

Little Monkey!



I received several emails and [facebook friend page](#) requests to put my instructions for the Monkey Wrench blocks from Little Monkey here! So I thought, why not? It is a fun traditional block and works so well with the sizes of scrap strips I already keep on hand, and that is what made it so enjoyable to dig and play with these, coming up with the craziest fabric and color combos that I could find!

My quilt has 36 blocks and finishes at approximately 51" X 51".

The Monkey Wrench blocks finish at 5" and are SO cute. If you cut your scraps down into useable sizes like I do, you've already got all the makings for these blocks close at hand!

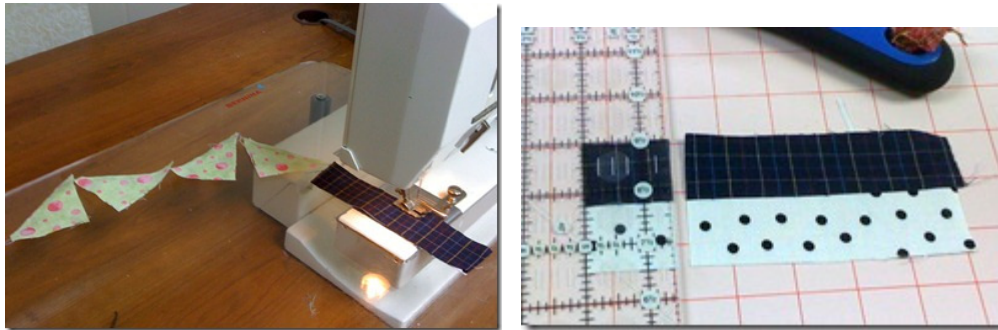
You will need:

- 2 - 2.5" strips (By about a 7.5" length) for the half square triangle corners, one background and one color.
- 2 - 1.5" X 6.5" strips for the connectors – one light, one dark ((or shake it up and use two contrasting colors!))
- 1 - 1.5" square from your box of 1.5" pre-cut squares for the block center. SEW SIMPLE!



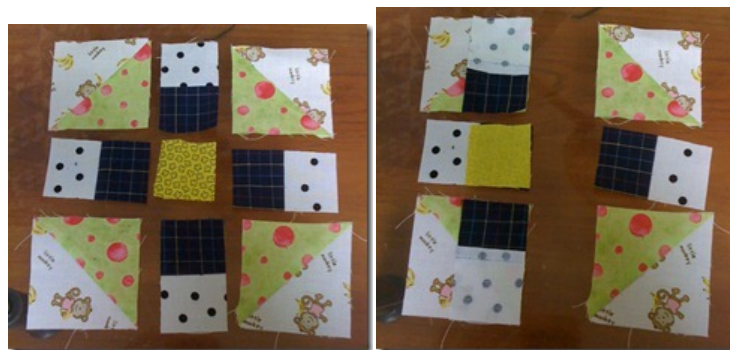
Place the two 2.5" strips right sides together ((You can use longer strips, but you need them at least 7.5" long to get the 4 triangles cut from the same set)) and using the 2.5" markings on the Easy Angle Ruler, cut 4 triangles as shown.

These are the pieces needed for the block for the first pass of chain piecing through the machine! Have fun picking fabrics that **DO NOT MATCH!** I have the Little Monkey Fabric and the lime green with pink dots for my 1/2 square triangles, a funky white with black dots and a recycled blue plaid for the connector units! My center square is an 1870s chrome yellow repro from the 1.5" squares drawer! Quit looking at the PRINT of the fabric, and just look at the color--- **HAVE FUN** shaking it up! **UNPREDICTABILITY** is our key word here!



Here are my 4 pairs of triangles AND my connector unit strip set being sewn. I run them through in one chain ((followed by a leader/ender or another unit from the quilt)) And take the whole chain to the ironing board. From there, I press everything open to the dark, THEN cut the units apart and remove the dog ears from the triangles. At this point measure to double check. Your 1/2 square triangles should measure 2.5" square. Your strip set should be 2.5" tall. If they are too short ((Say 2 3/8"!)) You have got to skinny-down on your seam allowance. This is the time to check that before you go any farther. ((Ask me how I know!))

Cut 4 1.5" sections from the strip set. There is 1/2" extra built into the length of the strip set for squaring/trimming before you cut.



And this is where I throw in **MORE** chain piecing. Assembling these units this way keeps me from getting things turned around, it saves thread, and keeps everything together so even if I just get the block partially sewn before I have to pick up my stuff at retreat and leave---I don't lose my **CHAIN** of **THOUGHT!**

To chain piece your block, look at the first picture, then the second. You will notice the center column of units is flipped right sides together on top of the first column of units. This is the first line of stitching we are going to be doing.

Pick up the upper left corner with the connector unit and feed it through the machine. When you get to the end of that unit, stop, but don't lift the presser foot. Grab the connector unit that has the center square on top of it and feed that through after the corner unit you just sewed. Finally, pick up the bottom corner unit that has the connector unit on it. Feed that through as well. Your 3 pairs of units will be connected by two thread "links" between them!



See how the first two columns are chained together? The second pic shows the first two columns sewn, with the threads connecting them still intact, and the 3rd column ready to be added!



Here I am adding the 3rd units to the rows with right sides together! I finished my seam with a pair of leader/ender squares, and can clip the partially sewn block off behind the presser foot.



Here are the three rows of my block! ((Isn't that Little Monkey fabric SO cute?!)) The three rows are webbed together by the chaining stitches between the rows. You can clip them apart now if you want, but I don't. It doesn't hurt to leave them there. At this point I finger press, and then flip the rows right sides together to complete the block stitching:



Block assembly! Easy, Right!?



One "Little Monkey" block done! All from scrap strips without having to cut into FQ's or yardage...just digging into parts I keep easily on hand!

If you want to make your quilt the size I did, you will need 36 Little Monkey blocks.

You will also need the following:

Sashings: 84 rectangles 2" X 5.5"

Cornerstones: 49 2" scrap squares in bright colors ((These all came from my 2" square box! Instant variety!))



Lay out the blocks with the sashings and the cornerstones in between-- the way you want them to appear in the quilt. I lay out the whole quilt this way, and then chain assemble it in rows as described in the chained block assembly above. It is no different, just more units and bigger size!



Assembly goes very fast this way, and there is **NO WAY** my pieces can get rotated and turned around on me. I pick up one column at a time and add those pieces to the previous rows, then go pick up another column and add it on until the whole top is webbed by the chaining stitches in between the rows like this:



When the top is sewn into rows, I just flip the rows right sides together and stitch, usually finger pressing seams in opposing directions as I go.



For borders, I added a 1.5" cut inner border in a light aqua blue, and then cut my outer wild print border at 4.5". Experiment with different border treatments/widths to finish your quilt your own way.



I think we as Quilters ALWAYS enjoy a Little Monkey-ing Around! 🤪



Last night I got as far as getting the binding ON, but the handwork is still left to do! Maybe tonight? Because today I've got more of THIS going on:



Getting those book orders out to you ASAP!

Bonnie

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