

# FAT QUARTER CUT-UPS BASIC INSTRUCTIONS

**CUT** the fat quarters into four 9" squares as diagramed below. I personally layer all 14 fat quarters and cut only once. If you wish, you may cut fewer layers. A 60mm rotary cutter is helpful when cutting many layers. The remnant strip at the right may be saved for another project.



**LAYER** the 9" squares **RIGHT SIDE UP** into stacks of 4, 6 or 8 squares deep, according to your ability and hand strength to cut multiple fabric layers. The blocks in this book are constructed from 2 or 4 different fabrics so the smallest stack could be 2 fabrics deep. I would recommend 4 or 8 layers.

Alternate light and dark as you assemble the stacks. Each fabric must contrast with the fabric squares that appear on either side of them in the stack.

The top fabric in the stack must contrast with the bottom fabric in the stack because they will be sewn together as well.

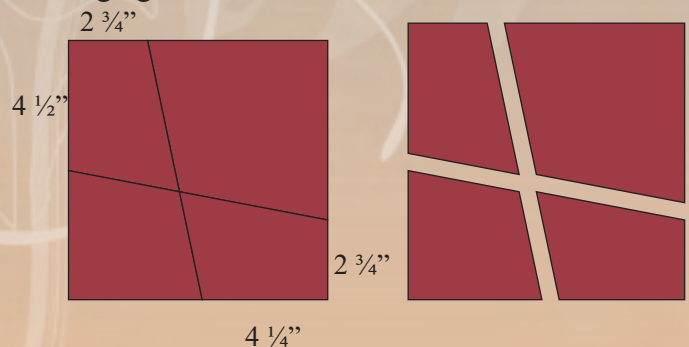
**Cut-Up** the layered squares as diagramed in your chosen pattern. Each block is diagramed with a measured cutting guide. It is your choice when constructing the quilt whether you follow the diagram exactly, or use it simply as a suggestion. If you use the diagram merely as a suggestion, the resulting blocks will be much more spontaneous. Many of the sample quilts were cut using the measured diagram exactly which results in more precise block construction.

**The cuts may be made in one of three ways:**

**Freehand** - using the cutting diagram only as a rough guide. This approach will produce the greatest variety of blocks. The piecing of each stack will be slightly different. The resulting quilt will have more movement and visual interest.

**Template** - with the cutting lines drawn onto 9" squares of freezer paper that will be cut as the stack is Cut-Up. This is the most precise method allowing you to accurately duplicate the original diagram. The shiny side of the freezer paper square is lightly pressed to the top layer of fabric after the cutting lines are drawn in place. The cutting template is cut as the fabric stack is cut-up. After you have cut the fabric stacks, gently remove the freezer paper. Make one freezer paper template for each fabric stack.

**Modified Template** - the cutting lines are drawn directly onto the top fabric in each stack using a quilt pencil. The cutting lines maybe drawn precisely as indicated by the cutting diagram, or with the diagram as a rough guide.



Choose your method and sub-cut the fabric stacks using firm pressure on your rotary cutter to ensure you cut through all the layers.

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**Master Diagram** Draw a full-sized paper template of the cutting diagram. As you cut the 9" stacks, arrange the cut pieces on the master diagram to prevent confusion as you stitch the units together.

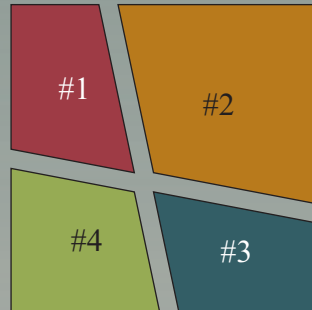
**REARRANGE** the fabric stacks.

**Stack #1** - leave undisturbed.

**Stack #2** - move the top piece of fabric to the bottom of the stack.

**Stack #3** - move the top 2 pieces of fabric to the bottom of the stack.

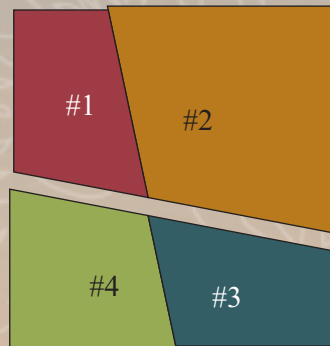
**Stack #4** - move the top 3 pieces of fabric to the bottom of the stack.



Rearranging the fabrics in this manner will prevent the same fabric from appearing in a block more than once.

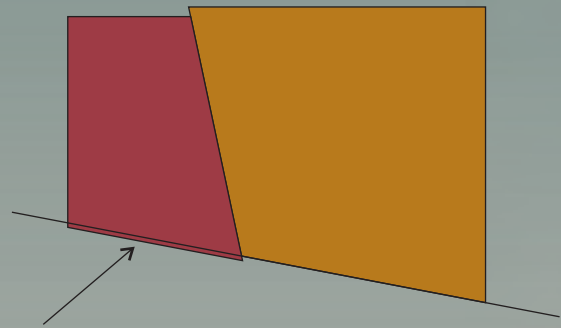
**STITCH** the block units together. Chain piece units #1 and #2 together in the order that they appear in the stack. You may wish to mark the first pair stitched as a reminder that this is the pair that is on top of the stack. Separate the units - always keeping them in order - and press all seams open. Place the stack of sewn units back in position on the master cutting diagram.

In the same manner, stitch units #3 and #4 together in the order that they appear in the stack. Again, mark the first pair stitched to help you remember that they will return to the top of the pile after the units are chain pieced, snapped apart and the seams pressed open. Place the sewn #3/#4 units back in place on the master cutting diagram.



**NOTE:** in the diagram above the raw edge that will be on the interior of the block is pieced in such a way as to remain straight. The excess fabric is on the outer edge of the block.

After piecing units #1 and #2 together, this edge will be trimmed and straightened as necessary. Trimming should remove just a sliver of fabric.



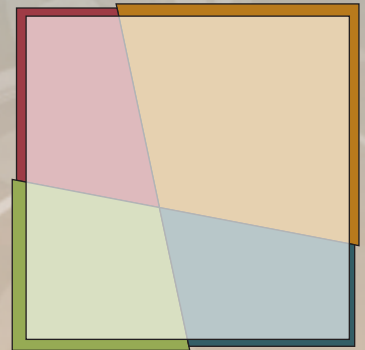
Trim the edge as necessary to straighten.

Stitch the block halves together. Press the seams open. The seam in the center may be matched, or not, it is up to your discretion.

**PRESS FINGER PRESS!!!** All seams within the Cut-Up blocks are finger pressed open. After the blocks are complete finger press the final seam and then press them using a steam iron. Press the blocks from the wrong side to ensure the seam allowances are not flipped in the wrong direction.

## SQUARE UP

Trim the pieced blocks using a square ruler. The individual pattern will specify what size to trim the block. In most cases the blocks were trimmed the smallest amount necessary to square them up. You may need to trim your blocks to a different size if you have taken a larger seam or trimmed fabric from the interior edge when piecing.



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