



2024 DECEMBER BLOCKS

The pattern for this year's blocks will be "Jewel Box". It is for all skill levels, incorporating Half Square Triangles (HST's) and 4-Patches. In order for this particular design to work in the finished quilt, specific colors need to be placed in particular order – blue, red, orange, gold, and green are the main colors, with neutrals as the background.

For the December Blocks program, participants are all making several of the same block as shown above. Deb Chilcote will collect your blocks during the year, mix them all up with other blocks turned in by others, and at the end of the year, will return the same number of blocks to you as you turned in. Deb's quilt with 36 blocks measured 65" square. If you only want to make a toddler size quilt, it takes 16 blocks to make a 43" square quilt. But no matter what size quilt you want to make, if you turn in 9, you get back 9. Or if you make all 36, you get back 36.

So, LET'S GET STARTED!!.....

IMPORTANT!.....The first thing you need to do is make sure your seams measure a scant 1/4". With this many seams in one block, it will not come out to the right size block if your seams are a little wider or narrower than this. To test your seams, sew two 2-1/2" squares together, and press seam to one side. Measure this piece, which should be 2-1/2" x 4-1/2". If it doesn't measure that, adjust your seam width and try again.

Not knowing how many blocks everyone will want to make, I have given you here the fabric requirements to make 4 blocks. That way, if you want to make all 36, multiply these by 9.....and if you just want to make a toddler quilt with 16 blocks, multiply these numbers by 4. Make as many blocks as you want, but this is the formula needed for 4 blocks:

5" squares for HST's (8)

- 4 of assorted blues (remember, blues only for the HST's)
- 4 of assorted neutrals



These are the assorted blues and assorted neutrals used for the HST's in Deb's quilt. Note that the blues have a small print or are solid, and the neutrals have subtle designs in them.

2-1/2" strips for 4-Patches (8)

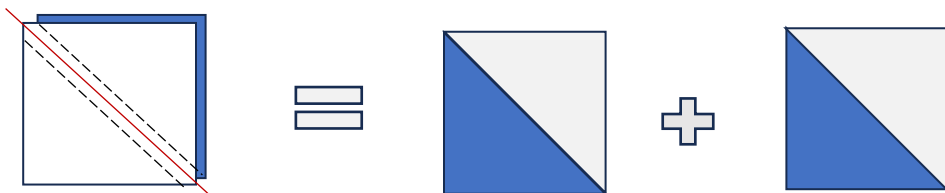
- 2-1/2" x WOF (width of fabric) of one neutral, or about 42" total of assorted neutrals
- 2-1/2" x 11" of red
- 2-1/2" x 11" of gold
- 2-1/2" x 11" of green
- 2-1/2" x 11" of orange



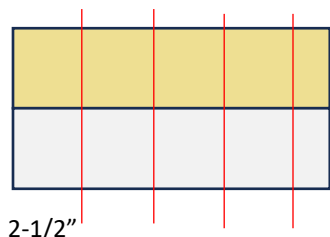
These are the fabrics used in Deb's quilt. Each color went with a different neutral print strip. Keep in mind that each set of blocks can have different fabrics, but you need to keep within the same color scheme for all.

Each block will be made the same way.

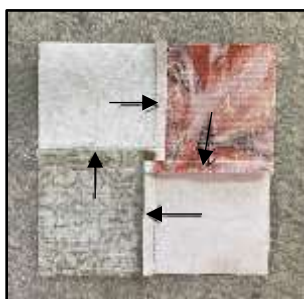
Starting with the Blue/Neutral HST's..... Mark the back side of the neutral square, corner to corner. With right sides together, sew $\frac{1}{4}$ " away from the diagonal line on either side. Then cut along the diagonal line (the red line in diagram below) to form 2 identical HST's. Press seam toward the blue side, and trim to a $4\text{-}1/2$ " square. Trimming to the correct size is very important in this block. You can sew these into the same block, but for a more scrappy look, sew each of them in a different block.



The 4-Patches..... Sew each color strip to a neutral strip longways, right sides together. Press toward the colored fabric. Your $4\text{-}1/2$ " wide strips should now look like the picture on the previous page for the red, gold, green, and orange. Double-check to make sure the whole strip is $4\text{-}1/2$ " wide, and trim if necessary. Trim the end of the strip, just to make it even. Then cut $2\text{-}1/2$ " wide sub-cuts. Your 11" strip will yield four sub-cuts. The extra inch was just to insure you had enough, so you can discard that extra piece on the end. Each sub-cut should now measure $2\text{-}1/2$ " x $4\text{-}1/2$ ". Make these sub-cuts on each of the colored/neutral strips.



With right sides together, sew a red sub-cut to a gold sub-cut, and a green sub-cut to an orange sub-cut. The middle seams should nest together. Spin the seams for each unit like in the picture below, and press.



Trim to $4\text{-}1/2$ " square. Don't skip this important step!

Your 4-patches are complete, and will be sewn onto the HST's next.

Sew each HST to a 4-patch, taking care to orient them in the right direction, according to the picture below.



Press seam toward HST. And then the last seam will connect all the units to make a block. Nest the middle seams when sewing together, and spin the seams before pressing.

Trim to 8-1/2" square. And then go make a bunch more just like this!

* Remember that you can use a variety of fabrics, as long as they are these colors and in the right placement.

At the end of the year, once you get all your blocks back that others have made (and you'll get some of yours, too), you can start to assemble them in the quilt. If you turn the blocks as shown in Deb's quilt below, you will get an interesting pattern. Sashing is made with cuts of light neutrals 1-1/2" x 8-1/2", and the cornerstones are teal color of 1-1/2" cut squares. You can border it however you choose – Deb used a teal inner border cut in 1-1/2" strips, and a green outer border cut 4-1/2" wide. Deb's quilt used 36 blocks, and finished at 65" square.

Important Tip: Before you add the borders, sew a long running stitch around the perimeter of the quilt top, about 1/8" from the edge. This will prevent all those little seams from coming apart.

