

Flora Mini Quilt

Designer

Lauren Wright from Molly and Mama

This darling mini quilt design embodies everything I love about sewing; tiny florals, pretty details and hand sewing hexies! Made using my favourite fabric, Liberty tana lawn, it features simple patchwork borders accentuated with hand quilting. The precious flower in the centre also gives an easy introduction to the process of English paper piecing. It's always such a pleasure to design something that suits all sewing levels. You can keep it simple with the included instructions or try something new and different to give the Flora Mini Quilt your own special touch. I can't wait to see all the different versions you create!

Difficulty level

Beginner

Finished Size

12" x 12"

MATERIALS and CUTTING LIST

- 2 ½" square of floral fabric 1 for hexagon flower centre
- six 2 ½" squares of floral fabric 2 for hexagon flower petals
- 8" square of white quilter's cotton for quilt centre
- 13" square of white quilter's cotton for quilt back
- two 10 ½" x 1 ½" white quilter's cotton strips for second border
- two 8 ½" x 1 ½" white quilter's cotton strips for second border
- two 8 ½" x 1 ½" strips (of floral fabric 3) for first border
- two 6 ½" x 1 ½" strips (of floral fabric 3) for first border
- two 12 ½" x 1 ½" strips (of floral fabric 1) for third border
- two 10 ½" x 1 ½" strips (of floral fabric 1) for third border
- 2" x 58" of floral fabric 4 for quilt binding
- two 3" squares of floral fabric 2 for quilt hanging corners (optional)
- 12" square of fusible fleece or quilt batting
- embroidery floss in colours to complement your fabric
- embroidery needle
- water or heat erasable pen
- seven 1" hexagon papers
- glue basting pen for English paper piecing
- 60 weight polyester bobbin thread or 80 weight cotton thread for basting hexagons
- milliner's needle in size 9
- rotary cutter, ruler and mat
- quilt basting (adhesive) spray
- 11" fine dowel rod for hanging mini quilt (optional)
- general sewing supplies

INSTRUCTIONS

NOTE: All seam allowances for this project are $\frac{1}{4}$ ".

TIP: For improved accuracy, use a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam foot on your sewing machine. Ensure all fabrics are well pressed.



Make the Hexagon Flower

Caroline - To eliminate extra steps in this section you could direct readers to this blog post or use the detailed description below (<http://www.mollyandmama.com.au/how-to-sew-hexies-an-english-paper-piecing-tutorial/>)

1. Follow the instructions below to glue baste seven hexagons onto the $2\frac{1}{2}$ " fabric squares; one in fabric 1 and six in fabric 2.
2. Place your hexagon paper on the wrong side of your fabric and hold in place. Cut around the hexagon shape leaving at least a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance.



3. Using the glue pen, run a small amount of glue along the edge of one side of the hexagon paper (being careful not to use too much glue, or to glue too close to the edge of the paper).



4. Fold the fabric over firmly and secure.



5. Repeat this process on each side to fold over all 6 sides of the fabric. Be especially careful to keep the fabric folded firmly near the points or corners.



6. Repeat this process until you have made all seven hexagons.



7. Lay out your hexagons in a flower shape with the hexagon points arranged vertically.
8. Select the centre hexagon and one of the petal hexagons, and identify the sides to be joined. Hold them right sides together, being sure to line up the edges and corners of the side you wish to sew.
9. Thread your fine milliner's needle with a single strand of fine thread (choose a colour that will blend nicely) and knot one end. Use very fine, and small, whip stitches to sew the two sides of the hexagons together, starting at one corner and stitching along the edge to the next corner. When you start, sew a couple of stitches in the same place, to secure the start of your stitching.



10. As you stitch, catch 2 - 3 threads from the folded edge of both pieces of fabric, being careful not to stitch through the actual paper. Small, closely spaced stitches sewn straight across the fabric top are best.
11. When one edge is sewn, secure your stitching with a couple of stitches repeated in the same place, at the end of your hexagon side. This keeps the stitches tight and the seams (for each side of the hexagon) neatly intact. Do not trim the thread though. Keep it intact.



12. Next, fold the hexagons out flat and identify the next hexagon petal to be added to the design.

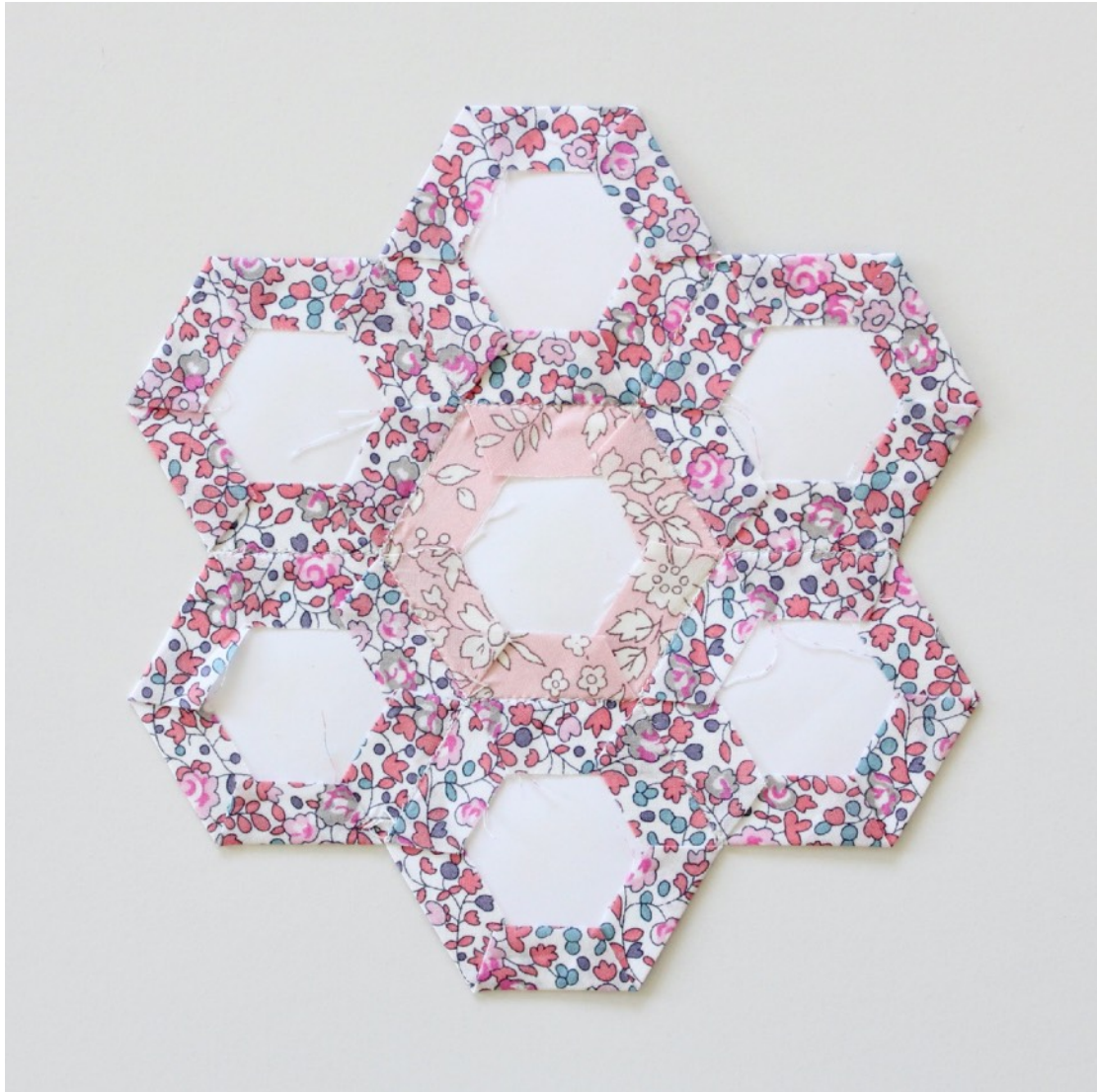


13. Using the same thread, place one petal over another (with right sides facing) and stitch two of the petal sides together.



14. Repeat the method as described above to join all the hexagons together.





15. So that you don't need to cut your thread at the end of each seam, you can run your needle and thread up the back of the seam stitches (on the wrong side of the hexagon) to move the thread to the flower centre to sew a new seam. You'll also discover that you need to fold the hexagons over to stitch certain sides together.



16. When the hexagon flower is completely stitched, you can begin removing the papers. Start at the centre of the design first. Carefully remove the papers by lifting up the fabric on one side of the back of the hexagon and sliding your finger along to tease the fabric from the glue. When you find the corner of the paper, you can carefully manoeuvre the rest of the paper out.



17. You may like to press the back of each hexie with a warm iron as you go. This will help the hexagons retain their shape.

Assemble the Quilt

18. Centre the hexagon flower on the 8" white fabric square and pin in place. Blind stitch the hexagon flower in place, using small fine stitches and a fine weight thread. Press, then trim the square down to 6 ½" (being sure to keep the flower centred).



19. Sew the first border around the hexagon flower panel. With right sides facing, pin and sew one short (6 ½") strip of fabric 3 to the top of the hexagon panel. Repeat this process with the second short (6 ½") strip of fabric 3 and sew it to the base of the hexagon panel. Press the seams toward the floral fabric.



20. With right sides facing, pin and sew the long (8 ½") floral fabric strip to the left of the quilt panel. Repeat this for the right side of the panel. Press the seams toward the floral fabric, and press the panel well.



21. Repeat this same method to attach the white border to the first floral border. Again, press the seams towards the floral fabric.



22. Sew the third border to the panel using the same method described above, pressing the seams towards the floral fabric. Press the panel well.



23. Secure the 12" square of fusible fleece to the wrong side of the 12" hexagon panel (following the manufacturer's instructions). If using quilt batting, secure the batting with quilt basting spray.
24. You may choose to now add the quilt backing fabric and then quilt the panel as desired. However, to add the hand quilted details that are used in my example, I stitch these before adding the quilt backing. This gives a lovely finish for mini quilt backs.
25. Using an erasable pen and a ruler, mark lines on the quilt top on the inside and outside edges of the white border (1/8" from the seam). Also mark lines around the outside of the hexagon panel, 1/8" from the edge. Use the photo as a guide to draw the simple bow detail on the top right hand corner of the white border.
26. Use three strands of co-ordinating floss to quilt the straight border lines using running stitch.



27. Hand embroider the bow detail with back stitch, using three strands of floss.



28. Remove the erasable marker lines.

29. Spray the back or wrong side of the quilt sandwich with quilt basting spray and secure the 13" square of white backing fabric with right side facing out.

30. Using a rotary cutter and ruler, trim the edges of the quilt sandwich so that it is 12" x 12". Keep the quilt square and ensure the sides are at right angles with the top and the bottom.

31. Make hanging corners for the quilt. Fold the two 3" floral fabric squares in half to make two triangles. Pin the triangles to the top left and right corners of the quilt. Baste stitch in place using a scant 1/8" seam allowance.



32. Bind the quilt with the binding fabric. Cut 2" wide fabric strips and join them to create a continuous length of binding 58" long. Attach the binding to the front of the quilt ensuring the raw edges of the binding line up with the raw edges of the quilt. Sew in place with a 1/4" seam allowance. Be careful to mitre the corners neatly, and join the binding ends neatly also.
33. When finished, fold the binding over towards the back of the quilt and pin or clip in place.



34. Using a single strand of polyester bobbin thread, blind stitch the binding to the back of the quilt with small, fine stitches. Don't forget to sew your own quilt label onto the bottom right corner as well!



35. Slip an 11" dowel rod inside the two corner pockets and hang your mini quilt on the wall with small removable hooks.



Modify this quilt block design to create your own full sized quilt by duplicating the blocks in coordinating fabrics. Play around with the hexagons. Try different shapes, new layouts and different sizes too. The opportunities are endless!

Share your Flora Mini Quilt on social media using the hashtags #floraminiquilt, #mollyandmama and #sewcanshemonthlyminis, so that we can all share in the fun!

