

QUILTER'S BLOCK-A-DAY CALENDAR COMPANION CD

Basic Instructions

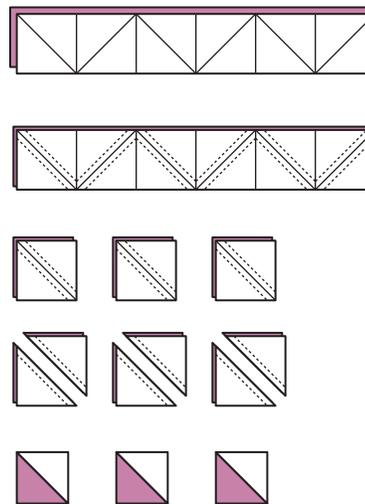
The following instructions provide basic information you will need to make the blocks in this CD.

Cutting instructions are geared for rotary cutting. Quick-cutting techniques sometimes yield more pieces than needed; save any extras for another project. All measurements for patchwork pieces include $\frac{1}{4}$ "-wide seam allowances. Do not add seam allowances to the dimensions given for each block.

For triangles, cutting dimensions are provided for the square from which you'll cut half- or quarter-square triangles. When you see this symbol , cut the square in half diagonally to yield two half-square triangles. When you see this symbol , cut the square twice diagonally to yield four quarter-square triangles.

A quick way to cut and piece multiple smaller half-square triangles found in many of the blocks is to use the long-strip method. Let's use an example, where $3\frac{7}{8}$ " squares are indicated in the block cutting instructions.

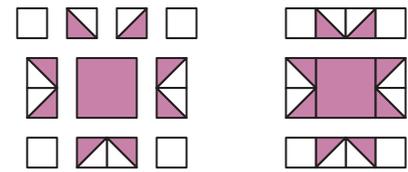
Cut a $3\frac{7}{8}$ " strip from each of the two fabrics required for the half-square triangles. Using your rotary-cutting ruler, measure and draw vertical lines every $3\frac{7}{8}$ " on the wrong side of the lighter strip. Then draw a diagonal line from corner to corner of each $3\frac{7}{8}$ "-wide space as shown. Pair the two strips, right sides together, and sew $\frac{1}{4}$ " away from each side of each diagonal line. Cut on the vertical lines, and then cut the stitched squares along the marked diagonal lines to yield a bundle of half-square-triangle units.



Some odd-sized pieces aren't as easy to rotary cut as squares and right triangles. For those pieces, we've supplied piecing templates in the instructions for the individual blocks. Carefully trace each template onto template plastic and cut out the shape.

Place the template right side up on the right side of the fabric. Trace around the template with a pencil and cut the fabric shape with scissors, or align a rotary ruler with the edges of the template and rotary cut around the template. To cut a reverse template (indicated by the lowercase letter "r"), turn the template over so that the wrong side of the template is facing up before placing it on the right side of the fabric and cutting.

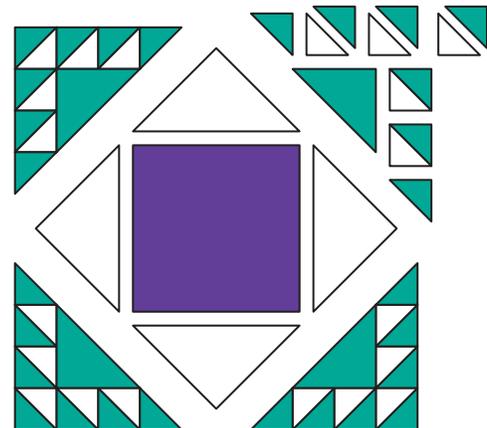
Once you've cut all the pieces for a block, it's time to sew the pieces together. Look for the most logical order in which to sew the pieces. Whenever possible, sew the pieces together in rows, and then join the rows as shown at right.



Stitch; then press.

Join rows.

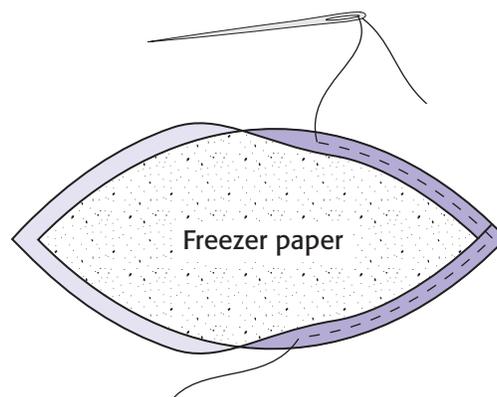
Some blocks, however, cannot be sewn in straight rows. Instead, look for ways to join pieces into manageable units that can then be sewn together. In the block shown at right, join the pieces that make up the center unit first. Then join the pieces to make the triangle units. To complete the block, sew the triangle units to the center unit.



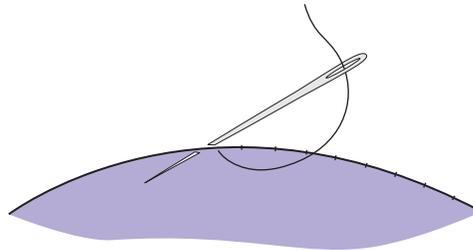
Sew units together;
then join into whole block.

Several of the blocks are appliquéd or have appliquéd accents. Appliquéd pieces are shown in gray on the block diagrams. Appliquéd template patterns are provided in the individual block instructions. Directions for freezer-paper appliquéd are provided below, but you can use another method if you prefer.

1. Make a plastic template for each appliquéd pattern in the block. Do not add seam allowances to the templates.
2. Trace around the template shape onto freezer paper. Cut out the paper pattern.
3. Pin each paper pattern to the wrong side of the fabric with the plastic-coated side facing out.
4. Cut out each fabric shape, adding a ¼"-wide seam allowance all around.
5. With your fingers, turn the seam allowance over the edge of the paper pattern and press the seam allowance in place with the tip of your iron, making sure that you do not touch the iron to the freezer paper. Or if you'd rather not press with an iron, baste the seam allowance to the paper pattern.



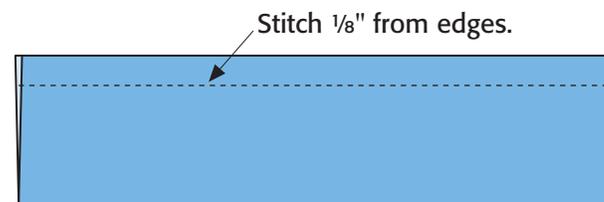
6. Position the appliqué pieces, pin them in place, and sew them to the background fabric.
7. To stitch the appliqué, use a single strand of thread that matches the appliqué pieces. Start the first stitch from the wrong side of the background fabric. Bring the needle up through the background fabric and through the folded edge of the appliqué piece.
8. Insert the needle next to where you brought it up, but this time go through the background fabric only.
9. Bring the needle up through the background fabric and into the folded edge of the appliqué piece, catching one or two threads. Space your stitches a little less than $\frac{1}{8}$ " apart.
10. For larger shapes, slit the background fabric when the appliqué is complete and pull out the paper pattern.



Appliqué stitch

Bias-strip appliqué is used on several of the blocks. These strips are shown in blue on the block diagrams. The following steps describe how to make bias strips for appliqué.

1. Cut each bias strip 1" wide and long enough for the individual appliqué (plus a couple of extra inches for insurance). For some larger blocks, such as Buttercup (April) and Sweet Gum Leaf (March), you may want to consider starting with a wider strip, such as $1\frac{1}{4}$ " or $1\frac{1}{2}$ ".
2. Fold the bias strip in half, wrong sides together, and stitch $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the long, raw edges. Press the strip into a tube so that the seam falls in the middle of the back.



Back of tube

3. Place the bias tube on the background fabric, forming the desired shape. Pin and stitch in place as described above in steps 7–9 for freezer-paper appliqué.