

## Jessica Stewart- Izzy & Ivy Designs

### More Fabric for More Fun- how to mix and match fabric for more interest

So Many Fabrics!

I like to start with an eye catching print and go from there. What colors are popular? What season am I sewing for? Who am I sewing for? These are all important questions to think about. Once you decide on that, the rest is fun!

People always ask how I choose my fabrics. I'll tell you a little secret. I start with the print I love, and then my next step is to look at the coordinating prints that the fabric company has released in that line. Sometimes you'll have 30 or more coordinates! You can choose prints that create a mono-chromatic look, or choose ones that bring out a color or motif hidden in your main print. I like to use the main print as my largest piece in the garment and then choose accents from there.

You can also choose fabrics that have shared colors but that might be from another line of fabric. Usually you will find the closest matches from the same manufacturer, but I have made many matches across fabric company lines. They do play well together! This is definitely a more bold approach and requires some risk taking, but if you are going for that boutique look, especially in children's garments, the end result is stunning.

I love to shop in my local fabric stores and be able to feel the quality of the fabric and see the colors in person, but sometimes that's not an option. Shopping online is a great way to have access to thousands of fabrics and I'm going to show you a fun way to plan those projects.

We're going to make digital collages with the fabric so you can play around with placement and color, and get a more solid view of what your end result will look like. First, you'll need JPEG images of the fabric you would like to use. Sometimes you can get those from the manufacturer's website as a downloadable zip file. If it's not available, be sure to contact them and get permission before saving images to your computer or phone. Next, use your favorite collage software or website and load your swatches. I like to use [www.picmonkey.com](http://www.picmonkey.com). The basic site is free to use, and you can do a whole lot more than just collages. Choose "collage" for your project and it will open up a new collage. You can adjust the width and length of your collage, as well as how many sections you have. Next, choose "add images" and select the files you want to use in your collage. I like to add a picture of the garment I'm going to sew as well. Now you can play! Mix and match to your heart's content. I will say this can become addictive and you will find yourself coming up with all kinds of different combinations. In this one, I've already made a dress in the greens and blues, but I want to see what it will look like in the purples and blues, with a little more

off-white mixed it. I will note that this is not an exact science, as digital images and screens can vary a bit from the actual color of the fabric, and the scale of the fabric can get thrown off some as you place your swatches in the collage. But overall, this is a great way to plan your project. When you're finished, save (export) your project and you're ready to sew!

Needs More Fabric!

Sometimes you want to add more fabric than the garment seems to allow. I'm going to show how to add stripwork to the tier on this dress. This can work with any gathered tier or ruffle on a garment, as well as with something that uses a pattern piece. You'll have to adjust your math to accommodate that, but this will give you a start.

### **Instructions for Child's Dress:**

You will need: a pattern and fabric, notions, etc. required for the project plus additional fabric for stripwork, needle, thread, iron, ironing board, and scissors.

This dress has a 2 panel tier attached at the bottom. The dimensions of each piece are 38" wide. Since it's gathered and I don't have to be exact, I can round up to make cutting easier. I'm going to round that up to 40", then divide by 4 to get 10" pieces. The seam allowance on this pattern is ½", so I'll bump that up to 11". I will need 4 pieces for the front and 4 pieces for the back.

1. Arrange your fabric in the way that you would like to see it on the garment. Take the first 2 pieces and stack them right sides together, then sew and finish the seam. Press the seam to one side and topstitch. You now have a strip. Continue this process until you have multiple strips (in this case 4).
2. Take 2 strips, stack them right sides together, then sew another seam. Finish the seam, press to one side, and topstitch. Repeat with the remainder of your strips. You should now have 2 larger strips of fabric with 4 pieces each.
3. Take the 2 large strips, right sides together, and sew the seam. Finish the seam, press to one side, and topstitch. You are almost there!
4. Match the short ends, right sides together, to create a loop. Sew and finish the seam, then press to one side, and topstitch. You are now ready to add your tier to the dress and continue on as the pattern instructs.

Patterns featured- Izzy & Ivy Designs Brooklyn's Boho Dress ([PDF](#) and [paper](#))

Fabric- [Ashtyn](#), [Hayden](#), and [Zola](#) for [Ink & Arrow Fabrics](#)