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Butterflies Are Free Crib Quilt

Fanciful butterflies fly free across the surface of this sweet crib quilt made from reproduction pastel feed-sack prints, first popular in the 1930s. Easy Four-Patch blocks alternate with the butterflies.

DESIGN BY JUDITH SANDSTROM

Project Specifications

Quilt Size: 42 x 54 inches

Materials

- 1 yard white tone-on-tone print for blocks
- $\frac{3}{8}$ yard dark blue tone-on-tone print for the Four-Patch blocks
- $\frac{1}{2}$ yard dark blue print for inner border
- $\frac{1}{4}$ yard each of six different pastel prints for the outer border and butterflies
- $\frac{3}{8}$ yard print for binding
- $1\frac{5}{8}$ yards print for backing (must be at least 44 inches wide after preshrinking; if not, you will need $3\frac{1}{2}$ yards in order to piece the backing large enough)
- 44 x 56-inch piece of batting
- Rotary cutter, mat and ruler
- Pencil
- Template plastic
- Thread and needles for hand quilting (optional)
- Basic sewing tools and equipment

Instructions

Project Note: Preshrink all fabrics and press to remove wrinkles. All cutting is based on 42 inches of usable width after preshrinking.

Step 1. From the white tone-on-tone print, cut three strips each $6\frac{1}{2}$ x 42 inches; crosscut a total of 18 squares from the strips. Cut three strips each $3\frac{1}{2}$ x 42 inches for the Four Patch blocks.

Step 2. From the dark blue (for the Four-Patch blocks), cut three strips each $3\frac{1}{2}$ x 42 inches. From the dark blue (for the inner border), cut three strips each $3\frac{1}{2}$ x 42 inches.

Step 3. From each of the six pastel prints, cut one strip $3\frac{1}{2}$ x 42 inches. Set the remaining fabric aside for the butterfly appliques.

Step 4. From the binding fabric, cut five strips each 2 x 42 inches.



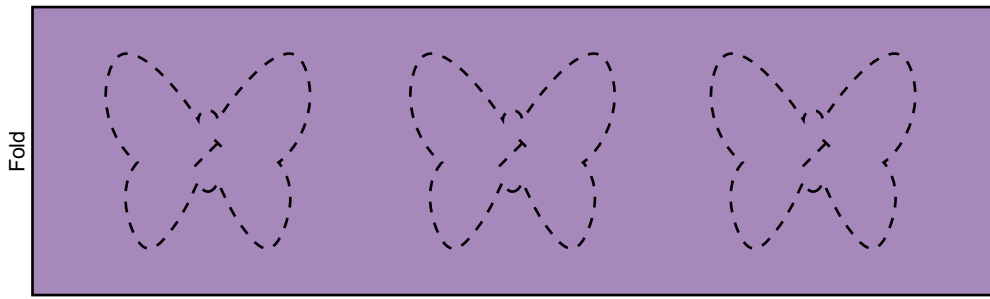


Fig. 1

Trace 3 butterflies on each fabric and stitch.

Step 5. Trace the butterfly onto template plastic and cut out. Fold the remainder of each pastel in half with right sides together. Trace around the butterfly template three times on each folded fabric, leaving $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of space between the traced lines. Pin the layers together and stitch on the traced lines (Fig. 1).

Step 6. Cut out each butterfly $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the stitching. Clip to the stitching at the inner points where the body and wings meet and at the inner points of the upper and lower wing intersections. Make a small vertical slit in the center of each butterfly through one layer only and gently turn the butterfly right side out through the slit (Fig. 2).

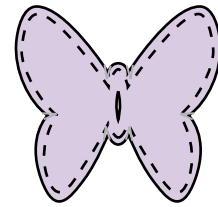


Fig. 2

Cut out butterflies and clip inner points. Slash center for turning.

Step 7. Center each butterfly on a $6\frac{1}{2}$ -inch white square and pin in place. With thread to match, zigzag around the butterfly body to attach it. Pull all threads to the back of the square and knot the ends. **Note:** To prevent puckering, apply a square of iron-on, tear-away stabilizer to the wrong side of each white square before positioning and stitching the butterfly in place.

Step 8. Stitch each $3\frac{1}{2}$ x 42-inch white strip to a dark blue tone-on-tone strip and press the seam toward the dark strip. From each strip unit, cut 12 segments each $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide. You will have two extra segments.

Arrange the pieces to make 17 Four-Patch blocks. Sew the pieces together for each block and press the seams to one side as directed by the arrows (Fig. 3).

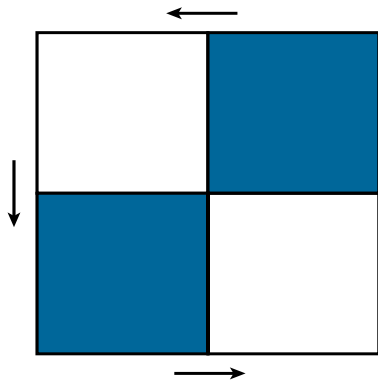


Fig. 3
Make 17
Four-Patch blocks.

Step 9. Referring to Fig. 4, arrange the Four-Patch blocks with the butterfly blocks in seven rows of five blocks each. Sew together in rows and press the seams in opposite directions from row to row. Sew the rows together to complete the center of the quilt top.

Step 10. Measure the length of the quilt top through the center and trim two blue inner border strips to this measurement. Sew to the long edges of the quilt top. Press the seams toward the borders. Measure the quilt-top width, including the blue borders, and trim the remaining blue border strips to this measurement. Sew to the top and bottom edges of the quilt top. Press.

Step 11. Sew the pastel strips together in groups of three in the order listed (lavender/peach/green and orange/blue/yellow). Press the seams in one direction in each unit.

Step 12. Cut (10) 3½-inch-wide segments from each strip unit. Sew the segments together in pairs to create 10 units with six colors in each one.

Step 13. Sew two six-block units together for the top border. Repeat for the bottom border. Press. Sew the pieced borders to the quilt top and press the seams toward the blue inner borders.

Step 14. Use the remaining units to assemble the long side border strips and sew to the quilt top. Press.

Step 15. Cut a 44 x 56-inch piece of backing fabric. With the backing fabric wrong side up, smooth the batting in place. Center the quilt top on the batting and baste the layers together.

Step 16. Quilt as desired by hand or machine. Trim the batting and backing even with the quilt-top edges.

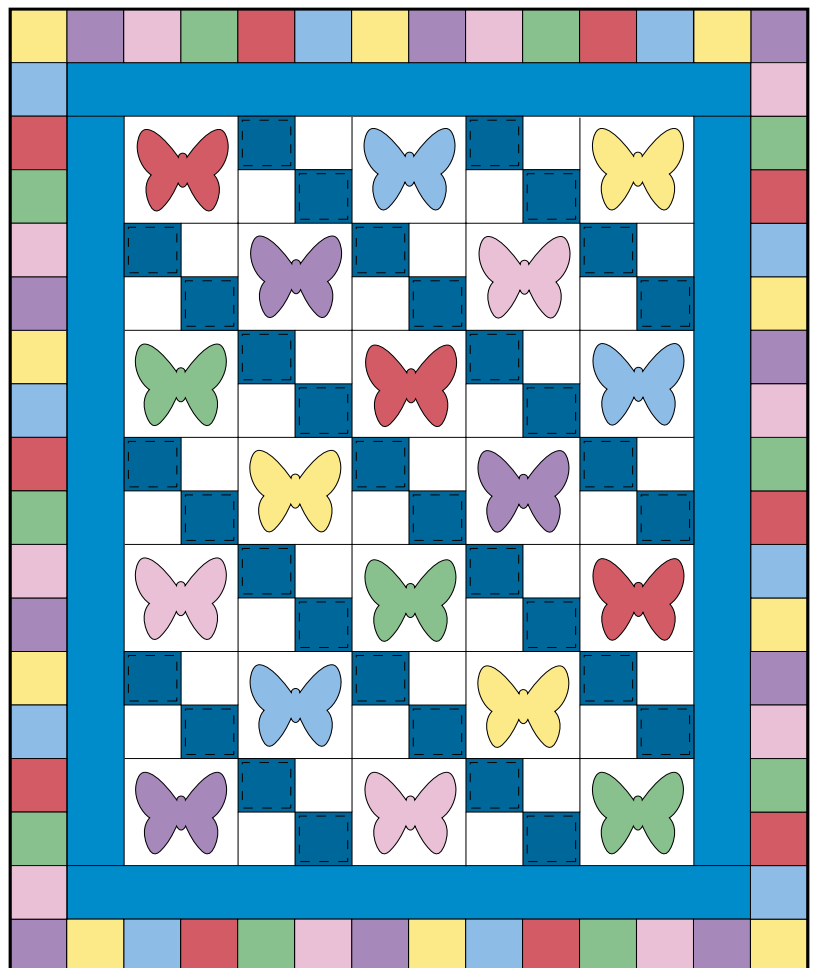


Fig. 4
Butterflies Are Free
Quilt Assembly



Step 17. Sew the binding strips together to make one long piece. Use bias seams and press the seams open. Fold the strip in half lengthwise with wrong sides together and raw edges even and press. Bind the quilt with the strip, using $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch-wide seams and mitering the corners as you reach them.

Step 18. Optional: For butterflies that aren't quite as "free," particularly if you wish to use this quilt as a wall hanging, hand-tack the upper curved point of each wing to the block with matching thread

Make a Matching Valance

It's easy to make a matching 18-inch-deep valance. This one finishes to 42 inches wide. Make it longer as needed by making additional blocks.

1. Make the required number of Butterfly and Four-Patch blocks as directed above and sew together. Add $3\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$ -inch sashing strips to the short ends of the block strip, and then add $3\frac{1}{2}$ -inch wide strips of the appropriate length to the upper and lower edges of the block panel.

2. Make the pieced borders using $3\frac{1}{2}$ -inch squares of the pastel prints to create borders of the required

length. Sew to the sides and then to the top and bottom edges of the panel.

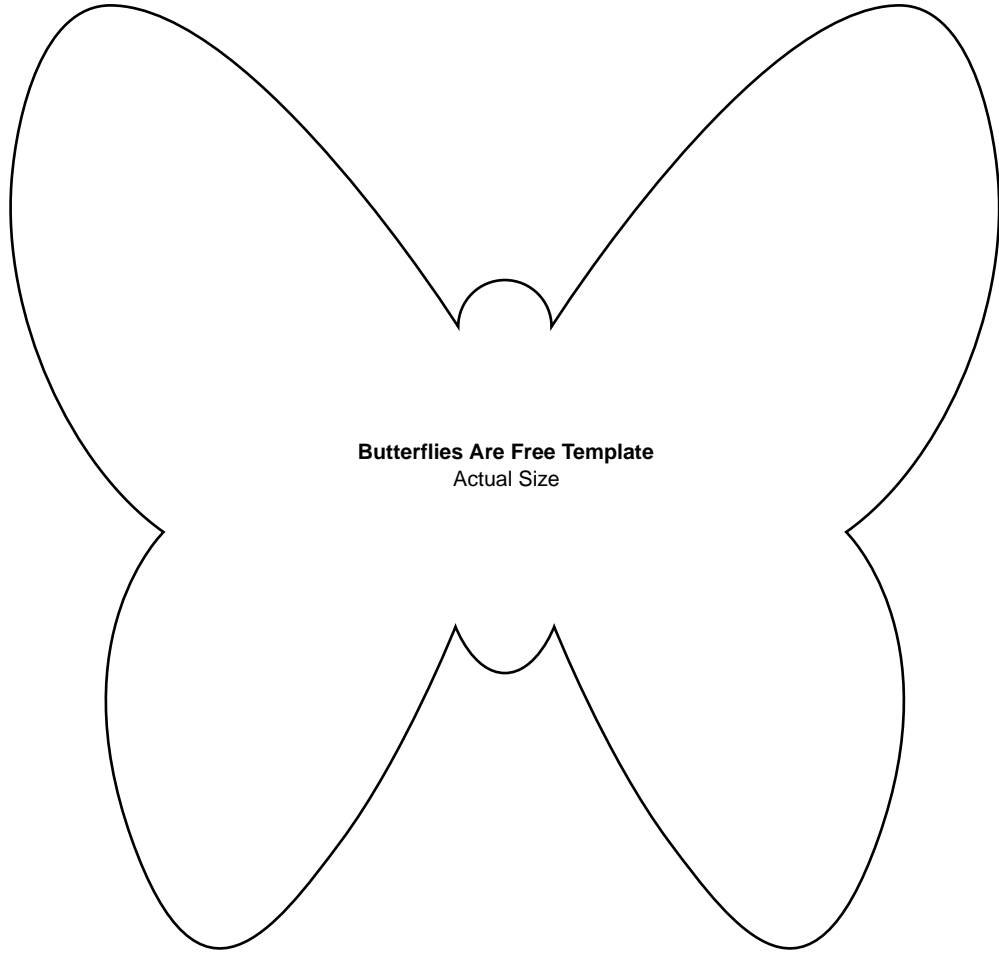
3. Place the completed valance strip face down on the lining fabric and pin in place around the outer edges. Stitch $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the upper edge. Stitch $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the lower edge and along one short end, leaving the upper 3 inches unstitched. Trim excess lining even with the raw edges of the valance.

4. Turn the valance right side out through the open end of the tube you've created. Press. Turn the raw edges under $\frac{1}{4}$ inch and slipstitch together, leaving the upper 3 inches unstitched. Tuck a scrap of fusible web between the seam allowance and the valance in the unstitched areas and fuse in place.

5. Pin the valance layers together and stitch in the ditch of the seam between the inner border and outer borders to form a rod pocket.

6. To keep the upper butterfly wings from flopping down when the valance is hung on a rod, use matching thread to tack the upper curve of each one to the background. ♦

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