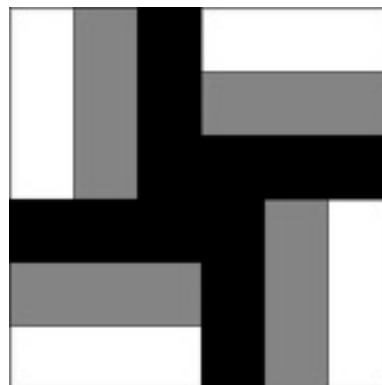


Block 2: Three by Two (provided January 2016; share February 2016)

The units in this simple block are the basic component of Rail Fence. The rotation of this unit creates a path with one of the fabrics. As shown, this block uses 3 fabrics: Lightest, Medium, Darkest.



Fabric needed: Cut 1 strip of each fabric. Be sure each strip is cut correctly. Accurate strip sets start with accurately cut strips.

	3" blocks	6" blocks	9" blocks	12" blocks	15" blocks
Finished Width of Rails	1/2"	1"	1-1/2"	2"	2-1/2"
Lightest	9" x 1"	15-1/2" x 1-1/2"	22" x 2"	28-1/2" x 2-1/2"	35" x 3"
Medium	9" x 1"	15-1/2" x 1-1/2"	22" x 2"	28-1/2" x 2-1/2"	35" x 3"
Darkest	9" x 1"	15-1/2" x 1-1/2"	22" x 2"	28-1/2" x 2-1/2"	35" x 3"

Piecing Instructions for 9" blocks (3", 6", 12", 15")

Note: Watch carefully as you stitch to maintain your accurate 1/4" seam. Take it slow so that the seam is stitched straight without any wobbles.

1. Stitch the Lightest strip to the Medium strip using a 1/4" seam. Press the seam toward the Medium strip. The strip set should now measure 3-1/2" x 22" (1-1/2" x 9", 2-1/2" x 15-1/2", 4-1/2" x 28-1/2", 5-1/2" x 35").
2. Stitch the Darkest strip to the other side of the Medium strip using a 1/4" seam. Press the seam toward the Medium strip. The strip set should now measure 5" x 22" (2" x 9", 3-1/2" x 15-1/2", 6-1/2" x 28-1/2", 8" x 35").
3. From the strip set cut 4 (four) pieces measuring 5" x 5" (2" x 2", 3-1/2" x 3-1/2", 6-1/2" x 6-1/2", 8" x 8"). Make sure that each piece is a perfect square. Use the extra length in the strip set to square off the end of the strip set before cutting each piece, if needed.
4. Arrange the four pieces as shown for the block. Stitch them together in pairs using a 1/4" seam. Press the seams toward the Darkest strip. Each unit should measure 9-1/2" x 5" (3-1/2" x 2", 6-1/2" x 3-1/2", 12-1/2" x 6-1/2", 15-1/2" x 8").

5. Now stitch the two units made in Step 4 together. Match up the seams sewn in Step 4 and secure with a pin. These seams should nest together snugly. Stitch using a 1/4" seam, removing the pin before stitching over it.
6. Press and furl the seams toward the Darkest strips. The seam intersection on the back should have a tiny four-patch. The unit should now measure 9-1/2" x 9-1/2" (3-1/2" x 3-1/2", 6-1/2" x 6-1/2", 12-1/2" x 12-1/2", 15-1/2" x 15-1/2").
7. Your Three by Two block should be complete and measure 9-1/2" x 9-1/2" (3-1/2" x 3-1/2", 6-1/2" x 6-1/2", 12-1/2" x 12-1/2", 15-1/2" x 15-1/2") if you have sewn perfect 1/4" seams and strip sets.

Extra Tip: Pressing versus Ironing

Pressing is primarily an up and down motion. It is used to set the threads and position seams as desired - open or to one side. Whereas, ironing is primarily a back and forth motion used on woven fabric garments to remove wrinkles. It should not be used while piecing as it can stretch fabric and skew the grain.

Most pressing is done with a dry iron. Steam may be used but if care isn't taken, distortion of the fabric can occur. For that reason, a dry iron is preferable.

For cotton quilt fabrics, set your iron on the hot, cotton setting. Lay the fabric flat on your ironing surface. Move your iron around while lifting and then pressing down until the entire surface has been pressed.

The use of starch when pressing is optional. The use of starch, or a product like Best Press[®], can stabilize bias edges. The added stiffness can facilitate the matching of edges and also increase the quality of your piecing. In general, you are advised not to use steam when starching. Read the instructions with the product you choose to use for best results.