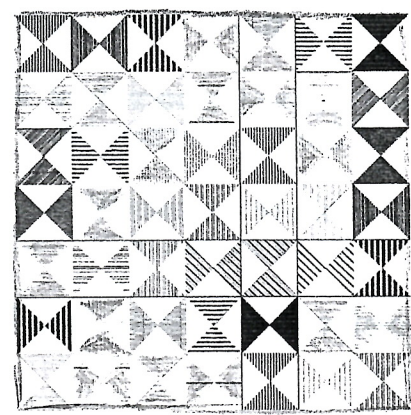


This month we're playing with stripes in whatever stripe colors you have on hand.

If you don't have stripes, use plaids, dots, checkers, in whatever colors you have, but try for happy colors.




We'll be making Hourglass blocks at 5" unfinished.



Main Color: Stripes, (can substitute plaids or checkers, or dots) in any colors.

Background: White.

CUTTING: Cut a 6-1/2" square in white, and also in your color. When you cut stripes, checks, or plaids, align your ruler with the lines in the print.

1. Draw a line on the white square, diagonally from corner to corner..... 
2. Place the two squares right sides together.
Sew a 1/4" seam on each side of the drawn line..... 
3. Cut along the drawn line. Iron toward the color side. You now have two HST's.
4. Lay one of the HST's on top of the other, right sides together.
5. **** TRICKY STUFF HERE: Arrange the top HST so the color side is on top of the white side of the bottom HST.
6. Nest the two seams together by massaging them into place. Make sure the corners are still aligned, and the seams nest all the way from corner to corner.
7. Draw a line diagonally, but this time, from the other corner to corner, across both white and print fabric.
Sew 1/4" away from each side of that line..... 
8. Cut along that line, and iron open. Look at those two very fine Hourglass blocks you just made! Nice work!
9. It takes a special procedure to trim Hourglass blocks to size. You can do it, or you can leave it for the winners to do. If you want to trim them, follow this procedure:
10. When you trim Hourglass blocks, you have to make sure that the X seams cross at the point exactly in the middle of your trimmed block.

If you just put your ruler on the side of the block and trim from there, the X won't be in the middle.

To make it easy for ourselves, we want to put a spot on our ruler that we can lay over the center of the X in our blocks.

So, since we want 5" blocks, we need to find the middle of the 5" square we want. Halfway across 5" is 2-1/2". Halfway up and down 5" is again 2-1/2".

So, look at your ruler, and find the 45 degree angle line that goes from corner to corner.

On that line, find the 2-1/2" spot, (it's 2-1/2" from the top edge, and 2-1/2" from the side edge.)

Put a piece of clear tape over that spot, and then mark it with a Sharpie so you can spot it easily.

Do a test drive: take a piece of scrap paper, and draw diagonal lines from corner to corner, making an X. Follow the steps below. If you end up with a 5" piece of paper with the X running from corner to corner, you've got it perfectly right.

1. Take one of your blocks, and place the 2-1/2" spot on your ruler exactly over the center of the X seams on your block. Move the ruler until the 45 degree angle line exactly covers the seam line, keeping the marked spot in the center of the X.
2. Trim two sides.
3. Flip the block around, and place the 2-1/2" ruler spot over the X center, and align the 45 degree angle line over the seam. Trim the remaining two sides.

Nice work! That's a gorgeous pair of blocks.

If you'd like to have more fun, cut another pair of squares and make some more! Get frisky with your fabrics!

GENERAL CALCULATION FOR MAKING HOURGLASS BLOCKS:

Add 1-1/2" to the unfinished size of the hourglass block you want to make:

5" unfinished block – start with 6-1/2" squares

8" unfinished block – start with 9-1/2" squares

This calculation allow sufficient extra fabric around edge to make trimming to size easy.