

"Throughout most of the 19th century children were viewed as miniature adults. It is logical, then, that children's quilts would be miniatures of traditional full size quilts..." "Treasure or Not" <sup>1</sup>

You will notice that the doll quilt pattern offered here is not for a cradle or trundle bed but for a 4 poster bed, an adult style bed. Yes, little 4 poster doll beds were made. Dolls too, were seen as miniature adults.

#### Early 19th Century Quilts

It will come as a surprise to many people that quilts were rarely made during Colonial times. Quilt making was not common until many years later when production of fabrics in American factories relieved women from the tasks of spinning and made fabric more affordable.

In addition the quilts that were made looked far different than the pieced quilts we imagine. In fact very few quilts were made with pieced blocks before 1840. Typically quilts in the years after the American Revolutionary War were made in the medallion style.

#### What is a Medallion Quilt?

Medallion quilts have a large central area. The center was surrounded by two or more borders. Occasional borders were plain but usually pieced or appliqued borders were included. Some exquisite medallion quilts had several borders each one unique.

Sometimes centers was simply a solid piece of fabric, usually a large print or perhaps a toile or tree of life. Others were embroidered or appliqued to give the center added interest. The quilting design could also bring attention to the center.

#### Early Pieced Star Patterns

Sometimes a large pieced star or a set of stars was featured in the center. Stars appear to be among the earliest pieced patterns. More often they were used in the borders around the medallion center.

#### Baby and Doll Medallion Quilt

The medallion quilt patterns I've designed for you are easy to make yet will give you a sense of what a woman or child might have made during the first quarter of the 19th century. First you must imagine you are part of a well to do family. Most people could not afford lovely imported fabric nor the leisure time for quilt making.

This quilt is a simple one with a large central fabric square in the center surrounded by borders with very little piecing. I designed the doll quilt to be used on a four poster doll bed. If you prefer you can fill in the bottom corners for a square quilt.

#### Lovely Fabrics to Choose From

The joy in this project is that you will be able to explore the fantastic array of reproduction fabrics that are typical of those imported in the latter 18th century and the early 19th century.

#### Toiles With Scenes of Children

Eileen Trestain describes toiles as pictorial fabrics, "featuring events of the period or classical literature scenes." <sup>2</sup> Many were pastoral scenes like the one in this doll quilt. Toiles were produced in both France and England.

Toiles would have been costly so a doll quilt would have used some small amount of fabric left over from another project. For this reason it would have been rare that the center could have been cut so carefully to show the scene of the farm boy like the example at the top of this page does. But we can fussy cut for our project if we wish. Perhaps our baby or child lived in an particularly wealthy family. 😊

I used a toile on the 4 poster bed doll quilt I made and on the EQ5 drawing of the blue crib quilt. The doll bed toile is from the "Monticello Collection" while the toile for the baby crib quilt is from "A Season of Toiles". There are links to this fabric at the end of this article. Look around in local shops and on the Internet, you can find some delightful toiles with children pictured in them.

#### Large and Small Scale Prints

Large scale prints, often floral, were also used in centers and borders of medallion quilts. Small prints were available as well and were frequently used in the pieced borders. The medallion crib quilt example shown to the right includes both large and small prints. It also shows the rectangle version.

Below you will find links to reproduction fabric that you can look over in deciding what you would like to use for your doll or crib quilt. Your local fabric stores may have some reproductions of these early fabrics as well.

#### Instructions for Cutting, Assembly and Quilting

Now go to the

#### [Patterns for the Doll & Baby Medallion Quilts](#)

including the cutting & sewing instructions.

I also give some different suggestions for quilting this project.

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#### References:

<sup>2</sup> p73 & <sup>1</sup> p74 [Treasure or Not: How to Compare and Value American Quilts](#), by Stells Rubin

<sup>2</sup> p13 ["Dating Fabrics: A Color Guide 1800 - 1960"](#), by Eileen Jahnke Trestain

#### Related Websites:

[Reproduction Fabric Review: A Season of Toiles](#)

Enjoy viewing and learning about these reproduction toiles

[ReproductionFabrics.com:1775-1825, Turn Of The 18th Century Fabrics](#)

An online shop with reproduction fabric including "A Season of Toiles".

[Toiles from Sunshine Sewing Company](#)

This has the "Monticello Collection" toile I used in the doll quilt but it's blue.

[Early America's Medallion Quilts With Multiple Borders](#)

More history on medallion quilts and examples of quilt borders for them.

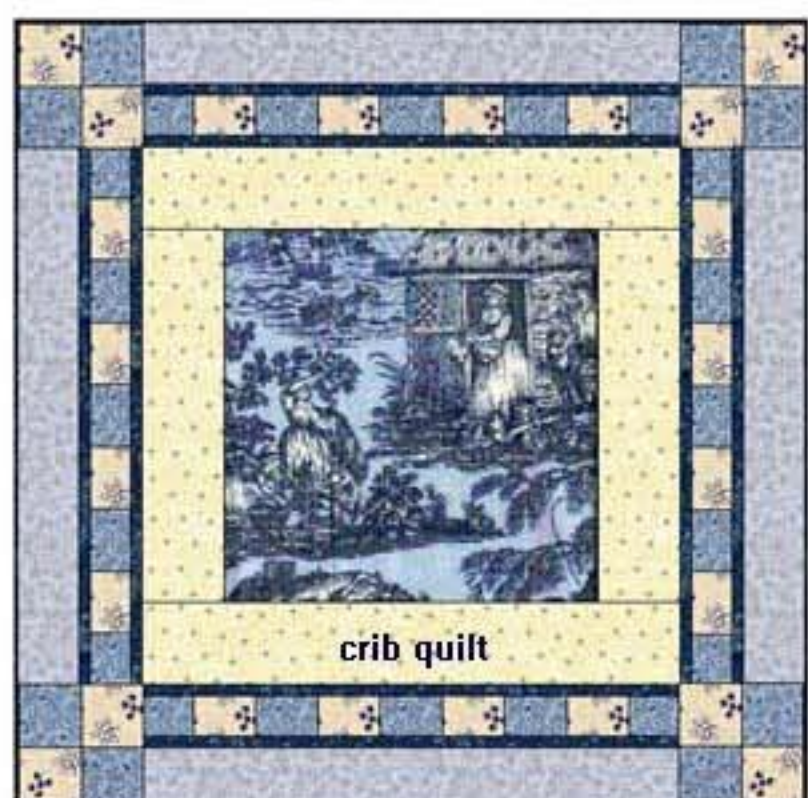
[Colonial Women ~ Quilters or Not?](#)

Learn more about colonial life and quilting.



Doll Quilt

click for larger version



crib quilt



crib quilt

# Full Version of the Medallion Doll Quilt

[ [Children & Baby Quilt Index](#) | [Medallion Quilt Pattern](#) ]



This page gives the cutting, assembling and quilting instructions for the doll and baby medallion quilts. **If you didn't come from [Doll & Baby Medallion Quilts](#) go there for the introduction** to this pattern including history and techniques that were used for this quilt during the early 1800s.

**Medallion Doll Quilt**

**estimated yardage:** You will need a fat quarter of each fabric except your feature center fabric. I suggest you get 2/3 of a yard of the feature fabric. That gives you enough to fussy cut for the center and corners and you will probably have enough to back the quilt as well.

**cutting instructions for the 19"x19" doll quilt**

Your feature fabric needs to be a toile or other large print.

Feature fabric:

Cut one large square 10½" by 10½" for the center.

Wait to cut 2 or 4 smaller squares. (2 if you are making the 4 poster bed quilt) When the pieced and plain borders are sewn together measure the width then use that measurement to make the corner squares. Or you could cut it 5" then when you go to attach it cut it down slightly if needed.



Doll Quilt

click for larger version

Plain borders:

Cut the wider border fabric into four 10½" by 2½" strips.  
Cut the narrow border fabric into eight 10½" by 1" strips.

Pieced border:

Cut eight fabric pieces into 2" by 2½" rectangles.  
Cut twelve contrasting fabric pieces into 2" by 2½" rectangles.

**Medallion Crib Quilt**

Estimated yardage for the rectangle crib quilt.  
The square quilt will take slightly less length with some fabric.

Fabric key	Number of patches	Yardage estimate	Fabric key	Number of patches	Yardage estimate
	12	* 1 + 1/4		5	7/8
	22	1/4		4	3/4
	4	* 1 + 1/8		22	1/4

**Cutting instructions for the 39"x39" crib quilt.**  
(the square crib quilt has one more border than the doll quilt)

Your feature fabric needs to be a toile or other large print.

Feature fabric:

Cut one large square 19½" by 19½" for the center.  
Cut 4 smaller squares 6½" by 6½" for the corners.

Plain borders:

Cut inner border fabric into four strips  
Two shorter ones 4½" by 19½"  
Two shorter ones 4½" by 27½"

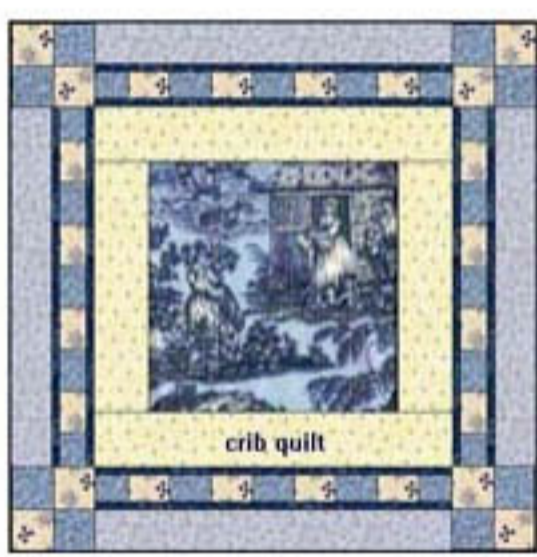
Cut the narrow border fabric into eight 27½" by 1" strips.

Cut the outer border fabric into four 27½" by 3½" strips.

Pieced border:

Cut sixteen fabric pieces into 2½" by 3½" rectangles.  
Cut twenty contrasting fabric pieces into 2½" by 3½" rectangles.

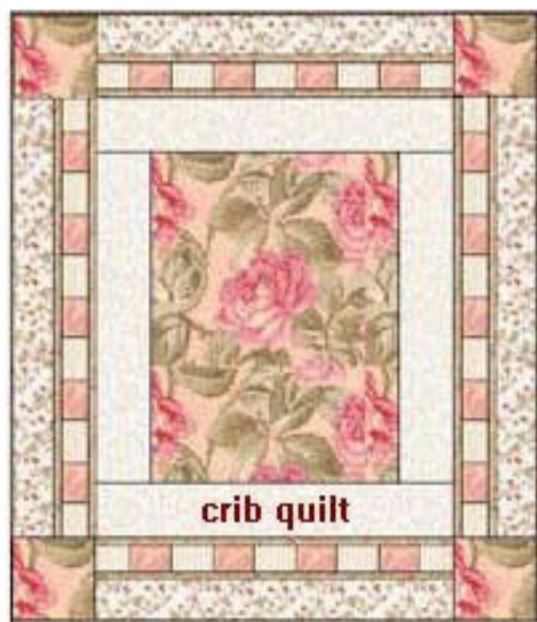
If you want to do a four patch in each corner of the crib quilt instead of the solid block cut the blocks for the four patches 3½" by 3½".



crib quilt

**Cutting instructions for the 39"x45" crib quilt.**

All you have to do to make the crib quilt longer is to add 6" to all the lengths. Then cut 4 more 2½" by 3½" rectangles, two of each fabric. These will lengthen the sides by 2 on each side.



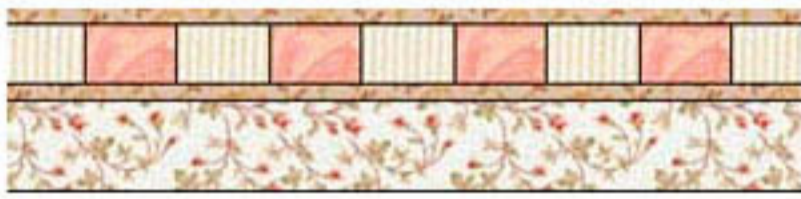
crib quilt

**Sewing Together the Quilt Tops**

Start by sewing the pieced strip. Then check the length. If it's longer or shorter than the above measurements adjust them accordingly. Some of us sew our seams slightly wider or narrower so it's worth checking.

If you are making a crib quilt your next step would be to add the innermost border. The doll quilt does not have this border.

Now sew together the rest of each of the 4 borders. Put the narrow strips on each side of the pieced border then add the outer border. Do not attach them to the quilt yet.



Next attach the side borders to the quilt.



Then attach the large squares to the top and bottom borders.



Finally add the top and bottom borders to the quilt.

**Quilting Your Medallion Quilt**

Use a fairly thin batting. These quilt were made for decoration, not warmth. I used a plain light tan backing. I was tempted to use the toile on the back but realized imported fabric would have been far too expensive to be used on the back of a quilt.



There are many ways you could quilt your project. I chose to hand quilt, something I rarely take the time to do but I wanted to try the old way with my small doll quilt. I used a cup to mark the quilting lines. I got the idea from looking at the quilting on a late 1700s whole cloth wool quilt. This would be a utilitarian style quilting pattern.

Another way a quilt might have been quilted during this period is in a diagonoal grid. The stitching lines would have been about 3/4 of an inch apart. To the right is an illustration of this quilting pattern.



But if you want to make the quilt fancy you can use a number of lovely quilting patterns. Feathers were popular as well as floral, fruit and other motifs from nature. Get out your stencils or design your own. You can make the quilting as fancy as you wish.

Of course at this early time the quilting would have been by hand but you can do lovely machine quilting to give the look of this period.

**Make a Very Narrow Binding**

Cut your binding in one inch strips. Sew them to the front then hand turn the binding to the back. Hand stitch making the binding width less then 1/4 inch. Women of this time were proud of thier ability to make a narrow binding. Also these narrow bindings took very little of the fabric that cost so dearly.