

Christmas Lights Part 1!



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Quilt Size: 67" X 79 3/4"

Finished Block Size: 9"

Finished Unit Size: 3"

Last year, Quiltmaker Magazine published a 3 part Mystery that I designed called Christmas Lights! It's been on my mind to re-release it here on my blog for those who either never got to participate, or for those who never finished it!

Though it won't really be written as a mystery, more of a Sew-Along, you will find the steps here just for you! I am presenting this in 3 Parts to keep the posts not overly long. I'm posting each part as I complete it, so check back for part 2 and 3 to come soon! You will also find these linked in the Christmas Lights tab above, which will probably be moved eventually to the tutorials tab. For right now, we want to keep things easy for you to find!

Yardage Requirements:

Blocks:

Assorted Neutral Prints: 1 1/4 yard

Assorted Colored prints: 5/8 yard

Black Print #1: 5/8 yard

Red Tone-on-Tone #1: 1 1/8 yard

Green print: 1/2 yard

Gold Tone-on-Tone: 1 3/8 yard for blocks AND Setting triangles

Borders:

Black Print #2: 1/2 yard for border #1

Red Tone-on-Tone #2: 5/8 yard for border #2

Red/Green paisley print: 2 1/4 yards for border #3 and binding.

Backing: 5 1/4 Yards

Batting: 75" X 88"

Making the Units!

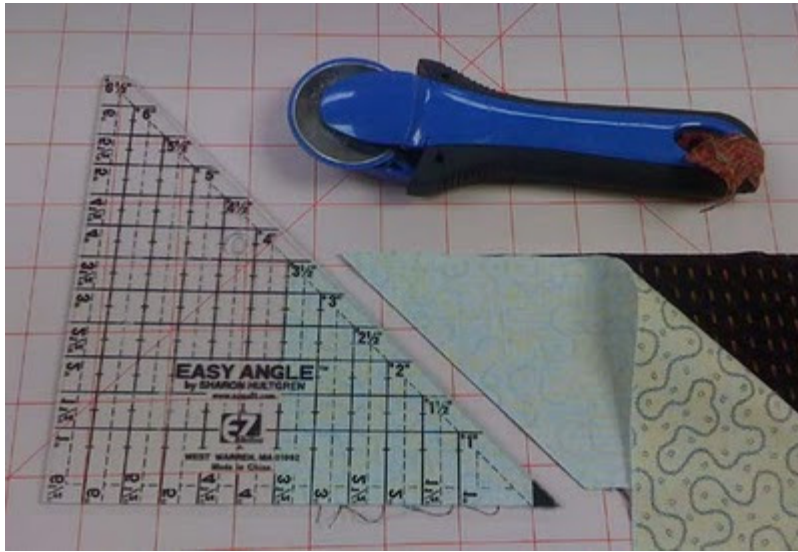


If you know me at all, or have followed me over the years, you know how I am always using pre-cut pieces as leaders & enders between my lines of chain piecing. This gives me buckets and boxes of pre-sewn parts that can be easily utilized in scrap quilt making! My favorite? 2" squares that are quickly sewn into 4 patches between the lines of chain piecing other things. I stock pile these! They are so cute and versatile and were the jumping off point for this quilt. This little basket is just FULL of leader/ender 4 patches. I pin them together in stacks of 10 so I always know how many I have...it's easy to count that way.

You will need 52 4 patches for this quilt, made with either individual 2" squares, or strip-pieced from 2" strips. Each 4 patch has 2 colored squares, and 2 neutral squares, totally scrappy!

My 4 patches include ALL COLORS, not just red/green Christmas fabrics. I like colored lights on my tree! I like many colors of wrapping paper beneath the tree too! Christmas is NOT just a celebration of red and green at my house, my ornaments have all colors too...I'm a color girl! I love how the many colors make this quilt sparkle!

Make 52 4 patches. They will measure 3.5" square and finish in the quilt at 3". Label these "Unit 1".



Unit 2! Half-Square Triangles!

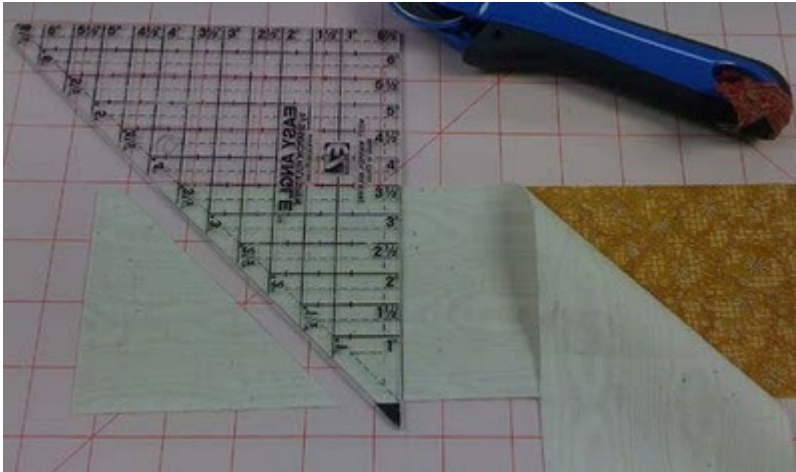
I use the Easy Angle ruler A LOT for half square triangles. The biggest benefit is that it works with the sizes of scrap strips that I already keep on hand. This way it is easy to pair a light strip with a dark strip and cut my triangle pairs already matched with right sides together...I just cut and Sew! These triangles finish at 3", so if you are using any other method, take that into consideration. For instance, if you prefer to cut a $3\frac{7}{8}$ " square, draw a diagonal line, and stitch $\frac{1}{4}$ " on each side of the center line, you can do it that way. You just have to know what size to start with to give you a triangle square that is going to finish at 3".

My directions will include use of the Easy Angle ruler!

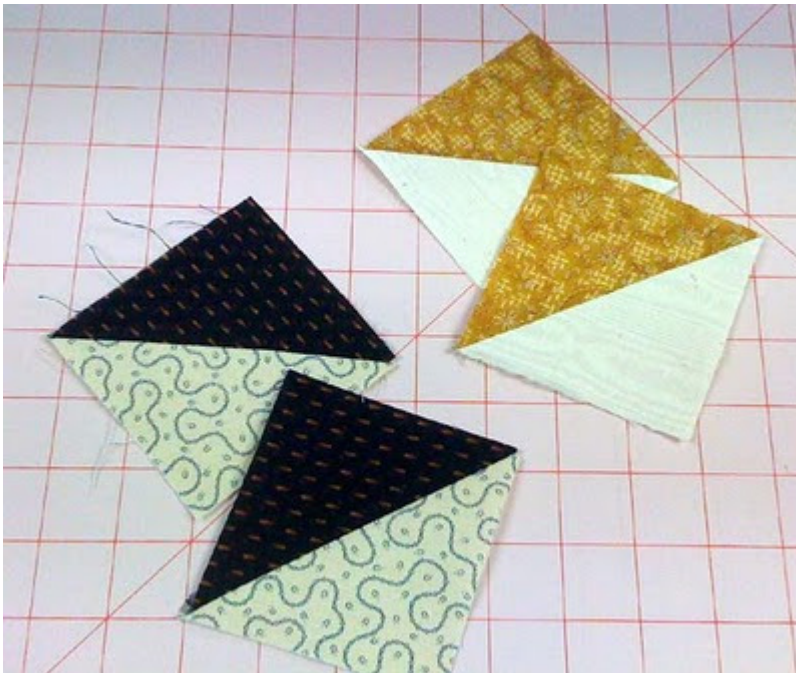
Match a $3\frac{1}{2}$ " strip of Black print #1 with a $3\frac{1}{2}$ " strip of Scrappy Neutral! Using the $3\frac{1}{2}$ " marking on the Easy Angle ruler, cut 40 matched triangle pairs. My neutrals varied throughout the process. I'd get as many as I could from one strip, and then work with another one, and another one. If you want variety, go for shorter strip lengths in your neutrals to give you more to play with!

Stitch pairs on the diagonal and press seams to the black. You will have 40 half square triangle units. ****Hint**** It is a good idea to sew one, and measure one..just to make sure it is coming out at $3\frac{1}{2}$ " square. Adjust seam width if necessary.

Unit 3! MORE Half-Square Triangles!

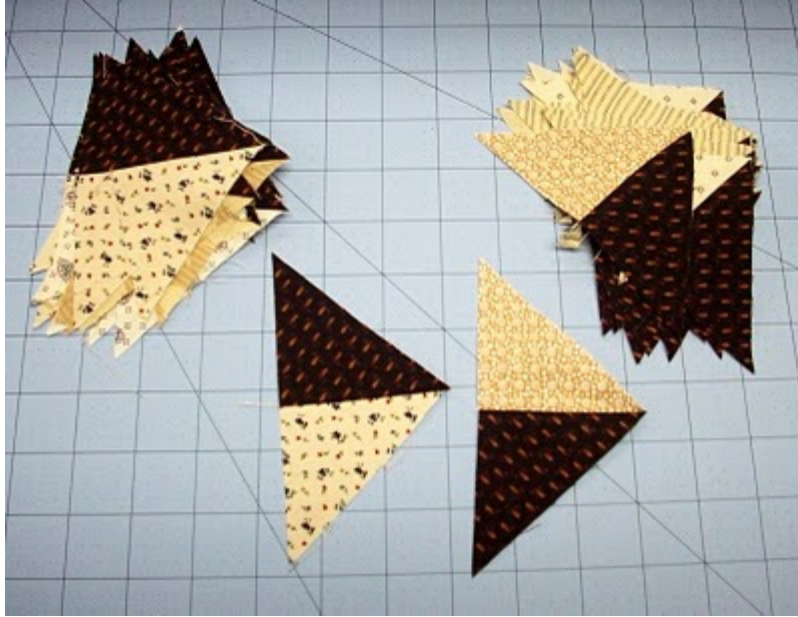


This time you will be matching a 3 1/2" Gold strip with a 3 1/2" random neutral strip! Cut 48 gold/neutral triangle pairs using the easy angle ruler. Stitch. Press seams toward the gold triangle.

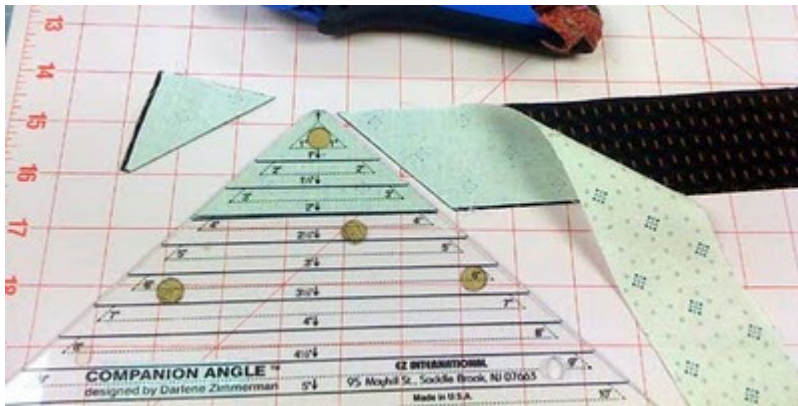


Got them done? 40 black/neutral Triangle Squares and 48 gold/neutral triangle squares!

Unit 4 and Unit 5!



The next unit is a bit trickier, we need half of them in Mirror Image! But that is easy to do with the Companion Angle Ruler!



Pair a 2" strip from black print #1 with a random neutral 2" strip, right sides together. Using the 2" line on the Companion Angle ruler, cut 48 matched pairs. To create the Mirror Image, so that the black will be on the right side in half the units, and the left side on the other half, simply sew half the pairs with the light on top, and the other half with the dark on top! Press seams to the black triangle. Trim dog ears! Make 2 stacks of pairs, one left, and one right.



If you don't have the Companion Angle ruler, and want to cut these the "regular" way, you will need (12) 4 1/4" squares of black print #1, and (12) 4 1/2" squares of random neutrals.

Match a neutral square with a black square with right sides together and slice twice on the diagonal with an X to yield 4 triangle pairs from each set of matched squares. You will have 48 matched pairs as above. Proceed to sew as previously shown, with half of the pairs with the light fabric on top, and the other half with the black fabric on top to give you the mirror image units required.

Using the Easy Angle Ruler, cut 48 Green base triangles from 3 1/2" strips of Green Print, using the 3 1/2" line on the ruler as a guide.

If you are sewing without the Easy Angle, cut (24) 3 7/8" squares from the green print. Slice squares on the diagonal from corner to corner to give you 48 green base triangles.



With right sides together, match a green triangle to each of the black/neutral triangle pairs. Stitch. Press seam toward the Green. Trim dog ears.

Assembly will begin in Christmas Lights, Part 2!