

General Instructions for BOM 2021-2022

You've decided to try Foundation Paper Piecing (FPP) or you already love it? Here are some guidelines, tips, and video links that you can use while doing the monthly blocks.

Printing Instructions:

- These monthly FPP patterns are **7" finished** blocks. That is the biggest size that fits on paper when printing from most home printers. If you want to make larger blocks, like 8" or larger, that is probably doable, but you'll have to piece two pieces of paper together.
- There are many different types of paper you can use when printing the pattern – **as long as you can see through the paper when shown in a bright light**. I use just regular copy paper because I already have it. Vellum works, newspaper, and special papers in quilt stores for FPP. Freezer paper can be used, but you don't sew through it, so it's a different technique.
- When you print from your printer, please check your settings to make sure it will print at "100%" or "actual size" to get the pattern at 7". You don't want it to "Fit to page". Also, make sure your printer is not *adding margins* to the document. Use the same settings each month.

Preparing for your sewing:

- **Before you forget, draw a ¼" border around the entire 7" square! Otherwise you won't have the ¼" seams to piece all your finished blocks together.**
- The joy of FPP is that you don't need to measure each strip going into the block. You just need to make sure that every scrap or strip that you use is more than enough to cover the space it's intended for. Most strips will be the same width on the pattern, but not the same length.
- **The solid lines on the pattern are sewing lines, and do not include the ¼" seams, including on the last outer pieces.** Each piece you use must cover at least ¼" beyond the solid lines for that log, on all sides. This seems to be the hardest concept to learn. Quilters don't like to waste fabric so we don't cut generously. For FPP, if you always add an extra inch, at least, to what you think it should be, you won't be ripping out your just finished seam. I will give suggested lengths for each section, but you may want to add extra by measuring each log yourself. Just don't sabotage yourself by trying to save an inch or two of fabric!
- Also, as above, if the pattern has angles on some of the log ends, you should add more than an inch to the strip length. Just always add extra and you won't get frustrated! I will send a great video to show how to sew angled seams error free when the pattern calls for it.
- It is much easier to fold your pattern sections ahead of time instead of waiting after you sew each seam. Take the time to fold the paper on each line of each section (except the outer border). It doesn't have to be exact, just close. Some quilters use a sewer's tracing wheel and ruler to mark the lines, which might be faster. [The FPP video link shows how to use a tracing wheel to do this.](#)

Choosing Fabrics:

- Traditionally, log cabin blocks had a red center, representing the "hearth", light colors coming thru the windows on one side, and dark colors representing the darker areas in the home. But since we are doing untraditional blocks, why not experiment with color placement, value and contrast?
- If you really want to be challenged, use a directional print. But it's not fun, and often frustrating.
- You can easily, however, use a small cardboard frame to fussy cut the center square!
- You might want to use color pencils to help you remember which fabrics will go in each numbered "log". Saves ripping out later! Or stack each fabric in sewing order to keep you organized.
- Most strips (but not all) will need to be at least 1-1/2" wide. Squares are usually 2-1/2" x 2-1/2". But there are exceptions, which will be detailed on each month's block.

Supplies Needed:

- An accurate ruler with a clear quarter inch marking on at least one side. There are special rulers for FPP, which help you trim to make the $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam, but you don't need to buy one.
- Rotary cutter, pins, cutting mat and iron set up close by, unless you like the up/down exercise. In the FPP video below, she uses a hand held seam presser, then she irons when the block is complete.
- Glue stick

Time to Sew!

- [Here's the video I chose to explain how to do FPP.](#) Of course there are many videos online that show FPP, with different techniques and tips to complete your block. Try them and share any that you think are great.
- **Here are my written instructions.** If you find errors, or don't understand a step please let me know.
 1. Remember you are sewing on the copy side, where the lines have been printed. That way you can sew exactly on the lines, with the fabrics placed on the backside of the paper.
 2. Because you are sewing through paper that you want to remove later, you should **use a smaller stitch length**. I usually set my stitch length to 1.8. Use your usual needle size, but it will be ruined by the time you finish twelve sample blocks!
 3. Consider using finer thread in a neutral color. I use bobbin thread in the bobbin case.
 4. **The first two numbers on the pattern are always the most difficult part.** Be patient with yourself!
 5. Measure the corner or center square(#1) and cut a piece of fabric about 1" larger than necessary. Place a little dot of glue in the center of the square on the back of the fabric. Put the fabric square on the back side of the paper, right side up, in the middle of the #1 square. Hold the paper up to a light, drawn lines on top, and make sure that the fabric square has at least $\frac{1}{4}$ " of fabric around the outside of the lines.
 6. Now fold the copy side of the paper back on the sew line between the #1 and #2 square. Using your ruler, trim the #1 block so that there is a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance beyond that folded sewing line.
 7. Take the next piece of fabric that will fit, generously, over the #2 square and place it right side DOWN on top of the #1 square, matching the seam allowance edge. Then fold over the #2 fabric, right side up, along the seam line between #1 and #2 squares and hold it in place. Again hold the drawn lines side of the pattern up to the light and make sure that the #2 square has at least $\frac{1}{4}$ " of fabric around the outside of the #2 square. Keep adjusting until you have full coverage. You can use a pin on the printed line side to hold the two pieces in place before sewing.
 8. Turn the printed side of pattern up on your sewing machine and sew the seam line between the #1 and #2 pieces. Start stitching two or three stitches before the line starts, and 2 to 3 stitches beyond the marked lines. No need to backstitch!!
 9. Flip the paper over to the fabric side and press the seam you've just sewn. Check again to make sure the #2 fabric completely covers the space, with at least $\frac{1}{4}$ " around all the sew lines of that numbered area.
 10. Now, flip the paper to the copy side and fold the next (#3) section over. You'll want to tear the paper slightly rather than the stitches. Then, use your ruler to add $\frac{1}{4}$ " beyond the fold line, and trim across.
 11. Continue adding the next piece of fabric in numerical order by repeating steps 7 – 10.