

Giraffe Patchwork Quilt

A step-by-step raw-edge appliqué adaptation inspired by the supplied giraffe quilt. Build the portrait one fabric shape at a time, then add flowers, quilting and a crisp bound edge.



Finished panel	Giraffe motif	Method
70 × 90 cm 27½ × 35¾ in	60 cm tall (23⅝ in) about 51–52 cm wide	Fused fabric collage Machine-stitched edges

Skill level: confident beginner to intermediate. Practice appliqué stitches and quilting on scraps before starting. Allow several relaxed sewing sessions.

About this guide: the new 3D illustrations demonstrate techniques; their patch layouts are illustrative. Use the supplied design on the final page for the giraffe’s actual contours. This is an instructional adaptation, not a tested reconstruction of the original maker’s pattern.

Materials & cutting plan

All main measurements are in centimeters; inch equivalents are approximate. The background is deliberately cut larger so it can be squared after quilting. This version uses a continuous cream background rather than pieced background blocks.

Material	Prepare / cut
Background cotton	1 piece 72 × 92 cm (28 ³ / ₈ × 36 ¹ / ₄ in). Buy about 1 m of 110 cm-wide cotton.
Giraffe foundation	Lightweight cream cotton, about 60 × 70 cm (23 ⁵ / ₈ × 27 ¹ / ₂ in); trace the full silhouette, then cut it to shape.
Colorful scraps	10–12 fat quarters, or an equivalent mix of usable scraps. Favor teal, rose, burgundy, mustard and green. Reserve larger pieces for ears and muzzle.
Face details	Small black, ivory and teal scraps. Use fabric or thread for highlights; no buttons are needed.
Fusible web	About 1 m × 90 cm (39 ³ / ₈ × 35 ³ / ₈ in), lightweight, paper-backed and suitable for stitching. Check coverage before cutting.
Batting + backing	One of each, 80 × 100 cm (31 ¹ / ₂ × 39 ³ / ₈ in). Buy about 1.1 m of 110 cm-wide backing.
Binding	4 strips, each 6.5 × 110 cm (2 ⁹ / ₁₆ × 43 ³ / ₄ in); join diagonally. About 350 cm of usable binding is needed.

Tools: sewing machine, sharp scissors, rotary cutter and mat, ruler, tracing paper, removable fabric marker, iron, pressing sheet, pins or basting spray, appliqué foot, walking foot and optional free-motion foot. Use 80/12 or 90/14 needles as appropriate for your layers.

Thread: 40–50 wt sewing thread in matching colors; dark brown or charcoal for selective outlines. Prewash and press cotton, test dark scraps for color transfer, and follow batting and fusible-web care instructions.

Make a reliable master

Important: the supplied final-page artwork is a placement reference, not a calibrated full-size cutting pattern. Some numbers repeat and the small size labels have no stated units. Do not cut rectangles using those printed size labels. The traced contours at your chosen scale determine every piece.

1. Enlarge the giraffe to 60 cm tall

Print the final page. Measure the giraffe itself from the highest horn tip to the bottom neck edge, excluding the white margin and footer. Divide 60 by that measured height and multiply by 100 to obtain the enlargement percentage. For example, a 24 cm printed giraffe needs 250% enlargement. Ask a print shop to enlarge the motif only, or use a poster/tile printing setting with overlap.

2. Assemble a full-size drawing

Match the tiled outlines, tape the paper together, and remeasure: the giraffe must be 60 cm tall and approximately 51-52 cm wide. Keep the original proportions; do not stretch the width independently. Trace the outer silhouette and all internal fabric boundaries onto a clean master sheet. Do not trace the printed numbers as fabric lines.

3. Give every cell a unique identity

Use five groups: E = ears and horns, H = forehead and cheek, M = muzzle, N = neck and F = facial overlays. Within each group, label each enclosed shape from top to bottom, left to right: E01, E02, and so on. Assign a separate ID to each unnumbered rim, narrow sliver, eye or nostril. Repeated printed numbers are only visual landmarks.

4. Trace the foundation and templates

Trace the entire silhouette onto lightweight cream cotton and cut on the outline. Trace each colored cell separately onto paper, adding its new ID, fabric choice, top arrow and overlap notes. Mark a short matching tick across shared edges on the paper copies. Keep one uncut master for placement.

Orientation: the giraffe faces left. To trace onto the paper side of fusible web, use a reversed tracing of each template; after fusing to the wrong side of fabric, the finished piece will face the correct way.

Cut every scrap with purpose



For each template: measure its widest width and height. Cut a fabric blank at least 1 cm larger in both directions. Example: an 8 × 6 cm traced shape needs at least a 9 × 7 cm blank. This is a preparation allowance, not a seam allowance.

Trace the reversed shape on fusible paper. Rough-cut the web slightly outside the line, fuse it to the fabric's wrong side as directed by its manufacturer, and let it cool. Cut the precise shape through fabric and paper. Leave the paper attached until placement; write the unique ID on the paper backing.

Choose the edge treatment before cutting: for butt-joined patches, cut exactly on the traced line. For a planned overlap, add about 2 mm only to the edge that will sit underneath its neighbor. Keep the visible upper edge on the original contour. No 6–7 mm turned-under seam allowance is used in this method.

Sort the cut pieces into labeled envelopes by group. Arrange every group over the master before removing release paper. Small cream gaps visible in the 3D examples are illustrative; for a fuller patchwork look, close the gaps using accurate butt joins or tiny overlaps.

Repeat for every enclosed cell: trace → assign ID → select fabric → fuse → cut → check on master. Retain tiny slivers as separate shapes where practical; shapes narrower than about 3 mm may be represented with embroidery.

Build the long neck



Place the foundation over the master on a light box or bright window and lightly transfer key boundaries. Lay it on a pressing surface. Dry-fit the entire neck before fusing so the sides follow the continuous outline without drifting.

Area / printed landmarks	Placement sequence
Bottom edge: 57, 58, 59, 56	Lay the aqua lower-left region and yellow lower-center region first. Add the pink inset and burgundy lower-right region. Match the straight bottom edge.
Lower-middle: both 52s; 53-55, 50-51	Arrange the left pink/green cells and center green/orange cells. Place the long right pink strip and aqua field. Add the burgundy spot as a separate overlay if you traced it that way.
Middle: 47-49, both 45s	Position the left teal cell and center yellow strip. Add the light-green connecting band, right aqua area and red side patch. Treat the cream 45 and red 45 as different pieces.
Upper neck: 41-44, 42	Fit the cream center, left pink inset and right pink/aqua cells beneath the jaw. Their top edges tuck under the head by about 2 mm where planned.

Work in short sections, checking the silhouette after each group. Secure a checked section with a brief press following the fusible instructions, then allow it to cool flat. Do not slide the iron. Finish the permanent press only when the surrounding shapes fit.

Shape the head & muzzle



Forehead: place the top arc (printed 7, 8, 9 and 10), then the central pink/red cells (15 and the head's 16). Add the small brow cells 17 and 18. Leave the eye areas free for the later overlays. Dry-fit the cream far-eye area marked 14 before adding its eye.

Cheek: fit the large orange area 19 and green side areas 20 and the side 21. Continue downward through the cream 23 and 24, brown 26, teal 27 and 28, burgundy 28, orange 27, narrow 29 and teal 30. Use your unique H IDs to distinguish repeated numbers. Include every intervening unnumbered cream band and colored sliver from your master.

Nose bridge: place the red bridge area marked 21, pink 22 and the upper pink area marked 31. Work toward the tip, checking that the outside line remains a smooth curve. Fit the upper orange region also marked 31 separately; it is not the same template.

Muzzle: lay the yellow/orange pieces 32–36, then fit the green lower band 37 and the unnumbered lower lip. Add connecting jaw pieces 38, 39 and 40. The two dark nostrils sit on top of the completed muzzle and will be sewn as separate overlays.

Before fusing: compare the muzzle, brow and jaw outlines with the master. Replace a poorly fitting piece rather than pulling the fabric into position. Small gaps can be covered by a deliberate narrow appliqué strip; avoid piling several heavy layers at one junction.

Ears, horns & expressive eyes



Ears: use the full outer ear shapes as bases, including the colored rims. Add the upright ear's pink, magenta and dark inner regions (printed 1 and the two 2s). For the sideways ear, add the burgundy region 12 and orange tip 13. Leave the rim visible; stitch inner pieces before the final outer outline.

Horns: fit the left stalk 4 and rounded tip 5; fit the right stalk's gingham cells 10 and 16 with rounded tip 6. Any portion already placed as a forehead cell should not be cut twice. Use the master boundary to decide where each distinct cell begins and ends.

Eyes: trace the exact eye contours from the enlarged master. Make a dark outer eye base, a slightly smaller ivory shape, an iris and a black pupil. Layer in that order. Add a tiny white fabric highlight or a few white satin stitches. Build the small far eye separately; do not duplicate the large eye's size.

Nostrils and lashes: apply both dark nostrils on top of the muzzle. Secure their curved edges with a small zigzag. Draw the lashes with a removable marker and stitch them with short straight stitches, retracing each line two or three times. Keep highlights and thin lashes as stitched details if cutting them is difficult.

Check the expression before the final press. A slight shift in an iris or upper eyelid changes the look significantly. The 3D example demonstrates the layers; the supplied master controls their final shape and position.

Secure every fabric edge



Center the assembled giraffe horizontally on the 72 × 92 cm background. As a starting layout, place its top about 10 cm below the intended finished top edge and its bottom about 20 cm above the finished bottom. The finished 70 × 90 cm rectangle sits 1 cm inside each raw background edge.

Baste the giraffe foundation to the background. If necessary, use small dots of washable fabric glue or sparse fusible web under the foundation. Avoid covering the whole foundation with another heavy adhesive layer. Support the panel on a table so its weight cannot drag against the needle.

Test first: try a narrow zigzag about 1.5–2 mm wide and 1–1.5 mm long on a matching scrap sandwich. Adjust tension, needle and stabilizer until the fabric stays flat. A blanket stitch is another option. Temporary tear-away stabilizer behind the top can help reduce puckering; remove it gently before layering the quilt.

Sew inside to outside: secure all interior patch edges, then eyes and nostrils, and finally the giraffe's outer silhouette. At a butt join, center the zigzag so it catches both fabrics. At an overlap, sew along the visible upper edge. Rotate gently on curves with the needle down on the outer swing.

For each cell, follow its perimeter and tick it off on your master. Stitch a shared boundary once if it securely catches both adjoining pieces. Never rely on fusible alone for the finished quilt. Pull tails to the back, tie and trim; use matching thread or intentional dark outlines.

Add flowers, leaves & stems

The supplied final-page pattern contains the giraffe only. The following simple floral shapes are optional additions inspired by the reference photo; make them on paper at the sizes below. Place them in the surrounding open space without covering the face.

Element	Make a paper template	Suggested quantity
Large leaf	Draw a 7 × 3 cm rectangle; draw a pointed oval inside it.	8, in varied greens
Small leaf	Draw a pointed oval inside a 5 × 2.5 cm rectangle.	10-12
Flower petal	Draw a rounded teardrop inside a 5 × 2.5 cm rectangle.	6 per flower
Flower center	Draw a 2.5 cm diameter circle.	1 per flower
Bud	Draw a rounded teardrop inside a 3 × 2 cm rectangle.	4-6
Curved stem	Cut bias strips 2 cm wide. Fold both raw edges toward the center for a finished width near 8-10 mm.	About 120 cm total

Arrange: draw a gently curved stem in each side area. Keep all motifs at least 2 cm inside the final trim line. Tuck leaf and petal bases under the stem or center circle. Make two or three flowers, then add leaves sparingly so cream space remains around the giraffe.

Attach: stitch stems along both folded edges. Fuse and stitch leaves, buds and petals using the same raw-edge method as the giraffe. Add center circles last so they cover the petal tips. Stitch a simple vein through each leaf if desired.

Scale check

Cut one paper flower and two leaves first, then audition them on the quilt. Reduce their size if the borders feel crowded. Avoid placing thick layered centers where several giraffe patches already overlap. Photograph the arrangement before lifting pieces for fusing.

Layer & quilt the panel



Layer in this order: backing wrong side up, batting in the middle, appliquéd top right side up. Center the top so batting and backing extend about 4 cm beyond every raw edge. Smooth each layer independently without stretching.

Baste from the center outward with safety pins roughly 10–12 cm apart, or use a basting product according to its directions. Remove temporary stabilizer from the appliqué stage first. Check the backing for folds before sewing.

Start near the center: quilt around the giraffe outline, then around a few large internal regions. Add lines through broad areas so the stitching meets your batting manufacturer's maximum spacing. Do not quilt the top first and add batting afterward; quilting joins all three layers.

Background texture: beginners can quilt gentle parallel waves 2–3 cm apart with a walking foot. For the reference's denser look, practice small meanders or rounded box shapes with a free-motion foot. Keep density reasonably even across the panel to limit distortion.

Use a stitch length near 2.5–3 mm for walking-foot quilting, testing on scraps first. Roll the panel loosely to fit the machine throat. Pause often to redistribute its weight. Avoid sewing through pins; stop immediately if the backing begins to tuck or the needle struggles.

Bind, check & print

Square to the finished size

Let the quilt rest flat, then mark a centered 70 × 90 cm rectangle. Check that the giraffe and floral motifs stay clear of the binding seam. Trim the top, batting and backing together using a ruler and rotary cutter. Minor size loss from dense quilting is normal; prioritize a square, balanced panel.

Make and attach the binding

Join the four 6.5 cm strips end to end with diagonal seams, right sides together. Trim each joining seam to about 6 mm and press open. Fold the long strip in half lengthwise, wrong sides together, and press. Measure at least 350 cm of usable binding before attaching it.

Starting along a side, leave a loose tail of about 15 cm. Match the binding's raw edges to the quilt's front edge and sew with a 6 mm seam. Stop 6 mm before a corner. Fold the binding upward at 45°, then down along the next side; resume sewing from the edge. Repeat for all corners. Join the remaining tails diagonally without twisting.

Wrap the folded edge to the back so it covers the attachment seam. Form tidy miters at each corner and hand-stitch or machine-stitch it in place. If you add a hanging sleeve, sew it to the back without stitching through the front. Keep the support hardware separate from the quilt.

Final checks & care

Check every patch for loose edges, trim stray threads, and remove all markings using the marker's instructions. Test pressing temperature on scraps. For this decorative art quilt, gentle spot cleaning is the safest starting point; wash only if every fabric, adhesive, batting and thread is suitable. Dry flat.

Print the supplied master on the next page

The last page intentionally contains only the supplied giraffe artwork and the requested branded footer. Print it in color for fabric placement. Its labels are reproduced unchanged for reference; they are not verified cutting measurements. Use the enlargement and tracing process on page 3 before cutting fabric. The final page is not a full-size A4 cutting template.

Ready-to-sew checklist: full-size 60 cm master checked; every cell uniquely labeled; overlap edges marked; fusible and stitches tested; all edges secured; quilt sandwich basted; finished rectangle squared.

