

How to Use a Printed Template to Make a Cat – Patchwork Tutorial

Patchwork projects are loved by quilters and sewing enthusiasts around the world. One of the easiest and most charming designs you can create is a cat silhouette. Cat shapes work beautifully in quilts, pillow covers, wall hangings, tote bags, and many other handmade sewing projects. Using a printed template makes the process much easier, especially for beginners. Instead of trying to draw shapes directly on the fabric, you can simply trace a pre-designed template and cut it with confidence. This method ensures consistent shapes and allows you to repeat the design multiple times. In this tutorial, you will learn how to use a printed cat template to create a patchwork piece step by step. Whether you are new to quilting or already experienced with sewing projects, this guide will help you create a lovely handmade piece featuring adorable cat silhouettes.

Materials You Will Need

- Printed cat template
- Cotton fabric for the cat shape
- Background fabric for the patchwork block
- Fabric scissors or rotary cutter
- Pins or sewing clips
- Sewing machine or needle and thread
- Fabric marker or pencil
- Iron and ironing board

Before starting your patchwork project, gather all the materials listed above. Cotton fabric is usually the best option for quilting because it is easy to cut, sew, and press. Choosing contrasting colors between the cat and the background will help the design stand out beautifully. If you want a playful and colorful quilt, you can even create several cats using different fabrics. Scrap fabrics work perfectly for this type of project, making it a great way to reuse leftover materials from previous sewing projects.

Step 1 – Print and Prepare the Template

The first step is printing the cat template. Use regular printer paper and choose the size that fits your project. If you are making a quilt block, you may want a medium-sized template. If you are creating a pillow cover or wall decoration, a larger template can create a bold visual effect. Once printed, carefully cut around the outline of the cat shape. Try to follow the curves smoothly, especially around the ears, back, and tail. These curves are what give the cat its distinctive silhouette. You can also transfer the template onto thicker paper or cardstock. This makes the template more durable and easier to reuse for future projects.

Step 2 – Trace the Cat Shape onto Fabric

Place the paper template on the wrong side (the back) of your chosen fabric. Use a fabric marker, chalk, or pencil to trace the outline of the cat shape. If you plan to sew the piece as an applique, remember to add a seam allowance around the shape. A seam allowance of about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (approximately 0.5 cm) works well for most quilting projects. Take your time during this step to ensure the lines are smooth and accurate. Clean outlines will make the cutting and sewing process much easier later.

Step 3 – Cut the Fabric Shape

Using sharp fabric scissors or a rotary cutter, carefully cut along the traced outline. Smooth cutting is important for achieving a clean and professional result. Pay special attention to the curves of the tail and body. Small, controlled cuts help maintain the shape of the silhouette. If the fabric begins to fray, do not worry — the edges will be secured later during the sewing step. Once cut, you will have a fabric cat silhouette ready to be attached to your patchwork background.

Step 4 – Prepare the Background Fabric

Choose a background fabric that contrasts nicely with your cat shape. Light backgrounds work well with dark cat silhouettes, while bright or patterned backgrounds can create a playful design. Cut the background fabric slightly larger than the cat shape so there is room for sewing and trimming. For example, if your cat template is about 6 inches tall, a background square of 8 or 9 inches is usually a good starting size. Iron the background fabric before placing the applique to ensure a smooth surface.

Step 5 – Position the Cat Applique

Place the fabric cat shape on top of the background fabric. Move it around until you find the position that looks most balanced. Some people prefer placing the cat in the center, while others like placing it slightly to one side for a more artistic layout. Once you are happy with the placement, secure the shape with pins, fabric glue, or temporary adhesive spray. This will prevent the piece from moving while you sew.

Step 6 – Sew the Applique

Now it is time to attach the cat shape to the background. There are several sewing methods you can use:

- Zigzag stitch – common and beginner-friendly
- Blanket stitch – decorative and popular for applique
- Straight stitch – minimal and modern look

Sew slowly around the edges of the cat shape. Guide the fabric carefully around the curves so the stitching follows the outline smoothly. This step not only attaches the cat to the background but also adds decorative detail to your patchwork.

Step 7 – Press and Finish the Block

After sewing, gently press the patchwork block with an iron. Pressing helps flatten the stitches and gives your project a polished finish. At this point, your cat patchwork block is complete. You can now incorporate it into a larger quilting project such as: • Quilts • Pillow covers • Table runners • Wall decorations • Tote bags Creating several cat blocks and arranging them in different directions can produce a playful and charming quilt design.

Cat Template Examples







