Make to Give: Sew a Gingham Crib Quilt with Faith Hale

Chapter 1 - Make to Give: Sew a Gingham Crib Quilt

Overview

I love giving away the quilts I've made, and there's no one more deserving than a small baby. These gifts are great to give to any family welcoming a new member, and are especially helpful in NICUs where they can really bring some cheer and love. I'm Faith Hale. I'm a quilter and a crafter and enthusiastic gift giver. In this class, we'll create a gingham-inspired quilt from start to finish. You can play with pattern, color, and complete an entire quilt in one go. We'll learn, seaming, piecing, making a quilt sandwich, and binding. Give a quilt and share some love.

Materials

The final size of our quilt will be 31 and a half inches square. And for this, we'll need 81 4-inch squares of quilting cotton. We're using a hundred percent cotton fabric, and you're welcome to do an all over patchwork style. I really love the graphic nature of this kind of checkered pattern. And for that you'll need a dark, a medium, and a light in the same tone. You'll need 16 squares of your lightest color. This can be cut from about a third of a yard. A half a yard of medium, and this will be 40 squares. For our dark, 25 squares. This can be cut from a half a yard of fabric. You'll need an additional third of a yard for your binding fabric. I'm cutting mine out of this darker material, so for the dark, I'll need a total of two thirds of a yard. Snips and scissors. We're using cotton batting. You can also use an 80% cotton, 20% polyester batting cut to 34 inches. And a bold graphic backing fabric. This is a hundred percent cotton. Also cut to 34 inches square. An iron and an ironing surface. A rotary cutter, a quilting ruler, and a cutting mat is not essential, but it's really helpful for getting nice crisp squares. This ruler is 24 and a half inches. Something long enough is really helpful. Bent quilting pins for basting, and quilt clips. You can also use pins if you're more comfortable with pins, but I really like these clips for attaching the binding. Sewing machine with a neutral thread. I've also added a piece of washi tape on here, at a quarter of an inch. If yours doesn't have a really visible quarter of an inch line, go ahead and add that there, and you'll need an all purpose thread that matches your binding fabric.

Cut fabric

Cutting with a rotary cutter and a quilting ruler gives you really crisp edges. You can of course use your scissors, but I like doing it this way for efficiency. I also cut my fabric directly off the roll. I generally don't wash it first. It comes with a lot of starches that helps keep things really tidy and clean. I leave my fabric folded, so you have the two layers and sometimes they're really precisely cut and sometimes they're not. So I'll line the fold up against the bottom line of my mat and then I take my ruler and line it up with my quilting mat. Press down firmly and make sure no fingers are peeking over the edge. It's a recipe for disaster. And we cut slowly and firmly all the way to the top. If you have skips, that means you need to change your blade. This blade is nice and sharp, and then I'll flip it to the other side of the mat. Not cutting this side yet, but because ergonomically I always wanna be cutting on the right side of my ruler because I'm right-handed. If you're left-handed, this will be reversed for you. We're cutting four inch strips, so I'm lining it up with the four inch mark. So you can see it's a little askew on the table. This is not as important at this point as the ruler. See, I can see it tilting up at the top here. I want to correct that before I get to the end. So now I'm double

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checking. Yeah, we're good. Once you get comfortable with the rotary cutter, you can batch cut the strips. I generally like to cut the strips one at a time, and then batch cut the squares. You'll need four medium strips, three dark strips, and two white strips. We're lining up all of our strips very meticulously. We have nine strips total. Usually I wouldn't do more than eight at a time, but we have a fresh blade and these, this fabric is really nicely starched, so I think we can make it work. The more fussy and fiddly you are at this point in time, the better. And we're going to cut off these ends first. I'm lining up the top and bottom of these lines to make sure this is straight, and then I'm flipping the whole stack over and we'll cut down the line. Because I want my cutting to be as streamlined and straightforward as possible, instead of cutting all the way down the mat, I'm going to cut, move, and cut and repeat all the way down. 56 00:03:34,855 --> 00:03:34,975 Amazing. Again, this is based more on your ruler and not on the mat to make sure it's lined up top and bottom. Actually, around all three sides. If you've cut exactly, you should have just about four inches left over. But make sure you put these aside. You're not going to be using them because they have these dots and not all the fabric lined up. But don't accidentally use these. You'll have more squares than you need. Go ahead and sort them out in each color. You'll need 40 medium, 25 dark, 16 light.

Piece strips

The pattern we're working with has five rows of dark and medium and four rows of medium and light. For my top row, I'm going to need four dark and light pairs, plus an additional dark. 5 00:00:22,920 --> 00:00:23,070 1, 2, 3, 4, and it'll end with a dark. Going to go ahead and sew these together one pair at a time. Make sure your edges are lined up and if you're using a patterned fabric, you'll want the right sides to be together. You'll wanna be holding your tail so they don't slip in. And we're going to use a quarter inch seam allowance and sew all the way down. This is a quarter of an inch presser foot, I just find it helpful to have an extra unit of measurement. And we're going to repeat this with the other three pairs in our strip. And we're just sewing one after another so you don't have to pull them out. We're going to cut in between them once we're done. Snip in between each pair, and then we're going to sew two pairs together, and then we're going to sew those pairs together. So we're just doing it one strip at a time. Now if your thread starts to bunch like that, it means that it was pulled back down, so I guess I didn't have a tight enough hold on my thread tail. I'm going to back this out before it becomes even more of a problem. So lift your presser foot, pull it out, see it was getting all tangled down there. And trim this as best you can. Pull out the threads and if they don't seem like they wanna come out, clip your threads as close to the surface as you can. And we're gonna try again. And we're sewing right over that, taking care to hold both of our threads. One more square and our strip is complete. We're adding the dark to the end. Press your seams towards the medium fabric and when you're doing a light and medium strip, you'll do this as well. You'll be pressing it towards the medium fabric. Now I am an extremely lazy quilter, so you can extra believe me when I say that this step is not optional, you must press your seams. This will make the next step much easier. When you're done piecing your rows, you should have five dark and medium, and four medium and light, and you can sew these one row at a time, or you can sew all the pairs first, then all of the fours next. This is called chain piecing. When you're just going through the machine and it's really efficient, you can also see that there's a benefit to not having to worry about the thread slipping down like it did on that one seam. Whatever you're most comfortable with.

Assemble quilt top

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To sew our strips together, you can use pins, but I really like using clips. Because we pressed towards the medium color, our seams should nest really nicely. This will make this intersection a lot easier to sew through. So we're laying them right sides together and the seam goes one way and the other way. I'm starting in the middle and working to each end, but you can just clip from the top down. I don't know that it really matters. Once you get more comfortable sewing the strips, you don't even need the clips. But I think it's a good, good thing to try out. We're not just clipping to hold it together, we're clipping to get these really precise seams. So make sure you're clipping it at the seam. We're going to be sewing with our quarter inch seam, and this time we're going to be back stitching at the beginning and end just to really lock it into place. Make sure you're holding your tails. Take out your clips as you come to them. It's a good idea to have a little dish to hold them because if they fall onto the floor, they're not my favorite thing to step on. If your seam gets stuck, place your needle down, lift the presser foot and tuck it back under. And repeat the back stitch here. Continue attaching your strips one at a time until you've completed your quilt top, and then we'll iron those seams open. So for the strips, we ironed it to one side. Now that it's all attached, we'll be ironing the seams we just sewed open. So you might want to finger press it. We'll all just go carefully one row at a time, doing your best to maintain however these seams were already pressed. Press all of these horizontal seams open. If you notice that some of the vertical seams got caught while you were sewing them together, just make them as flat as you can.

Make and pin baste a quilt sandwich

A quilt sandwich consists of the backing, the batting and the quilt top. In this step, we'll pin them all together to prepare it for quilting. I've laid down my backing fabric, right sides down on the table, and I use some washi tape to secure it nice and flat. I made sure to iron it first. The next layer is our batting. You can cut your batting to the same size as you're backing fabric or a little bit smaller. I'm just smoothing out all the wrinkles with my hands from the center out. Then we'll lay down our quilt top. If there's any little fuzzies at this point, you can use a tape roller to get them off. Maybe we'll do one more round of gentle smoothing. And if you're doing this on a larger quilt, you'll probably end up doing it on the floor. That's one thing I love about baby quilts is they can often fit just on the table. 21 00:01:34,785 --> 00:01:34,905 We're not pulling it, we're just smoothing it, and go and get any more bits with the tape roller, and because we're not using a walking foot because we're just using our machine, we really need to baste this well. We're going to use curved safety pins and just pour out a bunch, and we're going to pin in every single square, so that might seem excessive, but it'll really help us when we're doing the quilting. We're also going to leave the pin open and then close them all at the end. So I start by pinning right in the middle, and if you're working on like a nice dining room table, you'll have to be really careful about not scratching it. I'm using my work table so I could feel comfortable really pushing the pin down. I'm starting in the middle and I'm working my way out. And I think I'm going to pin all the dark squares first before I do the other ones. Now that I've done all the dark squares, I'm going to go from the inside out and making sure there's one pin inside every square. Working from the inside out really helps with bunching and wrinkling. This might seem like a lot of pins and it is, I wouldn't normally use this many if I was using a walking foot or if I was hand quilting, but because we're just using our standard machine, we want to baste it as much as we can. Go ahead and close up all of your pins and we'll be ready for the quilting.

Machine quilting

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Every seam in this quilt will have a line of quilting, a quarter of an inch, both to the left and to the right of it. We'll begin with the center top, stitch all the way down. Go back to the top and return to that seam. We're going to stitch from the center out. Turn our quilt 90 degrees, stitch center out, and repeat that until all of our seams are quilted. The reason why we work from the center out is to prevent there from being too much of the quilt underneath the throat of the machine. It helps it with bunching. I'm gonna loosely fold this over, and we're starting with this seam here. We're going to sew on either side of the seam, and because this presser foot is a quarter of an inch on either side, that's super helpful. So we can sew it on this side, and then the next row, we'll sew it on this side. An important part of this step is pulling up the bobbin thread. So we do that by using our hand crank to turn it once and then lifting our presser foot and you see how it can comes up from the bottom. This part's a little fiddly, but you get the hang of it. We put our presser foot back down. We're keeping our tails out of the way, and we begin sewing. Our hands aren't pushing, they're just gently following the quilt. And if your pins are ever in the way, just remove them. If it seems like there's any bubbling, gently smooth it out from your hands. We're not pulling the seam apart, but we're taking our time keeping it as bubble free as possible. See how it's kind of bunching up? We're just flattening it out. Make sure when you're flattening it out, you don't get your finger underneath this screw. I've gotten it caught before and it's not very comfortable. Sew just up to the edge. I wouldn't sew much past it. And some people like to back stitch here. I don't generally like to, I think it's kind of risky. Sometimes the thread can get bunched. So lift up your presser foot, pull it out, and snip your threads close to your quilt in the both the top and the bottom. Now we'll go back up to the top and we're gonna sew the same seam, but this time we're running the other side of our presser foot around it. So once more, put our presser foot down. Needle down, pull it up, grab that bobbin thread, needle down, tails out of the way and off we go. Repeat this process down every seam in this half. Rotate the quilt and continue until every line has been quilted.

Bind quilt

If you found machine quilting arduous, you're not alone. It can be kind of tricky, especially depending on the machine. Some machines take to it a lot more easily. The best thing you can do to make machine quilting easier is get yourself a walking foot. And I hope that you felt comfortable moving the pins around just a little bit if you had to. Now we're going to square up our quilt and trim off the edges. I'm not gonna be too concerned with getting things to any precise measurement. I just wanna trim along the edges so that all three pieces of batting, backing, and quilt top are aligned. Ideally, these edge blocks will be three and three quarters, but you can see if I line it up at the three and three quarter mark, it dips in a little bit here. I'm not really worried about that. I just wanna make sure that I get these lined up. So I'm putting the ruler as straight as I can, all the way up. The edge is a little wavy, but that's why we're cutting it off. And take your time here. You really wanna make sure that this is accurate. Pick up the whole piece and slide it closer to you so you can finish trimming. And make sure that the cut you've already made is nicely lined up. And repeat on the other three sides. Sometimes you plan to use one color binding and then you accidentally cut it up and you need to use another color binding. We have four strips that are two and a half inches tall by the width of your fabric. Overlap your pieces by a quarter of an inch, arranged perpendicularly and you'll pop a pin to hold it together. And we'll be sewing from here to here. Cut a quarter inch from your sew line, and when you fold it open, it should match up nicely. Attach the rest of your binding together this way and press these seams open. I've ironed my binding in half with the seams on the inside and I'm going to lay it out around the quilt just to make sure that none of those joining

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seams are on the corner. That can make it a little tricky when it comes time to mitering. We don't have to be super precise as long as we know that we're away from the corners with this seam. All right, I feel good about that. And we're going to leave about a 10 inch gap from where we start sewing and the end of our material. I'm just cutting that off here and I prefer not to pin all the way around. I find that it needs frequent adjustment anyway. So if I just clip the beginning and also clip this tail to prevent it from flipping around, that works best. And of course we're sewing on the backside so that we can flip it to the front. We're sewing with our quarter inch seam allowance and we're sewing with the raw edges all lined up. So the fold should be away from you, it shouldn't be what you're sewing. And I'll do a little back stitch at the beginning as well. Now when we get to the end, we're going to stop at a quarter of an inch pivot, 45 degrees and sew off the edge, that looks like this. So here's our edge there. Needle down, presser foot up, pivot and sew off. Clip our threads. And here's where we miter our corner. So take the whole binding, fold it up. So this is a 45 degree angle. It should line up with the corner here. And then we fold it straight down and this should line up with the top of our quilt so it's clunky, cumbersome, and totally fine. So again, we've sewn off at a 45 degree angle. We fold our binding up and back down and then we'll start again. Sewing a quarter of an inch from the edge all the way at the beginning. So you don't need to start down a quarter of an inch. You can start at the beginning of the fabric. Repeat that miter on the next three corners. Continue sewing until we reach the beginning of your binding strip. We have about a 10 inch opening and we're going to sew the ends of our binding together. We want to overlap our pieces and we're cutting the ends to overlap by exactly the width of our binding. So instead of measuring it, I like to use a piece of the binding itself. We're putting it in the middle. And so I'll cut this top piece to the left, pull it out. And the bottom piece to the right, the overlap is the width that needs to be. So we unfold one side, right side up and we unfold the other side right side down. It's a little twisty. This one looks like a house. We line them up perpendicular and make sure you're not sewing from the center out. We're sewing across. So if you have your quilt a point down, you're sewing horizontal, we'll put two pins in it and fold your quilt a little bit so that you have the space you need to work. And we're sewing from corner to corner right down the middle. And before we cut anything off, let's test it out to see if it works. Oh, thank goodness. That is exactly how we want it to be. Open it back up. Trim this with a quarter inch seam allowance and and finish stitching all the way to the beginning of our stitch line. You can overlap just a bit. We are gonna smooth out the bubble as much as we can, but if there's a little bit of a pucker, that's all right, it won't be noticeable on the other side. The very last thing we have to do is to flip our binding to the front and stitch it down. And I'm always so excited at this step and wanna race through it, but there's a few little fiddly things we can do to make this next step easier. You want to go around and trim any threads that are hanging off. You'll also press your binding away from your quilt and we're going to trim off our corners to give us a little less bulk. Position your quilt to the left of you, scissors to the right, and we're cutting this off at a 45 degree angle. There's a lot of layer of fabrics here, so go nice and slowly and we'll repeat that with your other three corners. This step is pretty fiddly, but it's a tip I learned that really changed how I do bindings. So we'll flip our binding over and you can see on one side it tucks under on this side. So when we flip to the front, we want the tuck under to be on the opposite side, right? So it's tucked under coming from the left here. It's tucked under coming from the right. That'll make it a lot crisper and nicer. So you might be tempted to do the same side, but look, you can see it's a little chunkier. When we reverse that, you get a really nice miter. Go ahead and clip that down. And if this feels fiddly to you, it's not because you're doing it wrong, it's just a fiddly process. Fold your binding to the front. And I like to pin one side at a time, but you could pin

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all the way around and you can use clips or pins, whatever you're most comfortable with. We'll be sewing right along the edge. And so on the back it'll show through. Some people like to attach their binding to the front and sew it to the back. I prefer this method because then I can match this color. And if you've given yourself enough of a seam allowance, you won't have to pull too hard to cover the first line of stitching you did. And I'll be starting to sew just a bit away from my first corner to get that first miter out of the way. I'll sew all the way down the side and then I'll re-clip a corner on another side. We'll be sewing with an eighth of an inch stitch allowance. So when we put our presser foot down, the binding should run up with the inside of our presser foot. We're starting our seam by pulling up our bobbin thread so it doesn't catch and tangle on the back. You'll pivot with the needle down and continue sewing all the way around this quilt, clipping as needed. Overlap your seam by about a half an inch. Give a little back stitch. Holy smokes. We're done. I'm so thrilled with how this quilt turned out. I think it's really beautiful and any of the imperfections really get hidden in the washing 'cause it puffs up. But also what's most special to me about this quilt is how much meaning it'll have for whoever gets it next.

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