those adjustments as we staple. Going back to the template we cut out before, this is the interior part of the headboard. I'm gonna lay this out on the fabric. I've pushed my

template up as far as I can on my fabric so I have plenty of extra fabric down here for stapling to the backside of the headboard. I also need to center my template on my pattern. So let's fold this in half and find the middle of the top. Cutting a little notch out to indicate the middle of the top. And this should already have the middle of the bottom marked, but I'll just double-check that. Yes. I've already cut that, so we're in good shape. So the fabric reaches around the padding and can staple to the headboard. I'll give myself about two or three inches of fabric here for stapling and on all sides. And we'll leave the bottom extra long for wrapping around the back of the headboard and stapling. I'm gonna use my straightedge to find a vertical line, and then I'm going to lay my template over that to find the center of my template. And remember, I can always make adjustments as I'm stapling. That's why we're leaving a lot of extra fabric for moving the fabric around. My template is on the fabric and as square as possible to the pattern. I'm going to trace around all sides of my template, leaving two to three inches of extra fabric for adjusting the pattern and stapling, except the bottom, which I'll leave extra long for wrapping around the back of the headboard and stapling. A nifty trick for sharpening your chalk, use your scissors to slice off the edges on either side, until you have a nice sharp point. I've made a vertical line to indicate the central axis of my fabric. Move your straightedge over to make your right and left sides. Now we just need to cut this out. We'll tape this piece to the headboard and get started a pull-string.

Attach fabric to padded portion of the headboard

- I'm gonna attach this fabric over the padded part of the headboard. So I have the center line marked on my fabric at the top. I'm gonna follow that down and find the center of the bottom. Now I need to measure and mark the center of the top and bottom of the headboard. 51 inches, so 25 and a half is gonna be the center. I'm following the 31 inches down into my wood. I'm not using the Sharpie for this, just so it doesn't show through my fabric. Move your headboard around as you need to to easily access the fabric and the stapling. I'm using my pneumatic staple gun, which is hooked up to an air hose and air compressor, and this is the easiest way to staple on upholstery. You can also use an electric staple gun. It just may give you trouble getting into the wood all the way. I'm pushing down the foam so the edge is not square, lining up my middle marks. I'm gonna attach a sub-staple. To do this, we'll put one side of the nose flush to the wood, with the other side sticking up. (stapling) (stapling) Those first two didn't go in all the way. Which makes it really easy to remove and adjust as we go. I'm smoothing the fabric from top to bottom. I've got my middle row lined up with my middle mark. And I'm gonna bring this around and staple it to the back side of the headboard. With sub-staples. (stapling) Gonna check this top staple to make sure it's still in place. Looks like it moved a little bit, so I'm just gonna pop that out and add another staple. The staples should go pretty close to the end of the foam. We don't want air pocket between the fabric and the wood. (stapling) Okay. We always work in opposites to keep the fabric evenly pulled across the headboard. And we've attached the top and the bottom, now we're gonna attach the sides. So. Keeping my sides evenly pulled, I don't wanna pull that vertical line out of shape. It's looking pretty good, my line's staying pretty straight. Want to make sure I still have enough extra fabric on all sides to cover the foam. I'm gonna attach a sub-staple to the middle of this side. And I'm squishing down the foam again to take off that square edge. And attaching a few sub-staples. (stapling) I'm gonna do a visual check of that line. It's gotten pulled a little bit this way, but when we tighten it to the other side, it should straighten the line out. I'm smoothing with the palm of my hand to get the excess fabric out. You don't wanna stretch the fabric too tightly. You just wanna get any excess fabric. (stapling) Okay, I'm gonna take a look at that line. They're still pulled a little bit too tight to

the right side, so I'm gonna listen the staple. You can use your pliers to take the subs out. Carefully remove those, so I don't leave a big hole in my fabric. I'll loosen that up a little bit and staple again. (stapling) This process of lining up the pattern is just a process of give and take, so you may have to take staples out and readjust to get the pattern straight. Then we can continue sub-stapling around the edge of the headboard. (stapling) (stapling) (stapling) I've sub-stapled around all four sides of the main part of the headboard, but to do one last double check, I'm gonna sit this guy up and look at the pattern to make sure everything's nice and straight before I start permanently stapling. I'm checking these dots just to make sure they're nice and straight with that vertical line, and it looks like things got shifted a little bit to the left as I was stapling. So it's not a major concern. I think what I'll do is I'll take the sub-staples out and staple towards the right to correct that. I'm gonna remove my sub-staples as I staple my permanent staples. And the permanent staples go in with both prongs all the way into the wood, and so that's gonna happen just by putting the nose completely flat to the wood as we staple. Use my pliers to remove the sub-staples, and I do just a few inches at a time. Then I'll go back. And attach my permanent staples. (stapling) These permanent staples need to be really close together so the fabric is evenly held in place. And I'm gonna use my ruler, just as a double check to make sure I'm not attaching staples beyond my six-inch tack band. And that's just about perfect. I'm six inches in, and my staples are just on the wood side of that six inches. So our tack band should cover that. So I'll just keep going here. Now I'm gonna smooth with the palm of my hand. Getting that square edge off. (stapling) And, staple. (stapling) I'm just gonna keep moving around the headboard once I get the top stapled. I'm gonna go to the bottom, and then I'll do opposite sides. And we'll be all stapled in place. (stapling) (stapling) As you approach the intersection between the leg and the headboard, you'll need to make some release cuts to release the fabric. I'm gonna use my chalk to mark the corner of the leg, and I'm gonna cut straight in to that mark. This is gonna fold under and go down into that notch. And I'm going to (stapling) staple that in place. And then we'll continue stapling to the end here. (stapling) (stapling) Okay, we'll also need to make another release cut where the wood intersects the leg at the bottom of the headboard. To do that, we'll make another mark. And we will cut straight in to that mark at a diagonal. This gives us enough fabric to fold under and wrap to the bottom of the headboard. (stapling) For the bottom of the headboard, we're gonna start at the middle and work our excess fabric out to the side. And it's really easy to see where the pattern lines up, so I'll just pull it to the same tightness. (stapling) And put in my permanent staples. (stapling) (stapling) (stapling) At this corner, I'll fold under the excess fabric and staple this down. (stapling) Before we trim off the excess fabric, and finish up this part of the headboard, we're gonna double check our staples with our ruler and make sure they're pretty close to that six-inch line. These are all looking pretty good. I can see that my staples ooch out a little bit as they get towards the top. So I'm gonna add a second row of staples to get a little bit closer. (stapling) I want these staples really close to the six inches so that when I put my welt cord down later, it won't create little puckers where I staple in that air pocket. (stapling) Let's trim off the rest of this excess fabric. It's really starting to come together. Let's move on to the border.

Cut tack band fabric and bias strips for welt cord

- To construct the tack band, also known as the border around the main piece of our headboard, we're gonna use the template that we cut out earlier to trace onto the fabric. Before we start tracing we need to cut this into three sections. I'm going to connect these intersections from the corner to the inside corner we're gonna separate the three pieces at these corners. This is gonna

make our mitered corners that I talked about earlier. The benefit of mitering these corners as opposed to tracing this as all one piece is that I can tailor the corner on the headboard so it wraps around snugly instead of having some pleating in the corners. It also does a tremendous job of saving fabric, which good for a headboard because it requires a lot of fabric. When I'm laying these pieces out on my fabric I want to take into account where they will connect to the main piece of fabric on the headboard. And if you have a really ornate pattern or something that continues across the headboard you'll want to match the pattern from the tact band to the main piece of the headboard. Mine's pretty easy to match since I just have this simple dot pattern. The other thing to keep in mind is our original template was not long enough on the sides to cover the entire height of the headboard so we'll need to make sure this finishes out at 38 inches plus enough extra fabric for seam allowance and stapling. So I'm gonna lay this out. My six inches starts about halfway into a row of these little circles. And I wanna measure from that top corner down. 38 inches. Let me get my-- wanna measure from that top corner down, let's say 40 inches just so we have enough to staple at the bottom. I also wanna match my pattern from top to bottom so I need to reference my headboard and where the top corner aligns with the pattern. On my headboard the inside corner of the tact band aligns right in the middle of one of these circles so since I have a few extra inches at the bottom, I'm just gonna scoot that down so when I attach this, it matches up with the fabric on the main part of my headboard. So now that I've moved this I'm just gonna double check and make sure I still have 40 inches, which I do. And I'm going to trace around the shape. For the inside, an angled part of the piece I'm gonna keep a half inch seam allowance and for the outside I'm gonna leave two inches to wrap around the headboard and staple to the back. So I'm gonna use my ruler to make a straight edge. You may have to do some adjusting like we did before with the fabric just to keep the grains straight. And when I have about a half inch from that edge I'm gonna mark it in chalk. I'll make another mark a half inch out from this edge. From this point, which is half inch up from here, I'm gonna draw a line straight across and this will wrap around the edge of the headboard and staple to the back. We have this piece drawn so let's go ahead and cut it out. I'm gonna leave this long. It's a little more than my two inches, but extra never hurts and I can't do anything with an inch of fabric so-- And since my fabric is symmetrical on my headboard, the way it's placed with the pattern, I'm gonna flip this piece over and use it to trace the other one and I'm just gonna line up the pattern from this piece of fabric to the one underneath. The only time it's best to trace out a whole new piece for the opposite side is if the pattern is not symmetrical from one side to the other or you have a really large pattern and there's something different on the right and left sides then you'll want to match the pattern separately on each side of the headboard. I'm gonna use some T pins to hold the pattern together. Once you have the pattern lined up you can go ahead and cut it out. And my outside edge is a little bit off, but this is the edge that's just stapled to the back of the headboard so I'm not super concerned about that. I have my right and left sides. I just need to draw the middle piece for the tact band. I'm gonna leave these here for reference. I want my middle piece of tact band to be centered on the headboard and I also want these mitered corners to match across the seam so I'm gonna look at the pieces that I drew before. Remember, these have a half inch seam allowance on them. The actual seam will be right in the center of these circles. I'm gonna look at this again. Let's see the other side here. With my half inch seam allowance taken out. Need to line that up about there. So that leaves me a half inch here. So the best thing to do for laying this middle piece out is to get it centered on the fabric and if possible, get it as close as possible to matching in these mitered corners. So I'm looking at the corner I've already cut out for this side piece and this is about as close as I can get to matching and you'll notice that I've

folded under this half inch seam allowance so I can see where the actual seam connects here. So I'm gonna smooth this piece across and I'm following the same horizontal line all the way across the pattern to make sure that the bottom here lines up. And that looks pretty centered. I'll go to my center here and that's looking centered on this axis so I think we're in a good spot here. We need to add a half inch seam allowance to the inside edge of the tact band and where the mitered corners seam to the sides. Once we get to this point a half inch from here we're going to follow the grain or the pattern to draw a line straight up. That's gonna be the flap that wraps around that corner very snugly. On the outside edge of the tact band we can just add an additional two to three inches like we did for the other tact band. This will wrap around the outside and staple to the back of the headboard. And we need to cut it out. Okay. I'm gonna use the main template from the headboard to calculate the number of inches that we need for welt cord. And this can be a really rough estimation. We just wanna make sure we have enough, but it's okay if we have several extra inches. So I know that this needs to be 32 inches and I'm gonna double that, so it's 64 inches. We also need welt cord to go around this inside edge between the tact band and the main piece of fabric on the headboard. So that's another 60 inches. So I need 124 inches and I'm just gonna round up to 130 inches for the welt cord between the tact band and the main piece of fabric. So 130 inches. We're also gonna need welt cord on an outside edge of the headboard on the backside so I'm gonna add an extra 20 inches to accommodate for that extra space and height on the back of the headboard. So we'll need 150 inches for the back of the headboard and 130 inches of welt cord for the inside of the headboard so that equals 280 inches of welt cord. Welt cord is also known as piping, which I'm sure you're familiar with that. And to construct it, we draw thin strips that are about an inch and a half wide on the bias. And the bias is a 45 degree angle. Now I have plenty of fabric here so I'm gonna do a true 45 degree angle, but if you happen to have a fabric that's really expensive or maybe you're working with a limited number of yards you can always cheat the angle slightly and it'll still work for your welt cord. So a true bias is at a 45 degree angle, but I never like to follow a line in a pattern just because that's too regular and as we're seaming pieces end to end it will be noticeable where the seam is. So I'm going to change my angle slightly where I'm running across the pattern. And obviously it's too hard to get 280 inches of welt cord in one strip so we're gonna cut out individual strips of welt cord and then we'll seam them end to end to make our one long strip of welt cord. I have a stick that I've cut out for our workshop that's an inch and a half wide and we call this the welt cord stick. So I'm using that to mark my strips of welt cord. If you don't have a piece like this that's already cut out, you can use a normal yard stick and just make sure that the strips wind up being an inch and a half apart. So I'm gonna draw on either side. I don't want a lot of seams in my welt cord so it's best to keep the lengths to at least 30 inches long if you can. So I'll just continue drawing until I have a measured amount of 280 inches and once I get to that amount I'm gonna go back and I'm gonna mark the bottom of every strip of welt cord. When we seam this together I'll line up a marked end with an unmarked end and that will keep our pattern running the same direction. This is especially important if you're working with a fabric like velvet where there's a nap and a change in the direction will change the sheen of the fabric. Now we just need to cut it out. Once you've cut out all of your strips we can move over to the sewing machine.

Create custom welt cord and attach to tack band

- I have my tack band pieces. This is my left side and my middle piece for the tack band. I'm going to line up these edges. I'm going to flip the middle piece onto the left piece. Line up these cut edges. And seam it together. I'm going to pin these together, just so they stay held in place as we

sew. Okay. You can use a medium stitch length for this. And remember, we're keeping a half-inch seam allowance. I'm going to take my pin out before my needle gets there. (sewing machine clicks and whirs) I'm going to pivot at the corner. And continue sewing. (sewing machine clicks and whirs) Do a little backstitch on this inside corner, (sewing machine clicks and whirs) keep that from coming apart. And that's it. Go ahead and repeat that for the other corner. (scissors snip) I'm going to move on to sewing welt cord. I have a marked end and an unmarked end. I'm going to put these together, but first I need to cut the ends to be complementary 45 degree angles. (scissors snip) Now I'm going to put them good sides facing. I'm going to line up that last cut end so it makes the shape of an A. I'm going to skew them slightly so there's a half inch between this intersection and this cut edge. You can see there is, on both sides. I'm going to sew from this intersection to this intersection and when it's sewn together we'll have a nice clean seam and it keeps the edges aligned. Okay, so I'm going to put this through the sewing machine, from that to that. (sewing machine clicks and whirs) (scissors snip) I'm working with an industrial sewing machine, but you can use a home sewing machine for most fabrics. Just know that you may have a few limitations if you're working with a thicker fabric. I've already sewn all of my welt cord except for the last little bit, so I'm going to show you how to do that now. Now, the trick to making self welt cord, which is welt cord out of the same fabric, you need a single welt cord foot. A lot of home sewing machines will have this as an option, and it definitely comes on an industrial sewing machine. The sewing machine foot has a small groove on the left side which cups the cording as you sew. So we're going to wrap the fabric around the cord until the cut edges meet and zip it through the sewing machine. (sewing machine clicks and whirs) As you get to seams in your welt cord fabric, you want to open up these seams and lay the cording in between. This will minimize bulk in the seam. (sewing machine clicks and whirs) And we'll just continue sewing until we're to the end of the welt cord fabric. (sewing machine clicks and whirs) (scissors snip) And we have one nice long length of welt cord. Our last step in sewing is attaching the welt cord to the inside of the tack band. That will save us an extra step as we upholster the headboard because the welt cord will already be attached to the tack band and we won't have to staple it separately. So I have my tack band all sewn together. (fabric rustles) See here. I'm going to attach the welt cord to the inside edge of the tack band. I'm going to start with an end of welt cord and I'm going to line up the cut edge with the cut edge of the inside of the tack band. Then I'm going to place all of this underneath the welt cord foot at the same time. And keeping my half-inch seam allowance, I'm going to sew all the way around. (sewing machine clicks and whirs) You'll notice as I'm doing this that the right side of the fabric is facing me. (sewing machine clicks and whirs) When I get to a corner, I'm going to split the seam allowance on the underside of the fabric, to minimize bulk. (sewing machine clicks and whirs) As I approach this seam, I'm going to bend the welt cord at a 90-degree angle. I'm going to sew right to the corner. (sewing machine clicks and whirs) I'll pivot my fabric under the sewing foot and continue attaching the welt cord along the edge. (sewing machine clicks and whirs) I have a slight curve, so it's not much of an issue for me, but if you had a really sharp curve, it helps to make little release cuts in the tail of the welt cord so it bends along the curve. (sewing machine clicks and whirs) I like to cut these little tails off just to minimize bulk. (sewing machine clicks and whirs) (scissors snip) (sewing machine clicks and whirs) (scissors snip) And we're all finished sewing.

Attach tack band to headboard

- To attach the tack band to the headboard we'll start by measuring and drawing with a ruler a six inch line all the way around. And that will be our guide when we attach the tack band. In general,

white chalk is going to be the best color for most fabrics. You can use your air blower attachment to test white and yellow chalk, and blow the chalk out and see which one comes out easier, since that's the way we blow the chalk out anyway. But in general, white chalk is going to be the best for this application. I'm just going to keep moving around. As you're stapling you may notice that some of the staples may be on the inside of the chalk line. And if that's the case you can always use your staple remover and your pliers to remove those staples and add new ones. There are also a few spots that I noticed that the staples are pretty far from my chalk line. So I may go back and put an additional line of staples that get closer to that chalk line, just so we don't wind up with that air pocket I was talking about earlier. I'm going to use my straight edge to mark the two side lines. And then I'll freehand the top curved line. You can see here that my chalk line is kind of far from my staple line. So later I'll go back and add another row of staples to get that closer. So I'll do that right now. Okay, that looks pretty good. Get my tack band. I'll going to line this up on the headboard. Trying to find my center line of circles. Just work this out to the edge to make sure I'm in the right spot. It looks good. I want the edge of my welt cord lined up with the white line that I just drew. I'll hold that in place. Grab your staple gun. And flip this over. You're going to staple the tail of the welt cord and all of the seam allowances to the wood. With the center stapled in place I'm going to work out to the corner and make sure I have that in the right location. And then I'll work out the fabric in between the center and the corner. So I've cut the fabric in the corner so it's nice and bendy. Going to line up the welt cord with my two lines. Flip this back while holding it in place. Going to staple down the tail of the welt cord. I'm using permanent staples. We're going to secure this other corner. Now we'll go back to the middle and we'll staple all of the tack band in between the corner and the middle. So I'm lining up the edge of the welt cord with the white line, flipping the fabric over while I hold it in place. And stapling. I'm just going to work every few inches to make sure I can disperse this fabric evenly. Lining up with the white line. And staple. Okay, have this side stapled down. Going to repeat this process for the other side. So I have the tack band stapled all across the top. Now I'm going to go in, line up the welt cord with the white line, and staple the sides down. As we get to the connection between the leg and the headboard, we'll just snugly tuck the welt cord and tack band into that groove. Now we'll move onto the other side. So we have the tack band stapled all the way around. We're going to go back and reinforce the staple line with some cardboard tack strip. This cardboard tack strip is really great for helping reinforce staple lines. I'm going to push it into the welt cord to keep the welt cord nice and stiff and tight to the wood. And I'm just going to go all the way around with it. So I'm pushing this into the welt cord. Just going to keep moving along, pushing it into the welt cord. You can see that makes a really clean tight line on the tack band. When you get to the corner you're going to disconnect the cardboard tack strip even with the corner. For this curved side, I'm going to make little release cuts like we did in the welt cord, so it bends along the curve. Continue using your scored cardboard tack strip for this curved top. And when you get to the other side you can switch back to just the unscored cardboard tack strip. And keep stapling until you get to the other end. We'll all stapled. Before we can staple the fabric to the outside of the headboard, we need to add some Dacron. Let's clean this up. To cut out our Dacron for the tack bank, we can use the template to trace the shape onto the Dacron and cut it out. So I have my side pieces and my middle piece. When you cut around the template, make sure you leave one to two inches on the outside edge of the template to wrap around the sides of the headboard. Lay this out. And then I'll cut around the outside edge to cut out the right shape for the padding. When I get to the middle I can flip this piece of Dacron over and cut out the second half. Dacron is really forgiving. So it's not a big deal if our shape isn't perfectly like the piece that we have for the

template. We can always move the Dacron around so it pads the entire tack band. So that'll be for our top. And then we'll cut two side pieces out to cover the sides of the tack band. So for the side pieces, remember they need to be a little bit longer than our template piece. So I'm going to measure from the top corner to the bottom to make sure it's about 38 inches. So continue cutting. And we'll flip this over to cut the other side. Now let's staple the Dacron to the tack band. So I'll start with one of the sides. Going to staple in between the top layer and the bottom layer of the Dacron. So I'm going to put the nose of the staple gun in between and staple that down. When the fabric lays over that, the indentation made by the staple will be concealed. We also need to staple the outside edge, so staple in between the top and bottom layers all along the outside. Go ahead and repeat those steps for the top and other side of the tack band. Trim off the excess Dacron even with the back edge of the headboard. You can see I'm pushing the Dacron over the side of the headboard and trimming even with this back edge. And just continue doing this all the way around. Okay. So we'll go back to the middle to headboard and smooth the fabric on the tack band out towards the outside edge. Wrap the fabric around the wood, and staple to the back side of the headboard. We're going to work our way out from that middle staple. And make sure you're smoothing with the palm of your hand and pulling with the palm of your hand to get the smoothest look. At this point you can go ahead and permanently staple your fabric, unless you feel more comfortable using sub-staples. Because we're attached all the way around on the inside of the tack band, I'm going to go ahead and just permanently staple the outside edge since we just need to get it taut. So just continue stapling all the way around. As you get to a curve, you may need to make some shallow release cuts to get the fabric to follow the curve. Just make sure you don't cut that too deep. And I'm just putting staples every three or four inches to get started. And then I'll go back and add more staples. I've stapled all the way around. And as I approach the legs I'm going to clean up the welt cord and this leftover flap of fabric. So I'm going to cut off the excess to about two inches. I'm going to open up the welt cord. And when I get it, the welt cord exposed, I'm going to snip it even with the bottom edge of the headboard. This way. And wrap this all back up. And staple all the way across the bottom. I want this staple line to be below the bottom edge of the headboard. And staple around to the back. Repeat this step for the other leg. And then trim off the excess fabric on the back of the headboard. Time to cover the legs. To cover the legs you'll need to cut out two pieces of fabric that are 18 inches wide by 15 inches tall. We're going to blind tack these to the legs. And we won't need any padding or anything 'cause we don't want that getting caught in our nuts and bolts when we attach it to the bed frame. Even though the leg is hidden behind the mattress and box spring, I still like to do my best to pattern match from the tack band to the leg. So I'm going to eyeball where that pattern matching happens. And I want just enough fabric on this side to fold under and staple to the inside of the leg. And the fabric on the right side needs to wrap around and staple to the side of the legs. So it looks like we're in good shape there. So I'll holding this in place. Just as we did with the tack band, we're going to hold the fabric in place and we're going to staple on the back side underneath the fabric to hide the staples. So I'm holding the seam allowance, flipping this up. And I'm going to staple all the way across. Then I'm going to cut a piece of cardboard tack strip and reinforce that staple line with the cardboard tack strip. So let me double check this and make sure that we're still at the right spot. I'm going to staple this all the way across. And I'm also going to staple this around the side. I can flip this down. I'm not going to add any padding to this, because again, I don't want my screws to get stuck in the Dacron. So I'm going to fold under this top edge and wrap it around the leg to the inside. And I'm going to staple. And I'm going to use my pattern to keep this fabric straight. I'm going to cut off the excess on this side

down to half an inch so I can fold that under and staple that on top of that edge. So I'm going to pull it tight around the leg and cut the fabric off to half an inch beyond the leg. Then I'm going to fold this under and staple it on top of that fabric. The rest of the leg on the bottom wraps up like a present. So I'm going to fold the fabric around the side, put one staple. Same on this side. And I'm just going to fold this in, and that end. I'm going to cut the bottom fabric off to about half an inch beyond the end of the leg. Fold this up and staple it to the bottom. I fold this down, fold it under, and staple it on top of that. But first I'm going to cut some of this excess off. So leave about a half an inch beyond the back of the leg. Hold this under and staple it. To protect the bottom of the leg I'm going to attach these nail in plastic glides which will keep the fabric from getting scuffed and torn. And these just nail in with a hammer. I'm going to nail in one on each side of the leg, keep that fabric off the ground. That's it for the legs. Repeat these steps to cover and complete the other leg.

Chapter 5 - Finish and Attach to Bed Frame

Finish back of headboard

- When you're ready to finish up the back, flip the headboard face down onto your work surface. Be sure that the work surface is clean, and if you're having some trouble getting it clean, lay a piece of scrap fabric or Dacron on your work surface before putting your clean fabric on top of it. Starting at the bottom of the headboard near one leg, you'll attach the welt cord all the way around the perimeter, followed by a layer of cardboard tact strip to reinforce the welt cord and keep it from rocking around. I'm gonna show you how to finish this up here. Using your index finger and thumb, line the edge of the welt cord with the wooden edge of the headboard. When you get to corners, prebend the cording. I'm gonna cut out this excess fabric to minimize bulk. Continue stapling it down. You'll do this all the way around. I'll just keep going here. Until we get to the bottom of the headboard near the other leg. As you approach the leg, you're gonna cut off the welt cord half an inch beyond the bottom of the headboard. I'm gonna open this up. Cut off the cording even with the bottom of the headboard, and wrap the end and staple it in place. You're gonna start the welt cord the exact same way we finished the welt cord on the other side near the leg. For the cardboard tact strip, as you go around the curve you'll need to make little release cuts in it like we did before for the tack band. I've already done that there. And then it'll bend behind this welt cording curve. It'll be nice and tight. So just pushing the cardboard tact strip into the welt cord, and working your way around. I'm gonna cut it even with the next side. And I'm gonna cut off this little corner so it tucks nicely into the welt cord. And we'll just do another piece of straight welt cord down the side. We're finished with that. Desk cover is also known as cambric, and it's commonly used to cover the bottom and backs of furniture pieces to conceal all the visible staples and endings of fabric on the back and bottoms of furniture. So we're gonna use it here to cover the raw wood on the back of our headboard. Now, this desk cover doesn't come wide enough to cover the entire height of our headboard, so I've seamed two pieces together to make up the height of our headboard. We'll start by blind tacking one straight edge of the headboard, and for me, I'm gonna use the bottom, that make the most sense. So I'm gonna flip this over. So I'm lining up the desk cover about an inch of overlap, and then staple all the way across. Be careful not to stretch the desk cover as you're stapling. We're going to reinforce the staple line with a layer of cardboard tact strip. Align the edge of the cardboard tact strip with the bottom of the headboard, and staple it in place on top of the desk cover. When you approach the edge of the headboard, you're gonna cut off the cardboard tact strip and staple it down. We can flip the desk cover towards the opposite side. In my case, it's the top. And I'm going to trim all of this excess off to a few inches, cause we don't need all of that.

We'll smooth and pull the desk cover to the top center. We're gonna fold under this edge and staple it even with the edge of the headboard, but behind the welt cord. And we'll just work our way around. We'll start back at the middle and go the opposite direction. To finish the upholstery, we just need to turn her over, and dust her off with the air blower attachment. We're all finished with the upholstery. Now we just need to drill some holes and attach this to the bed frame.

Attach to bed frame

- We have one final step, which is attaching our headboard to our bed rails. The headboard should attach to any standard bed rail. And just remember to center the bed rails on the headboard. Don't try to center the leg on each individual rail or it will wind up not centered. First we'll use chalk to mark the inside of the screw holes onto the bed. Cut away a small hole where we'll drill to attach the bolt. With a drill bit slightly larger than the bolt, we're going to drill all the way through the leg. Because the drill is going so quickly, it will punch right through the fabric on the back side of the leg. And cut away the shredded fabric on the back side of the leg so it stays clear of the nut. So we're just clearing a small hole. And we'll bring our bed frame to the front of the headboard. And then attach locking nuts to the back side. And I'll tighten them up with a wrench. And that feels pretty sturdy. I hope we inspired you to make your own upholstered headboard.