

# Selvage Blocks

## Tip Sheet from Elizabeth Eastmond



Okay, it's Throwback Time!

Once upon a time... we tried to use up our colorful and fun selvages. This version is a variation of one from Krista Hennebury of Poppyprint, but there are many others out there on the web (do a search for "selvage quilt").

This block, made of four sections, finishes at 20" square. It uses a paper backing to help keep everything together in construction. I'm using my favorite: vellum paper, which tears off easily.

This little free handout came about because I wanted to finish my selvages quilt, and what better way to do that than to write about it.



wrong

Start by gathering your selvages. Leave at least 3/4" above the selvage when you trim it.

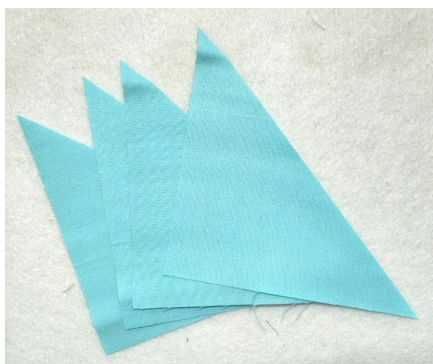
On the left, these are unusable, as the colorful fabric is not to be found.

On the right, I've left an abundance of fabric. (Not all need to be this big.)

Notice the little fringe on the bottom one? You can leave it, or trim it.



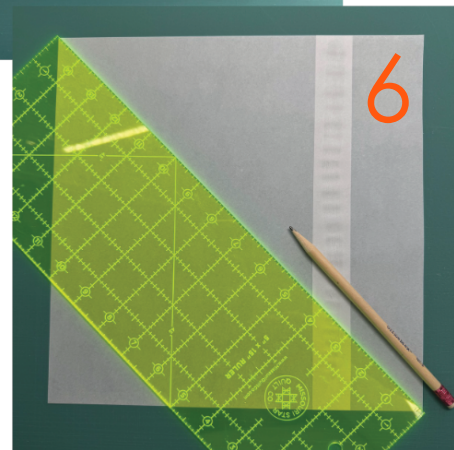
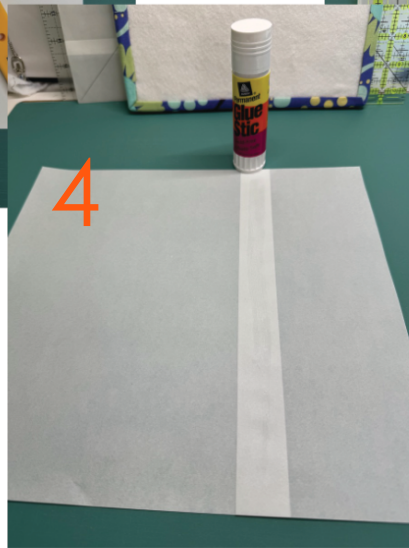
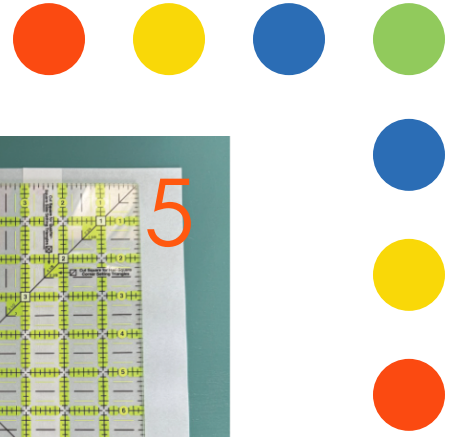
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## Time To Stitch- - - - -

1. After you've gathered a bunch, I mean a lot of selvages, kind of look them over for colors that seem to coordinate with them. Don't overthink this step.
2. Choose your color and cut two 5" squares. Cut these in half diagonally. You'll need four triangles of the same color for each block.

# Selvage Blocks

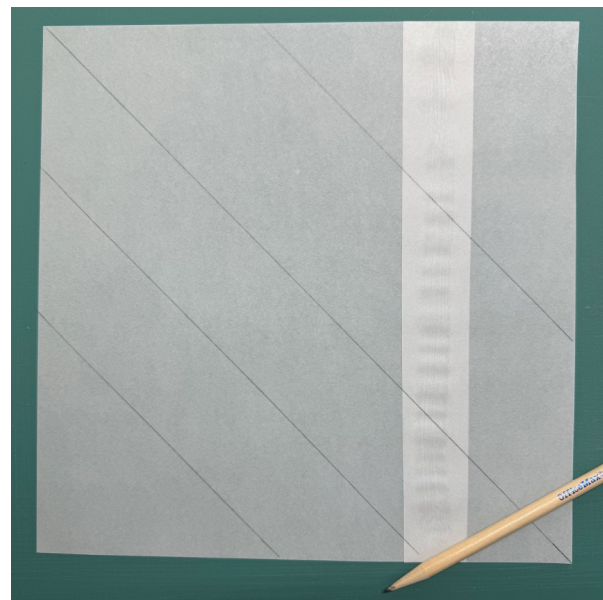


3. Prepare your paper. This is for an 8 1/2" x 11" paper. For one block, cut two sheets in half, lengthwise.

4. Glue one long piece to the long edge of a piece of paper.

5. Cut it to 10 1/2" size.

6. Draw a diagonal line from corner to corner, then add another line of two, on the same 45-degree slant. (See paper to the right.)





# Selvage Blocks



7. Lay your triangle piece of solid color, matching edges, onto one corner. Pin.

8. Layer one of your selvages across the edge by at least  $\frac{1}{4}$ " to make sure it is caught in the stitching. Using a bit smaller stitch (2.2) topstitch across the selvage, a full  $\frac{1}{8}$ " away from the edge.

9. Layer another selvage across the raw cut edge of that first selvage, overlapping it by at least a  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch (more is okay). Double check to make sure that it covers the full width of your paper.

Repeat the stitching. I did it in batches, as you can see to your left.

10. Keep layering your selvages on, topstitching them down. If you are sewing one that has the fringe, make sure you are well back from the edge – again – an  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch topstitch seam.

NOTE: Smooth out the underneath strip, when you put the new one on top, so you don't get tucks or wrinkles.

If you need to stop for a press, use a dry iron, and then keep going.



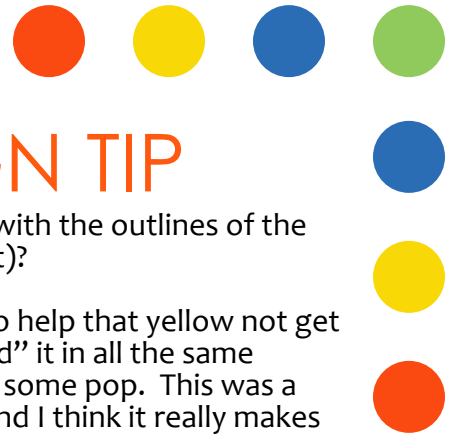
11. Just keep going, filling your square with selvages. Sometimes you'll have more fabric, and sometimes less.

12. As you come to the very tip, try to gauge the placement so you are not just putting a weensy little bit on the top. Use one of your selvages that is a bit wider (meaning that you have extra fabric above the selvage).





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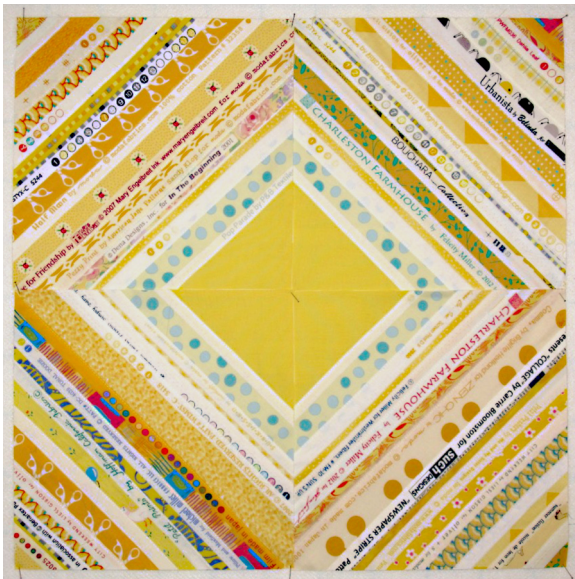
## DESIGN TIP

See that center, with the outlines of the dotted fabrics (left)?

I decided to try to help that yellow not get lost and “outlined” it in all the same selvage to give it some pop. This was a tip from Krista, and I think it really makes the block look good.

## CONFESSION

I was not above going into my stash and cutting off long lengths of selvages, just so I could do this.



The difference between the yellow set of blocks, with that “framed center” and the orange set of blocks, without the frame, can be seen here.

Even though I tried to use *similar* widths of fabrics at that center, it just doesn’t have the same impact as using the *same* fabric.

Again, don’t overthink it. It will be a busy quilt.

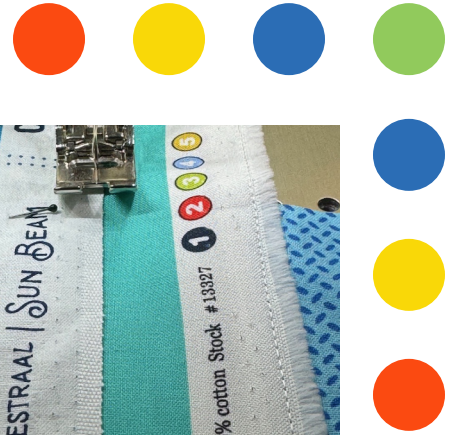
I’ve left the papers on, but do see the tip on the next page.

The vellum comes off easily, so while it will be tedious, it won’t be the end of me. However, because there are so many seams, at the end it may be better to have a bit tighter quilting on this, just to keep everything in place.





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You can seam your selvages if you want to put two of the motifs together.



Stitch close to the edge, but not too close – about 1/8 inch.

If you accidentally veer off course, just throw a partial selvage in there to fill up the space.

When you take the papers out, the block becomes soft and pliable again. Double check your stitching, and repair any loose spots.



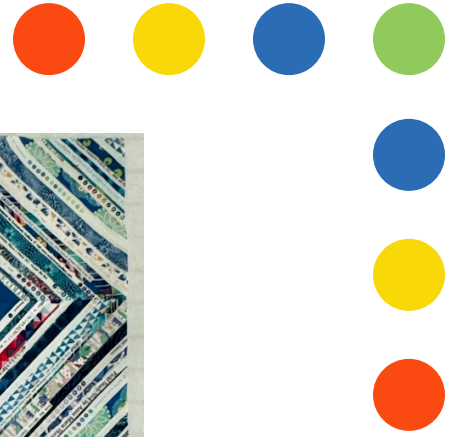
I also found it helpful to remove the paper from the center color triangles before stitching. Because, yeah... paper doesn't stretch or yield... and sometimes I need that pliability to get the seams to match up.

And if there is anywhere where the paper is "holding you up," don't hesitate to rip out a little bit before you stitch the seam.

As to pressing: I recommend you press the seams to one side, not open.



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OPQUILT

Free Pattern by Elizabeth Eastmond | OPQuilt.com

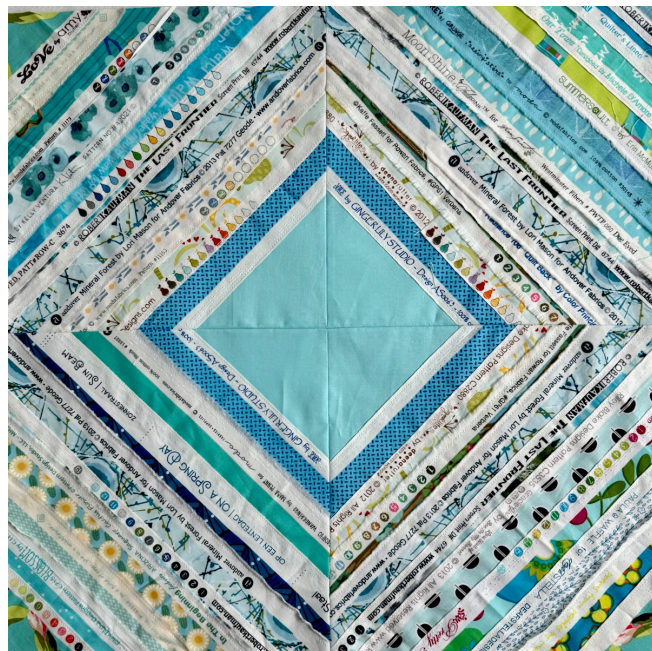
## All the blocks together.

I've had a lot of fun looking at the pieces as I sew. It's my own "fabric journal," a bit of my sewing and quilting history!

Write if you have any questions—

*Elizabeth*

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Selvage Quilt Block