

American patchwork quilt history. Plus use our patchwork patterns and get rid of your leftovers!

Description

A glance into the past.

Patchwork has been known for centuries. It has been used together with other methods to create clothing and home décor. Some of the oldest patchwork pieces are dated as long as 3000 years ago. (I bet it was linen, that lasted that long). However the technique itself started its development in the 16th century in England and by 18th century became a true art.

Patchwork. From Europe to America.

It all began when England started importing cotton from India. It became very fashionable to have a blanket from India that was embroidered or had a colorful print on it. Those products and fabrics became so popular, that English government, in order to protect English manufactures, issued a law that forbade selling fabrics from India as well as any products made from them. Of course it didn't stop people from importing to England the product that was in demand. The new law only made it more exclusive and expensive. That's when an idea of using leftovers became widely used and piece work became the ultimate technique of creating fashionable home decorations. Patchwork got to America with first settlers from Europe and soon became a truly national craft. A colorful quilt made from small pieces of fabric attached together can be found nowadays in almost every American home.

You vs. Leftovers

Do you have linen leftovers? And you are going to use them one day, right? Well today is the day! It is time to stop that pile of pieces that are too good to throw away from growing. It is time to be creative. So get that bag of scraps out of your closet and let's begin!

There are hundreds of beautiful patterns that have been developed since patchwork was first invented. I want to introduce to you to a few ornaments that I find very beautiful and yet quite simple to make.

“Chessboard”

It is one of the basic patchwork patterns. It is great for combining two fabrics of contrast colors together. But you can always mix in as many colors as you like.

Step 1.

Cut your fabric in strips so they have same width. Don't forget to leave a little extra width on each side for seam allowances.

Step 2.

Patchwork-ChessBoard-Step2.jpg

Sew strips together as shown on a picture below. Then iron the seams.

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Step 3.

Take the piece you just made and divide it into strips of the same width as your original ones. Cut the fabric perpendicular to the seam leaving extra space for seam allowances. (see picture)

Patchwork-ChessBoard-Step3.jpg

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Step 4.

Take every other strip and rotate it up side down as shown on a picture below.

Patchwork-ChessBoard-Step4.jpg

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Step 5.

Sew strips together as shown below. Then iron. And you are done!

Patchwork-ChessBoard-Step5.jpg

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“Diamond”

Step 1.

First, you need to create a paper pattern template.

- Take a paper square that equals in size to the patchwork project that you will be creating. Divide each of its sides in half and mark the spot. Connect your marks with a line. You should get a tilted square in the center.

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- In the square that you just got divide all sides in half, and repeat the operation in step 1a until you get a figure of a desired size in the middle. This little square in the center is the piece that we will start working

with in Step 2.

Patchwork-Diamond-Step1b.jpg

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Step 2.

Cut your fabric using center square template that you just created (don't forget to leave some extra fabric for seam allowances). Then cut out 4 triangles from another fabric (use template of a triangle in the row marked "2" – see picture in Step 1). Place the square "face up" and put 1 triangle on top of it "face down" matching sides of both figures. Sew two pieces together as shown on a picture below. Then do the same for the remaining 3 triangles and iron.

Patchwork-Diamond-Step2.jpg

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Step 3.

Patchwork-Diamond-Step3.jpg

You should have a new square. If its sides are not straight trim them with scissors.

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Step 4.

Patchwork-Diamond-Step4.jpg

Cut out other pieces according to your pattern and repeat Step 2 until you are done.

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P.S.: Don't forget to send us pictures of your fabulous quilts and patchwork projects!

CATEGORY

1. LIFE LOVERS

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