

4 Patch & Furrows!



Quilt size: 62" X 68"

Block size: 6" finished.

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Easy yet Striking blocks from short 2" strips make this a great stash-busting quilt!

I think everyone who quilts is familiar with easy strip piecing methods. I love them. They save us time and give us greater accuracy. If you use long strips from the width of fabric though, you end up with several blocks all with the same fabrics...there is only so much you can do to get a random look when using long strips...

As a scrap quilter who is trying her best to use her scraps and reduce them continually, occasionally I find I have more short strips left than long ones and need a project to use them up!

This quilt uses dark/medium 2" strips that are approximately 9" long.

There are probably lots of these shorter strips in your scrap stash, or they can easily be cut from Fat Quarters or yardage. The light backgrounds need to be a longer strip, at least 18" in length since you will need that same background for 4 four patches in each block. Two of the 4 patches are made from one 9" dark strip and the other two 4 patches come from a contrasting 9" strip.

When I was pulling fabrics for this quilt, I spent an evening digging through the 2" strip bin, finding a main strip that I wanted to showcase down the center of the block, and finding a contrasting strip to go with it. I laid a pile of strips together all stacked up on the cutting board, about 8 strips at a time and cut them at 9" lengths. After I had enough pairs cut, I cut the background strips into 18" lengths.

Pre-cutting your strips this way guarantees that each block in your quilt will be different, and you can get to the business of power sewing without having to stop and sort and pull and trim more short strips. However, if you like that process you can feel free to make one block at a time. Make as many as you want to make the quilt the size you need it to be. The blocks finish at 6".

For each block you will need:



(1) 18" X 2" neutral or background strip

(2) 2" X 9" coordinating block strips.

Chain sew the two 9" block strips on top of the 18" background strip.

If you are speed sewing, you could continue to feed more pairs of block strips through the machine into one long chain.



Cut the background strip between the block strips and press seams towards the dark fabric.



This way when I trim, They are already aligned and matched up and I am ready to feed the pairs through the machine to sew into 4 patches.



At this point I like to take the strip pairs and cut them in 1/2 (I just fold and cut with scissors at this point) so that I can flip one half of the strip and lay it on top of the bottom strip with right sides facing and with dark on top of light/light on top of dark.



Each strip set will give you two 4 patches. Feed the pairs through the machine continually. Four-patches will measure 3 1/2" and finish at 3" in the quilt.



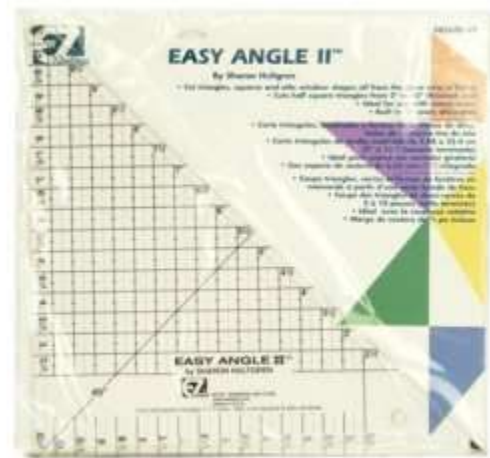
Press the 4 patches open and snip the connecting threads between them!



This is where you can choose which fabric you want running diagonally down the center of your block! Try it both ways and see which you like the best! Block will measure $6\frac{1}{2}''$ and finish at $6''$ in the quilt.

When you are ready, sew the four 4 patches together into one double 4 patch block. The quilt shown above has 72 double 4 patch

blocks, and 72 half-square triangle setting squares that make up the 'furrows' setting.



NOTE This pattern was published in 2005 before my own Essential Triangle Tool became available.

This is the Easy Angle II Ruler. I love this ruler for making the large half square triangle squares. With this ruler, you add $\frac{1}{2}''$ to the finished size of your block to decide which size of strip to cut. In this case, the triangle squares finish at $6''$, so I cut my green and pink strips at $6.5''$. With this ruler, I lay the strips right sides together, and cut so that the pairs are already matched up and ready to be fed chain style through the machine! It's a great ruler, give it a try! If you use any other method, just remember that your triangle squares need to finish at $6''$. Or be $6.5''$ unfinished.

Traditional rotary cutting will have you placing your pink and green $6\frac{7}{8}''$ squares right sides together and slicing on the diagonal from corner to corner to yield 2 half-square triangle pairs ready to sew.



Here is the quilt center before borders! This was a stash busting project, and I really didn't have the finished quilt fully in mind when I was choosing fabrics for the center. When it came time to do borders I was not sure at all what I was going to do!



After pulling out what seemed like half my stash to try and see if I could come up with anything acceptable, I found a half yard of burgundy that worked great for the 2" cut inner border! More digging produced a darker poison green, and there was enough to use for the outer 4.5" cut border. More shuffling found 4 left over 4" 4-patches that worked great for the cornerstones in the outer border!



With all the pink, this was the perfect place for me to try a new pantograph...this is Wild at Heart by Willow Leaf Studios. I just love their designs, and it was a great choice for this quilt.

I hope that you might find yourself inspired to dig into your 2" strips and try some of these fast and fun blocks! It's great when something so simple looks so wonderful, and we use up scraps in the process!



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