

WINTER LANTERNS

A cozy scrap-friendly lantern quilt • Finished size: approximately 58" × 66"



Pattern Overview

Winter Lanterns is a confident-beginner/intermediate patchwork quilt built from colorful lantern blocks, small pinwheel-style sparkle units, a light background, and dark framing accents. The layout is intentionally scrap-friendly: lantern centers can be mixed within red, green, gold, aqua, and blue color families.

Seam allowance: ¼" throughout unless noted. Press carefully rather than sliding the iron, especially on diagonal seams.

Materials

Fabric	Suggested amount
Assorted gold prints	8 fat eighths
Assorted cranberry red prints	6 fat eighths

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Assorted forest green prints	6 fat eighths
Assorted aqua / deep blue prints	5 fat eighths
Cream / low-volume background	2 yards
Deep navy accent	1 yard
Coordinating outer-border print	1½ yards
Backing	4 yards
Batting	66" × 74"

Cutting Guide

Because the quilt is designed to welcome scraps, cut by unit rather than trying to make every lantern identical. For each lantern block, prepare one printed center rectangle, navy pieces for the cap/base, and cream pieces for the surrounding field. Make a single test block first and confirm its size before batch-cutting the remainder.

Unit	Cut / prepare
Lantern center	1 print rectangle, 5½" × 6½"
Lantern cap	1 navy rectangle, 5½" × 2½"
Lantern base	1 navy rectangle, 5½" × 1½"
Top corner shaping	2 cream squares, 2½" × 2½"
Side/background pieces	Cream pieces cut to complete an 11½" unfinished block
Lantern hanger	Navy strips pieced into a small rectangular loop; center above cap
Sparkle units	Make from contrasting 2½" squares using half-square triangles

Important: The decorative hanger is easiest to piece slightly oversized and trim after pressing. If your test block does not finish at 11½" unfinished, adjust the cream side/background pieces before cutting the full batch.

1. Make the Lantern Body

Place a 2½" cream square right sides together on each upper corner of the navy cap rectangle. Draw a diagonal line on each cream square. Sew on the marked line, trim the excess to a ¼" seam allowance, and press the cream triangles outward. Join the cap to the printed center, then add the navy base. Keep the printed center square and avoid stretching the angled seams.

2. Add the Hanger

Piece a small navy rectangular loop centered above the lantern cap, surrounding it with cream background fabric. Join this upper section to the lantern body. Add cream side pieces and trim the complete lantern block to 11½" square unfinished. Repeat, mixing prints so neighboring lanterns have good color contrast.

3. Make the Sparkle Units

Pair two contrasting squares right sides together. Mark a diagonal line, stitch ¼" on both sides, cut on the marked line, press, and square the half-square triangles. Arrange four HSTs as a tiny pinwheel/diamond sparkle and sew them together. This standard two-at-a-time HST method helps stabilize the bias before cutting.

4. Arrange the Quilt Top

Lay out the lantern blocks with cream background spaces and sparkle units between selected blocks. Alternate the lantern colors so reds, greens, golds, and aquas travel across the quilt rather than clustering. Photograph the arrangement before sewing—it is an easy reference if pieces get moved.

5. Join Rows and Add Borders

Sew the blocks and filler sections into rows with a consistent ¼" seam. Press neighboring rows in opposite directions where practical so seams nest. Join the rows. Add a narrow deep-navy inner border, measuring through the quilt center before cutting border strips. Add the coordinating botanical/holiday outer border in the same way. Trim the completed top to approximately 58" × 66".

6. Make the Quilt Sandwich

Press the backing and quilt top. Layer backing wrong-side up, batting, and quilt top right-side up. Smooth from the center outward and baste with your preferred method. Quilt with gentle swirls, straight lines, loops, or small stars, keeping the density reasonably even across the surface.

7. Binding

After quilting, square the quilt and trim away excess batting/backing. Prepare double-fold binding from 2½"-wide strips, join strips with diagonal seams, press in half lengthwise, and attach around the quilt. Miter the corners and finish the final edge by machine or hand.

Helpful Notes

- Make one complete lantern block before batch cutting.

- Use a scant $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam if your blocks consistently finish small.
- Press diagonal seams gently; dragging the iron can distort bias edges.
- Square HST units before assembling sparkle blocks.
- Choose strong light/dark contrast so the lantern silhouettes remain clear.
- A dark binding visually frames the cream background and colorful lanterns.

Winter Lanterns Quilt

Designed as an original companion pattern for the Winter Lanterns article on Quilte Dreams. Measurements are intended for the illustrated design; always verify the first test block before cutting an entire fabric batch.