

North Pittsburgh Stay-at-Home Row Quilt

Part 2: Ric-Rac Blocks

Hello Everyone! Welcome to the second installment of this row quilt. I hope it's fun. (And not too frustrating. No one needs extra frustration just now!)

I have repeated the housekeeping notes from the first installment below, in case you want a refresher or are starting new. (The repeated part is now in italics.) If you don't need them, go ahead and skip to page 2 to begin the blocks.

First, some housekeeping:

1. *I have done my best to write correct and clear instructions, but if you find a mistake or have any questions, please let me know at skoequilt@aol.com.*
2. *Fabric requirements: This quilt is meant to be scrappy. Very scrappy. Every block in it can be different. For example: there are 6 flower blocks in there and every one of them can be made with different fabrics. This is a make-do quilt.*
For that reason, there are no overall yardage requirements given except for the sashing (5/8 yard), border (1 yard) and binding (3/8 yard). And if you want to scrap them up too, that's OK!
3. *I have included two sets of instructions. You can choose what you want to go with.*

*The **first** set is how I would make the blocks. If you have another way that you are comfortable with, by all means use that. Personally, I struggle with accuracy with any block that has a diagonal seam in it, which, face it, is just about every block in this quilt. No matter how careful I try to be, I end up distorting that diagonal seam and my block is never ever square. My solution to this situation is to make all my units a little bit bigger than they need to be and trim them down to size after I've sewn that diagonal seam. So that is the way I have written the first (main) set of instructions. I hope you find them helpful.*

*The **second** set is the Alternate Instructions. Generally, they are a little wonkier, maybe a little more free-form, than the first, more traditional, instructions. If you think you may be interested in the second set, read the whole thing before you begin as they will often have different cutting directions and fabric requirements.*

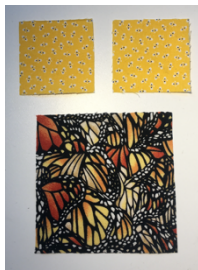
4. The overall quilt size is 46 inches by 63 inches, including the 5-inch border. All the blocks are 3-inch, 6-inch or 9-inch. If you want the finished quilt to be a different size, you can add or subtract blocks or leave out or repeat rows or make the sashing and borders different sizes.

Row 2: Ric-Rac

Note: This row is repeated near the bottom of the quilt. You can decide if you want to do them both now or wait and do one later. The instructions below are for 1 row. If you are doing both of them now, double what is below. Keep in mind you don't need to make them both the same colors/

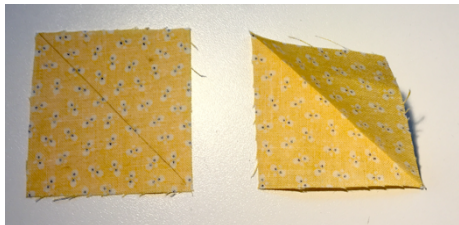


fabrics. Work with what you have.



This row has twelve 3-inch (finished) blocks.

1. For each block, you will need one 3 ½-inch square of the main fabric and two 2-inch squares of the accent fabric. (So, for 1 complete row, 12 main fabric squares and 24 accent squares.) Keep in mind that although the sample above has all the main and accent squares the same in each block, you can scrap it up any way you want.



2. On the back of each of the 2 accent squares of fabric, mark a diagonal line. (This photo is from the back of the squares.)

There are lots of ways to do it, but here are 2 of the most common.

- On the left is the tried and true drawn pencil line.
- On the right, I have folded the accent square in half diagonally and created a crease by pressing. If you use this method, it will be easier if the 'valley' of the crease is on the back of the square; it's easier to sew in a 'valley' than on a 'peak.'

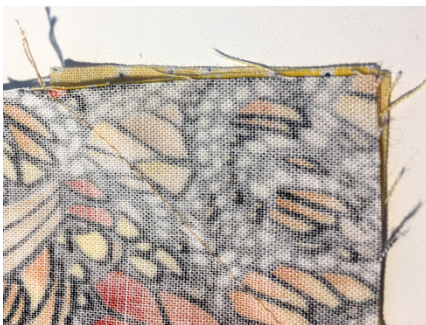


3. However the accent squares are marked, place them, right sides together, on opposite corners of the main fabric piece so that the drawn / pressed lines are parallel to each other, not making one continuous marked line.



The traditional wisdom at this point is to stitch on the marked line. However, another of my personal bug-a-boos with diagonal seams is that when I do that, the half of the accent fabric that is supposed to flap over the corner (the snowball thing-y) is never quite big enough. So, I have learned to stitch just the tiniest bit on the corner-side of the diagonal line. See picture on next page.

Note that my stitching line is not really straight....



This gives me just a tiny bit of wiggle room when the inner half of the accent square is flipped and pressed over to form the corner....

4. ...which you are now going to do. Press your accent square out toward the corner.



This picture is from the back. You will see all kinds of edges hanging out. I find it helpful to trim all of this back to the edge of the main square.

5. You now have 3 layers of fabric at the corner. You have both sides of your accent square and the corner of the background square.

This picture is from the front.



If you want to, you can reduce the bulk in the corner by trimming out the background corner and the covered-up half of the accent corner, leaving a ¼-inch-ish seam allowance, and one fabric layer at the corner.

And voila! Here's your corner! Repeat with all your accent corners. (24 times per row—2 corners for each of 12 blocks.)



We will be using this stitch-and-flip-ish, snowball-y corner treatment again and again in this quilt. I am planning on referring back to this set of instructions each time. Future instructions will be somewhat abbreviated. Please let me know if this is not working for you and I will do the detail thing



each time. Skoequilt@aol.com.

Orient the blocks, alternating the direction of the main fabric square, and stitch together for the row.



Alternate Directions:



Wonky... (call it Blue) Notice mixed fabrics; ran out of the first one, pulled in something else. And those accent triangle do not match up.

...and Wonkier (Call it Purple) A whole bunch of active little crazy purple lines that mostly don't even meet up!

Remember that as you go wonky or wonkier that you will likely need more fabric to achieve your desired degree of out-of-whack.



1. So, for the Blue Wonky above, which skews the accent square / triangles, but leaves the main fabric squares alone, you will need to start with one 3 ½-inch square of main fabric and two 3 ½-inch squares of accent fabric. (12 main fabric squares and 24 accent fabric squares for the row, all cut 3 ½-inches square.)



2. In these photos you are able to kind of see through the accent fabric and know where the corner of the (covered) main square is. You might not be able to do this with your fabrics, but I wanted you to get the idea.

Notice that there is no marking the accent square with a diagonal line. Not doing a strict diagonal seam is where you get the wonk.

Also notice that, in terms of the accent fabric, more of it is on the main fabric square than is off it. You'll see why in a minute.



3. Stitch your 'diagonal' line.

The line goes from the top edge of the main fabric square to the right hand edge of the main fabric square. In this photo the line does not go the top edge of the accent fabric square. That's OK. At this step it's all about the seam on the main fabric square.

The seam must be straight. It can pretty much be at any angle; in the photo the top of the seam is closer to the upper right corner of the main fabric than the bottom of the seam. (In the traditional version of the block, the top and bottom of the seam are equidistant from the corner of the main square.) ...and this is OK, more or less.....



4. Here's the 'more' OK part. The accent corner has been folded over as it would be in the finished block. The triangle it forms is skewed...which is what you want. But more importantly, the folded-over section of the accent completely covers the background square corner. Which you can see because of the fabrics chosen here. Using different fabrics you might have to work a little harder to figure this out....maybe hold it up to a light.



5. Here is the 'less' OK part. This is, in fact, a different block with an accent square that has been differently placed and stitched than the block above in step 4, so you could see the problem. You can see that, when folded into position, the accent triangle does not cover all of the main fabric square. The main fabric would still be visible if you trimmed the corner.

The trick is to position the accent square so there will be plenty of fabric on the 'bottom' side of the seam line to fold up and cover the corner. See Step 3 above.

6. Now you press and trim the corners like you would have in Steps 4 and 5 in the traditional method above.



Voila! Wonky corners. Repeat for 12 blocks.



And for Purple Wonkier

In this version you are going to skew the corner triangle **and** skew the whole block.

1. The wonkier you go, the more fabric you need.

You start out with one 5-inch main square and two 5-inch accent squares.



2. Now you are going to follow the instructions for Wonky Blue Steps 2 and 3 above. Place and stitch your 'not-so-diagonal' seams and press the accent triangles out' You will end up with a much larger 'thing' than in the previous

methods.

Notice that the relative sizes of the main fabric section (it's smaller) and the accent triangles (they're bigger) are different.... You can play around with relative size to get different effects.

NOTE: In the top right corner of this photo you can see a tiny little triangle peeking out that isn't entirely covered by the accent triangle.

Don't worry about it, because.....

3. You're going to trim the 'thing' down to 3 ½-inches square.



With a lot of 'extra' fabric, you can move your ruler around a bit to get the most interesting part of the 'thing' in the finished 3 ½-inch block.

Do that 11 more times and you have a very energetic little row of blocks!