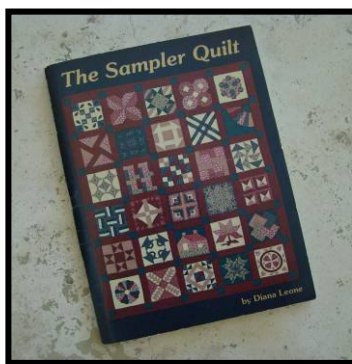


Year Long Sampler Quilt

Let's make a Sampler Quilt together!! Yes, I'm talking about spending one year to create a 6 block quilt....but we do it as a group! Just imagine all the beautiful combinations we'll create! Well, here's how this started.

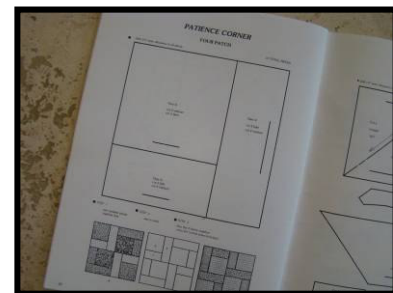


Many years ago, when Brittany was still a toddler, I felt the need to get back to something creative. I was working at Sherwin Williams at the time in a cubicle office and wasn't really finding an outlet for my love of sewing. So, I found a little fabric shop in my area that was teaching a first timers quilting class. The project was to finish a sampler quilt in the ten week or so period.



We started the class working with a book on sampler quilts called, "The Sampler Quilt" by Diana Leone. It gave us a variety of simple patterns to try and a lot of instruction. I had such a good time learning about quilting and creating my first

quilt that I thought we might all try to create one together over the next year one block at a time!



My intention is to teach you 6 different designed blocks, one every other month. This way, with our busy schedules, we'll have time to complete a 6 block sampler. If you are interested in joining us and sharing our beautiful quilts at the end, just read on!



All of the blocks we make are going to be 12" square, they will be separated by a grid of fabric strips called "sashing" and then outlined with a border. A 2 x 3 block quilt measures about 42" x 54". It makes a great **wall hanging**. So, you can plan where you want to hang your sampler and that will help you decide what colors you want to use.



To select **fabrics** for your quilt, you should make sure you have small, medium and large patterned fabrics and light, medium and dark fabrics.

I've read that one way to select your fabrics is to start with the one that has the most colors in it. Along the selvage edge is the **printer's dots** of color depicting each of the color inks used in the print. You can take this line of dots to the other fabrics and match your colors up to the dots so everything co-ordinates!



Before you fall in love with any of the fabrics, check to make sure you are selecting a **quality** quilting fabric. Generally, quilters like to use 100% cotton fabric. They prefer a high thread count, (just like with sheets!) and they always make sure that the grain of the fabric is straight. In other words the vertical threads are vertical and the horizontal threads are just that and at a perfect 90 degree angle to the vertical threads. It's just best to have higher quality fabrics that won't twist or fray or fall apart after one washing.

And, speaking of washing, you ought to **prewash** your fabrics. Simply put them in a warm water wash with a gentle cleanser like Dreft and rinse in cool water. Toss in the dryer on a permanent press cycle and bring the pieces out just before they are totally dry. Press them flat at the ironing board and you're ready to start cutting.

Once we get to the point where you have all of your squares completed and sewn together, sashing in between and borders on, it will be time to consider the **batting** you'd like to use. Batting is the filling in between the front quilt and the back fabric. Batting comes in a variety of weights or "lofts". You can find low, medium and high-loft battings in your local craft or sewing shop. For a wall-hanging, most people recommend the low-loft batting because you don't need the extra thickness for warmth, and the low-loft batting is much easier to machine quilt through.

It also comes in several different materials. Generally you can find batting in cotton, wool, silk and polyester. However, there is also a blend out there that gives you the best of all worlds - it's a poly/cotton blend.

Purchased in a package, the batting will have folds that can be removed in the dryer on a no heat setting.

Well, that is a lot to absorb if you've never quilted before, so let's give it a rest here and if you are interested in making a sampler quilt over the next year, go out and start looking at quilting fabrics. Think about the room you'd like to hang it in and start coordinating your fabrics.

For our sampler quilt, here's what you'll need.

Materials List:

1 ½ yards for an **outer border** fabric

1 ¾ yards for an **inner border** fabric

¾ yard for the **sashing** in between blocks

½ yard for the **cornerstones**

½ yard for a **background** fabric in your blocks

¼ yard of about 5 different fabrics for the **blocks**

2 dark, 2 medium and 1 light

½ yard for the **binding**

1 ¾ yards of a **backing** fabric

Batting – a baby batt at 43" x 57" will work

The book, "**A Sampler Quilt**" by Diana Leone (if you can find it)

A couple sheets of **template plastic**

Scissors for cutting plastic (different from good fabric scissors)

100% cotton sewing **thread**

At the measurements above, you will have plenty of extra fabric in case you need to re-cut a piece or if you change your mind on the colors you've selected for a block. Good luck selecting your fabrics! When you are all set with your materials, check out the instructions for our first quilt block, **Patience Corner**.

Shari

