

I'm a firm believer of making LARGE blocks and getting the job done!! However, this will work with any size block. You can even ~~make~~ piece your blocks first, quilt them onto individual batting and backing, then sash them together. Just a note of caution, these blocks tend to shrink as they are quilted. Take that into account as you make your plans.

To make a child size quilt, make 12 - 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ " blocks. This should give you about a 45 X 60" quilt. A twin quilt takes 20 - 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ " blocks.

For a scrappy, strip quilt, cut or assemble:

lots of strips of assorted fabrics, from 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 "wide.

batting: 12 - 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ " squares

backing: 12 - 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ " squares.

The strips don't have to be even or cut straight although sewing is easier if they are. As you sew and trim, save the small pieces. They come in handy to fill in corners.

Process:

Lay the backing face down on work surface and smooth it out. Lay the batting on top of the backing, smooth it gently, and pin or baste the edges together. Don't stretch either of these.

Using a soft pencil or graphite stick, mark the batting from one corner to the opposite corner across the center. This is the line on which the first strips will be sewn.

Select two strips long enough to reach ~~batting~~ from corner to corner across the batting. Place them right sides together along the left side of the marked line. Using a slightly longer stitch than normal, sew the strips to the batting and backing with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam. Back stitch at each end. If you want a focus fabric in the center of each block, now is the time to use it.

Open the strips out and press the seam open, being careful not to squash or melt the batting.

Position a single strip right side down on top of the right hand strip making sure that the corner of the 3rd strip overlaps the edge of the batting just a bit.

Continue this process to the corner of the block. Then turn the block around and repeat on the other side of the block.

NOTE: Check frequently to ensure that the backing is not being puckered as you sew and is still attached to the batting. You might use a basting spray to prevent puckers. I like pinning.

Make as many blocks as you need. Trim them all to whatever is the finished size of the smallest block. Working with squares rather than rectangles will make the job a lot easier.

Sashing for Quilt as You Go Method:

Front: Uses approximately 300 inches of 1 1/8" fabric strips. Join these only to match width or length of blocks plus about 1". There can be scrappy, different colors, or the same focus fabric used across center of blocks.

Back: Uses approximately 300 inches of 1 3/4" fabric strips. Press these in half lengthwise with the WRONG sides together. Again, do not sew these together much longer than about the width or length of block plus 1". These also can be scrappy, different colors, or matching the backing fabric you used.

Process to Join Two Blocks:

Line up and pin the edge of the wrong side of a 1 1/8" strip to the right side of block. On the back of the block, do the same with the bottom raw edge of a 1 3/4" strip. Re-pin so all raw edges are even. Sew with a 1/4" seam.

Pin the width of the back strip out of the way. Place second block right sides together with the 1 1/8" strip and sew them together with a 1/4" seam.

Place the set of blocks on a flat surface with the back side up and smooth them out flat. If the seams were sewn with an accurate 1/4" each, the raw edges will meet in the middle leaving no gap. (If there is one, you might want to use a bit of batting to fill it.)

Unpin the back sashing strip, and make sure it is still folded in half. Gently position it over the abutted raw edges. I prefer to slip stitch this strip by hand but some people machine stitch it down just catching the edge. (The thread will show on the front of your quilt.)

Process to Join Four Blocks into a Four Patch:

Repeat the same process as above but start at the middle and make sure the sashing lines up well. Sew a 1/4" seam about 2 or 3 inches away from either side of the center. Now trim the sashing ends leaving just a bit of extra length and match and pin the edges of the blocks. Sew from the end toward the middle. Check to make sure the edges of all squares are even.

Add blocks together in rows to make the quilt the width you want. Then join the rows together. Always work with the new blocks or rows under the head of the sewing machine and push the bulk of the quilt to your left.

Then bind using whatever method you like best.