



A Patchwork Dog to Stitch

DESIGN INTERPRETED BY

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The patchwork dog.

Photograph by Joe Coca.

Squares of printed cotton fabric and basic handsewing skills are all you need to make this lovable patchwork dog. Choose firmly woven fabrics in a selection of colors and different pattern sizes. You may easily modify the square size to make a larger or smaller dog. For example, 2-inch (5.1-cm) squares will make a pillow-size dog. A sewing machine may be used to stitch the pieces as well. If you will machine-sew, begin and end each seam with a backstitch and don't sew past the seam lines at the end of a square or row.

INSTRUCTIONS

Draw a 1-inch (2.5-cm) square and a 1½-inch (3.8-cm) square on the graph paper. Cut out both squares and glue each onto the poster board. Cut the squares from the poster board and glue them to the remaining poster board; cut out around the squares again to make 2 two-layer square templates. Smooth any irregularities in the edges of the template with sandpaper; coat the edges with nail polish to make them durable, and let dry.

Wash and press the fabrics. You will need 104 squares for one dog. Lay a sheet of sandpaper grit side up on a flat surface. Place each fabric in turn, right side down, on the sandpaper and trace around the 1½-inch (3.8-cm) template with the pencil to make as many squares as you would like from each fabric. Be sure to align the template with the straight grain of the fabric. Cut out the squares on the penciled line.

Place each square, right side down, on the sandpaper and center the 1-inch (2.5-cm) template on the fabric square. Draw around the template to mark the stitching lines.

On an ironing board or other heatproof surface, lay out the fabric squares, right sides up, matching the layout in the Layout and Construction Guide below. Make a second arrangement of fabric squares in the mirror image of the first. Rearrange the colors and patterns until you are satisfied with the layout. Cut 2 pieces of freezer paper, each slightly larger than a set of fabric squares. Lay a piece of freezer paper, shiny side down, on top of each grouping. Iron on top of the freezer paper with the iron set on medium heat and no steam for 30 to 45 seconds or until the fabric adheres to the paper. You will peel the fabric squares off the freezer paper as you need them.

MATERIALS

Cotton fabrics
DMC Embroidery Floss, 100% cotton 6-strand thread, 8.7 yards (8 m)/skein, 1 skein of #310 Black
John James Needle, sharps, size 9
Quilting thread, Natural
Fiberfill, 12-ounce (340.2-g) bag, 1
Graph paper, 4 squares/inch (2.5 cm)
Poster board, about 6 inches (15 cm) square, 1 piece
Glue stick
Clear nail polish
Freezer paper
Mechanical pencil, 7 mm
Sandpaper, very fine (220), 1 sheet
Pencil with an eraser

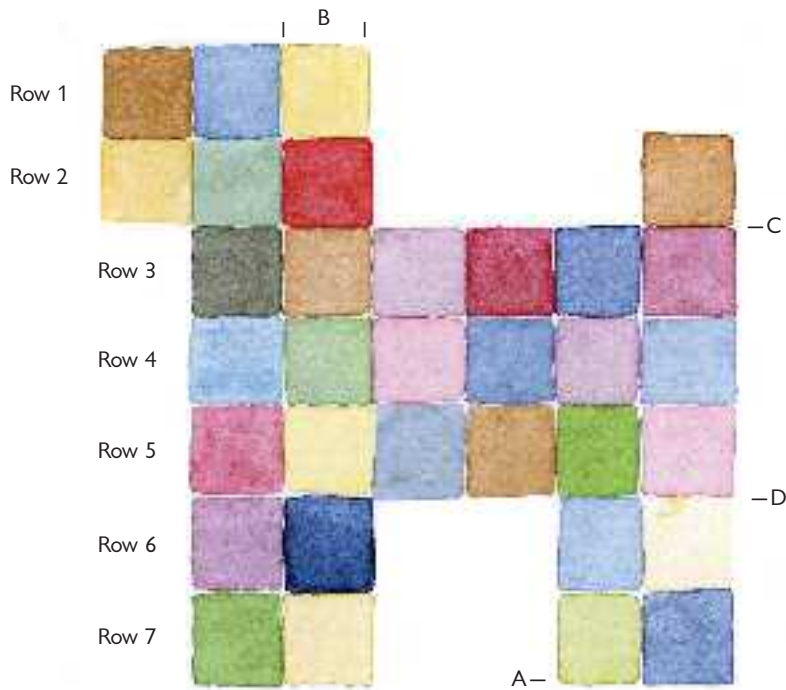
Finished size: 7 inches (17.8 cm) high and 7 inches (17.8 cm) from nose to tail

Join the squares for one side of the dog into horizontal rows as indicated in the Layout and Construction Guide. To stitch two squares together, remove them in order from the freezer paper, place them together with right sides facing, and handstitch along the seam line with a single strand of quilting thread. Begin and end each seam with 2 backstitches and stitch only along the marked seam line with running stitch, leaving the ¼-inch (6-mm) seam allowance at each end free. As each row is completed, pin it to the freezer paper in the correct order.

When you have sewn all the rows, unpin them from the freezer paper, and join them together in order, starting with Rows 1 and 2. Match the seam intersections and use pins to retain the alignment. Do not incorporate any intersecting seam allowances in the seams.

Stitch each pair of squares in the rows being joined, beginning and ending with 2 backstitches. To begin the seam for the next pair of squares, pass the needle through the intersecting seam instead of cutting the thread and beginning again.

Repeat the assembly process for the other side, making sure that it will be a mirror image of the first side. For each ear, place 2 squares together with right sides facing and stitch them together around 3 sides. Turn the ear right side out and, with right sides together, baste it to the top of the square at the back of the head (B on the Layout and Construction Guide) with raw edges even and the ear pointing down toward the dog's feet.



Layout and Construction Guide

Arrange 34 squares in a long strip 1 square wide. Stitch them together along the marked stitching lines. With right sides together, stitch the strip of squares around the perimeter of one side of the dog, starting at the lower edge of the inner rear leg (A on the Layout and Construction Guide) and working toward the front of the dog. Stitch the strip in place, square by square, keeping the seam allowances free, to allow the corners to turn neatly as you stitch around them. Use small backstitches on the inside corners for added strength at these stress points. Stitch the ear into the seam when you come to it. When you have stitched the strip all the way around the first side, stitch the free ends of the strip together. Align the remaining side of the dog with the free side of the strip, right sides together. Pin a few key points and stitch as before. Leave 3 squares below the tail (between C and D on the Layout

and Construction Guide) open for stuffing.

Turn the dog right side out and stuff it firmly but gently with golf-ball size clumps of the fiberfill, using the eraser end of the pencil. Turn in the seam allowance on one side of the opening and lap it over the other seam allowance. Slip-stitch the opening closed. Using 3 strands of floss, embroider a small eye on each side of the head.

ABOUT THE DESIGNER. Since receiving her first patchwork dog more than thirty years ago, Susan Opdahl has found several others, each with slight variations, at garage and rummage sales. Her interest in textiles and garment construction has made deciphering how each was made an enjoyable puzzle.

This project originally appeared in the March/April 1997 issue of PieceWork.