

Stash Busting String Quilt

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String quilts are great for using left over bits and pieces of fabrics from all your other projects, or you can purchase fabric and cut your strips. I used two fat quarter towers of fabric to make my "Happy Days" string quilt. They can be planned or randomly pieced...either way, they are fun!

String quilts have been around centuries. The "string" was just another name for a tiny bit or strip of fabric that was too small to make a block, but too precious to throw away. When these bits of fabric were sewn together, you had an original block. If you google antique string quilts you will see some amazing art work done by women (and men) that have survived through the ages.

When making a string quilt you use a foundation of either paper or muslin. In my "Happy Days" quilt, I used 10½" x 10½" squares of muslin. I have approximate yardage listed for two different sized quilts. One has blocks, 10½" x 10 ½" and one is for 8½" x 8 ½" squares. When you are planning your string quilt one thing to consider is the size of paper you have available for a foundation. The muslin will make your quilt heavier with the added fabric, the paper needs to be torn out after you sew your strips of fabric (strings) down.

Once you have decided which type of foundation you are going to use, then you need to decide on the size. In my pattern I have included two different "color-planning" pages. Please photo copy your color-planning pages so you can try different options for your layout and color. See photo 1 I wanted my "Happy Days" to have a "Trip Around the World" type of design (see photo #6), you can try different color options, and different lay out options by using these pages.

Let's get started!

STARCH! I use heavy duty spray starch on all of my fabric. When you are cutting these strips of fabric and then handling them over and over...they start to fray.

Cut your foundation squares. Press a fold in the center of each block on the diagonal...you can also draw a line

Cut your dividing center strips 2" wide. For the 10 ½" squares you need to cut 16" lengths, for 8 ½" squares they are 2" x 13". You need 51 #1 (red) strips, #2 (bright blue) strips and 20 #3 (navy) strips

Follow your color-plan page, in my Happy Days, I needed less yellow and orange strips than the other colors. I stacked 4 fat quarters of yellow and cut two strips of each size 2", 1 ¾", 1 ½", 1 ¼", and one 1" strip... I did the same thing with the orange. As I was sewing down the yellow and orange blocks, if I needed more strips, I cut more strips. When I was cutting the other colors I cut three of each size of strips. When I needed more I cut more. Keep your strips separated by color.

Place the first strip (center dividing strip) right side up in the center, you can use a spot of a fabric glue stick or a pin to hold it in place. See photo #2

Place the next strip of fabric on top of the center strip, right sides together. Line up the raw edges on the right side and sew a ¼" seam. You can finger press or use an iron to press the fabric open to the right. See photo #3

Continue sewing strips down and pressing until the right side of your foundation is covered by fabric.

Press and trim off excess from the back side of your block. See photo #4

Now turn your block and sew strips to the other side of the foundation until the foundation is completely covered. Press and trim. See photo #5. These steps are repeated for every block. I put a check mark on my color-plan page as I finished each block.

Once all the blocks are finished, follow your color – planning page, sew them into rows, then sew the rows together. See photo #6

Quilt, bind and enjoy!

Photo #1

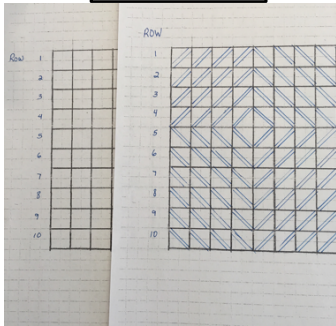


Photo #2



Photo #3

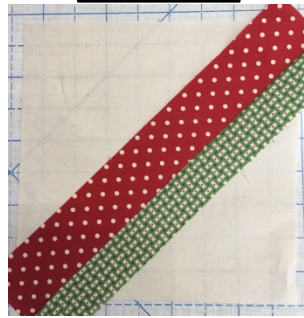


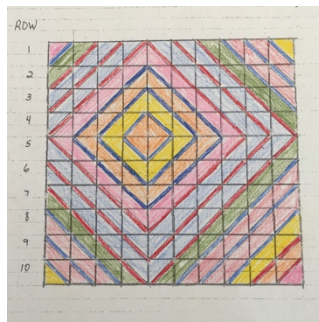
Photo #4



Photo #5



Photo #6



Supply List

80"x80" quilt using 8 ½" x 8 ½" foundation

Please use heavy spray starch when you press everything

Muslin- 5 yards (washed dried and pressed) cut into 8 ½" x 8 ½" squares

Dividing strip #1 – 1 Yard red polka dot

Dividing strip #2 – ¼ yard bright blue

Dividing strip #3 – ½ yard navy dot

Yellow – ¾ yard of various size strips in a variety of shades

Orange – ¾ yard of various size strips in a variety of shades

Pink – 1 ½ yards of various size strips in a variety of shades

Blue – 3 yards of various size strips in a variety of shades

Green – 2 ½ yards of various size strips in a variety of shades

Red – 2 yards of various size strips in a variety of shades

That will equal to about 10 ½ yards combined. This is a generous estimate.

Binding – 2/3 yards

Backing – 5 yards

Batting – 88" x 88" square

Supply list

100" x 100" quilt using 10 ½" x 10 ½" foundation

Muslin – 7 ½ yards (washed, dried and pressed) cut into 10 ½" x 10 ½" squares

Dividing strip #1 – 1 ½ Yard red polka dot

Dividing strip #2 – ¼ yard bright blue

Dividing strip #3 – 2/3 yard navy dot

Yellow – 1 ½ yard of various size strips in a variety of shades

Orange – 1 ½ yard of various size strips in a variety of shades

Pink – 2 yards of various size strips in a variety of shades

Blue – 4 ½ yards of various size strips in a variety of shades

Green – 3 yards of various size strips in a variety of shades

Red – 2 ½ yards of various size strips in a variety of shades

*That will equal to about 15 yards combined. This is a generous estimate.

Binding – 3/4 yards 10 strips cut at 2 ½"

Backing – 9 yards

Batting – 108" x 108" square