



WE CAN'T REALLY TALK ABOUT shapes in quilting without starting with our reliable, go-to guys: the square and the rectangle. Squares and rectangles—basically, any shape with four sides and containing four 90° angles—are the best place for a beginning quilter to start. Squares and rectangles are easy to cut and easier to match points than triangles or curved piecing. And stitching basic squares and rectangles together is the perfect way to practice making ¼-inch (6 mm) seams and matching corners.

But if you think that sewing with squares and rectangles is beginners-only territory, think again. In fact, these simple shapes can be combined in seemingly infinite ways to form quilt patterns that are new and innovative, traditional or contemporary, exact or “wonky.” Beginning and advanced quilters alike continue to create amazing quilts with tried-and-true block patterns such as log cabin, courthouse steps, four-patch, and nine-patch blocks. All are composed of the most basic square and rectangle shapes.

Simple. Approachable, timeless, versatile. What can you create with squares and rectangles?

book of stamps

by KATY JONES

CUTTING

- 1 From assorted print fabrics of dark and light colors, cut 24 squares measuring 1½ inches (3.8 cm).
- 2 From white solid fabric, cut the following strips for the outer border:
 - 2 strips measuring 3½ x 8½ inches (8.9 x 21.6 cm)
 - 2 strips measuring 2½ x 12½ inches (6.4 x 31.8 cm)
- 3 From red solid fabric, cut the following strips for the inner border:
 - 2 strips measuring 1½ x 4½ inches (3.8 x 11.4 cm)
 - 2 strips measuring 1½ x 6½ inches (3.8 x 16.5 cm)

ASSEMBLY

- 4 Stitch the 1½-inch (3.8 cm) squares into four rows of six squares, alternating dark and light squares (**FIGURE 1**). Press seams to the dark fabric.
- 5 Stitch the two longer red border strips to the top and bottom of the block. Press seams towards the border. Stitch the remaining red inner border strips to the sides of the block.
- 6 Stitch the two shorter white border strips to the top and bottom of the block. Press seams towards the inner border. Stitch the remaining white border strips to the sides of the block.

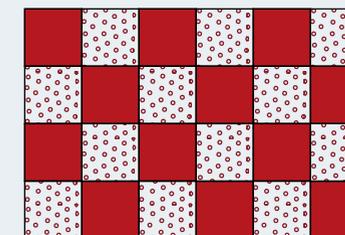


FIGURE 1

I have been wanting to make a postage stamp quilt for the longest time, but the thought of making a whole quilt using just 1-inch [2.5 cm] squares is daunting. This block is a far easier way to scratch that postage stamp itch!

—Katy



IN GEOMETRY, A DIAMOND is more commonly known as a “rhombus,” meaning it’s a quadrilateral shape (with four sides of equal length). For quilters, a diamond in its simplest form is simply a square set on point. Just turn blocks on point, and you can achieve a completely different effect! Of course, this is only one way to incorporate diamonds into your quilting repertoire. Diamonds can also play a starring role within a square quilt block.

Additionally, diamonds can be stretched in all different ways to make them as tall and thin or as short and squat as you like. And diamonds can be thought of as parallelograms—with opposite sides that are parallel to one another.

In this section, we’ve pulled together several ideas for quilt blocks and projects that feature diamond shapes and patterns for quilters of all skill levels. Have fun, be inspired, and challenge yourself—tilt your head and consider diamonds instead of squares for your next quilting project!

It’s said that diamonds are a girl’s best friend, but we much prefer ours in quilt form (especially John).

four eyes

by TACHA BRUECHER

CUTTING

- 1** From each of two gray prints and two orange prints, cut eight squares measuring $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches (3.8 cm), for a total of 36 squares.
- 2** From both a blue print and an orange print, cut:
 - 2 squares measuring $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches (3.8 cm), for “eye” centers
 - 4 strips measuring $1 \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ inches (2.5 x 14 cm) for borders
 - 4 strips measuring $1 \times 6\frac{1}{2}$ inches (2.5 x 16.5 cm) for borders
- 3** From white solid fabric, cut:
 - 16 strips measuring $1\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ inches (3.8 x 6.4 cm)
 - 16 strips measuring $1\frac{1}{2} \times 2$ inches (3.8 x 5.1 cm)
 - 8 squares measuring $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches (3.8 cm)

ASSEMBLY

- 4** Assemble and stitch four “eye” units as follows (**FIGURE 1**):
 - Top row: two longer white strips and one colored square from step 1
 - Second row: two shorter white strips and two matching color squares
 - Third row: two white squares, two matching color squares, and one contrasting center square
 - Fourth row: same as second row
 - Fifth row: same as top row
- 5** Stitch the shorter contrasting borders to the sides of each block, then stitch the two longer contrasting borders to the top and bottom edges.
- 6** Use the photograph as a guide for arranging the diamond units into a four-patch block. Stitch them together in rows.

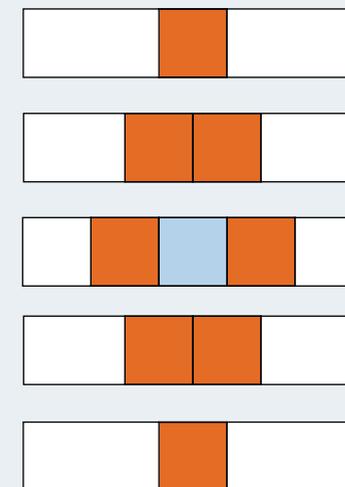


FIGURE 1



A POLY-WHAT?! The definition of a polygon is a many-sided flat shape with at least three straight sides (but typically five or more). We've included quirky shapes that don't seem to fit into a chapter of their own. Here they are: hexagons, pentagons, wedges, and other uncommon shapes that can add interest to your quilts.

The idea of piecing many different angles can be intimidating. To ease you into feeling more comfortable with polygons, we have included a variety of polygon blocks. Some are made from pure polygon shapes, and some are simpler shapes that together create a polygon shape.

Geometry was never this much fun! Join us for a refresher course on hexagons, pentagons, and other multi-sided shapes.

Many true polygon shapes (for example the hexagon or pentagon) are popular in English paper piecing (see page 133). This method is an ideal way to learn how to work with polygons. English paper piecing is also a great on-the-go project that can be taken on car journeys (when you're a passenger) or even sewn up while sitting in the doctor's office. Some of the blocks and both of the quilts are made using this method. For more complicated and multi-faceted polygon sewing, try using different polygon shapes together to form a single larger shape.

wedge wave

by KATY JONES

CUTTING

note: *In addition to fabric, you will also need template plastic.*

1 Enlarge the wedge template on page 142. Trace it onto template plastic and cut it out.

2 Trace around the template on the wrong side of 11 different blue solid fabric scraps. Cut out the shapes.

3 From background fabric, cut two rectangles measuring 5½ x 13 inches (14 x 33 cm).

ASSEMBLY

4 Starting with a wedge that is narrow-end-up, arrange the wedges in a row, rotating the ends each time as seen in the block. Move the wedges around to find an arrangement that you like.

5 Stitch the wedges in order, right sides together, matching the corners as shown (FIGURE 1). Press the finished strip. Draw a line down the center of the wedges at both ends and trim them to make a rectangular strip.

6 Stitch the background strips to the top and bottom edges of the center strip. Press and square up as needed.

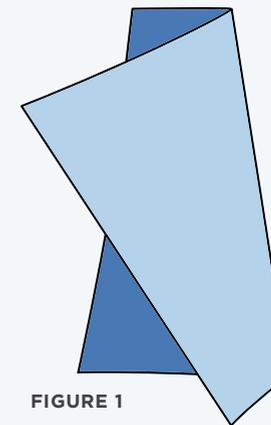


FIGURE 1

The basic tumbler or wedge shape is incredibly versatile. This exact same wedge shape is the basis of the Dresden Plate block on page 96, but it couldn't look more different when it's in this modern setting

—Katy





▲ fast forward/rewind quilt

by Tacha Bruecher ■ finished size: 61 x 84 inches (154.9 x 213.4 cm)

Don't be put off by the number of geese in this stunning quilt. Cut all the fabric first chain piece the flying geese, and you will be done in a jiffy!

materials

- 3 fat eighths of different orange prints
- 6 fat quarters of different green prints
- 6 fat eighths of different yellow prints
- 3 fat eighths of different gray prints
- 2 yards (1.8 m) of linen
- 4½ yards (4.1 m) of white solid
- ⅝ yard (.6 m) of binding fabric
- Piece of batting, 70 x 92 inches (177.8 x 233.7 cm)
- 5 yards (4.6 m) of backing fabric





orange soda quilt

by Katy Jones ■ finished size: 69 x 85 inches (175.3 x 215.9 cm), twin size ■ machine quilting by Christine Marriage using “Bubble Play” by Vickie Malaski of Designs by Vickie

Not all circles in quilting need to be made using curved seams. Orange Soda is a modern play on the traditional blocks named Orange Peel and Robbing Peter to Pay Paul. The background is constructed using the simplest of patchwork, and the fused appliqué petal shapes give the illusion of circles.

materials

- Total of 5 yards (4.6 m) of fabric for background squares, from at least 15 different fabrics (the greater the variety, the more vibrant your quilt will be)
- 4 yards (3.7 m) of a contrasting solid or pin dot fabric for appliquéd petal shapes and binding
- 5½ yards (5m) of fabric for backing
- 1 piece of batting, 75 x 90 inches (190.5 x 228.6cm)
- 9 yards (8.2 m) of 12-inch-wide (30.5 cm) fusible web, or 36 of the 8 x 12-inch (20.3 x 30.5 cm) sheets
- Template plastic
- Large petal template (page 139)



Joseph's coat

by BRIONI GREENBERG

CUTTING

note: In addition to fabric, you will also need a 6 x 12-inch (15.2 x 30.5 cm) piece of fusible web and template plastic.

1 From assorted green background prints, cut the following:

- 6 squares measuring 6½ inches (16.5 cm)
- 4 rectangles measuring 3¾ x 7 inches (9.5 x 17.8 cm)
- 2 rectangles measuring 1¾ x 8 inches (4.4 x 20.3 cm)

2 From assorted pink petal prints, cut 12 rectangles measuring 1½ x 6½ inches (3.4 x 16.5 cm).

3 Enlarge the templates (A, B, C, and the petal shape) on page 138. Trace them onto template plastic and cut them out. Label each template on the wrong side.

4 Trace the templates on the wrong side of the green background fabrics as listed and cut them out:

- Template A on the 6½-inch (16.5 cm) squares.
- Template B on the 1¾ x 8-inch (4.4 x 20.3 cm) rectangles.
- Template C on two of the 3¾ x 7-inch (9.5 x 17.8 cm) rectangles; flip the template over and trace it on the remaining green rectangles to form mirror images.

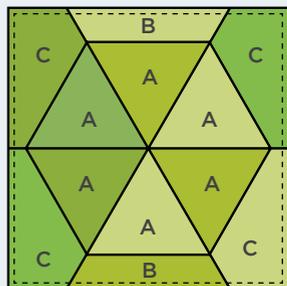


FIGURE 17

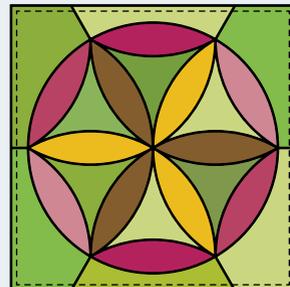


FIGURE 18



ASSEMBLY

5 Lay out the template pieces (FIGURE 17), and stitch them together:

- Start by stitching each of the template A pieces to either a template B or C piece. Press the seams open to reduce bulk.
- Stitch three sections together for the left-hand side, then the remaining three sections for the right-hand side. Stitch the two halves together and press seams open.

6 Trace the petal template eight times on the paper side of the fusible web and cut out the shapes outside the drawn lines. Press these to the wrong side of the petal fabric, following the manufacturer's instructions. Cut out the shapes along the drawn lines.

7 Use the diagram as a guide to layout the petals on the block, covering all seams (FIGURE 18). Peel off the paper side of the web and press the petal shapes in place. Stitch around the edge of each petal appliqué to secure.

convergence

by JOHN Q. ADAMS

CUTTING

1 Cut a total of eight squares measuring 8½ inches (21.6 cm), as follows:

- 2 from raspberry fabric
- 2 from a different raspberry fabric
- 2 from a brown fabric
- 2 from a yellow fabric

ASSEMBLY

2 With all fabrics right side up, stack two matching raspberry print squares atop the two brown squares, aligning all of the corners. Select two circle templates of your choosing, one slightly larger than the other. Make two curved cuts through the stack of squares, as seen in the finished block.

tip: Circular items like CDs, plates, and mug rims make great templates. The size is not important, as long as you use the same two templates for all cuts.

3 Take one inner (quarter-circle) piece from the raspberry fabric and join it with a brown middle piece. Pin and stitch together along the curve. Press well. Join this piece with an outer cut of the raspberry background fabric. Trim the block to 6½ inches (16.5 cm) square. Repeat to make a second identical block.

4 Repeat steps 2 and 3, using the remaining two raspberry squares and the two yellow squares.

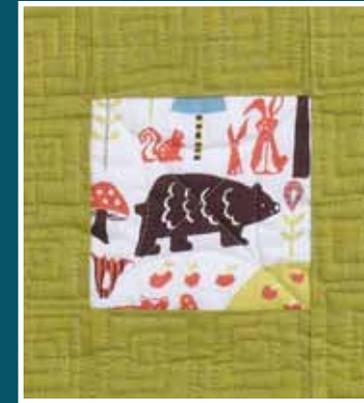
note: You will have leftover pieces to make contrasting blocks to use in your quilt, or in another project.

5 Join the quadrants together as shown in the photo. Press.



For this circle block, I decided to not include a circle at all! Rather, my design blows the circle apart and rearranges its four quadrants. The power of this design comes in its repeat: imagine a quilt featuring this block in a tiled design.

John



■ cub crawl baby quilt

by John Q. Adams ■ finished size: 48 x 56 inches (121.9 x 142.2 cm)
■ machine quilted by Angela Walters

Cub Crawl combines square-in-square blocks with long rectangles to create a design perfect for highlighting both fussy-cut squares as well as large prints. Although it's a beginner-friendly pattern, the versatility of the design for different color and pattern combinations can appeal to all skill levels.

materials

- ½ yard (.5 m) cuts of seven assorted prints
- 4 fat quarters of coordinating solid or near-solid fabrics
- 3½ yards (3.2 m) of backing fabric
- 1 piece of batting, 56 x 64 inches (142.2 x 162.6 cm)
- ½ yard (.5 m) of binding fabric