What is a joey and why do they need pouches?
The term ‘joey’ refers to the young of any marsupial. Baby possums, gliders, kangaroos, wallabies, koalas and bandicoots are all referred to as ‘joeys’. When hand-raising orphaned joeys we try to imitate the way their mother would care for them which includes providing them with a warm and secure pouch in which the joey will live until it is old enough (...and brave enough!) to start to venture away from its safety.

What are pouches made from?
Below are some guidelines for selecting fabric to make joey pouches:

- Preferably, fabric should be made from natural fibres such as soft, 100% cotton. Suitable types of cotton include t-shirt/knit material or cotton flannelette, which are easily washed. Non-natural (synthetic) fabrics do not “breathe” well and can cause the joeys to overheat.
- Unfurried joeys have very sensitive and delicate skin so the fabric needs to be soft so that it doesn’t cause irritation.
- Fabric used does not need to be brand new, good quality second-hand fabrics sourced from bed linen can also be used (e.g. flannelette sheets).
- Just like any other baby, our marsupial joeys like to suckle, sometimes on their pouch, so materials that do not shed any lint, or pill, or have any loose threads are essential.
- There is no preference for specific colours or fabric designs/patterns – our joeys don’t mind if the fabric is a slightly “ugly”!

How do I make pouches?
Below are some easy to follow instructions to make joey pouches:

- Cut material for your pouch which is the width required (plus seam allowances), and double the length required (plus hem allowance).
- Fold a double hem along the “short edges” of your pouch (this will eventually become the top opening of the pouch). Iron or pin into place and stitch.
- Fold your fabric, right sides together so that it forms the rectangular pouch shape (longer than it is wider).
- Stitch a seam down each side. Note that because the seam will be enclosed you do not need to overlock.
- Turn your pouch right side out, make sure the corners are fully turned (clip or trim if necessary), and iron so that the pouch is nice and flat.
- Top stitch to enclose each side seam (sometimes called French seaming). A simple tutorial on how to sew a French seam can be found on the Craftsy website - http://www.craftsy.com/blog/2013/05/seam-series-how-to-sew-a-french-seam/
Rehab Easy Reference Sheet
Making Pouches for Orphaned Joeys (continued)

Photos above – showing a completed cotton pouch.

What size should the pouches be?
Different species require different size pouches. Small species such as gliders will need much smaller pouches than wallabies and kangaroos.

Below is a general guideline for the finished sizes of pouches for various species. It doesn’t matter though if your pouches end up being slightly different in size – our joeys come in all sizes!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Koalas</td>
<td>20cm wide x 30cm deep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gliders</td>
<td>15cm wide x 20cm deep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possums</td>
<td>15cm wide x 20cm deep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10cm wide x 15cm deep for unfurred possums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bandicoots and Small Carnivorous Marsupials</td>
<td>15cm wide x 20cm deep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallabies and Kangaroos</td>
<td>25cm wide x 35cm deep for unfurred joeys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35cm wide x 40cm deep for just furring joeys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50cm wide x 65cm deep for fully furred joeys</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Wallabies and kangaroos stay ‘in pouch’ for much longer than other joey species and as such require a variety of size pouches to accommodate them as they grow.

How many pouches do we need?
Because pouches need to be changed regularly (sometimes as often as each feed), each joey will need at least 30 pouches. The donation of even just a few pouches is welcome.

The need for pouches is always great and any assistance that you can provide to our volunteers is greatly appreciated. Having a joey in care not only takes time with chores such as feeding (sometimes up to eight times a day - through both the day and night) but also cleaning, food preparation and collecting natural food for older joeys. Most of our wildlife carers have more than one joey in care, which also greatly increases their workload and most volunteer wildlife carers also work full time in other areas of employment.
Where can I send pouches?
Completed pouches can be posted to Wildcare to be distributed to wildlife carers as required. Our postal address is:

Wildcare Australia Inc
PO Box 2379
Nerang Mail Centre  Qld  4211

Otherwise, if you live in South-east Queensland, we may be able to organise for one of our volunteers to collect them from you. Please contact us via email and we will have someone contact you.

For more information about making joey pouches, or to organise collection, please contact Karen Scott via email at Karen@wildcare.org.au or mobile 0400 165 462.

And here are some of our joeys!

Oliver the koala joey
Oliver was found on his own at the base of a tree with no sign of his mother. He was extremely dehydrated but with specialised veterinary care and a dedicated wildlife carer, he gained strength quickly. Here he is snuggled up in several layers of pouches.

Miffy the Long-nosed Bandicoot
Miffy was orphaned when her mother was hit by a car. She was so tiny when she came into care, her eyes hadn’t even opened yet. Miffy was hand-raised and released back to a suitable bush habitat.

Chrissie the Red-legged Pademelon
Chrissie was orphaned as a result of road trauma but received the loving care of one of our volunteer wildlife carers who specialises in raising pademelon joeys. She was raised with several other pademelons and was released back to the wild.