

# Fashionistas: Paper Dolls for Grown Ups

by Kathryn Pellman

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Host Susan Brubaker Knapp and quilt artist Kathryn Pellman

## Materials

- Background fabric larger than the desired finished size (I like silk dupioni or a monochromatic cotton fabric with a subtle print.)
- Small pieces of printed fabric for dresses
- Pictorial fabric—hats, shoes, purses, dogs, cats, flower pots, cars, baskets, etc.
- ¼ yard fusible web (I used Wonder-Under® 805.)
- Cardstock or file folders
- Backing fabric
- White felt (I use this instead of batting)
- ½ yard 20"-wide sew-in interfacing (I used Pellon® 910.)
- Sewing machine with free-motion and blanket stitch capability

• **T**hese fashionistas combines my  
 • love of fashion, fabric, quilting,  
 • cartooning, and storytelling.  
 • I think of this series as a formula:  
 • Fashionista + Dress + Hat + Shoes +  
 • Purse + 2 Things to Hold + Scenery. The  
 • finished piece can be any size you like  
 • but I recommend no less than 8" on  
 • each side and no more than 14".

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. For the dresses, cut a window template from cardstock or a file folder to audition fabric. It should approximate the size of the dress. This will allow you to see what the dress will look like when it is cut. Cut free form or do a rough drawing to guide you. Everyone's fashionista is unique and reflects their personal taste.
2. Apply fusible web to the reverse of fabrics for dresses, props, and accessories. Leave space on the edges to trim to their final size later. Remove the paper backing.

3. Arrange the fashionistas wardrobe and accessory items on the background. Add hats, shoes, purses and scenery (dogs, cats, flower pots, cars, baskets, etc.). Trim the items, as needed.

**Tip:** Hold a 12" acrylic square or quilting ruler over the arrangement to see what it will look like and how everything will fit into the space once it is cut to size. Use a larger or small square for a different size composition.

4. When you are completely satisfied, fuse the elements to the background.

**Tip:** Steam both sides before layering.

## FINISHING

1. Layer the quilt in this order: backing, interfacing, felt (or batting), and, finally, the quilt top.

2. Using black thread and free-motion quilting, outline all the pieces and thread sketch the fashionistas. The fashionistas should be loose and cartoony.

**Note:** *If you wish, draw the fashionistas first using a fabric-safe temporary marker.*

3. Create background texture—to look like wallpaper—with decorative stitching. Be sure not to sew over the fashionistas or props.
4. Trim to the finished size.
5. Finish the edge with a tight buttonhole stitch or satin stitch.

**Tip:** *I usually use the same thread I used for the wallpaper.*

## TIPS

- Place everything out on a flat board that can be ironed on. Then transport the entire board—with pieces to be fused—to the ironing station. This usually cuts down on piece going missing. I use a piece of foam core with felt attached to it with spray-on adhesive.
- Before you start sewing, loosen up and check the thread tension on a sample piece by doing squiggles and writing your name.
- If you need to move the piece and it is not been tacked down with the iron, use a small dab of glue stick to hold in place.

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