

Make a beach poncho

They're bright, fun and practical. Make a towelling poncho for your little one – and another for you – and you're both ready to hit the beach. By **Kelly Doust**.

MAKE THESE BRIGHT and fun poncho towels for early mornings at the pool or beach this summer, or throw on for a quick dry and to cover up. Made from thick cotton towelling with a hood to keep the warmth in, these should last both you and the kids well through the chilly months also.

To make these cosy hooded towels, source all-cotton terry towelling on the roll (available from large haberdashery stores such as Spotlight or Lincraft) or finished towels in favourite prints or stripes. Embellish with a row of pompoms or tasselled fringing along the bottom at front and back – kids will love the cute look of pompoms, and tassels add summer style for the unisex adult's version. Both of these poncho towels are made from two large, 100 per cent cotton towels, available from Country Road.

Children's poncho towel

YOU WILL NEED:

- Towelling measuring 68cm wide by 130cm high for the main part of the poncho, and towelling measuring 35cm wide by 76cm high for the hood. If you are converting a finished towel, fold your large rectangular towel in half so it appears square before chopping the fabric for the hood from one side.
- 1.5 metre length of pompom fringing
- Large ruler or quilting ruler
- Dressmaker's chalk
- Dressmaker's scissors
- Sewing machine and thread
- Pins



STEP 1 Lie out your towelling fabric on a flat surface. Use your ruler to measure the above two sections for both the hood piece and main body of the poncho. Use the finished edge of the towelling on one side of the hood piece – that way, you won't need to hem around the edge of the hood's opening.

STEP 2 Mark out your measurements with dressmaker's chalk, before cutting out both shapes with scissors.

STEP 3 Take the larger piece for the main body of the poncho and, rolling the unfinished edge underneath, hem along the edges you have just cut. If you bought your

towelling from the roll in the correct width, you will need to roll under and sew a hem along both the top and bottom edges only, to avoid any fraying.

STEP 4 Take your length of pompom fringing and line it

up along the edge of one short side of the poncho. If the towelling has a 'right' side, make sure the pompom fringing lies along this (rather than the reverse) side. Stitch into place with your machine, using either a straight or zigzag stitch. Reverse a few times at either end for strength.

STEP 5 Take your piece of towelling for the hood and fold over so it measures 35cm wide by 38cm high. If there is a 'right' side to the towelling, make sure both right sides are together. Lie on your flat surface with the finished edge on the right, folded edge on top and right sides facing together. Take your ruler and measure in from the bottom left corner by 10cm, making a mark with your chalk. Measure up from the bottom left corner by 10cm, making a mark there also. Now use your ruler and chalk to connect the two marks. Cut off the edge, rounding it in a slightly concave

fashion to mimic the rounded shape at the base of the head.

STEP 6 Now fold over the hood so the wrong sides are together, and sew around the edge you have just cut, reversing a few times at either end for strength. When you have finished, turn inside out so the right sides are together again, and sew along this edge to create a French seam. Place aside.

STEP 7 Take the poncho and fold in half, twice, in order to find the very centre of the towel. Make a mark at the centre corner with the chalk. Lie it out flat again and draw an oval here in the very centre measuring 20cm wide by 12cm high. Cut out this shape from the centre of the towel.

STEP 8 With your poncho laid out flat with the right side facing up, place the middle of the back of the hood against the top part of the oval in the centre. Pin into place. With the right sides facing

Tip!
Tip about the adult version on the next page
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It's a wrap! Your little ones will love taking cover under a fun poncho this summer.

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together along the cut edges, continue to use pins to fasten the pieces along the edges until both sides of the hood wrap around to the lower (front) section of the poncho. To do this, you will need to apply the pins to the inside of the hood.

STEP 9 Starting in the middle where you placed the first pin, use your sewing machine to stitch a straight line along the edge connecting the hood to the poncho, removing the pins as you go and reversing a few times when you reach the end for strength. Snip off any loose threads and start stitching from the middle of the hood once again, removing the pins as you go, this time connecting the other side of the hood to the poncho. Reverse a few times when you reach the end.

STEP 10 Now sew one long line of zigzag stitching around the base of the hood as closely as possible to the raw edge – this will stop the towelling from fraying inside the hood.

Adult's poncho towel

YOU WILL NEED:

- Towelling measuring 68cm wide by 180cm high for the main part of the poncho and towelling measuring 30cm wide by 90cm high for the hood. If you're converting a finished towel, fold your large rectangular towel in half so it appears square before chopping the fabric for the hood from one side.
- 1.5 metre length of tasselled fringing
- Large ruler or quilting ruler
- Dressmaker's chalk
- Dressmaker's scissors
- Sewing machine and thread
- Pins

FOLLOW all of the above steps to create the adult's version – the only difference is that this will accommodate someone much taller. One other change to make with the adult's version concerns STEP 5 to avoid a peaked hood (which looks cute on a child, but less so on grown-ups!).

STEP 5 Take your piece of towelling for the hood and fold it over so it measures 30cm wide by 45cm high. If there is a 'right' side to the towelling, make sure both right sides are together. Lie it on your flat surface with

the finished edge on the right, folded edge on top and right sides facing together. Take your ruler and measure in from the bottom left corner by 5cm, making a mark with your chalk. Measure up from the bottom left corner by 10cm, making a mark there also. Now use your ruler and chalk to connect the two marks. Cut off the edge, rounding it in a slightly concave fashion to mimic the rounded shape at the base of the head. Now repeat this step with the top left corner of the hood to round off the shape at the top of the hood.



