
Arrow Crown Block with Heather Jones

Chapter 1 - Arrow Crown Block

Introduction

(cheerful music) - Hi, I'm Heather Jones. I'm a modern quilter and designer. I'm gonna show you today how to make the arrow crown block. This is a traditional pattern and if you take a look at it you can see that it's made up of lots of little pieces. But I'm gonna show you some tips and tricks to make it a little bit more manageable. I'll show you how to construct half square triangles. So with a precise, quarter inch seam allowance construct sections that make up the bigger block. I'm gonna show you how to nestle seams so you can get really precise points in your beautiful finished block. (upbeat music)

Materials

- To make a 16 inch square block, you'll need the following materials. You'll need fat quarters of quilting cotton, you'll have precise measurements for this in your PDF. I'm using four solids, but you could certainly use some prints, some small scale prints would work well in this project. Your fabric one needs to be cut into 16 three by three inch squares and eight two and a half by two and a half inch squares. Your fabric two, which is my blue, needs to be cut into 12 three by three inch squares and four two and a half by two and a half inch squares. My fabric three needs to be cut into eight two and a half by two and a half inch squares and one four and a half by four and a half square. And my fabric four needs to be cut into 12 three by three inch squares. This is a lot of pieces and I know it's kind of overwhelming to think about, but we've got some diagrams here that will be in the PDF that will be helpful for you to make it a little bit less scary and more manageable. You can see we've got a color diagram featuring the colors that I'm using in my project, but we're also including one that you can fill in your own colors if you choose to make your block in a totally different color way and it's labeled so you can make sure you get your colors in the correct areas for the block. You also need a pencil to mark on your fabric, a pair of thread snips, to snip off excess thread. You'll need a six and a half by 12 inch ruler and you'll also need a ruler that's two and a half by two and a half inch square. If you have one of these in a different size, that's fine too. We can customize it and I'll show you how to do that as well. You'll need a rotary cutter and a cutting mat. Pins, a sewing machine threaded with neutral thread, an iron, and a pressing station.

Assembling the Block

Construct half square triangles

- We're gonna start by making our half-square triangles. You need one square of each color, to make two half-square triangles. And I'll show you how we do that. I always draw my line on the lightest fabric because it's easiest to see. So take one of your square one fabrics, which in my case is this cream color, and place a ruler on top of it diagonally. And then with a pencil, make a line through the center. You might need to go over it a couple times, just so it's dark enough for you to see. So we've got our first line. Then we need to draw two lines, one on either side of this center line. Place the ruler one quarter inch to the right of the line that you just drew. And draw another

line. That becomes one of the lines that we sew on. Rotate your block over. Place the ruler down again, lining up the center line and the line we just drew, and draw the third line, again a quarter inch to the side of the center line. So there's our three lines. You can see my center line is not perfectly centered, and that's okay, because that's actually the cutting line. It's more important that these two outer lines are in the correct space because that's what we're actually going to sew on. Once you've got your three lines drawn onto the square, it's time to pin it to the other square. Place the square that you drew the lines on, on top of the other square, right sides together. You'll see again, I'm using a solid fabric for both, so the right side is not very important, or pretty much the same on either side. But if you were using a print, you would definitely make sure or wanna make sure that the right sides were together. Once you have the square placed on top of the other square, pin it in place, to hold it. And I like to put a pin parallel to the lines that I drew. On either side. Once it's pinned, we're ready to sew. You sew right along the two outer lines. One at a time of course. And I'm not gonna backstitch because it adds to the bulk. But just line it up on your machine. Take your time, and put the pencil line right underneath the needle, and start to sew. And go slowly, to try to stay on that line as much as you can. Once you're done with that, remove it from the machine, snip the threads, and then repeat on the other side. On the other drawn pencil line. Place it under the needle. Make any adjustments beforehand, in it's position before you start to sew. And then just again, start to sew going slowly, to really try and stay on that pencil line. Staying on the pencil lines will give you more precise half-square triangles. Once you're done, remove it from the machine, snip the excess threads, unpin, and we're ready to cut our half-square triangles apart. Take your ruler, place it over the center of the square, that diagonal line in the middle, that's our cutting line. So place it right on top of that, and cut with a rotary cutter. Open it up, and I like to finger press. And we're gonna finger press our seams to the side toward the darker fabric. So open it up and then just run your fingernail over that seam line. Repeat with the other block as well. Just bring the block over and give it a press with a hot iron. And pressing, is placing the iron down on the block without a back and forth motion. If you need to move the iron, lift it up and then replace it. The pattern calls for 16 of these one, two, half-square triangle units. So repeat this step seven more times to get all the pieces you need for the pattern. So next we need to make our one, four, half-square triangle units for the pattern. You'll need 16 of these, and just like with our one, two, half-square triangle units, it's the same process. Repeat this step a total of seven more times to make the 16 one, four, half-square triangles that you need for the pattern. Once we're done with that, we're ready to move on to our two, four, half-square triangles. We need eight of these for the pattern. So for my two, four, half-square triangles, I've got the blue and the yellow fabric, and the lighter of the two is the yellow. So I'm gonna draw my lines on these. Just like we did before, we're gonna draw a series of three lines on the lighter square. If you're working with a print, make sure it's on the wrong side of the fabric. Repeat this step three more times, to make a total of eight of these two, four, half-square triangles. Once you're done making all of your half-square triangles, I like to square them up all together at the same time. So I'll show you how to do that. If you've got a two and a half inch square ruler, that's a great handy tool. I place painter's tape right at the two and a half inch mark on the top and side, so I can use that to make a two and a half inch, half-square triangle. And to square it up, I first like to cut off these points on the side, which are called "dog ears". Just cause somebody thought they looked like dog ears at some point. So just cut those off, and that makes it easier to place the ruler on top of the half-square triangle. Place the diagonal line of the ruler, right on top of that diagonal seam line that we constructed. When you've got the diagonal line right on your seam line, use your rotary cutter, hold that ruler in place, and trim off the excess fabric on the top and

side. And there's our half-square triangle, all squared up. We're gonna repeat this with the others. Trim off the dog ears. Find the diagonal line and place it right on that seam. And you'll notice as you do this, that some of your squares will have a little bit more to cut off than others, and that's okay. It's part of the process. So trim off the side, and the top. Go ahead and square up all of your half-square triangle units, and then I'll show you how to assemble them into the sections.

Assemble section A

- There are a lot of pieces in this block, so I've broken it down into sections to make it a little bit more easier for you. We're gonna build the section A of the pattern, and on the diagram, that's this section right here. And you can see that there are four of these in the pattern. I've got my fabrics that make up this section laid out, and to make this A section you need two of your one-four half-square triangles, two of the two-four half-square triangles, one of your fabric two squares, two of your fabric three squares, and two of your fabric one squares. And we're gonna sew these together in rows, one at a time. So we're gonna do the top row, the second row, and then the bottom row. So we're gonna place our square on top of our half-square triangle, right sides together, and we're gonna sew along this edge using a 1/4-inch seam allowance. I like to pin it in place, just to make sure things don't move around. I've got a piece of washi tape here to mark where a 1/4-inch seam line is, and I'm gonna place my fabric right up against that line. There's no need to backstitch because we're gonna be sewing these blocks all together. (sewing machine running) Once you're done, take it off the machine, snip the threads, unpin, finger press, and then sew the next square on. Place it right sides together, pin in place, and sew with a 1/4-inch seam. (sewing machine running) Take it off the machine, snip the threads, and finger press the seam. We're gonna press at the end, so once you've got the top row sewn, go ahead and move on to the second row. Take the half-square triangle, place it on top of the square, pin it in place, and sew along this side with a 1/4-inch seam. Make sure your seams are staying flat as you sew the other seams. (sewing machine running) Remove from the machine, snip the threads, unpin, finger press, and then pin the next half-square triangle onto the square. Pin in place and sew the next seam. (sewing machine running) Remove from the machine, snip the threads, unpin, and finger press. And now we're ready to move on to our bottom row. Once we're finished with the bottom row, we're ready to press. And I want to show you how they're finger pressed in the directions of the seams. The top row, the seams are away from the half-square triangle in the middle. The middle row, the seams are pressed towards the center square, which is white, and it's a lighter fabric than the other fabrics, which is unusual. Usually, you press towards the darker side of the fabric, but because we're gonna nestle our seams and we want our points to match up, we're gonna press towards the lighter fabric, in this case, that center square. On the bottom row, it is opposite so our seams'll nestle. So on the bottom row, the seams are pressed away from the center square. Once they're finger pressed like this, press with the iron. When I'm making these sections, I like to press with the seams towards me, the seams up, so I can see the direction that they're pressed in. (iron hissing) There's our top row. Here's our middle row. (iron hissing) And here's the bottom row. (iron hissing) At this point, before we go any further, it's a good idea to make sure that all of your squares and triangles are in the right position for the pattern. Because there are so many pieces that we're sewing together, it's easy to get them confused and turn them upside down, so it's a good idea to pull out your diagram and make sure that you're on track. It's not the end of the world if you're not, if something got flipped over, just take a minute and rip out the stitches and then resew it in the correct order. Once you double-check to make sure everything's where it should be, we're gonna sew our three rows

together, starting with the first and second rows. So place the first row on top of the second row. This is where pressing the seams in the opposite direction really comes in handy for nestling our seams together. You can see that where these two white fabrics intersect and where these two blue fabrics intersect, they just kind of squeeze together, and the same thing happens over here with the blue and white half-square triangle and this yellow and blue half-square triangle and the two squares opposite, this orange square and this white square. Because we have pressed the seams in the opposite direction, those seams just nestle together. Once you figure where the seams go, pin them in place. I like to place a pin parallel to the seam that I want to nestle together, and I place one on either side of that seam. I've found that that works the best to limit the amount of shifting that goes on when I'm sewing. So I placed two pins on either side of that seam that I'm gonna sew, and then I place the other pins in the opposite direction. I like to place them parallel to the seam we're gonna sew. So we're gonna sew right along this edge. This should hold everything together nicely. Place it on the machine and sew a 1/4-inch seam allowance. And here, you'll want to make sure that the seams that are on the underneath side of our fabric don't get twisted. That will help make things lay flat throughout the construction process. So, if you need to, just stop the machine and keep checking. Lift the presser foot to make sure that the seams are staying in the direction that they've been pressed in. (sewing machine running) And that happens a lot at the intersections where we've got all this bulk, all these seams that are nestled together. So again, stop the machine, keep your needle down, and just make any adjustments that you might need to. (sewing machine running) Once you're done, remove it from the machine. You can see how pinning everything in place and taking the time to make any adjustments while we're sewing really keeps the seams in place. You can finger press the row, and you can take a look and see how nicely your points are coming together. If they're not aligning like you want them to, feel free to unsew them and try again. And we're gonna go ahead and move on to our bottom row. So place the bottom row right sides together on top of the second, middle row, and again, nestle the seams just like we did. Double-check the placement before you sew, and you can see this seam is not quite nestled where it should be, so I'm just gonna unpin and scooch it over a bit. There, that's better. So once I've got the correct position again, pin in place, and we're ready to sew. Sew with a 1/4-inch seam allowance, and remember to take your time as you do it to make sure none of your seams move out of the direction that they've been pressed in. (sewing machine running) Again, that can happen a lot where the seams are nestled, so feel free to stop the sewing machine and just make sure everything is in the place it should be. You may also have to lift that presser foot up to guide the seams through. (sewing machine running) You can feel it start to shift as you're sewing, and the more you do it, the more you'll get the hang of it. You can see it's started to flip up, so I'm going to lift my presser foot up. My needle is down. I'm just gonna guide that back where it should be to keep everything nice and flat. (sewing machine running) When you get to the end, lift it off the machine, unpin, and then open up that row and take a look at your seams. That was the third, the bottom row, so we're gonna flip it upside down. And you can see my seams. I'm pretty happy with how my seams have lined up, so I'm going to continue to finger press this and then press it with the iron. So, when it's time to press, I like to put the seams up so I can see what direction they're going in. And we want to press the seams for the top and bottom rows towards the middle row in this section. Give it a little steam. (iron hissing) And just continue to press. If anything shifts out of the way it should be, just move it back with your finger, and then hit it with the iron. (iron hissing) Once this whole section is pressed, I like to flip it over and press one more time on the front. (iron hissing) There's no need to square these guys up. And repeat this process three more times to make a total

of four A sections.

Assemble section B

- We're ready to start making our B sections for the pattern. And if you look at the diagram, you can see that they are right here. There are four of these in the pattern. Let's get started. The B sections are made with four of our one, four half-square triangles, and two of our one, two half-square triangles. And just like when we built the A sections in the pattern, we're gonna be building them in three rows, a top row, a middle row, and a bottom row. Start by pinning two of these half-square triangles together, and in this section, you cannot nestle the seams because of the way that the seam allowances are pressed. So just do your best to make sure that they line up as you pin. Place a pin in, and I like to place the pin parallel to the seam I'm going to sew, we're gonna sew right along this edge. Once they're pinned, it's ready to sew. Place it on the machine using our tape as a guide. And sew the seam. When you're done, take it off the machine. Snip the excess threads, unpin, and open it up. And we're gonna finger-press this top seam towards the left, and that is when it's right-side up. Go ahead and pin and sew the next two rows in the exact same way. This is row one. And this is the direction that we're pressing the section in. Press row two to the left as you're looking at the back. Flip it over and give it a press on the front. For row three, if you're looking at it from the back, press to the right. Now we're ready to sew these three rows together, nestling the seams as we go. (sewing machine hums) Remember when you get to an area where you have this intersection of seams, you might need to stop the machine and adjust the presser foot as needed to make sure all the seams lay flat. There's also a lot of bulk at this point, so you might need to help guide this section through with your other hand on the back of the machine. So we'll snip our threads. So we're ready to unpin and open up our B section. And we're ready to press. Because in our section A pieces we pressed the middle row, the seams towards the middle row, in our section B pieces, we wanna press the seams away from the middle row so that we can nestle our seams when we finish the block. Repeat this step three more times for a total of four B sections.

Assembling the block

- Once we have all of our A and B sections completed, this is how the block comes together. We've got an A section at the top, a B section, another A section, a B section, got our center square, and another B section, an A section, a B section and our last A section. And we're just gonna sew these together, in three rows, from right to left, top to bottom, like we did with the sections. Because of the way we pressed our seams, we can nestle the seams between these sections as well. Just remember to line up the seams where you want them to be, and then place pins parallel to each seam that we want to nestle. Might need to wiggle it around a little bit to make sure it fits where it should. And then I'm going to place a couple more pins parallel to that edge. So with a quarter inch seam allowance, and again, remember, go slow, because you might need to adjust your seams as you're stitching in case they get flipped or caught. Remember, it happens a lot where the seams are being nestled together. So if that happens, just stop with the needle down, lift your presser foot, and then continue to sew. And if there's a lot of bulk, which happens too where the seams are nestled, you may need to help just ease it through by pulling it out on the other side of the machine. Once you're done, remove it from the machine, snip your threads, and unpin. We're ready to sew the next section on. Nestle the seams again, just like we did. And we're just sewing with a quarter inch seam allowance. Unpin. And open up, and then we'll sew the second and third rows in the same way. For the top row, we're going to press our seams towards the center, toward the B section, and guide

them down with your finger, especially where there's a lot of bulk. And because there is a lot of bulk, I like to shoot an extra bit of steam through that seam. Flip it over, give it one more press. Row two, we're going to press away from the center square. And again, where there's a bulky seam, just kind of hold it in place with your finger. Just careful not to burn yourself. And once you've got it pressed, it's a good idea to flip it over and then press again on the top. And the bottom row is just like the top row, we're going to press toward the center, towards that B section. Flip it over and give it one final press. Now we're ready to sew our rows our rows together, just like we've done before, from top to bottom, nestling our seams as we go. Nestle the seams together, so they fit nice and snug. Again I'm putting pins on either side of that seam. I'm going to place a couple more pins along the edge, because our block's getting rather large now. We're ready to sew our quarter inch seam. Remember to go slow, and where you've got bulk or seams nestled, you may have to stop and make some adjustments, just like we did before. And again, if it's too bulky, just help guide it through with your other hand. When you're done sewing the seam, take it off the machine, snip your threads. Unpin, there's a lot of pins. I'd rather use a lot of pins, keep everything in place, especially once you've done all this work. So unpin it, open it up, and then sew the bottom row on, just like we did the top. And I've got one block finished that I've already done so you can see that. Once you sew the top and bottom row on, give it a final press on both the back and the front side. And here's your finished arrow crown block. This can be used as a mini quilt, you can make one, finish it off as a mini quilt with binding, you could turn this into a throw pillow, and of course you could make more than one block and make a full sized quilt with this pattern.