

## **Nature Brights Kitchen: Triple Border Dish Towels**

Editor: Liz Johnson

Thursday, 04 February 2010 10:00



If you want to jump start a project, start with something off-the-shelf and add your own sewn touches to make it unique. That's what we did with this set of clever dish towels. We started with plain white towels from Crate and Barrel, then added three fabric bands with contrasting topstitching. The color and pattern really pops off the crisp white background. I can't guarantee folks will be fighting to help you dry the dishes, but I can promise the towels will look fabulous hanging on the rack.

Our Nature Brights projects were made using Patty Young's wonderful [Flora & Fauna Collection](#) by Michael Miller Fabrics. To learn more about the collection and all the tutorials available, read our article: [Nature Brights Kitchen: A Bowlful of Color with a Generous Helping of Style](#).

### **Sewing Tools You Need**

- Any Sewing Machine (we recommend the [Janome 3128](#))

### **Fabric and Other Supplies**

For a set of three towels:

- 3 solid color, store-bought dish towels: *we used a basic white dish towel from Crate and Barrel that measured 20" across the bottom edge*
- ¼ yard of 45" wide fabric for the top and bottom accent bands, *we used [Patty Young's Flora & Fauna](#) in Black Ta-Dot*
- ¼ yard EACH of three 45" wide fabric for center bands, *we used [Patty Young's Flora & Fauna](#) in Lime Hive, Lime Daisy Dot and Lime Humming Birds*

NOTE: *You actually only need a 4" x 21" piece for each towel's center panel, so if you are doing other projects, you might be able to simply use scraps of fabric. Many online and in-store retailers have ¼ - ½ yard minimum cuts. You really only need an 1/8 yard.*

- All purpose thread in a contrasting color: *we used bright green*
- See-through ruler
- Fabric pencil
- Seam gauge
- Iron and ironing board
- Scissors or rotary cutter and mat
- Straight pins

## Getting Started

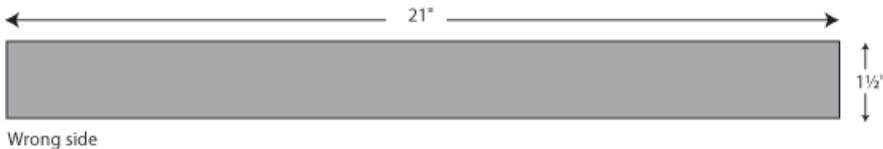
1. From your accent band fabric (*Black Ta-Dot in our samples*) cut one 1½" x WOF (with of fabric) strip per towel, then cut that down to two strips 1½" x 21".
2. From each of your center band fabrics (*Lime Hive, Lime Daisy Dot and Lime Humming Birds in our samples*), cut one rectangle 4" x 21". If you have a fabric, like our *Flora & Fauna Lime Humming Birds* which has a specific design you'd like to show when the towel is folded, fussy cut the piece, centering the image you want at the 10½" mark along the 21" side of your 4" x 21" rectangle.



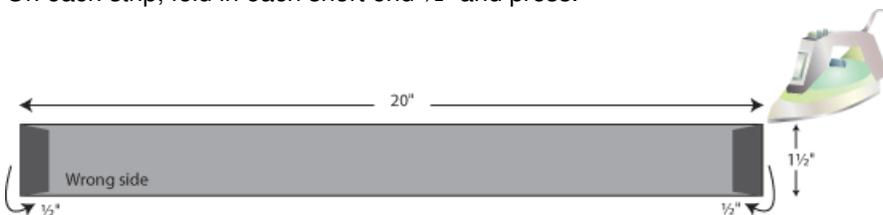
3. Use your see-through ruler to mark and draw a horizontal line across the front of your towel(s) 2½" up from the bottom hem.

## At Your Sewing Machine & Ironing Board

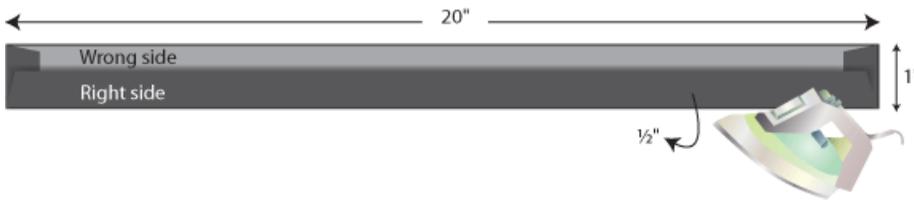
1. Take the 1½" accent band strips to your ironing board.



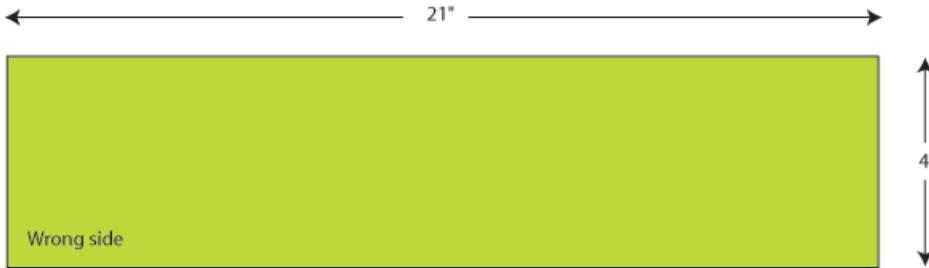
2. On each strip, fold in each short end ½" and press.



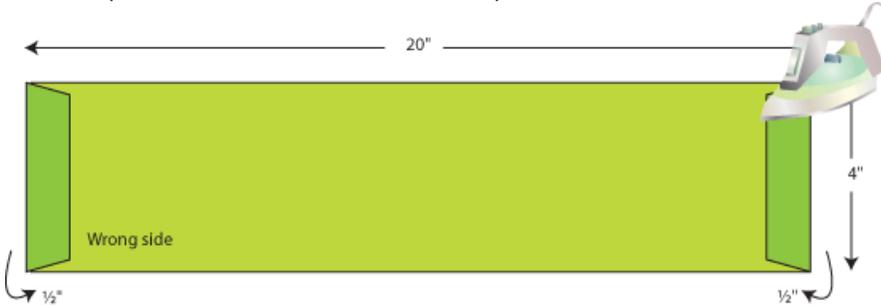
3. Then, fold up one long side ½" and press. Set both strips aside.



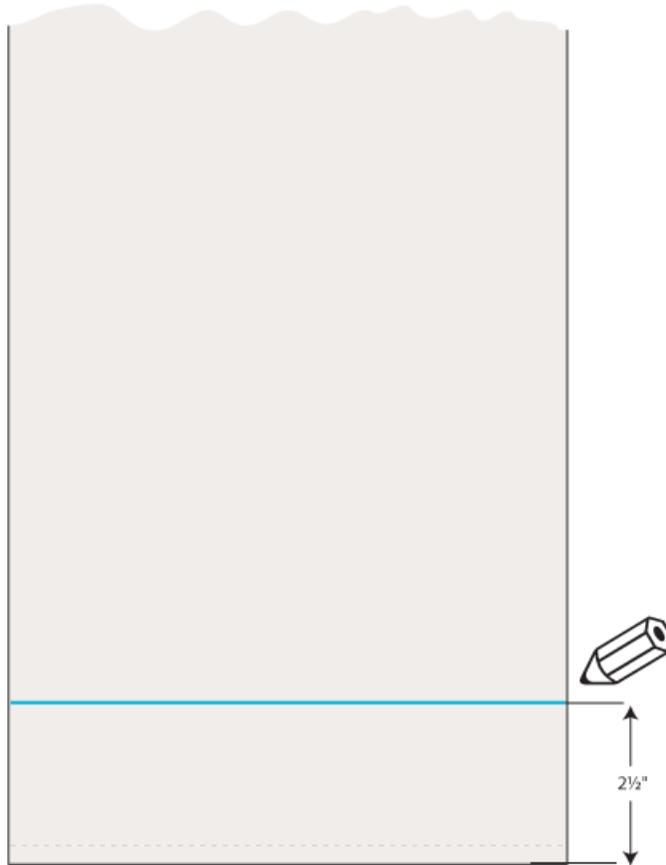
4. Take your 4" center panel fabric(s) to your ironing board.



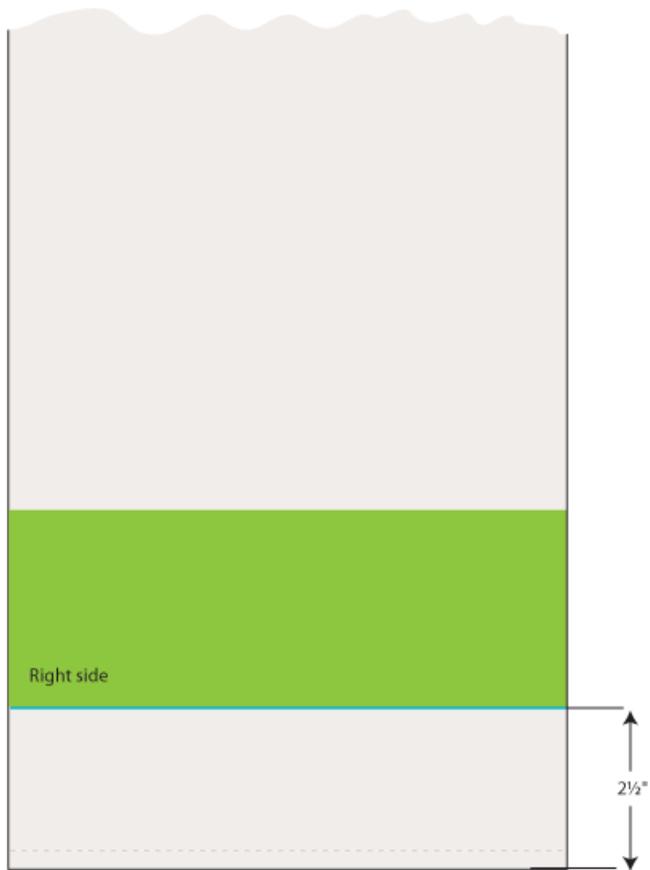
5. On each panel, fold in each 4" side  $\frac{1}{2}$ " and press.



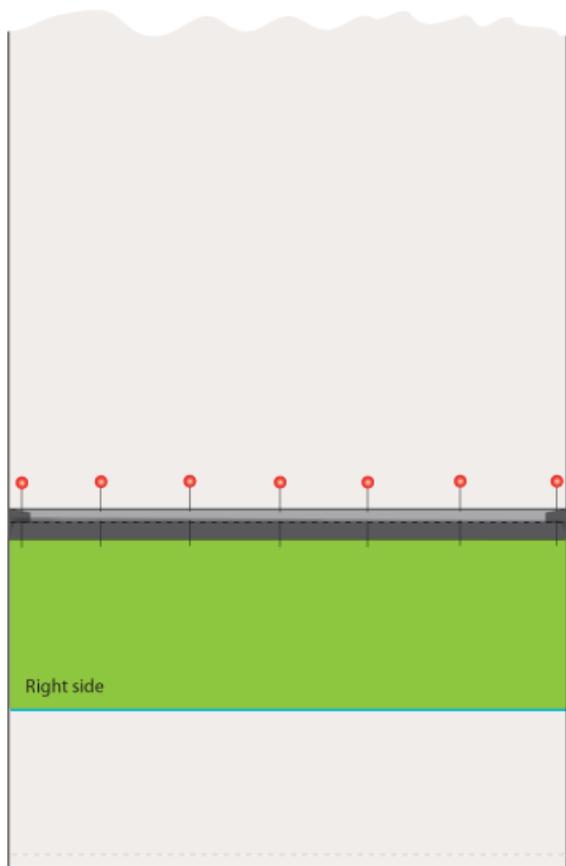
6. Take each towel and lay it face up on your work surface so the drawn horizontal line is visible.



7. Place a center panel strip, right side facing up, on top of a towel. Line up the bottom edge of the center panel strip with the drawn horizontal line. The folded outside edges of your center panel strip should be flush with the hemmed edges of the towel. If they aren't perfect, re-press the folds as needed to make an exact match. It'll look dorky if the fabric border hangs over the edge of the towel.



8. Take one accent strip and align its flat raw edge with the top raw edge of the center panel, right sides together. This means the opposite folded edge of the accent strip will lay on top of the center panel fabric ... not on top of the towel.

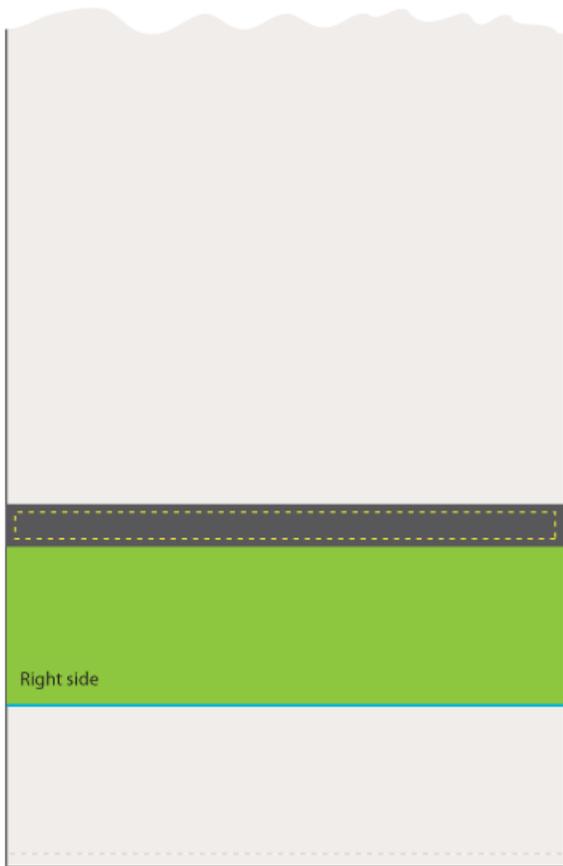


9. Using an approximate  $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance, stitch through both fabric layers as well as the towel. Stitch right along the inside edge of the accent strip's folded up raw edge, but do NOT stitch on it. Remember to back tack at the beginning and end of your seam.



10. Trim your seam allowance back about 1/8".
11. Keeping the existing fold to the inside, roll the accent strip up and over to cover the raw seam allowance. Press well and pin.
12. Topstitch very close to the edge around all four sides of the accent strip.





13. Repeat steps 8 - 12 to attach the remaining accent strip to the bottom of the center panel.
14. When both accent strips are topstitched in place, add an additional line of topstitching down each side of your triple border to close the sides.





### Contributors

Project Design: Alicia Thommas

Sample Creation: Kathy Andrews, What Sew Ever

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