



A Bustle & Sew  
Publication

# Free Easter Minimag



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# Welcome to my free Easter Minimag



Hello everyone!

This special Easter Minimag contains a selection of patterns, articles and other seasonal goodies selected from past spring editions of the [Bustle & Sew Magazine](#) and I do hope you'll enjoy my choices. There are four Easter patterns featuring chickens and bunnies, some lovely chocolate-themed recipes, hints and tips for stitchers and more besides.

Of course this is only a taster of what's between the covers of our monthly magazine which contains six projects every month, as well as our current series - A Stitcher's Alphabet, monthly almanac, seasonal recipes, articles, features and much more besides.

Please just [CLICK HERE](#) if you'd like to learn more about subscribing to the Bustle & Sew Magazine or [visit our store to purchase individual back copies](#) - it's a great way to build your pattern library. Meanwhile, I hope you have a wonderful Easter with lots of chocolate too!

Very best wishes

*Helen xx*





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## Tips for Stitchers

When choosing a fabric for your embroidery don't limit yourself to plain linens and cottons - sometimes it's fun to embroider on a coloured fabric. Do be careful though and make sure that the design of the fabric doesn't overpower your stitching.

Whatever fabric you choose be sure to keep your work neat on the reverse. My Grandma always said I should aim for the back looking the same as the front. This was never going to happen, but I do try to keep everything neat as sloppy habits (her words not mine!) Such as failing to trim your ends and carrying the floss across the back of the design between different areas will show through to the front, especially if your fabric is lightweight or light coloured.

Also be sure to fasten off your ends securely so that they won't unravel particularly if your embroidery is going to be put to a practical purpose rather than simply for display.





## Two French Hens

*“Deux poules Francais”*

Adorable little hen softies stitched from felt and fabric scraps. Each hen measures about 4 ½” high. They’re a great beginners’ project or a really quick and easy make for the more experienced stitcher.

A French Hen would make a lovely door stop if she was a little larger – or why not part-stuff and add a lining for a cute egg cosy?



### You will need:

- 12" square felt or similar for the body
- 4" square felt or similar for the head
- Scraps of red felt for comb and wattles
- 4" square fabric or felt for wings
- Small piece of cardboard for base
- Tiny black beads for eyes (eighth of an inch)
- Rice or poly beads to weight base (optional)
- Stranded cotton embroidery floss in suitable colour for body plus tiny bit of black thread for attaching eyes. You will use 3 strands of floss when joining the body pieces.
- Toy stuffing

### To make your hen:

- Cut pieces as shown on template.
- Sew the head and body pieces together along the line a – c. Place wrong sides together and stitch by hand using half cross stitch one way, then working back the other way to complete the cross stitch over the seams.
- Join the front of the body from a – e.
- Now attach the base to the body in the same way.
- Join the front of the head from c to just before d.
- Stitch the wattles to the seam with a couple of tiny stitches.
- Insert the beak at d and secure between the two sides using tiny stitches, then oversew with cross stitch.
- Do the same with the wattle and then close the head seam from d to a.
- Close the back seam from b to the top of the tail and insert your cardboard base.
- Add rice/poly beads to weight base if using. Stuff your hen, paying particular attention to her head, using small pieces of stuffing and moulding her head into shape.
- Close the top seam, adding more stuffing to shape the tail as you go. Sew wings into position using straight stitches.
- This is done at this stage to make sure you like their position.
- Mark the position of her eyes with pins - move them around until you're happy with her expression, then stitch in place with black thread.



- I added little hearts to this hen's wings to make her even cuter!



# Easter Celebrations

Easter can fall anytime between March 22 and April 25. It's calculated by a very ancient formula dating back nearly seventeen hundred years. Easter Day is always the first Sunday after the first Full Moon on or after March 21<sup>st</sup> (the spring or vernal equinox). If the Full Moon is on a Sunday, Easter Day is on the next Sunday.

Whenever Easter falls, we love to celebrate the final ending of winter, in much the same way as our pagan ancestors who would

light great bonfires to mark the return of the sun after a long cold winter. Today our Easter celebrations are the most glorious muddle of ancient pagan traditions and Christian customs. The symbolism of fire is still used in Christian worship at Easter. In Catholic churches on Easter Eve, all candles are extinguished, then the great Paschal candle is lit and from its flame all the other candles are rekindled. The custom of decorating churches with spring flowers and greenery owes more

than a little to the ancient Celtic practice of tree worship.

At the original feast of Eostre, the goddess of spring, eggs were used to represent renewal and new life. Centuries later the Christian church adopted the egg, using it as a potent symbol for the Resurrection. Ancient games like egg-rolling (originally performed to ensure good crops and large families) were reinterpreted so that the egg came to symbolize the rolling away of the stone from the door of Christ's tomb.





This year Easter is quite late, falling on Sunday 16 April. The date can fall anytime between March 22 and April 25. It's calculated by a very ancient formula dating back nearly seventeen hundred years. Easter Day is always the first Sunday after the first Full Moon on or after March 21<sup>st</sup> (the spring or vernal equinox). If the Full Moon is on a Sunday,

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## Some ideas for family fun this Easter

### Egg & Spoon Race

Use hard boiled eggs to avoid messy accidents! For extra fun, children might enjoy decorating their eggs first. Balance the eggs on spoons and everybody tries to keep their hard-boiled egg on their spoon until they reach the finishing line a few metres away. Concentrate hard on balancing your egg as whoever reaches the finish first without dropping it is the winner.

### Egg Hunts

Children of all ages (including my own daughter Rosie who at the age of 28 still insists on an egg hunt every year!) adore Easter egg hunts. If you have very young children do make sure to hide some where they'll be sure to find them to avoid any tears of frustration! According to tradition the Easter Bunny hides the eggs - not mum, dad or other family members!

### Egg Tapping

This game is played by two participants, each of whom holds a hard-boiled egg in their hand. One player taps the top of their egg against the top of their opponent's egg to try and break the egg shell. You can try with the bottom of the egg too. The winner is the person whose egg best survives the impact!

### Egg Rolling

Eggs are rolled down a slope or bank, and at the end of each round any damaged eggs are eliminated. The winner is the person whose egg remains intact or rolls the furthest. To increase the challenge eggs can also be rolled down long thin planks of wood or tossed into a hole (padded with something soft) with the aim of hitting those previously thrown by others. For another variation, try rolling eggs across a table as fast as possible whilst your opponent tries to catch them in an empty bowl.



Hens' eggs can be painted in a naturalistic way to copy the colouring of different species of birds' eggs. Display them in a basket, on straw or simply in a humble egg box for a lovely rustic effect. But remember eggs coloured with paints rather than edible food dyes should be used for decorative purposes only.







Processions and parades are traditional at Easter time across the world and provide the perfect excuse for dressing up. When hats used to be worn every day rather than reserved for special occasions, then it would have been natural to want to decorate your ordinary bonnet for special occasions.

At Easter real spring flowers, ribbons and carefully crafted paper flowers were all used to decorate normal headwear. In

parades large and small, at national or village level, prizes were awarded to the best or most highly decorated Easter bonnets. It's a custom that's still popular today with everyone from schoolchildren in classroom competitions to adults taking part in the vast Easter parades that take place all over the world. Parades are especially popular in Spain, particularly in Seville, where the Easter *feria* or fair lasts for days on end, and also in Spanish

speaking Latin American countries such as Mexico.

As well as flowers all sorts of other decorations may be added to bonnets, such as rabbits or chicks. Rabbits have a special significance at Easter, representing the Easter hare who was the sacred companion of Eostre, the ancient goddess of spring. All over Europe children get up early on Easter Sunday to search for eggs supposedly left by the Easter Hare or Bunny.

# Easter Decorations

I'm sure that if you, like me, love a prettily decorated Easter tree, then you'll enjoy a couple of cheerful chickens - the perfect additions to your Easter decorations.

These also use speedy machine applique - a great technique when so many other activities are calling at this time of year, and are simply backed with felt ready to hang.

Measure around 3" tall (approx)



## Materials

- 8" square green felt for backing
- Scraps of coloured felt and fabric for chickens
- Twine for hanging loops
- Black Embroidery floss for eyes
- Bondaweb
- Embroidery foot for your sewing machine

- Fabric adhesive

## Method

- Cut your green backing felt into four 4" squares.
- Trace the chicken shapes onto the paper side of your bondaweb. Allow a little extra at the ends of the legs, beak and combs/wattles so the main body shapes can overlap them. Cut out roughly.
- Fuse to the reverse of your fabric using a hot iron and cut out carefully.



- Position each chicken in the centre of one of your squares of green felt, building up the shape and only fusing into place with a hot iron (protect your work with a cloth) when you're happy with the positioning.
- Fit the embroidery foot to your sewing machine and drop the needle. With dark thread in your needle and a pale colour in the reverse go around the edge of each shape twice using a sort of scribbled effect. Add the feathers on the wings in the same way.
- Mark the position of the eye with your temporary fabric marker pen and stitch in black floss and satin stitch.
- With your temporary fabric marker pen draw around the edge of each chicken about 1/8" from the edge of your applique and cut out. Place this shape on the second green felt square, draw around and cut out.
- Stick the two shapes together sandwiching the ends of your hanging loop between.
- FINISHED!





## A (very) Little Guide to Transferring your Design

Let's consider the situation for a moment ... here you are – you have a box full of wonderful rainbow-coloured flosses, the right needles, sharp pointy scissors and a book or containing a wonderful design that you can't wait to transfer to your carefully chosen fabric.

Then .... You hit a barrier. How do you get the design from the paper to your fabric? There

are a variety of different ways of doing this. You can discover which suits you through trial and error, and of course different methods will suit different background fabrics and complexities of design. But whatever you do, don't be tempted by the availability of iron on transfer paper – the sort you run through your printer and then iron onto your fabric. They seem so easy ... all you need is an ink-jet printer and

some special paper and you can transfer just about any design to fabric. But these are not suitable for transferring embroidery designs. If you have a line drawing on your computer and you print it onto this transfer paper, then transfer it to fabric to embroider, you will end up with the film from the paper on your fabric as well as the lines of the design. This gives an odd, stiff finish to the fabric and which is



not a good thing when combined with hand embroidery. Just saying. If you want to try it, then go ahead, but please don't say I didn't warn you!

### Tracing your design

You can trace your design from paper to fabric using a light box/table or even your window on a bright day. Simply place your printed pattern on a light table or tape it to your window and position your fabric on top so the design is visible through the fabric in the exact position you want to stitch it. Trace the pattern using a temporary fabric pen - or some people use a pencil and draw very lightly - do be careful if you choose to do this though as the pencil marks are not easily removed if you go wrong.

This is a really easy and fast method to use, but it isn't suitable for dark or heavier weight fabrics.

### Iron on Pencil or Pen

These are easy to use - simply follow the instructions that come with your pencil or pen. You trace the printed pattern with your pen or pencil, then turn the paper face down onto the right side of your fabric (you might want to tape both paper and fabric to avoid slipping). The ink or pencil marks will be transferred to the fabric through the heat of your iron in the same way as a

commercially produced iron-on pattern.

Bear in mind though that the image you will produce using this method will be a mirror of the actual design, so be sure to use the reversed version of the design if this will be a problem - for example if text is included.

This method is not suitable for some synthetic fabrics as you do need to use a hot iron. It is normally also a permanent image, so is not suitable if you don't plan to stitch over all the lines.

### Dressmaker's Carbon Paper

This comes in small packages containing about five different colours of carbon. It's not really carbon paper as we (used) to know it in the office, it's graphite & wax-free transfer paper that works just like that old-fashioned carbon paper used to. (If you don't remember using carbon paper in the office, then obviously you're much younger than me!).

Place your fabric right side up on a clean, smooth, hard surface (you may wish to tape it down to stop it slipping). Tape your carbon onto the fabric and your printed design on top of that. Using a sharp pencil, stylus or ballpoint pen and a firm steady stroke, carefully trace over the lines of your design in long continuous lines. Be very careful not to

puncture the paper as this will leave a nasty blob on your fabric. As the transfer paper is available in many colours, it's easy to choose the one that will show best on your fabric.

### Printable Water-Soluble Stabilizers

I am aware of two brands currently on the market - Transfer-Eze and my favourite - Sulky Sticky Fabri Solvy. (If using this product be sure to purchase individual sheets, not on a roll as it's impossible, in my experience to get this to go through your printer).

These products allow you to simply print out your design, peel off the backing and adhere it to your fabric - stitch and then dissolve away when you're done.

This must be the quickest and easiest method of all, as you simply print from your computer - no time needs to be spent tracing. However, it is by far the most expensive method, it can only be used on fabrics that can be safely submerged in water and sometimes a sticky residue can collect on your needle. A few months ago I also had problems with one batch that didn't seem to want to dissolve away - though in fairness, that has only happened to me with one pack. It's a good method for dark and heavier weight fabrics.

# Chocolate Delights for Easter!







## Chocolate Brownies

This is an easy, yet completely delicious chocolate brownie recipe that delivers (nearly) everything you want in a brownie - fudgy, dark and chocolatey. But.... for that extra special Easter delight, why not stir in smashed up mini eggs, or sink Cadbury's crème eggs (halved) into the top of the mix before baking? And these are just two seasonal ideas - the possibilities are only limited by your imagination!

### Ingredients

- 140 g dark chocolate
- 225 g butter
- 5 large eggs
- 450 g caster sugar
- 110 g plain flour
- 55 g cocoa powder

### Method

- Pre-heat your oven to 190C/357F/Gas 5. Line an 8" x 12" baking tin with baking parchment.
- Gently melt the butter and sugar together in a large pan.
- Remove from heat and beat in the rest of the ingredients.
- Pour into baking tin and bake for 30-40 minutes until the top of the mix is firm, but the inside still feels soft and squidgy
- Cool in the tin, then cut into squares when cool.

## Easy Chocolate Biscuits

A great make with kids, this recipe is guaranteed to succeed. And again, why not adapt to include nuts, fruit, mini-eggs or anything else that takes your fancy?

### Ingredients

- 250 g butter, softened
- 350 g light soft brown sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 350 g self raising flour
- 100 g cocoa powder

### Method

- Beat the sugar and butter together in a bowl until light and fluffy, then beat in the eggs one at a time.
- Sift over the flour and cocoa powder and beat into the butter mix, then fold through the chocolate chips.
- Chill in the fridge for an hour.
- Roll mix into 40 g balls before baking and position on a large greased baking tray. Be sure to allow plenty of space between them as they will spread whilst cooking.
- Bake for 12-15 minutes, then leave to cool slightly and enjoy warm or eat cold if preferred.
- Will keep in a tin for three days. (If well hidden from your family!)
- Pre-heat your oven to 190C/357F/Gas 5.

## No-Bake Chocolate Tart

This is a really easy creation, but so rich and yummy - especially great to serve if you have a houseful of visitors and are running out of time to do everything! The ganache can easily be made beforehand and will keep well in the fridge for a few days - and it freezes well too if you're super-well organised and want to get well ahead! You will need an 8" (20 cm) loose-bottomed tart/flan case.

### Ingredients

#### For the base

- 175 g good quality milk chocolate broken into chunks.
- 400 g digestive biscuits (smashed/processed to a fine powder)
- 50 g Rice Crispies (puffed rice breakfast cereal)

#### For the filling

- 350 g good quality dark chocolate
- 350 g double (heavy) cream
- 25 g salted butter

### Method

- First make the base: Melt the chocolate in a bowl or dish placed over a large pan of hot water. When its melted combine with the dry ingredients and pour the mixture into the tart case.
- Spread it evenly, including the edges with the help of a spoon and press it up the sides of the case too. Be careful not to push too hard and compact the mixture too much though or you'll get a tough base.
- Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
- While the base is in the fridge make the filling. Gently bring the cream to a boil then remove from the heat. Pour onto the chocolate and butter and stir well to combine. The mixture should be smooth and shiny.
- Allow to cool a little then pour over the tart case.
- Refrigerate for two hours. Either dredge with cocoa powder for a sophisticated finish, or decorate with mini eggs, chicks and whatever your heart desires for a seasonal look!





# Spiced Chocolate Custards

This is a lovely recipe for Easter, combining as it does my favourite ingredient chocolate with the traditional spices that appear in so many recipes at this time of year. What could be nicer? Just garnish with orange zest for a sophisticated look, or again you could use mini-eggs for a seasonal variation. These amounts make enough for six people.

## Ingredients

- 225 ml milk
- 2 crushed cardamom pods
- 1 vanilla pod
- 1 crushed cinnamon stick
- ¼ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- 200 g good quality plain chocolate
- 5 egg yolks
- 140 ml single cream
- Zest of an orange.

## Method

- Pour the milk into a pan. Add the spices, bring the milk to boiling point and leave to infuse for a few minutes. Strain and discard the spices.
- Break the chocolate into pieces and add it to the milk. Place over a low heat and stir until the chocolate has melted and blended thoroughly into the milk.
- Add the egg yolks and beat well.
- Continue cooking the mixture on a low heat, stirring continuously until it thickens and becomes creamy.
- Remove from heat and stir occasionally while the mixture is cooling.
- Swirl in the cream and then pour into six small dishes or glasses.
- Sprinkle the orange zest on top to decorate.



# Tea Time Chocolatey Treats!





And finally - we have so many lovely chocolatey recipes in our family I thought I'd finish by sharing a couple of teatime treats with you - lovely for sharing over a cup of tea and a chat!

## Florentines

### Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons golden syrup
- 55 g butter
- 55 g soft brown sugar
- 55 g chopped almonds
- 30 g chopped glace cherries
- 30 g raisins
- Zest of an orange, grated
- 45 g plain flour
- 170g good quality plain chocolate

### Method

- Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4.
- Line three baking trays with baking parchment or silicon sheets.
- Put the syrup butter and sugar in a heavy-based pan over a low heat. When it has melted and the sugar dissolved remove from the heat and add all the other ingredients stirring well to mix.
- Make 18 Florentines by spooning six teaspoonfuls of the mixture on to each of the prepared baking trays, leaving plenty of room for them to spread during cooking. Bake for 8-10 minutes, or until golden-brown. Remove from oven and allow to cool.
- Melt the chocolate over a pan of hot water. Spread a little melted chocolate over the flat underside of each biscuit and leave to cool slightly before marking a zigzag pattern in the chocolate with a fork. Leave to set with the chocolate side uppermost. Store in an airtight container.

## Chocolate Flapjacks

### Ingredients

- 110 g butter
- 55 g plain chocolate
- 1 tablespoon golden syrup
- 85 g soft brown sugar
- 85 g cornflakes
- 55 g self-raising flour
- 55 g rolled oats

You will need a Swiss Roll tin

### Method

- Preheat the oven to 190C/375F/Gas 5.
- Generously grease the Swiss Roll tin.
- Chop the butter into a heavy-based pan over a low heat. Break the chocolate into pieces and add it to the butter. Add the golden syrup and sugar.
- Place the cornflakes into a strong plastic bag and crush them with a rolling pin.
- When the butter and chocolate have melted and the sugar is dissolved, stir thoroughly and remove the mixture from the heat.
- Put the cornflakes, flour and oats into a large basin. Mix, then make a well in the centre. Pour in the melted ingredients and blend thoroughly.
- Press the mixture into your Swiss Roll tin and bake for 15-20 minutes.
- Cut into fingers while still warm in the tin. Leave to cool, then remove and cool fully on a wire rack.

# Hot Cross Buns Basket

I made a bread (or hot cross bun) basket last year featuring some really pretty fabric from [Peonie Cole](#). This year the emphasis is more on the embroidery as the fabric is quite plain. The outside is a striped linen - actually half a napkin(!) and the interior is vintage Cath Kidston cotton duck. The little rabbit is also vintage, he's a copyright expired illustration I discovered when browsing - I think he's adorable and have been waiting to include him in a project!

Finished basket measures 6" tall x 8" diameter (approx)



## Materials

- ½ yard exterior fabric
- ½ yard lining fabric
- ½ yard fusible fleece
- DMC stranded cotton floss in colours 310, 470, 727, 893, 3713, 3752

## Notes:

- Use one strand of floss for rabbit and floral garland and two strands for the text
- A seam allowance of ¼" is included in the measurements.





- 893
- 3713
- 727
- 3752
- 470



## Method

- From both your exterior and lining fabrics and fleece cut one 25 ½" x 8" strip and one 8" diameter circle.
- Fold your exterior strip in half widthways and press down with your hands to make a centre fold (if you press the fold in with your iron it may prove stubborn and difficult to remove)

## Embroidery

- Transfer the bunny design to your exterior fabric centring it on the fold and with the centre pink flower of the floral scroll 1 ¼" up from the bottom edge.
- Now work the embroidery using ONE strand of floss for the bunny and flowers and TWO strands for the text. The colour chart is included on the previous page and the stitches used are as follows:
  - ❑ Text is stem stitch for the wider parts of the letters and back stitch for the narrower parts. Make very small stitches around the loops of the letters being careful that your needle enters and leaves the fabric through the same hole. This will give you a nice smooth line.
  - ❑ The leaves and stems are all completed in the same green floss. The stems are back stitch and the leaves are satin stitch.
  - ❑ The centre two flowers and all the blue flowers are radiating straight stitches.
  - ❑ The other pink flowers are satin stitch.

❑ The large yellow flowers are bullion stitch and the smaller yellow flowers are French knots.

❑ The rabbit is worked in back stitch. Use the illustration as a guide - he shouldn't have solid lines of stitching, more a sort of sketched effect to reflect the hand drawn original.

- When you have finished your embroidery press lightly on the reverse. Don't press too heavily or you will flatten your stitches.

## Assemble your Basket

- Iron the strip of fleece onto the reverse side of your exterior fabric. You always have to press down quite hard and wait longer than you think (at least in my experience) when you're adhering fleece, so do be sure to check the manufacturer's instructions.
- Iron the circle of fleece onto the reverse side of the circle of exterior fabric in the same way.
- With right sides facing join the two short ends of the exterior strip of fabric to make a circle and press the seam allowance open.
- With right sides facing join the exterior and base together (1) Clip the curved seam and press well (2)
- Join the two short sides of the lining fabric in the same way leaving a 3" gap in the centre of the seam for turning. Attach the base and clip the curved seam.





- Turn the exterior wrong side out and place the interior inside it with the right side facing outwards, ie so the two right sides are facing each other and the fleece lining is on the outside (3).
- Align the seams and pin the inner and outer pieces together along the top edge. Set your pins at right angles to your sewing line so if your needle hits one then it will simply slide off and not break. (4) Setting them at right angles to the stitching line also helps prevent the fabric slipping while you stitch.
- Sew around the top edge.
- Trim seam allowance close to your line of stitching to minimise bulk and turn your basket the right way out through the gap you left in the lining.
- Either slip stitch by hand (neater) or machine top stitch (faster) the turning gap closed.
- Push the lining down inside the basket and press well.
- Turn over the top edge of the lining by about 1 ½" so that you can see the pretty fabric but it doesn't obscure any of your stitching.
- Press again.
- Fill with hot cross buns or rolls of your choice and serve - yum!





# Eggstra-ordinary Eggs!

Chicken eggs are by far the most common in our kitchens but there are of course many others to choose between:

- Quail (pictured below) are small and quite fiddly to peel, but are great in canapes, individual gala pies and more.
- Pheasant eggs have a deep yellow yolk and a rich flavour. They're quite a bit smaller than chicken eggs and are in season from April to June.
- Chicken eggs are the kind we're all familiar with. Always be sure to choose free-range if possible. The colour of the shell will tell you whether the yolk will be dark or pale (there is no difference in nutritional value)
- Duck eggs have a creamy yolk with a gelatinous texture and a rich flavour. They're great for baking but I personally find them a little too rich for serving as boiled eggs.
- Goose eggs are even richer and creamier than ducks. One goose egg is equivalent to two-three chicken eggs so they're perfect for sharing. They're in season from March until June
- Ostrich eggs are ENORMOUS!! Each one is as big as two dozen - yes that really is 24 - large chicken eggs - how exciting if you're able to get hold of one. The flavour is quite light but distinctive and they're in season from late March to early September.



- Turkey eggs are quite rare as turkeys don't actually lay very many eggs. They have a large and very creamy yolk and are in season from April to June.
- And finally - one you're unlikely to come across in your local supermarket(!) - Emu lay beautiful dark bluish green eggs that have a mild taste and a light fluffy texture. They're in season from late November to early May.











# The Egg Hunt

Easter wouldn't be the same in our family (in Rosie's opinion at least!) without our Easter egg hunt on Easter Sunday morning.

We have both chocolate and real eggs in our hunt and when Rosie was little she used to enjoy decorating the hard boiled eggs with felt tip pens or paints. But these days we feel it's much nicer to use vegetable colour dyes to colour our eggs.

Soaking the eggs in vinegar before boiling or adding a spoonful of vinegar to the coloured water does seem to make the egg shell more receptive to the colouring.

Onion skins produce the most beautiful deep golden yellow, and if you deliberately wrap some eggs inside the skins you will find beautiful delicate patterns on them when they are cool. Try beetroot juice for pink, moss or birch leaves for green. If you tie a leaf or a tiny branch to an egg with cotton then its outline should remain delicately imprinted upon the egg when you remove the string after the egg has cooled.

When it's time for your hunt, choose one person to be the Easter Bunny and hide the eggs well so that they're not too easy to find. Use both your hard boiled eggs and an assortment of sweet and chocolate ones too.

The Easter Bunny may need to get up super-early that day to make sure he or she has enough time to hide all the eggs before the family awake and spot what's going on! Another good idea is to keep your egg shells from previous baking sessions - if you rinse them well they make great containers to keep the smaller eggs safely together.

Everyone participating in the hunt will need a container - perhaps an Easter basket they've made beforehand, or a small wicker basket or bowl. Nobody must start looking until everyone is ready to begin at the same time.

Eggs can be hidden behind bushes, nestled within clumps of daffodils or primroses, in tall grass or perhaps somewhere in an innocent-looking bush or shrub. Be sure to ban any pets from the garden while the hunt is in progress - although they may enjoy the hunt too, chocolate is poisonous to dogs.

Very young children are often happy to bring their finds to a large communal basket - and I remember one year that a very clever Easter Bunny managed to secretly re-hide the eggs while the toddlers were still hunting. That was the longest egg hunt ever - and do you know, those little ones never even noticed!





# Follow the Bunny Wreath

Here at Bustle & Sew HQ, our firmly-held opinion is that you can never have too many bunnies, especially at this time of year! This is such a fun little project using the inside ring of an old embroidery hoop as the base and covering it with tiny bunnies in shades of brown and grey (can you spot the little white rabbit too?) And adding some simple felt flowers - peonies I think - for a properly spring-like feel.

Wreath measures 12" across and each bunny is 4" long (approx)



## Materials

- Scraps of grey, brown and white felt, enough to make 6 bunnies
- Scraps of pale pink felt for the ears
- 6" square white fluffy fleece fabric for tails (approx)
- Scraps of cerise, pale pink, golden yellow, lilac and two shades of green felt for flowers and leaves
- Stranded cotton floss in colours to match bunny and ear felt and also black and white
- Oddments of cotton floss in pretty spring colours for rabbits' collars
- Toy stuffing
- Stuffing stick (this can be as simple as a bamboo skewer with the end broken off and frayed to "grab" the stuffing as you insert it into the bunnies)
- Glue gun
- Inside ring from 10" hoop

## Method

- First make the bunnies. Cut out six pairs of bunny shapes from the full size templates. Cut out six ear shapes.
- Stitch one ear shape onto six of the bunnies (the reverse sides are unseen and so can be left plain) Use two strands of pale pink floss and short straight stitches worked at right angles to the edge of the ear shape.
- Join the two sides of each bunny together with wrong sides facing and using tow strands of matching floss to work blanket stitch. Stuff lightly as you go, paying particular attention to the ends of legs, ears and nose.
- Give each bunny a floral collar - scatter straight stitches and tiny French knots at their necks using random pretty colours. They don't need to be all the same.
- Add the eyes in black satin stitch, giving them a little sparkle and life.
- Cut small pieces of fleece fabric, gather each one into a loose ball and stitch in place on each rabbit.
- Next make the flowers and leaves.
- The leaves are very simple basic leaf shapes cut in two shades of green and varying between 1" and 1 ½" in length.
- The flowers are very simple to make and you will need six large and approximately 16-18 smaller ones.
- The large cerise flowers are formed of a short strip of gold coloured felt that has been cut into a fringe along one edge and then rolled up and secured with a glue gun. The inner petals are a wavy edged piece of cerise felt rolled around the centre and secured with a glue gun. The outer petals are elongated semi-circles (3 for each flower) with their bases glued to the bottom edge of the flower. Cut and position them so that they overlap slightly like the petals of a real flower.
- The smaller (pale pink and lilac) flowers are simply short strips of felt with one wavy and one straight edge rolled into the shape of a flower bud and secured at the base with glue.
- Finally assemble your wreath.
- Space the bunnies equally around the ring. I positioned mine by eye which means they're not exact, but do measure them if you would prefer your wreath to be symmetrical.
- With the hot glue gun secure your bunnies around the edge of the ring.
- Position a cluster of leaves between each pair of bunnies, selecting a mixture of light and dark green leaves.
- Finally add first your cerise flower and then two or three flower buds, securing them also with your hot glue gun.
- Your wreath is now finished!







## Some Clever Uses for Egg Shells

Eggs are a traditional food at Easter - and not just chocolate ones - I certainly use plenty making cakes and custards for my hungry family. But what to do with all those shells? Here's some ideas for you....

### Boost your garden plants

Eggshells are calcium-rich and break down quickly, making them a perfect soil boost for your garden plants. Crush used egg shells into small pieces and incorporate them into the soil; they break down over several months so the best time to do it is autumn or spring. You can also put eggshells at the bottom of a newly potted plant to help give them a mineral boost.

### Deter those slugs and snails

Another advantage of incorporating eggshells into your soil is that it can also act as a deterrent for pests like snails and slugs. Crush eggshells and sprinkle on the topsoil around your garden plants to help keep unwanted slimy pests away.

### Nurture your seedlings

Instead of tiny plastic pots or specialty seed holders, you can nurture new seedlings using eggshells instead. Plant new seeds in halved eggshells and grow them indoors; you also have the advantage of the egg carton to help store them safely!

### Make an abrasive cleaner

If you need an abrasive cleaner to help clean pots and pans that is tough but non-toxic, eggshells can help. Collect about a dozen eggshells, rinse and let dry. Crush and then grind the eggshells into a powder with a pestle and mortar. In a mason jar, combine one part eggshells to three parts baking soda, then activate using vinegar. The formula can be used on dingy looking grout, too.

### Feed the birds

Egg shells can be re-purposed into bird feed! Bake your eggshells until dry, then crush - they should crumble easily. Sprinkle into your feeder or on the ground for birds to enjoy. The calcium from the eggshells is particularly good at this time of year.

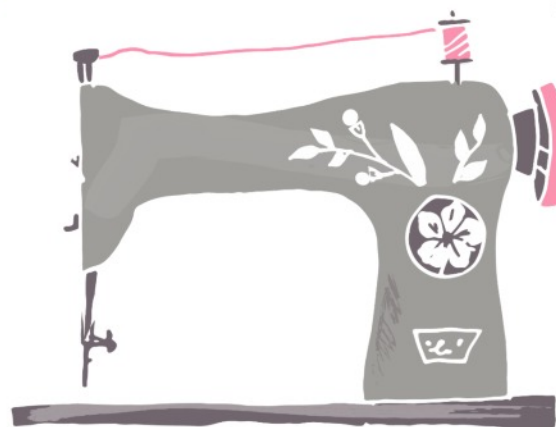
# Tastes of the Season: Delicious Dandelions

This month the countryside blossoms into life as we finally say farewell to the cold months of winter. It's fun to go out foraging - wild garlic is a particular favourite of our family - but don't forget the humble dandelion, whose flowers bring a splash of vibrant colour to spring hedgerows (and my lawn too!) The dandelion plays an important role in providing nectar and nutritious pollen for early bees. Each flower head is made up of hundreds of tiny florets shaped like the rays of the sun. The deeply toothed leaves are the source of its name - dant-de-lion is old French for lion's tooth.

All parts of the dandelion are edible and are high in calcium and vitamin C. Its roots can be used for medicinal purposes whilst its flowers can be picked to make wine (my dad's dandelion liquor packed a powerful punch!) or try them battered and fried. The leaves are at their best before the flower heads have formed. They have a bitterness that can be delicious and are packed with iron too. To draw out the bitterness soak the leaves in a large bowl of cold water for 10 minutes, (repeat if necessary) then use as you would spinach. Alternatively, you can grow cultivated varieties in your vegetable plot. These contain fewer bitter substances than the wild varieties, but if they are still too tart simply rinse them briefly in warm water to draw out the bitterness.



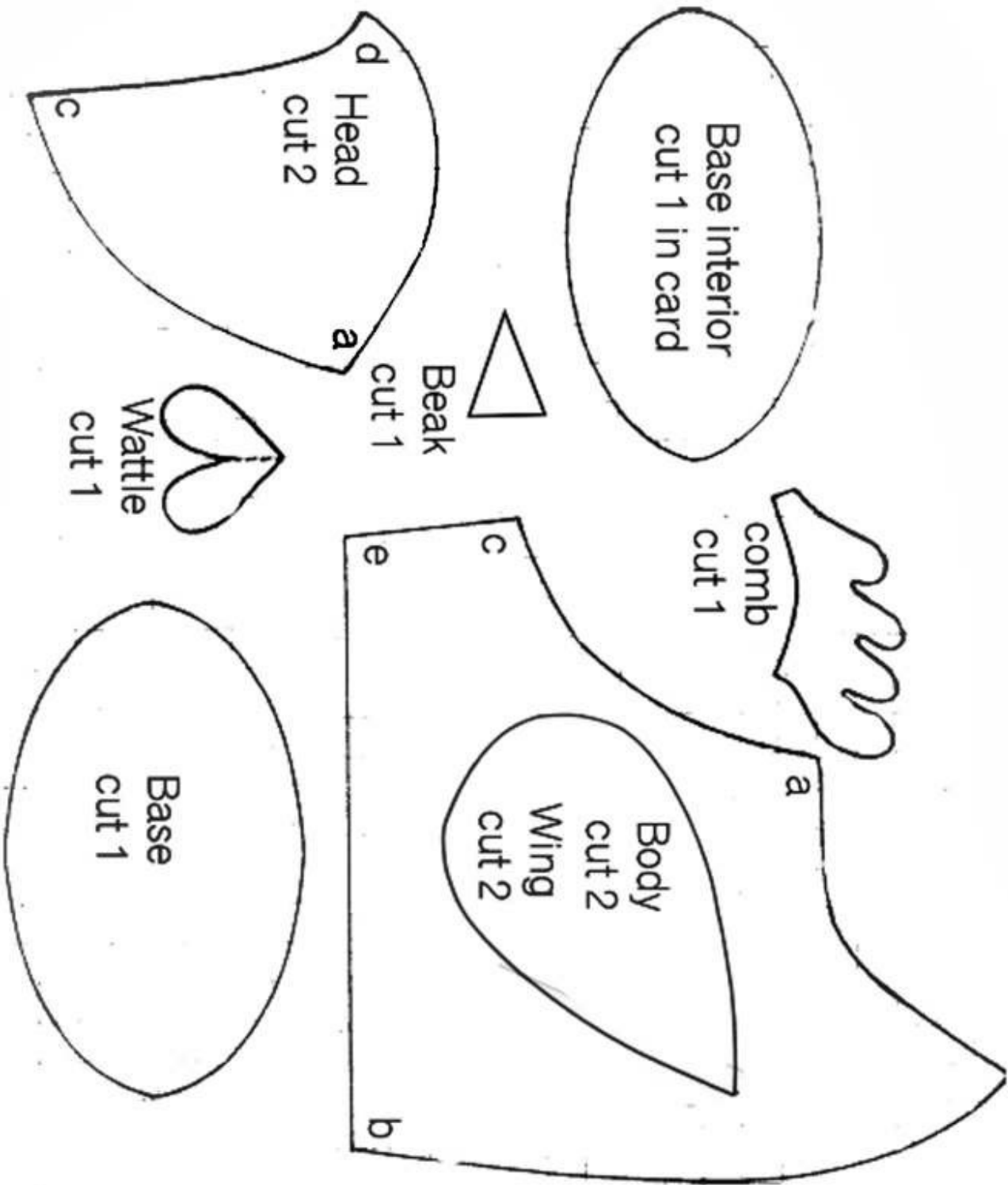




# TEMPLATES

# Two French Hens

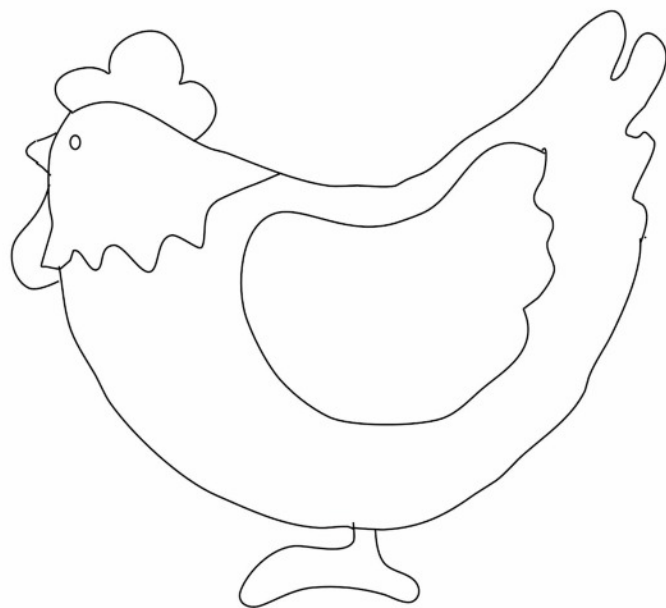
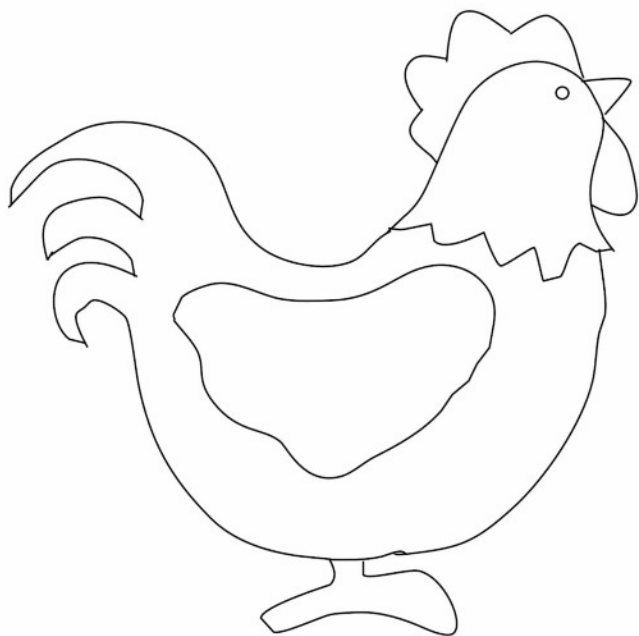
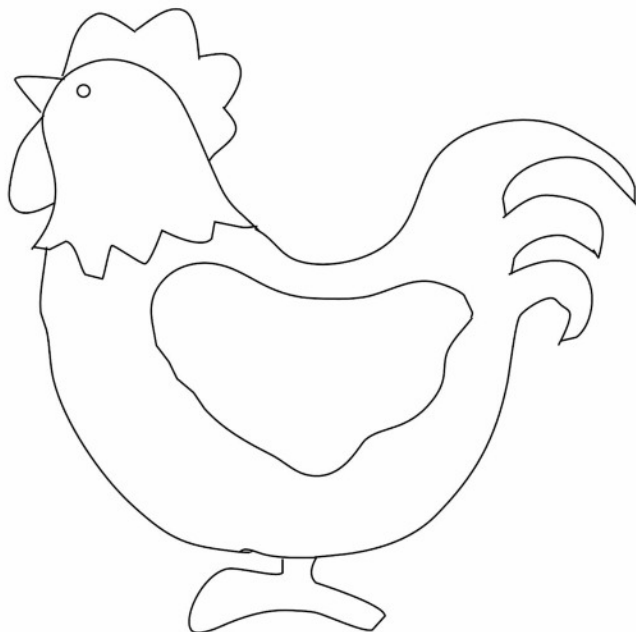
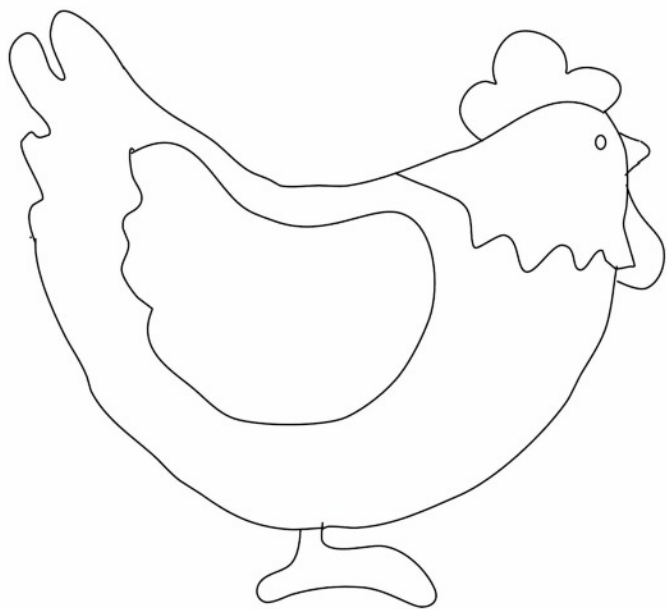
Templates are the right size.





## Easter Ornaments

Templates are the right size.



## Hot Cross Buns Basket

Template is full size and also reversed  
to suit your preferred method of  
transfer





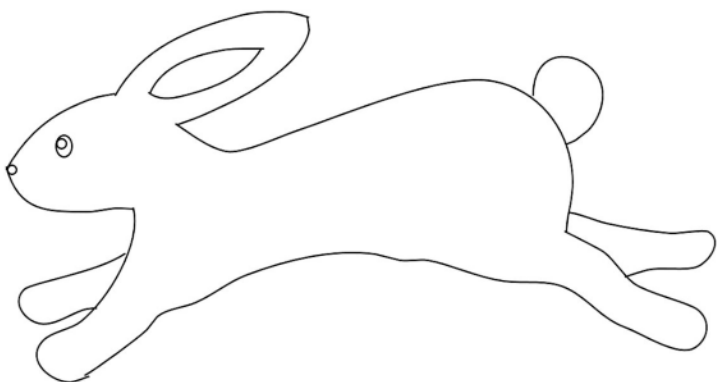
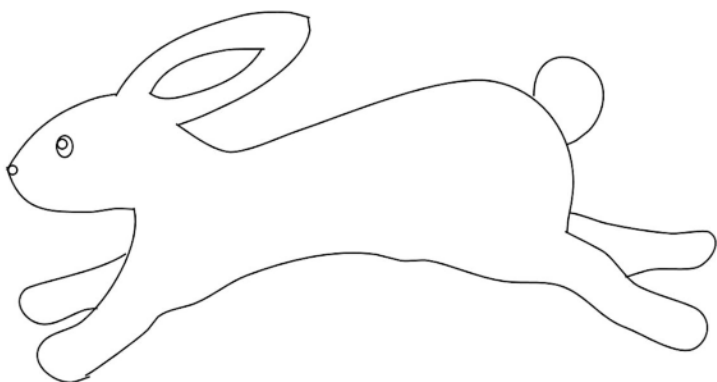
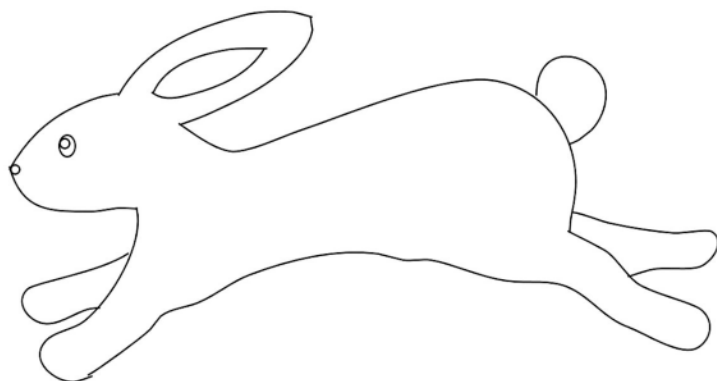
Dear John

and  
P



## Follow the Bunny Wreath

I have included a number of bunnies - they are all identical but as you have a lot to cut I thought it might be useful to include several templates on one page.





Why do we love to stitch? After all you can purchase mass-produced textile items at many high streets stores for very little cost. These days handmade means something special - a unique item created with love, a gift from the heart, not one that can be bought. Hand stitching is also a great way to personalise an item, or perhaps to breathe new life into an old favourite that has seen better days.

**Bustle & Sew** offers my own unique patterns, designed to appeal to all skill levels and bring out all your natural creativity. And you can keep up to date with all the latest news from Somerset where I live as well as the newest patterns and much more over on the [Bustle & Sew Blog](#).

## Find out more about our magazine..



**PS** If you love stitching, then you're sure to enjoy my Bustle & Sew Magazine. It's delivered by email to your in-box each month and is crammed full of ideas, projects, features, articles, patterns and more to inspire you. To learn more please visit the [Bustle & Sew website](#).

*Helen xx*



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Thank you.