

FREE YEAR-LONG BLOCK SERIES

Block of the Month Sampler

12 beautiful quilt blocks — one for each month — that come together into a stunning sampler quilt.

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- ▣ 12 Traditional Blocks
 - ▣ Complete Instructions
 - ▣ Layout Guide Included
 - ▣ All Skill Levels Welcome

A Free Gift for Our Community ▣

Your Year-Long Quilting Journey

This Block of the Month program is designed to ease you gently into quilting — or deepen your existing skills — over 12 months. Each month introduces one classic quilt block, complete with its history, instructions, and tips for making it beautifully.

At the end of the year, you'll have 12 completed 12-inch blocks ready to arrange into a sampler quilt. The layout guide on the final pages shows you exactly how to put them all together.

Overall Fabric Planning

To give your sampler quilt a cohesive look, choose your fabrics before you begin. Here's a simple approach:

Fabric Role	Amount Needed	Suggestion
Background / Light	3.5 yards total	A cream, white, or soft neutral — use this consistently in all 12 blocks
Feature / Dark	3 yards total	One or two coordinating darker fabrics — pick a color story and stick to it
Accent / Medium	2 yards total	A medium-value fabric that bridges your light and dark
Binding	0.6 yards	Choose after completing all blocks so you can pick the perfect finish

January: The Flying Geese Block

The Flying Geese block is one of the oldest and most beloved blocks in American quilting tradition, dating back to the early 1800s. Groups of these blocks arranged together look like flocks of birds in flight — hence the beautiful name.

Background (light):	Cut (4) rectangles 2.5" x 4.5"
Feature fabric:	Cut (1) rectangle 4.5" x 2.5" — this is your 'goose'
To make one unit:	Draw a diagonal line on the wrong side of each small square
Step 1:	Place a small square on one end of the large rectangle, right sides together
Step 2:	Sew directly ON the diagonal line
Step 3:	Trim 1/4" away from the stitching line, open and press
Step 4:	Repeat on the other end of the large rectangle
Step 5:	Press open — you have one Flying Geese unit
For the 12" block:	Make 8 flying geese units and arrange in 4 rows of 2
Sew rows:	Sew 2 units together into a row, then sew 4 rows together

□ QUILTER'S TIP: When sewing the diagonal line, sew a thread's width OUTSIDE the line rather than on it — this accounts for the seam when you fold the corner over and gives a perfectly-sized unit.

February: The Heart in a Square Block

The heart block has appeared in American quilts since the 19th century, often made as gifts for loved ones. This modern version appliques a simple heart shape onto a background square — beginner-friendly and absolutely charming.

Background square:	Cut (1) square 12.5" x 12.5"
Heart fabric:	Cut (1) piece approximately 9" x 10"
Fusible web:	Trace and cut one heart shape approximately 8" tall
Step 1:	Iron fusible web onto wrong side of heart fabric following manufacturer's instructions
Step 2:	Trace the heart template onto the paper backing and cut out carefully
Step 3:	Center the heart on the background square and iron to fuse
Step 4:	Stitch around the heart edge — use a blanket stitch, zigzag, or straight stitch
Step 5:	Square up to 12.5" x 12.5" if needed
Note:	A heart template is available as a bonus download — link in your welcome email

□ QUILTER'S TIP: Use a heart template with smooth, gradual curves rather than a deep V — it's much easier to appliqué and looks just as beautiful.

March: The Pinwheel Block

Pinwheels have been spinning their way through American quilt history since the 1800s. Made from half-square triangles, this block has a wonderful sense of movement and plays beautifully with color contrast.

Light fabric:	Cut (4) squares 3.875" x 3.875" — draw diagonal line on wrong side
Dark fabric:	Cut (4) squares 3.875" x 3.875"
Step 1:	Layer one light and one dark square right sides together
Step 2:	Sew 1/4" on both sides of the drawn diagonal line
Step 3:	Cut on the drawn line — you have 2 half-square triangles
Step 4:	Press open and trim to 3.5" x 3.5" — make 8 total HSTs
Step 5:	Arrange in a 4x4 grid with dark triangles all pointing clockwise
Step 6:	Sew into 4 rows of 2, then sew rows together, matching centers precisely
Tip:	Press seams open at the center to reduce bulk — your pinwheel will lie flat

□ QUILTER'S TIP: The pinwheel center is where all four seams meet. Press each HST seam open (not to the side) and twist the center seam allowances to distribute bulk — your block will lie perfectly flat.

April: The Flower Basket Block

Basket blocks became popular in American quilts during the 1800s and remain beloved today for their charming, traditional look. This simplified version uses quick-piecing techniques to create a beautiful basket filled with 'flowers.'

Background:	Cut (1) square 6.5" x 6.5", (4) squares 3.5" x 3.5", (1) rectangle 3.5" x 6.5"
Basket fabric:	Cut (1) square 6.5" x 6.5" for HST, (2) squares 3.5" for sides
Handle fabric:	Cut bias strips 1.25" wide, about 12" long
Step 1:	Make one large HST from the 6.5" squares for the basket body
Step 2:	Make four small HSTs from 3.5" squares for basket sides and lid
Step 3:	Shape handle fabric into a curve and appliqué onto background square
Step 4:	Assemble basket body, sides, and handle following the layout
Step 5:	Add 'flower' accents using yo-yos or small fabric circles if desired

□ QUILTER'S TIP: Press the bias handle strip in thirds first, then shape it around a circular object (like a can) before pressing into a curve — it holds its shape perfectly for appliqué.

May: The Bear Paw Block

The Bear Paw block dates to the mid-1800s and is thought to have represented the paths taken westward by settlers following bear tracks. It's one of the most recognized traditional blocks with its distinctive 'claw' corners.

Background:	Cut (4) squares 2.5" x 2.5", (1) square 4.5" x 4.5", (4) rectangles 2.5" x 4.5"
Paw fabric:	Cut (1) square 4.5" x 4.5", (8) squares 2.5" x 2.5"
Claw fabric:	Cut (8) squares 2.5" x 2.5"
Step 1:	Make 8 half-square triangles from paw and claw fabrics — trim to 2.5"
Step 2:	Arrange 2 HSTs + 1 background square in an L-shape for each 'claw'
Step 3:	Sew each claw unit together — make 4 claw units
Step 4:	Arrange all pieces: center square, 4 claw units, 4 rectangles, corner squares
Step 5:	Sew in sections: corners, then center row, then complete block

□ QUILTER'S TIP: Consistent triangle points are the hallmark of a beautiful Bear Paw. Use starch when pressing and sew with your HSTs on top so you can guide the points through the machine without distortion.

June: The Log Cabin Block

The Log Cabin is arguably the most iconic American quilt block, dating to the 1860s. Traditionally, a red center symbolized the hearth of the home. The block's versatility is extraordinary — the same block arranged differently creates dozens of different overall quilt patterns.

Center square:	Cut (1) square 2.5" x 2.5" in red or accent fabric
Light strips:	Cut strips 1.5" wide — you'll need about 1 yard total of light fabrics
Dark strips:	Cut strips 1.5" wide — you'll need about 1 yard total of dark fabrics
Step 1:	Sew a light strip to one side of the center square, trim, press away from center
Step 2:	Sew a light strip to the adjacent side, trim, press
Step 3:	Sew a dark strip to the opposite light side, trim, press
Step 4:	Sew a dark strip to the final side, trim, press — one round complete
Step 5:	Continue adding rounds alternating light/dark until block measures 12.5" unfinished
Note:	This block is all about pressing as you go — press each strip before adding the next

□ **QUILTER'S TIP:** The Log Cabin is extremely forgiving of slight inaccuracies in cutting — the strip-piecing method means small errors disappear as you build outward. Perfect for new quilters.

July: The Star Points (Ohio Star) Block

The Ohio Star is a classic 9-patch star block that has appeared in American quilts since the late 1700s. It's one of the most loved traditional blocks because it's beginner-friendly but creates a stunning graphic effect.

Background:	Cut (4) squares 4.5" x 4.5", (4) squares 2.5" x 2.5"
Star center:	Cut (1) square 4.5" x 4.5"
Star points:	Cut (2) squares 5.25" x 5.25"
Step 1:	Cut the 5.25" squares diagonally TWICE to make 8 quarter-square triangles
Step 2:	Sew one star-point triangle to one background triangle — make 8 units
Step 3:	Sew pairs of units together to make 4 'hourglass' star point units
Step 4:	Press and trim all hourglass units to 4.5" x 4.5"
Step 5:	Arrange in 3x3 grid: corner/point/corner, point/center/point, corner/point/corner
Step 6:	Sew rows, then sew rows together — press seams toward corners

□ QUILTER'S TIP: The star points use quarter-square triangles (QSTs), not half-square triangles. The extra cutting step is worth it — QSTs have the straight of grain on all four sides, so your star won't stretch or distort.

August: The Churn Dash Block

The Churn Dash is named after the old butter churning tool and is one of the simplest yet most satisfying traditional blocks to piece. Its geometric simplicity reads beautifully in both modern and traditional contexts.

Background:	Cut (4) squares 2.5" x 2.5", (4) rectangles 2.5" x 4.5", (4) squares 3" x 3"
Feature fabric:	Cut (4) rectangles 2.5" x 4.5", (1) square 4.5" x 4.5"
HST fabric:	Cut (4) squares 3" x 3" in feature color
Step 1:	Make 4 HSTs from the 3" squares — trim to 2.5" x 2.5"
Step 2:	Sew each background rectangle to a feature rectangle along the long edge
Step 3:	Arrange in 3x3 grid: HST, rectangle unit, HST in corners; rectangles in sides; center square
Step 4:	Sew into 3 rows, then sew rows together
Step 5:	Press seams away from center square — the block will lie beautifully flat

□ QUILTER'S TIP: The Churn Dash block looks most striking when your 'feature' fabric has enough contrast with your background to make the diagonal movement visible. A medium-to-dark feature on a light background is the classic approach.

September: The Dresden Plate Block

The Dresden Plate is one of the most recognizable appliqué quilt blocks, popular from the 1920s through the 1940s. Its fan of 'petals' creates a beautiful circular motif that looks impressive but is surprisingly achievable for beginners.

Background square:	Cut (1) square 13" x 13" — trim to 12.5" after appliqué
Petal fabrics:	Cut (16) wedge shapes using a Dresden Plate template — use 4–8 different fabrics
Center circle:	Cut (1) circle approximately 3.5" diameter
Step 1:	Fold each wedge in half lengthwise, right sides together, and sew across the wide end
Step 2:	Clip corner, turn right side out, press — pointed petal end created
Step 3:	Sew all 16 petals together in a circle, right sides together, matching raw edges
Step 4:	Center the assembled plate on the background square and pin
Step 5:	Appliqué outer edges of plate to background using your preferred method
Step 6:	Tuck raw center edges under the circle, appliqué circle over center

□ QUILTER'S TIP: The rounded petal end is traditional, but if you're new to appliqué, try the 'blade' version — pointed at both ends, so you only need to turn under the appliqué once rather than navigating a curve.

October: The Pumpkin Block Block

A seasonal favorite, the appliquéd pumpkin block is perfect for this program's October slot. It's a charming addition to any sampler and makes the most delightful autumn pillow cover if you want to use it separately.

Background:	Cut (1) square 12.5" x 12.5" in sky blue, warm white, or cream
Pumpkin body:	Cut (3) rectangles in slightly different orange fabrics for a dimensional look
Stem:	Cut (1) small rectangle in brown or sage green
Leaf:	Cut (1) leaf shape in green fabric
Step 1:	Prepare fusible web shapes for pumpkin sections, stem, and leaf
Step 2:	Fuse pumpkin body sections onto background, slightly overlapping for dimension
Step 3:	Add stem and leaf at top of pumpkin
Step 4:	Appliqué all edges using blanket stitch, zigzag, or straight stitch
Step 5:	Add optional hand embroidery: leaf veins, vine tendrils, subtle texture lines

□ QUILTER'S TIP: Using three slightly different orange fabrics for the pumpkin's three sections gives an incredible sense of dimension and depth — far more interesting than a single orange.

November: The Turkey Tracks (Bear's Paw variation) Block

Also known as 'Wandering Foot,' the Turkey Tracks block is a 4-patch design with distinctive curved elements that create a sense of movement. It's perfect for November and offers a satisfying introduction to working with curved piecing.

Background:	Cut (4) squares 6.5" x 6.5"
Track fabric:	Cut strips and shapes as per template below
Step 1:	Divide each 6.5" background square diagonally and mark curves for the 'tracks'
Step 2:	Cut four curved 'foot' shapes from track fabric using the template
Step 3:	Clip the convex (outer) curve of each background piece at 1/4" intervals
Step 4:	Pin curved track piece to background matching centers first, then ends
Step 5:	Sew slowly — the clipped background eases around the track's inner curve
Step 6:	Press toward the track fabric, then assemble four squares into one 12" block

□ QUILTER'S TIP: Curved piecing sounds scary but the secret is simple: always sew with the CONCAVE (inward) curve on top, facing you. You control the feed — never battle the machine. Work slowly and pin generously.

December: The Christmas Star (Lone Star variation) Block

Our final block is a showstopper — a simplified version of the classic Lone Star in a 12-inch format. Using eight diamond units, this block creates a stunning eight-pointed star perfect for the final month of the program.

Star fabrics:	Cut (16) diamonds using a 60-degree diamond template in 2–3 coordinating fabrics
Background:	Cut (4) squares 3.5" x 3.5" and (4) triangles from a 6" square cut diagonally twice
Step 1:	Sew 2 diamonds together along one edge — make 8 pairs, press seams open
Step 2:	Sew pairs together into 4 quarter-star units — press seams open
Step 3:	Sew 2 quarter units together — make 2 half-star units (Y-seams required)
Step 4:	Set in the 4 background squares and 4 triangles using Y-seams
Step 5:	Press all seams carefully — a good pressing makes the star lie flat
Step 6:	Square up to 12.5" x 12.5" taking care to keep the star centered

□ QUILTER'S TIP: Y-seams sound intimidating — but they're simply seams where you stop at a specific point (usually marked with a dot on the pattern) and pivot. Mark all Y-seam pivot points with a pin before sewing your first seam.

Assembling Your Sampler Quilt

Congratulations — you've made all 12 blocks! Here's how to put them together:

Quilt Layout: Arrange your 12 blocks in a 3x4 grid. Lay them all out on a design wall or floor before sewing to find the most pleasing arrangement.

Sashing (Optional): For a more traditional look, add 2.5" sashing strips between blocks in a coordinating fabric. This makes the quilt 56" x 73" — a generous throw size.

Without Sashing: Simply sew blocks edge to edge. The quilt will measure 36" x 48" — a lap quilt. Add borders to size up.

Backing: You'll need 3.5 yards for a back with the sashing layout, or 1.5 yards for the lap size. Pre-wash and piece as needed.

Batting: A cotton/poly 80/20 blend is perfect for a sampler quilt — it's easy to quilt by machine or hand.

Quilting: Stitch in the ditch along all seam lines for a clean look, or choose a simple allover design like gentle waves or a large stipple.

Binding: Cut 2.25" strips on the straight grain and join end-to-end. You'll need about 6 yards of joined length for the sashed version.