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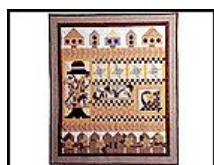
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## Isabella's Garden: December 2003 Quilt Block

### Finishing: Backing, Quilting and Binding

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We're tackling the final part of this 12-month quilt project—backing, quilting and binding.

Welcome back to the last month of Isabella's Garden! Sometimes a row and sometimes a bordered block, this 12-month project is tackling one section at a time. This month, we're finishing the quilt with backing, quilting and binding.

#### Backing

1. To determine the amount of backing needed, measure the finished quilt top. Cut the backing fabric six to eight inches larger than the quilt top on all sides. The backing may need to be pieced to accommodate the size.

To piece the backing fabric, fold it width-wise (the opposite fold as to how the fabric comes on the bolt) and cut it down the middle. With right sides together and selvedge edges matching, stitch the pieces together, and press the seam allowance open. Remember—cut the backing fabric the size of the quilt top plus an extra six to eight inches.

#### Batting

Select a batting and cut to size if necessary. This quilt features a 54" x 97" piece (1-1/2 yards) of 100-percent cotton mid-loft batting. Cut the batting six to eight inches larger than the quilt top.

#### Basting

To baste, sandwich the batting between the quilt top and backing fabric, then pin the three layers or secure with running stitches. Here's how to tackle it:

1. Place the backing right side down on a smooth work surface. Clip or tape the backing to the work surface to hold it in place. Center the batting on top of the backing fabric. Smooth out any creases.
2. Center the quilt top on the batting right side up, smoothing out any creases. Secure the layers together with running stitches or pins, using small, rustproof safety pins to pin through all three layers. Begin in the center of the quilt top and work out, placing a pin every three to four inches.
3. Trim the batting and backing to two inches beyond the edge of the quilt. Now that the basting is finished, it's time to quilt.



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### Quilting

Ever stumped as to how to quilt a quilt? By hand, by machine, freehand or with templates, there's no wrong way to quilt. Quilt your project as desired, adding your own custom embellishments. This one was freehand, machine-quilted by Dori Hawks from [www.QuilterCommunity.com](http://www.QuilterCommunity.com). Here's a list of the quilting details:

- Stitch along the seam lines ("stitch-in-the-ditch") throughout the entire quilt with monofilament thread. For the rest of the quilting, use a bobbin wound with monofilament or thread color-coordinated to the backing fabric. Use color-coordinated thread for the top, changing the color as needed while keeping the bobbin color constant.
- Embellish the Birdhouse row with clouds and a bird.
- Soften the edges and add dimension to the Flying Geese rows with heart shapes formed by quilting arched triangles into the small triangles of each block.
- Accent the Friendship Stars with quilted flowers between each point and a curly variation of a Celtic design in the center block.
- Add definition to the Picket Fence row by quilting two vertical lines down each picket in addition to the monofilament quilting around the pickets.
- Add dimension to the Pinwheels by quilting arched triangles inside every other pinwheel blade.
- Embellish the outer border of the project by quilting a centered winding vine with heart-shaped leaves sprouting from each side.

### Binding

1. Measure the quilt around all four-sides. Add 24 inches to the total measurement.
2. From a 3/8-yard cut of binding fabric, cut six, 2-1/2-inch strips on the straight of grain. Join the strips with diagonal seams to make one continuous binding strip. Press it open.

3. On one end of the binding strip, fold over one inch to wrong side of fabric (**figure A**). Fold the binding strip in half lengthwise, right sides out. Beginning in the center, on one long side of the quilt top, match the raw edges and pin the binding strip to the right side of the quilt. Begin stitching through all layers, beyond the one-inch under-turn, stopping 1/4 inch from the corner. End by backstitching.

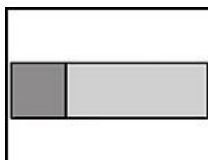


Figure A

4. Fold the binding strip upward, making a diagonal fold and finger-press (**figure B**). Hold the diagonal fold in place and bring binding strip down to match the next edge (**figure C**). A horizontal fold will align with the edge with binding attached. Match raw edges, pin and begin stitching at the top of the horizontal fold. Treat each corner in the same manner.

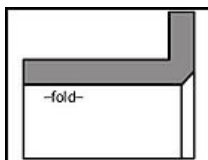


Figure B

5. When joining the ends of the binding strip, tuck the raw edge under the under-turned edge. If any backing or batting is not even with the quilt top, trim again before going further. Turn the binding over the quilt edge and hand-stitch or topstitch the binding strip to the backside of the quilt.

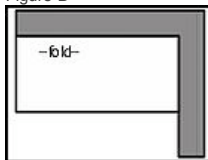


Figure C

6. To create mitered corners on the backside of the quilt, hand-stitch up to the corner; fold a miter in the binding; and make a stitch or two in the fold to secure in place.

### Resources

Dori Hawks

Quilting expert, teacher

E-mail: [dorihawks@thequiltercommunity.com](mailto:dorihawks@thequiltercommunity.com)

Website: [www.thequiltercommunity.com](http://www.thequiltercommunity.com)

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