

License Plate Placemats!



Finished size: Approximately 13" x 17".

I am sincerely loving working with all of the row-by-row license plates from participating quilt shops that have come my way. I can't thank everyone enough for all of these locations that have ended up in the 24 placemats, bringing us all together to give my Quiltville Inn guests a smile and a giggle.

I know they will love the captions and shop names and fun play-on-words sayings on each and every one.

I started thinking I needed 24, because constant washing may have these cute mats looking quite the worse for wear over time.

The truth be told - I don't know how they are really going to hold up. We shall see.

But I am already working on a table runner idea with the bumper crop of plates still beckoning me to "Come play!"

You've seen me do string piecing before – We've used these techniques in many of my previous mystery quilts, or book patterns.



The assembly is easy -

This tutorial assumes you have a basic knowledge of string piecing on foundation papers. If you don't, check out my book *String Frenzy* which covers both the kind of piecing used in the center blocks, and the top and bottom borders.

For each placemat you will need:



2 row-by-row license plates trimmed to 8" x 4 1/2" (Some may be a bit narrower than 4 1/2" and that's okay – we trim the string border to fit.)

Sashings: 2 strips 1" x 8" and 2 strips 1" x 17"

Binding: 2 strips 2" x 40" from width of fabric, or enough 2" strips from fat-quarter to yield approximately 60" of binding.

I used the same fabric for binding as I did for the sashing strips.

Foundation papers:

4 squares 4 1/4" x 4 1/4"
2 phone book pages (or foundation paper) approximately 8" x 11". If your phone book pages are smaller, just use more pages to get the desired result.

Construction:

When string piecing, use a very small stitch length for easier paper removal.

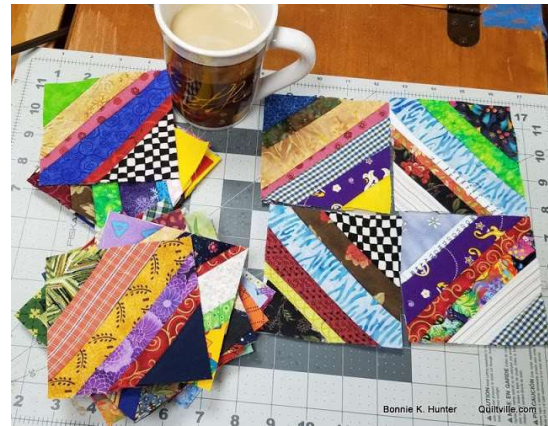


Treadling blocks on my 1910 Singer 66 with lotus decals.

Place two strips with right sides together, centering the strips over the paper foundation, from corner to corner. Stitch through all layers using a 1/4" seam.

Fold top strip out and press.

Cover the 4 squares with strings. Trim to 4 1/4" and remove paper.



Stitch the four string blocks together. Some of my placemats had the string blocks forming an X, some a diamond. It's up to you.

String block center will measure 8" square at this point.

Stitch an 8" sashing piece to either side of string block center. Press seams toward the sashing just added.

Stitch a license plate to each sashing piece with the bottom of each plate toward the center of the placemat. Press seams toward the sashing strips.

Measure placemat through the center from side to side. Take note of this measurement.

If your placemat measures less than 17', trim the long sashings to this new measurement. Stitch long sashings to top and bottom of placemat.

Outer border string piecing:



Place two strips with right sides together across the center of the page from side to side (Across in the shortest direction.) Stitch through all layers using 1/4" seam. Press top strip over and continue to completely fill the page with random strips and strings.

I found I needed 2 pages to get the number of strips I needed, and it also increased my variety.

Short strips can be joined end to end and used as one long strip across the page. USE EVERYTHING!



Four with prepared bindings!



Trim the edges of the pages and cross-cut into 2 1/2" strips. Remove paper. Join the strips end to end into one long length.



And then there were six!

Cut 2 borders 17" in length from the pieced strips. (Or use your adjusted measurement from trimming your long sashings if needed.) I found that sometimes I had to shift the ruler for the best placement down the string piecing, avoiding seams too close to either end of the 17" border length.

I also found it helpful to avoid bulk at the ends of the borders by pressing the last seam on either end toward the center of the border.



Mass quilting on the long arm!

Add the top and bottom borders to the placemat. Press seams toward the long sashings.

Feel free to quilt these as desired. The size is small enough to easily be managed on your home machine. I have had great success placing the mats in rows, 2 mats across, and letting the machine quilt all the way across.

It's also a great way to use up scraps of batting – we all know how those tend to hang around needing a project to use them up.

Binding:



Join the binding strips from end to end with diagonal seams. (More binding info is found under the Tips & Techniques tab at the top of my blog under binding hints!)

Trim excess fabric 1/4" beyond seams and press seams open.



Press the binding in half by bringing long raw edges together. Apply to placemats with 1/4" seam for 1/4" finish.

If you wish to machine finish the binding, stitch the binding to the back of the placemat first, and roll it to the front to top stitch. I enjoyed several evenings of simple hand stitching to finish my bindings for the result I like best.



I love these!!

This pattern is given for personal use only. No part may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic or mechanical including printing or photocopying for sharing, scanning or by any information storage and retrieval system without permission in writing from the author.

Please no uploading and saving of this file with intent to share, email or distribute, either digitally or in hard copy.

Please refer your friends to the Free Patterns tab at the top of my blog at Quiltville.blogspot.com to print their own copy.

Be watching for other digital patterns and books available in the Quiltville Store at Quiltville.com.

©2019 Bonnie K Hunter. All Rights Reserved.