
Mod Stripes Quilt Top with Heather Jones

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

- I'm gonna show you how to make my mod stripes quilt. This pattern comes together really quickly, because it's stripped-pieced, which means long strips of fabric are sewn together. I'm gonna show you how to cut them into blocks, and join them with sashing. This quilt is a lap-sized quilt, so it's an approachable project for a beginner because it's easy to construct and finish on your home sewing machine. The design is really simple. It uses three different colors of fabric, but it has a really strong visual impact, which makes it a great example of a modern quilt. (gentle music)

Chapter 2 - Materials

Materials

- The materials you'll need for this project are two and a quarter yards of green fabric, two yards of blue fabric, two yards of white fabric for the front which includes the sashing. For the back I used white for this project as well and you need four and a half yards of that fabric, and then a half a yard of fabric for your binding which I used white again for my project. You'll also need a rotary cutter, cutting mat, an acrylic ruler, measuring tape, thread snips, a marking tool, and moleskin. Moleskin is a product that you find in a drugstore or the pharmacy department of a grocery store, but I'm gonna show you a tip that my friend actually taught me to get great quarter inch seam allowances with it. You'll also need blue painters tape, a sharpie marker or other kind of marking pen. You'll use pins to pin your fabrics together and my sewing machine I've got threaded with white cotton polyester thread. You can use a different color thread if you like to match your fabrics but I typically piece with white thread. And you also need an iron and ironing board.

Chapter 3 - Prepare Fabric

Cut fabric

- We're gonna start by cutting our fabric and when I start a project like this I like to keep a copy of my pattern handy to refer to it to make sure we're cutting the correct amounts. So we're gonna cut 17 strips that are 4.5 inches wide times the width of the fabric, out of the green fabric. The fabric is folded in half when you buy it off of the bolt. So we just line up our fabric on our cutting mat and we use our rotary cutter and our ruler. You'll notice the edge of the fabric is kind of uneven so it's always a good idea to square it up and make it even before you start measuring and cutting the strips of fabric for your project. So you line up your ruler and using the straight edge and the rotary cutter trim off the jagged edge of the fabric. So now we measure out our strip, and it's 4.5 inches wide. So no matter where you're at on the cutting mat, measure 4.5 inches. Place your ruler, line up the edges so that you have a nice straight line, and an accurate line, and then cut. We have one strip of fabric cut out of the green fabric and we repeat that until we have a total of 17 strips of fabric cut out of the green fabric. We've got all our green strips cut now, so we'll move on to the blue fabric. And for the pattern you need 15 strips that are again 4.5 inches wide out of the blue fabric. We're gonna cut them in the same manner, using the rotary cutter and the straight edge, and again we need to square up the edge of the fabric because it's jagged. Measure 4.5 inches, line up the ruler. Hold it in place too so it doesn't move, and cut. Keep cutting the blue fabric the same way, cutting 4.5 inch strips until you have 15. We have all of our strips cut, all of our blue strips cut, so now we're

going to start cutting the sashing. And out of the sashing we cut it out of a two yard piece of fabric. And again the edges are jagged, so we are going to square up the edge. We have to cut our sashing so that it's 64.5 inches long, and because our cutting mat is only 36 inches long we need to take that measurement in two. So we can start by putting our fabric at 34.5 and then put your finger at the zero mark and then move the fabric holding onto the place where it was next to the zero on the cutting mat and move that to the 30 inch mark, and then smooth out the fabric so that we can cut it. The 34.5 inch mark and the 30 inch mark equals 64.5 inches so when we make this cut our fabric will measure 64.5 inches as the pattern calls for. Again, hold your ruler in place, and cut. To cut the sashing so that it's 64.5 inches long by 2.5 inches wide, we need to cut the fabric lengthwise. So we have to open up our fabric, and cut it along the length of the fabric. And because it's kind of long and bulky, we fold it in half and then in half again to make the cut easier. (fabric rustling) Smooth out the edges. And again because our edges are uneven, square off those edges. Which is this part of the fabric that has the little holes. Measure 2.5 inches, and cut the fabric. Now you're going through four layers of fabric now so just take your time, cut slowly. We have one piece of sashing cut and we'll repeat that two more times so we've got three pieces of long sashing that are 64.5 inches long by 2.5 inches wide. We also need some short pieces of sashing. So we're gonna refold our fabric so we can cut those. Our short pieces of sashing measure 2.5 inches wide by 16.5 inches long. Just like our other steps, we're gonna square up the edge of the fabric because it gets a little jagged as you move the fabric around. And you want to make sure your measurements and your cuts are nice and even. Then measure again, 2.5 inches wide. Moving your ruler into that position to get the measurement, and cutting with the rotary cutter. After we cut our strips, our four strips that are 2.5 inches wide, we're gonna cut this to 16.5 inches. Because the fabric is folded in half, each cut will yield two pieces of sashing. Let's cut one more. I'm squaring up the edge at the zero mark. Making a cut there, and then cutting at 16.5 inches. And repeat that step until you have eight strips that are 2.5 inches wide by 16.5 inches long.

Chapter 4 - Piece Quilt Blocks

Organize fabric

- [Instructor] We've got all our strips cut out. Now we're gonna organize our strips of fabric. Some of our blocks are constructed out of three strips of fabric, four strips of fabric, and five strips of fabric. We're gonna organize our strips into piles. We're not gonna use our sashing right now so we're just gonna put it to the side. Lets start with our three-strip pile. And the three-strip is two strips of green and one strip of blue. Our four-strip pile is two green strips and two blue strips. And we'll make six of those and set those aside. Our five-strip block is made out of three green strips and two blue strips. We just need one of those and we'll set that aside. Once you have all your piles of strips organized, you're ready to start sewing.

Strip piece

- We have our strips organized into one pile of three, six piles of four and one pile of five. We're gonna start pinning them together so we can sew them. It's a good idea to refer back to the pattern when you are starting to pin and sew your piles together to make sure that you construct the piles of strips in the correct order. We're starting on a three strip pile. Our three strip pile goes green, blue, green. We're just gonna pin them together, right sides together. I pin along the edge of the fabric like this so that the pin is parallel to the edge of the fabric. So, you don't run the risk of accidentally sewing over a pin, and I pin along the entire length of the strip. Before we start sewing

I'm going to show you a trick to get really nice and even quarter inch seams using mole skin. Mole skin is again, just purchased at a drug store, or the pharmacy section of a grocery store. And a friend showed me this trick. We're going to cut off a section of it using our rotary cutter and our straight edge ruler. You only need about an inch or so. So line up your edges and cut. One side has a sticky back, we're gonna remove that after we find our measurement. To find our quarter inch measurement, we're gonna place our measuring tape and lower the needle to the position right at the one inch mark. So I can see that the measurement for our quarter inch is right at the feed dogs, so I'm gonna place my mole skin there. Once our mole skin is in place, it makes an easy way to make a quarter inch seam allowance, which is important in really having this quilt come together quickly and nicely. Got our strips all pinned together, and we're ready to sew. I always back-stitch at the beginning of the seam to lock the stitches. (sewing machine operating) I'm using a straight stitch with white thread, and I'm just removing my pins as I sew. (sewing machine operating) See how the mole skin keeps the fabric lined up in place giving us the quarter inch mark. (sewing machine operating) Just runs right up along the edge of the mole skin. And at the end I like to back-stitch. Let's add our green strip. And pin these right sides together. Let's sew this strip together. (sewing machine operating) We're gonna sew all the way to the end with a quarter inch seam. (sewing machine operating) This is what our three strip piece looks like together when it's all sewn. So continue to construct the other piles of fabric, the four strip piles and the five strip pile in the same manner, and then we'll cut our blocks out.

Cut quilt blocks and label

- Now that all of our strips are sewn together, it's time to iron all the seams open before we can cut our blocks. I begin ironing by pressing the seams open. I finger press them and run my fingernail over the seam, then follow-up with the iron. Just keep moving along the seam, finger press, and then put the iron down. If you run the iron back and forth over the fabric, you run the risk of stretching the fabric out. So it's better to press, to lift the iron up, and then reposition it in the next area you want to smooth out. Continue to press all the seams open on all the strips before we cut out our blocks. We're gonna start with the three-stripped section, and we're gonna cut our D blocks out of this. Gonna square up the edges by cutting them off. We're cutting the D block, which is 12 1/2 inches by 16 1/2 inches. And the 12 1/2 inches is the measurement that is created from the sewing of the three strips together. So we're gonna cut at the 16 1/2 inch mark. Line up your ruler and use your rotary cutter to cut the block. And we cut two D blocks out of this section. So out of this three-strip section, we cut another D block. So move the fabric down to the zero mark on the cutting mat, place your ruler at 16 1/2 inches again, and cut. Now that we have our first blocks cut out, it's important to start labeling them so we don't get them confused. They all kinda look alike, so it's a good idea to label them with blue painter's tape and a Sharpie marker so we're keeping track of everything as it should be. I just rip off a piece of the painter's tape, place your tape on a hard surface, and write the letter for the corresponding block. So label your block and set aside. We're moving onto the four- pieced section now. And out of one of the four-pieced sections, we're gonna cut out block A and block C for the pattern. A measures 16 1/2 by 24 1/2. We're gonna square up our edges. And the 16 1/2 measurement is the length that you get from the four strips of fabric being sewn together. Square off the edge, slide everything down and cut at 24 1/2 inches. This is block A. Set block A to the side and cut out block C out of the remaining piece of this segment. Block C measures 16 1/2 by 16 1/2. And we'll label this block C. Out of another four-strip piece of fabric, we're gonna cut out block E. Block E measures 16 1/2 by 22 1/2, so we only get one of those out of this

section of fabric. Square up the edge, and cut at 22 1/2 inches. And label block E. Now we're gonna cut block F. Gonna square up the edge, and make the cut at 26 1/2 inches. And label this block. Now we're cutting the last block, which is B out of the five-strip section. B measures 20 1/2 inches by 16 1/2 inches. The 20 1/2 inches is the dimension that's created from the strips, so place your ruler at 16 1/2 inches. Label this block B. Move this block to the side, and cut out the other block B from this section as well. And cut it at 16 1/2 inches again. And label the block B. Continue cutting out all of your blocks out of the rest of the strips of fabric. You'll have two A blocks, two B blocks, two C blocks, two D blocks, two E blocks, and two F blocks.

Chapter 5 - Assemble Quilt Top

Sew row 1

- In my studio at home, I use a large design wall to lay out my blocks. So what we've done here is made small paper versions of our blocks to show how the quilt top is arranged. We take block A, sew a piece of small sashing to it. Right sides together. We would open that up. Then sew block B to that in this matter. Right sides together. Take another piece of small sashing and sew it to block B. Right sides together. And then take block C and sew it to the sashing. Right sides together. That finishes row one, the top row of the quilt top. After we sew that together, we sew a long piece of sashing all along the bottom. Next we sew block D to a small piece of sashing. Right sides together. Block E to the sashing. Right sides together. Another piece of sashing to Block E. Right sides together. And then sew block F to the sashing. That completes row two. We sew row two, the whole row to that piece of long sashing. Then we sew another piece of long sashing to the bottom of row two. So these six blocks make up this top half of the quilt section and we repeat those six blocks for the bottom half. Using a design wall or a process like this really helps me to see how the blocks come together for the quilt design. We have all of our blocks stacked in order for the top half of the quilt. So we're gonna start constructing them now. Starting with block A, we're gonna pin a piece of the short sashing to it. Right sides together. We're ready to sew. We're sewing, again, with our quarter inch seam and a straight stitch. I usually stop at the section where there's a seam. Just to make sure the seam doesn't get caught in the needle. You can feel where the seam is with your finger. So I just lift the presser foot and take a peek to make sure everything's laying down flat as it should be. And I back stitch at the end. Remove your pins. Now we're ready to add block B. We're gonna sew it the way. Right sides together to this piece of sashing. I'm gonna pin it in place. Now we add another piece of short sashing. Pin in place. And sew. We remove the pins and we're ready to sew the last block C for this row. It's always a good idea too to keep looking at your diagram to make sure you're gonna sew it in the right direction. And now we're done with row one.

Sew row 2

- We're ready to sew row two and we're going to start with block D. Sew it just like we did row one, left to right. Take block D. Pin a piece of short sashing to it. Right sides together. And sew. Remove your pins and sew block E to the sashing. Now we're going to add another piece of short sashing and block F. And with that, we are finished with row two.

Sew rows together

- I've got row one and row two all sewn together, and I pressed the seams open. Before I can join the two rows together, I need to sew a long piece of sashing to one of the rows. So, I've got one long sashing pinned to this row two. (sewing machine whining) And remember, we're sewing with a

1/4 inch seam along the entire length of the sashing. (sewing machine whining) I've got the long sashing sewn onto row two. So, next we sew it to row one, right sides together. We're gonna pin that together, now. We've got it all pinned together, now and we're ready to sew. We're using still a straight stitch with a 1/4 seam allowance. (sewing machine whining) As you're sewing your quilt top you might notice that it's starting to get a little bit heavy, a little bit of weight to it because of all the fabric you've got, so just take your time and adjust it as needed to compensate for the whole of the fabric. So, rows one and two are now finished and joined together with sashing. We've joined rows one and two with sashing. The second half of the quilt is exactly the same, repeat row three and four with the sashing in between. And then join those two rows with another long piece of sashing. Press all your seams open and then you're finished with your quilt top.

Chapter 6 - Prepare for Quilting

Create backing

- [Instructor] Here we are all finished with our quilt. I used for the backing two pieces of fabric because the quilt size is larger than the width of a fabric. So I just used white fabric for the back that I joined together with a big seam down the center of the back of the quilt. For the batting I used a cotton bamboo blend. A low loft batting that is sandwiched between the quilt front which we just finished and the quilt back. Binding is the first thing to go on a quilt so I machine attach and sew my binding to my quilts. I start by sewing the binding on the back. Then I flip it over and just edge stitch along the edge of the binding with my sewing machine. For quilting I prefer to do straight lines of stitching. Although I don't typically recommend a lot of fancy or expensive equipment to make quilts. One thing I would recommend investing in is a walking foot for your sewing machine. A walking foot is a special foot for your machine that helps move the fabric through the machine better. A feed dog on your sewing machine moves the bottom fabric, but what a walking foot does is help move the top, the batting, and the back of the fabric through the machine easier, reducing puckering, and I think you just get an overall better stitch quality with a walking foot. On this quilt I quilted it by echoing the seam lines on the blocks. And in the sections where the blocks were a different orientation, or they were positioned differently, I just continued to draw a line where the seam would be with a chalk marker and stitched along the line. And I did that throughout the quilt on either side of the seams. What I love about my mod stripes quilt is it's a simple project that only uses three colors of fabric but it has a really strong impact, making it a great modern quilting project.