

JULY 2021 BLOCK OF THE MONTH-LOG CABIN ILLUSION



Before you begin, read all instructions and look at the pictures.

I've made log cabin quilts since 1980, when I made my first quilt. I took Eleanor Burns Quilt in a Day class and I was hooked. I've lost count of how many Log Cabins I've made since the 80s, at least 50.

LOG CABIN FOLKLORE: Log Cabin quilts have been around since the early 1800's. The first patterns came to the United States from England and from Sweden. The strips in the square represent the 'logs' in a cabin. A red center square is said to represent the 'heart of the home'. A yellow center is the "light to welcome the weary traveler". A black center was a message from the underground railroad of a 'safe house'.

Each Log Cabin block has a center surrounded by a light side and a dark side. Look at the diagonal sides of the block. Usually, the light and dark sides are fabric strips which shade from dark to light. Not this time!

This block is my own design. A couple of years ago, I was making a jelly roll quilt and got an idea. What if I made the dark side of a log cabin block out of strips sewn together horizontally, like a jelly roll, and then cut vertically? The "illusion" is that the dark side looks like lots of small squares. It is not. You will learn the illusion here.

If you have made Log Cabin blocks and/or jelly rolls in the past, this will be easy. If not, please call me or email me for any questions! I'm on the roster. If you don't have a roster, there is a link on our Website, pvqa.org where you can contact me by email.

FABRICS ENCLOSED:

Light side: One 2&1/2" X approx. 39" and one 2&1/2 X approx. 21" white and gray print. This should be plenty.

Dark side: Eight strips of different black and white prints 2&1/2 X 12"

Center: You will get one 2&1/2" square, either yellow, red or black.

Making the dark side strips:

First, sew the black and white prints horizontally to each other in a way that pleases you. Try to alternate lighter and darker prints. Press seams open to eliminate bulk. All other seams will be pressed toward the outside edges of the block. See figure 6. Next, lay out the stripped piece with the long side horizontal to you. Even out the sides if needed. Now, cut 2&1/2 inch strips vertically. See Fig. 1

Fig 1



BLOCK ASSEMBLY: Each strip of light or dark will be used **twice** with each application to surround the center square, alternating light and dark. When the block is completed, there will be 3 sets of light strips and 3 sets of dark strips on the diagonal of the block. See above, picture on the left. Here is a link for a tutorial on log cabin block assembly. We are not shading, just using two colors, the darks and the light white & grey fabric. Ignore what she says about color and wrong vs. right sides. Concentrate on assembly. Eleanor Burns, Quilt in a Day book is perfect for learning. I'll bet one of your quilt friends has the book.

<https://youtu.be/pzncJHhkQow?t=4>

All seams are $\frac{1}{4}$ ". All seams are along the right side of the unit. Press seams toward the outside of the block

1. Take one light strip, right side up (use the shorter strip first) and put the 2&1/2 square (red, black or yellow) right side down on top of the light strip. See Figure 1.
2. Trim the excess light strip even with the red square. This is now called a 'unit'. We will continue making units until we have one block.
3. Open out the unit. Take another piece of light strip, right side up. Place unit with red square on the bottom, wrong side down, on top of the light strip (Figure 2). Sew and then trim to fit. (Figure 2)
4. Take a strip of the darks, right side up. Add the unit right side down, red square at the bottom, onto the dark strip. Sew and trim to fit. (Figure 4)
5. Add the second dark. Dark strip, right side up. Place unit right side down, Red square in the middle on top of another piece of a dark strip. Sew and trim to fit (Figure 5).

We have now added 2 pieces of light and 2 pieces of dark. See Figure 6. Continue in this manner adding 2 pieces of light then, 2 pieces of dark until there are 3 lights and 3 darks added to the center square. The center square will shift positions as we add strips. For orientation, after application of the first dark, you will be sewing through 2 seams each time you add a strip. If not, you have it positioned wrong. The tutorial will show this. Again, any questions, call me.

Return block and any extra fabric to me : Susan Raineri. Mail with enough time to reach me by the next meeting, which is 8/9.

Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Completed block should look like this:

