DIY Denim Patchwork Highland Cow Appliqué

DENIM PATCHWORK HIGHLAND COW APPLIQUE TUTORIAL

Overall Width 22cm

Textured felt (Cream)

1.5cm Distressed Wood Button

Muzzle Pocket 6x4cm

Ear height 5cm

Overall Height 25cm

Muzzle width 8cm

Muzzle Pocket 6x4cm

1.5cm Distressed Wood Button

Udder width 4cm

Tail length 9cm

Overall Width 22cm

DENIM TYPE USED
- Deep Indigo Drill
- Acid Wash Denim
- Stripe Indigo Denim
- Raw Selvedge Denim
- Frayed Edge Details

USA QUILTING & SEWING METHODS USED

- **Applique Stitch** Satin Stitch 15mm, 2mm width.
- **Blanket Stitch** All at 1.5mm stitch length, length, 2mm width.
- **Frayed Edge Stitched** All at 1.5mm stitch length, length, 2mm width.
- **Fuss Cutting** Precision cutting around patterns.
- **Layered Piecing** For the dimensional body.
- **Raw Edge Fraying** For texture.
- **Surface Embellishment** Button and bead placement.
- **Top-Stitching** For pocket details.

① Preparation
Trace templates onto freezer paper. Iron onto chosen denim fabrics.

② Cutting
Fussy-cut all pieces with a 0.5cm fray margin.

③ Layering & Basting
Arrange pieces on background fabric, 35x40cm. Use fabric glue or basting spray.

Base Fabric - Ecru Linen/Cotton Blend, 35x40cm

④ Edge Stitching
Use "Indigo Blue" thread for most. "Ecru" for horns.

Create a charming Highland cow appliqué using recycled denim pieces! This project combines quilting, patchwork, and appliqué techniques, resulting in a rustic and adorable design perfect for pillows, wall art, or bags. Follow this detailed guide from start to finish.

✂️ Step 1: Gather Your Materials

Before starting, make sure you have everything ready:

- Assorted denim fabric pieces (different shades for contrast)
- Base fabric (cotton or canvas, approx. 20" x 24")
- Fusible web or interfacing (optional but helpful)
- Fabric scissors and small detail scissors
- Sewing machine or needle for hand stitching
- Thread (matching and contrasting colors)
- Fabric chalk or washable marker
- Pins or clips
- Iron and ironing board

Tip: Using old jeans with different washes will give your cow a beautiful patchwork effect.

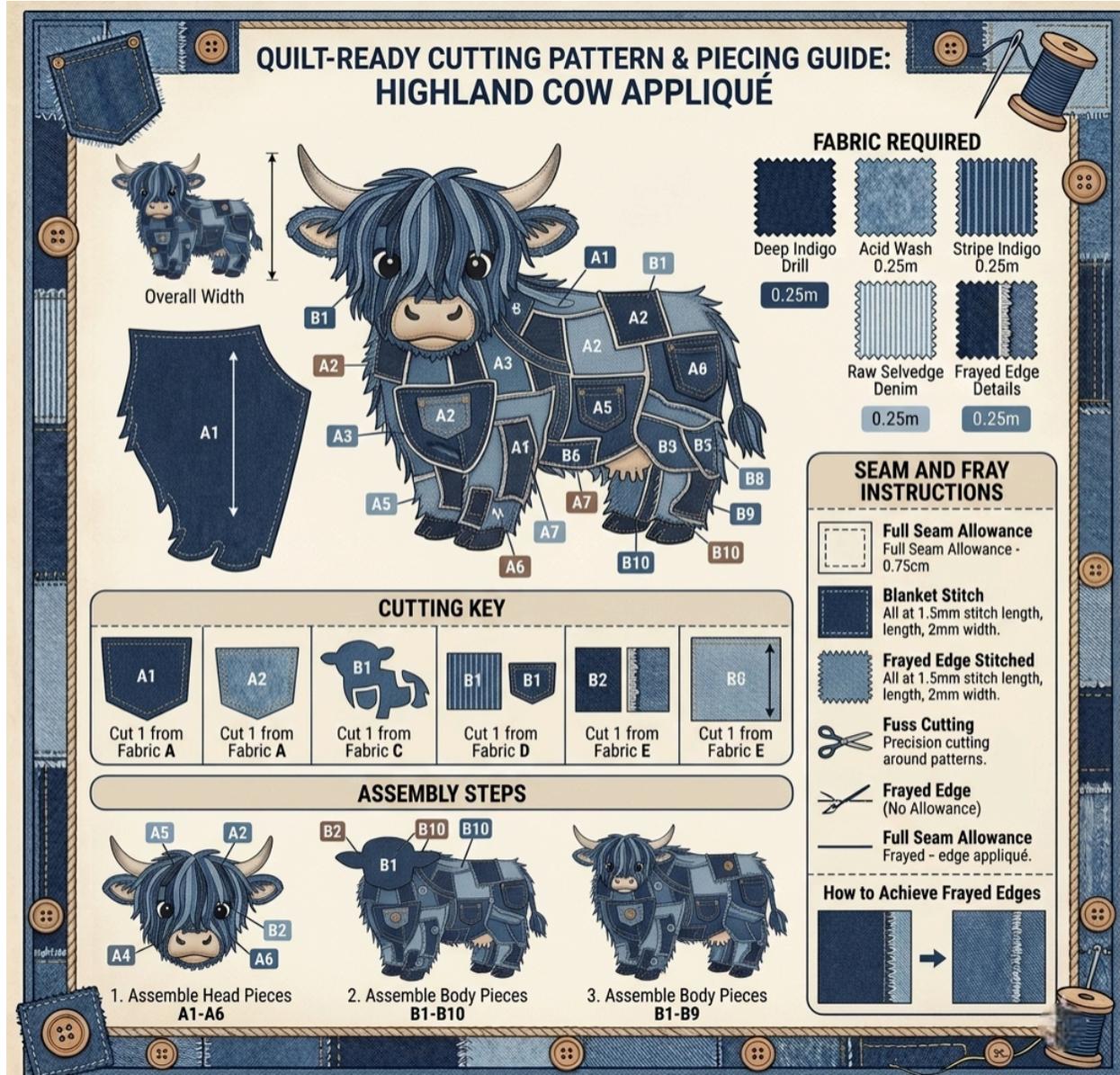# 🐄 Step 2: Create and Transfer the Pattern

Draw or print a Highland cow template that includes:

- Full body outline
- Head and face details
- Ears, horns, legs, and tail

Steps:

- Sketch the cow on paper or print a template
- Break the body into patchwork sections (like puzzle pieces)
- Trace each section onto paper or directly onto fusible web
- Transfer the pattern pieces onto the wrong side of your denim

Make sure to label each piece if needed to keep track during assembly.

QUILT-READY CUTTING PATTERN & PIECING GUIDE:
HIGHLAND COW APPLIQUÉ

Overall Width

A1

B1

B1

A2

A2

A2

A3

A6

A5

A2

A3

A1

B6

B3

B3

B8

A5

A7

B9

A7

B10

B10

A6

B10

FABRIC REQUIRED

Deep Indigo Drill
0.25m

Acid Wash
0.25m

Stripe Indigo
0.25m

Raw Selvedge Denim
0.25m

Frayed Edge Details
0.25m

SEAM AND FRAY INSTRUCTIONS

Full Seam Allowance
Full Seam Allowance - 0.75cm

Blanket Stitch
All at 1.5mm stitch length, length, 2mm width.

Frayed Edge Stitched
All at 1.5mm stitch length, length, 2mm width.

Fuss Cutting
Precision cutting around patterns.

Frayed Edge
(No Allowance)

Full Seam Allowance
Frayed - edge appliqué.

How to Achieve Frayed Edges

CUTTING KEY

A1	A2	B1	B1	B1	B2	RG
Cut 1 from Fabric **A**	Cut 1 from Fabric **A**	Cut 1 from Fabric **C**	Cut 1 from Fabric **D**	Cut 1 from Fabric **E**	Cut 1 from Fabric **E**

ASSEMBLY STEPS

A5   A2
B2   B10   B10
B1
A2   B2
A4   A6
A4   A6

1. Assemble Head Pieces
A1-A6

2. Assemble Body Pieces
B1-B10

3. Assemble Body Pieces
B1-B9

🧩 Step 3: Cut and Build the Patchwork Body

Now it's time to bring the body together:

- Cut denim pieces following your pattern sections
- Mix different shades for a natural patchwork look
- Arrange pieces on your base fabric before sewing
- Slightly overlap edges or align them neatly depending on your style

Sewing:

- Use a straight stitch or zigzag stitch to secure each patch
- Start from the center and work outward
- Press pieces with an iron as you go

This step forms the main body structure of your cow.

🐮 Step 4: Create the Shaggy Hair and Fringe

The Highland cow's signature look comes from its shaggy hair:

- Cut thin strips of denim (about ¼" to ½" wide)
- Vary lengths for a natural effect
- Fray the edges by pulling threads slightly

Attach the fringe:

- Layer strips across the head area
- Stitch along the top edge to secure
- Let the ends hang freely for texture

Repeat for the top of the head and slightly over the eyes.

👀 Step 5: Make and Attach the Head & Face

Now focus on the facial features:

- Cut out face base (lighter fabric works well)
- Add eyes using fabric circles or embroidery
- Stitch the nose and mouth with embroidery thread
- Attach ears and horns (use lighter or contrasting denim)

Assembly:

- Position the face on the body
- Stitch around edges using a tight zigzag or appliqué stitch
- Add small details like highlights in the eyes for personality

🐾 Step 6: Add Legs, Hooves, and Tail

Construct the lower parts:

- Cut leg shapes from denim
- Use darker fabric for hooves
- Layer and stitch each leg individually

Attach:

- Position legs evenly under the body
- Stitch securely with reinforced seams

Tail:

- Create a thin strip of denim
- Add a small fringe at the end
- Attach to the back of the cow

🖇️ Step 7: Attach the Appliqué to the Base

Now secure everything onto your final background:

- Center the cow on your base fabric
- Pin or clip in place
- Stitch around the entire cow using a zigzag or blanket stitch

Optional:

- Add batting underneath for a quilted effect
- Quilt lightly around the cow to add texture

✨ Step 8: Finishing Touches

Bring your project to life with final details:

- Lightly fray some denim edges for a rustic look
- Press the entire piece with an iron

- Trim excess threads
- Add decorative stitching if desired

Optional uses:

- Turn into a pillow cover
- Frame as wall art
- Sew onto a tote bag

🪡 Extra Tips for Best Results

- Work slowly when sewing small pieces
- Use denim needles if sewing with a machine
- Mix textures and shades for depth
- Don't worry about perfection—rustic charm is part of the design