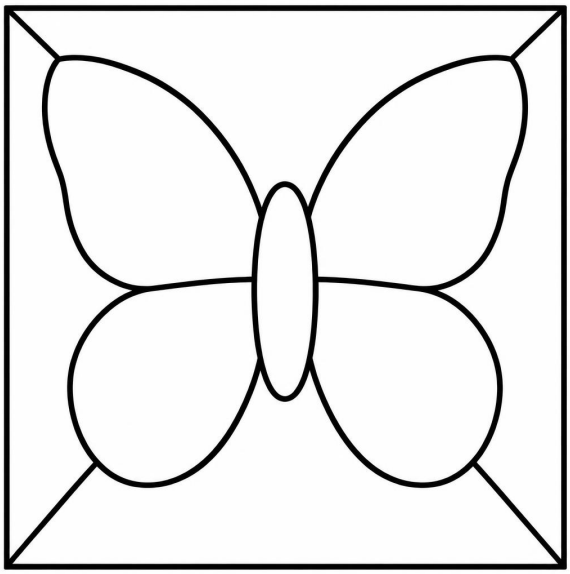
Your first kinusaiga piece

Kinusaiga is the Japanese art of tucking fabric into grooves cut in foam — no sewing, no needle. This guide walks you through a free starter pattern from blank board to finished art in an afternoon or two.



Start with the Butterfly

The Butterfly and Mountain chickadee starters are rated **Beginner**: large, smooth sections that are easy to cut and tuck. Open any starter on figandfiber.com to see suggested fabrics already placed, then print it at 100%.

Time: 2–4 hours
Suggested board: 8 × 8 or 8 × 10 in
Fabric: 4–6 cotton scraps, about 6 × 6 in each

What you'll need

- **Foam board** — a 1" rigid foam panel (we use Owens Corning FOAMULAR NGX), cut to your board size.
- **Double-sided adhesive sheets** — keep fabric in place while you tuck.
- **Craft knife** with spare blades (an X-Acto works well) and a cutting mat.
- **Tucking tool** — seam rippers in a large and small size, or any blunt, thin tool.
- **Scissors and thread snips** for trimming fabric.
- **Fabric scraps** — quilting cotton is easiest for a first piece. Thin, tightly woven fabric tucks cleanly.
- **Alcohol prep pads** to wipe adhesive residue off your blade.

Step by step

1. **Print at 100%**
   Download the board PDF or letter tiles. In the print dialog choose “Actual size” / 100% scaling, then measure one edge to confirm. Tape tiles together along the guide marks.

2. **Prepare the foam**
   Cut the foam to your board size. Smooth an adhesive sheet onto the top from the center outward. Leave the top liner on for now.

3. **Transfer the pattern**
   Tape your print over the foam and trace every black line firmly with a ballpoint pen so it leaves a groove line. Keep the print as your numbered reference.

4. **Cut the grooves**
   Hold the knife upright and cut along each line about 1/4" deep in one steady pass — don't saw, and don't cut through the board. Keep fingers clear of the blade.

5. **Check every line**
   Run a seam ripper gently along each groove to open it. Make sure every section is fully enclosed so fabric has somewhere to tuck.

6. **Cut your fabric**
   Using the numbered color map, cut each piece about 1/4" larger than its section on every side.

7. **Tuck background first**
   Work from large background pieces toward small foreground details. Peel the liner from one section, lay the fabric down, and press its edges into the grooves all the way around.

8. **Trim and tidy**
   Trim fabric that won't tuck, then press it in. Neighbouring pieces share a groove — tuck both edges into the same line.

9. **Finish and frame**
   Add tiny details last. Attach the back of the foam to a backing board or frame, and you're done.

Beginner tips

- Practise a few grooves and tucks on a foam scrap before your board.
- Change blades often — a dull blade tears foam instead of cutting it.
- If fabric pops out, the groove is too shallow; deepen it slightly.
- Low-pile and lightweight fabrics are easiest; save thick or stretchy fabric for later pieces.

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