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It's July!

And you know what that means!

It's time to kick off our next Leader & Ender challenge!

Our year-long challenge runs from July of 2020 to July of 2021. It's not a race – it's a challenge. The main purpose is to sew up your scraps into something cute without really thinking about it. Cut some pieces ahead, leave them next to your machine. And as you are chain-piecing away, use pairs of pieces as your "sew between" instead of that folded-over-thread-covered mess of scrap that always ends up in the trash anyway.

If you are new to Leaders & Enders, please click the Tips & Techniques tab at the top of the blog and scroll down to L for Leaders & Enders.

I also have two books on the subject – Adventures with Leaders & Enders and MORE Adventures with Leaders & Enders, both available in the Quiltville Store at greatly discounted prices. All of the quilts made in

these books were created in between the lines of sewing other things.

Quilters LOVE to multitask – and this is multitasking at its best!



20 on the design wall.

These were made while I was assembling my most recent finish, Shoo Fly Shoo, Variation II from our previous Leader & Ender challenge.

Once you get used to sewing with a purpose, instead of sewing to throw away, it becomes difficult to ever end a seam without a Leader & Ender at the end of your chain, holding place under your presser foot, ready for the next round to begin.



Lola, getting in on some cutting and kitting up!

I am giving the cutting instructions for TWO sizes of blocks.

For the 4" finished block cut:
4 rectangles 2 1/2" x 1 1/2" background (Mine are neutrals)
2 colored rectangles 6 1/2" x 1 1/2" (Minimum length – they can start out longer, but this is the smallest you can get by with.)

Place the 2 colored rectangles with right sides together and make 4 subcuts at 1 1/2" yielding 4 pairs of matched squares.

2 pairs will become the center four-patch, the other two pairs will be the cornerstones.

Blocks will measure 4 1/2" unfinished and finish at 4" in the quilt.

For the 6" finished block cut:

4 rectangles 2" x 3 1/2" background
2 colored rectangles 2" x 8 1/2" (minimum length – can be longer.)

Place the 2 colored rectangles with right sides together and make 4 subcuts at 2", yielding 4 pairs of matched squares.

2 pairs will become the center four-patch, the other two pairs will be the cornerstones.

Blocks will measure 6 1/2" unfinished and finish at 6" in the quilt.



Block construction is simple.

To begin – at the end of a chain of piecing when it is time for a Leader & Ender, sew the

four-patch pairs through – both of them, to keep them together.

Let those pairs stay under your presser foot as you clip your patchwork chain from behind, cut apart, go press – whatever you are doing.

When you come back to sew again, the four-patch pairs you left under the presser foot now assume the role of LEADER where they ended the previous chain as ENDER.

Snip the four-patch pairs off of the chain you are piecing. Press seams to oppose in the center. Clip chaining thread. Stitch this pair at the end of the next chain to complete your four-patch.



Webbing the Easy Breezy block at the end of a chain.

It has been an easy quick clean-up of my sewing table to just cut the scraps I'm already working with in another project to the sizes I need for this Leader & Ender challenge.

I tend to cut about 10 blocks ahead, and when they run out, I cut more. It doesn't take much time really, and I can often get my chain pieces from my 1 1/2" strip bin and cut the backgrounds from my 2 1/2" neutral strips.

You can take as long as you want to build your blocks, but I like to keep things together.

Here I am following up my project block by sewing columns 1 & 2 of the Leader & Ender block all at the same time. I'll leave the

chaining threads in place to keep things organized.

You can also see that I have spun the seams on the center four-patch. You'll find info on spinning four-patch seams under the Tips & Techniques tab at the top of the blog as well.



Chaining threads in place!
Ready to add column 3!



Pressing: Press the top and bottom rows toward the sashing piece (Yes, to the light.) Press the center row toward the sashing pieces away from the four-patch.

The last two seams will be sewn one at a time as Enders for whatever else is going on under my machine.

I wish I could show you – but I was working on my 2021 Quiltmaker Addicted to Scraps column blocks and those need to stay secret for now!



Block building as Leaders & Enders.

It's a FEEL GOOD!



As with all Leader & Ender challenges, no complete quilt pattern is given.

It is up to you as to how many blocks you make, in whatever size you make them and what you decide to make with your blocks – be it a table topper or runner, wall quilt, baby quilt, bed runner, pillow or up to a full sized quilt.

My focus with these Leader & Ender quilts has been turning them into scrap quilts that I can

put on the guest beds at Quiltville Inn. I generally shoot for a size somewhere around 70 X 90 that covers a twin with a long enough drop to cover the box springs and side rails.

This would be a great block set on point with an alternate block – can you envision that?

Have fun with your scraps. Smile each time you add another block to your growing pile. Pin them in sets of 10 so it is easy to keep count!

I will also be adding this challenge to the free patterns tab at the top of the blog where you will be able to find it along with our other Leader & Ender challenges from previous years.

Happy Leadering and Endering, everyone!

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