

# "Oh So Sweet" Patchwork Dress

[Printer Friendly Instructions](#)

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## Materials:

- 12 Fat Quarters of Riley Blake "Sweet Divinity"
- 1 yd. White Cotton Muslin (for dress lining)
- Dress Pattern
  - Any dress pattern that has a top you like will do! (*I used McCall's MP 386, dress A, size 4T*)

### Note:

The material list above is based on the [4T, 4 tiered dress](#) that I made.

- Since each dress will be unique in size, style, and dimensions, please **do your math FIRST**, calculating the size and quantity of squares required for your dress (shown in steps 4-5, for dress body; and step 20, for dress lining), and **then purchase your materials.**

## Suggested Embellishments:

- Crochet Flowers (shown)
- Cute Buttons (Riley Blake's "Happy Holiday Assortment" shown)
- Rick Rack (shown)
- Ribbon
- Anything else you think would make the dress darling!

## Instructions:

1. Cut out dress top according to pattern instructions, on **both** the dress fabric and the muslin lining. Set the lining fabric pieces aside.

2. With the dress fabric pieces right sides together, **sew the dress top together** according to the pattern instructions. *(Please refer to pattern for proper seam allowance; most apparel is sewn at 5/8")*



3. **Iron appropriately**, and turn dress top right side out.
4. **Measure** the base of the dress top (the part that you will begin to add layers of patchwork to). For my 4T dress, this measured 26".
5. **Calculate** the number of squares needed for the first tier.
- **Multiply** the base measurement of the dress top by 1.5
    - **Ex:** My measurement was 26"
      - $26" \times 1.5 = 39"$
  - **Divide** the multiplied result (ex: 39") by the size which you would like your sewn squares to be. *(No S.A included)*
    - **Ex:** I wanted my sewn squares to be 4", so I divided 39" by 4, which gave me the total number of squares needed for my first tier.
      - $39 \div 4 = 9.7$  (Rounded up = 10)
6. **Continue to calculate the number of squares needed for the rest of your tiers. Use the following formula to do so...**
- **Multiply** the number of squares from the previous tier by 1.5, and round up to the nearest whole number.
    - **Ex:** For my dress I wanted 4 tiers, so my calculations were as follows...
      - **Tier #1:** 10 squares (see above)
      - **Tier #2:** 15 squares ( $10 \times 1.5 = 15$ )
      - **Tier #3:** 23 squares ( $15 \times 1.5 = 22.5$ )
      - **Tier #4:** 35 squares ( $23 \times 1.5 = 34.5$ )
      - **Total # of squares:** 83
7. **Cut your squares.** *Do not forget to add your seam allowance when cutting your squares*
- **Ex:** If you want 4" sewn squares, then you will need to cut each square at  $4 \frac{1}{2}$



8. **Sew your first tier together.** Place squares right sides together, and sew at  $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Continue to do this with each square, until you have the appropriate amount of squares sewn together for that tier.
- **To finish:** Sew both ends together, placing right sides together, so that you have a circle of squares.



(Pin)



(Sew)



(Iron)

9. **Gather** the first tier by sewing, using your machines basting stitch (widest stitch setting on your machine), at  $\frac{1}{8}$ " -  $\frac{1}{4}$ " away from edge. Pull on one of the end threads, gathering the fabric evenly as you go, until the gathered tier measures the same circumference as the dress top base.
10. **Pin profusely!** With right sides together, pin the gathered tier to the dress top base.
11. **Sew** the tier to the dress top at a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. *(Be sure to return your machines stitch length to its normal setting before sewing!)*

12. **Iron appropriately!** Iron the first tier down, pushing the seam allowance up towards dress top.



*(Front)*



*(Back)*

13. **Sew together remaining tiers**, following the instructions in steps 8-12 for each tier.



*(Photos show dress with 3 tiers shown)*

- ***Please keep in mind:***
  - As you begin to sew each tier to the previous one, you will most likely need to gather less than you would initially think. Trust me when I say, ***Gather less first, and then more as needed***, it will save you a lot of time and frustration in the long run.
- ***Remember:*** each tier is only 1.5 times the length of the previous tier, so you are only gathering the new tier to 1/3 its length.

14. **Calculate bottom ruffle length.**

- To do so, take your initial dress top base measurement and multiply by 1.5.
- Continue to multiply each tier's circumference by 1.5 until you have the circumference of your final tier, and multiply that by 1.5.

- Ex: For my 4T dress, the calculations were as follows...
  - Tier #1: 39" (see step #5)
  - Tier #2: 59" ( $39" \times 1.5 = 58.5$ )
  - Tier #3: 89" ( $59" \times 1.5 = 88.5$ )
  - Tier #4: 134" ( $89" \times 1.5 = 133.5$ )
  - Ruffled Hem: 201" ( $134" \times 1.5 = 201"$ )

15. **Cut fabric for bottom ruffle.** Cut the fabric to be 5" tall, and between 5" - 8" in length. (I used a mix of 8" and 5" strips)



*(Photos show 8"x5" and 5"x5" strips cut for the bottom hem ruffle)*

16. **Sew together bottom ruffle,** following the instructions in step 8.

17. **Iron.** Once the fabric strips are sewn together, fold the fabric in half (right sides out) and iron.

18. **Gather** as instructed in step 10.



*(Photos show bottom ruffle being pinned for gathering)*

19. **Pin and Sew.** Pin and sew the ruffled bottom onto the dress, right sides together. Iron appropriately, pressing the seam allowance upwards.



**CONGRATULATIONS!!!!**

**You have now completed the dress body, and are ALMOST DONE!**

20. **Construct the dress lining.**

1. **Sew together the dress top lining** as you previously did for the dress top.



2. **Calculate** the measurements for the lining of the dress body. (*width x length*)

○ *Cut TWO pieces at the figured measurements below.*

- **Width** = Dress top base +  $1 \frac{1}{4}$ "
  - **Ex:** for my dress this was  $27 \frac{1}{4}$ " ( $26" + 1 \frac{1}{4}" = 27 \frac{1}{4}"$ )
- **Length** = # of tiers x size of sewn squares +  $\frac{5}{8}$ " S.A.
  - **Ex:** 4 tiers x 4" squares = 16" +  $\frac{5}{8}" = 16 \frac{5}{8}"$
- **SO...** for my dress lining I cut **TWO** pieces at  $27 \frac{1}{4}" \times 16 \frac{5}{8}"$

3. **Sew** your dress lining pieces together at the sides.

○ *Remember that you are now sewing at  $\frac{5}{8}$ " seam allowance!*



4. **Gather** your dress lining



5. **Pin** your lining top and your dress lining, **RIGHT SIDES** together.



6. **Sew** your dress top and bottom together. (*Still 5/8" SA*)

7. **Iron** seam allowance up towards dress top.

21. **Sew dress lining to dress.**

1. With right sides together, **slip the dress lining on top of the dress**, so that they are directly mirroring each other.



2. **Pin** the two layers together, matching up the side seams.



3. **Sew** the two layers together.



4. **Clip and Turn.** Clip all curved edges, and turn your dress right side out.



5. **Iron** the seams flat.

6. **Topstitch** along the edge of the dress top to secure the two layers in place.



22. **Hem the dress lining bottom.**

1. **Turn** the raw edge of the dress bottom up  $5/8$ " , and iron in place.
2. **Fold** the raw edge of this fold in  $1/4$ " , and pin in place.
3. **Sew** hem  $1/8$ " away from the folded edge, securing the hem in place.



Your dress is now complete, with the exception of embellishments or buttons!



Feel free to embellish the dress to your heart's content!

I suggest sewing little crochet flowers, rickrack, buttons, etc. along the neckline, waist line, or straps of the dress.



For my dress, I sewed buttons onto the center of Riley Blakes crochet flowers (size Large), and then sewd the flowers onto the top of my straps. For the dress closure, I sewed snaps onto the dress top and on the underside of the straps, so that the dress just snaps closed. To add just the right finishing touch, I sewed coordinating rick rack along the waistline, and Viola! the dress is complete.

### Complete list of embellishments used:

- 2 packs Riley Blake crochet flowers (Largest size used)
- 1 pack Riley Blake "Happy Holiday Assortment" Buttons
  - 1 pack Riley Blake rick rack (in pink)
  - 2 snaps (Whopper Poppers work well too!)

The best thing about this dress, is that it is completely customizable! If the dress is too full for your tastes, cut back on the number of squares sewn together for each tier (That's what I did!).

Want a skirt rather than a dress?

Measure your child's waist/ hips (depending on where you want the skirt to sit), add 2-3 inches to this, so the elastic waistband can move and expand. Construct skirt as outlined in steps 5-19. Attach waist band at the top of the skirt, and feed in elastic (cut to waist/hip measurement, possibly -1", depending on how snug you want it). If you want a lining attached, add this before you attach the waistband. Add embellishments!

Have fun, and be creative!



Thanks for participating in my tutorial!

If you have any questions, comments, concerns, etc. please feel free to contact me at [abotich87@sbcglobal.net](mailto:abotich87@sbcglobal.net).

Also, you can follow me, and my sewing adventures at my blog [Kaylie's Closet](#).