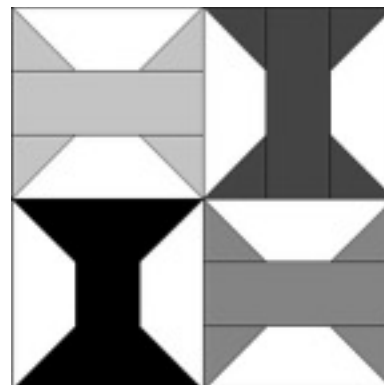


Block 3: Spools (provided February 2016; share March 2016)

The Spools block is a favorite of quilters. There are various methods for piecing this block. The instructions given here utilize the technique called snowballing the corners. One benefit of this technique is that you can avoid bias edges. Bias edges can stretch out of shape resulting in misshapen blocks. Another name for this technique is Stitch and Flip. As shown, this block uses 5 fabrics: Lightest, Light, Medium, Dark, Darkest.



Fabric needed: Cut the listed pieces for each fabric. Be sure each piece is cut accurately.

	3" blocks	6" blocks	9" blocks	12" blocks	15" blocks
Lightest	8 at 2" x 1"	8 at 3-1/2" x 1-1/2"	8 at 5" x 2"	8 at 6-1/2" x 2-1/2"	8 at 8" x 3"
Light	1 at 2" x 1" 4 at 1" x 1"	1 at 3-1/2" x 1-1/2" 4 at 1-1/2" x 1-1/2"	1 at 5" x 2" 4 at 2" x 2"	1 at 6-1/2" x 2-1/2" 4 at 2-1/2" x 2-1/2"	1 at 8" x 3" 4 at 3" x 3"
Medium	1 at 2" x 1" 4 at 1" x 1"	1 at 3-1/2" x 1-1/2" 4 at 1-1/2" x 1-1/2"	1 at 5" x 2" 4 at 2" x 2"	1 at 6-1/2" x 2-1/2" 4 at 2-1/2" x 2-1/2"	1 at 8" x 3" 4 at 3" x 3"
Dark	1 at 2" x 1" 4 at 1" x 1"	1 at 3-1/2" x 1-1/2" 4 at 1-1/2" x 1-1/2"	1 at 5" x 2" 4 at 2" x 2"	1 at 6-1/2" x 2-1/2" 4 at 2-1/2" x 2-1/2"	1 at 8" x 3" 4 at 3" x 3"
Darkest	1 at 2" x 1" 4 at 1" x 1"	1 at 3-1/2" x 1-1/2" 4 at 1-1/2" x 1-1/2"	1 at 5" x 2" 4 at 2" x 2"	1 at 6-1/2" x 2-1/2" 4 at 2-1/2" x 2-1/2"	1 at 8" x 3" 4 at 3" x 3"

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

Note: Watch carefully as you stitch.

1. On the back of the four Light squares, draw a line diagonally from one corner to another. Use a regular pencil, special marking pencil (wash-away or brush-away), chalk, Frixion® marker (irons off) or other fabric-safe utensil. Another option is to press each square in half leaving a crease marking the diagonal.
2. Carefully position a Light square on one end of a Lightest rectangle, right sides together, matching the edges. The marked line should meet in a corner. Stitch just a thread or two to the outside of the line. Be careful to sew straight and watch that the end doesn't twist.
3. Press the Light square toward the corner of the rectangle. There will be three layers meeting at the corner (the Lightest rectangle and two layers of the folded Light square) when it is pieced and pressed correctly.

4. To reduce bulk, hold the top layer of Light square out of the way and trim off the corner of the Lightest rectangle and other layer of the Light square, leaving a 1/4" seam. The snowballed unit should still measure 5" x 2" (2" x 1", 3-1/2" x 1-1/2", 6-1/2" x 2-1/2", 8" x 3").
5. Now position a Light square on the other end of the Lightest rectangle. The line should start in the corner of the same side as the first. Stitch, press and trim as described in Steps 2-4 to snowball the other end of the Lightest rectangle.
6. Repeat Steps 2-5, using the remaining Light squares to snowball both ends of another Lightest rectangle.
7. Watching the orientation of the units, sew a snowballed Lightest rectangle on either side of the Light rectangle to create a spool. Press the seams away from the snowballed units. The spool unit should measure 5" x 5" (2" x 2", 3-1/2" x 3-1/2", 6-1/2" x 6-1/2", 8" x 8").
8. Repeat Steps 1-7 using the Medium fabric instead of Light to create a second spool unit measuring 5" x 5" (2" x 2", 3-1/2" x 3-1/2", 6-1/2" x 6-1/2", 8" x 8").
9. Repeat Steps 1-7 using the Dark fabric instead of Light to create a third spool unit measuring 5" x 5" (2" x 2", 3-1/2" x 3-1/2", 6-1/2" x 6-1/2", 8" x 8").
10. Repeat Steps 1-7 using the Darkest fabric instead of Light to create a fourth spool unit measuring 5" x 5" (2" x 2", 3-1/2" x 3-1/2", 6-1/2" x 6-1/2", 8" x 8").
11. Arrange the four spools as shown for the block. Stitch them together in pairs using a 1/4" seam. Press the seams away from the Lightest 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").
12. Now stitch the two units made in Step 11 together. Match up the seams sewn in Step 11 and secure with a pin. These seams should nest together snugly. Stitch using a 1/4" seam, removing the pin before stitching over it.
13. Press and furl the seams away from the Lightest 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").
14. Your Spools 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 snowballed your corners correctly and sewn accurate 1/4" seams.