

## *BlockAid: Serving up some suspense!*

Many of today's quilters are enthusiastic participants in the mystery classes sponsored by their local guilds or shops, where cutting and construction directions are divided into distinct and "mysterious" steps, and nobody knows what the result will be until the final step is unveiled.

This mini-mystery was developed for use by guilds, groups and shops for **non-profit community service efforts**. This is a very simple project--so not quite as "mysterious" as other Mystery offerings you may be familiar with--but it's easy to cut and stitch, makes effective use of scraps, and can be finished either with or without borders. It is well within the capabilities of any quilter who is comfortable with basic rotary cutting and machine piecing techniques. The project can be made up in any of seven different sizes, from baby to queen-sized quilt--you can specify the size, or let each contributor decide what size he or she wants to make.

Participants can work independently or as a group, one suspenseful step at a time, using their own fabrics, donated fabrics, or a mix. Duplicate and distribute the instructions through your newsletter, mail or hand them out to members or customers interested in contributing quilts to a worthy cause, or use them as the basis for service-quilt workshops or retreats.

You must duplicate the handouts I've provided in their entirety--do not re-type or reorganize the instructions. I've left room at the bottom of each page for your group or shop name and any special instructions to participants. You can distribute the steps once a week, once every two weeks, or once a month--whatever suits your group and your timetable.

Remember--it's a **mystery**, so just hand out one step at a time, and don't let the participants know what the result will be before they reach the final step!

If you do this in a group setting, you'll need to hand out Step 1 several weeks before the sewing session is scheduled, so participants can gather their fabrics and cut before they come. When participants arrive to sew, start them out with Step 2. Encourage them to work to their own standards, at their own pace--this is not a race! When someone finishes Step 2, he or she can just take a copy of Step 3 and proceed.

You could hold a one-day or late-night mystery workshop for as many people as your room can hold, or schedule a mystery day or weekend where everyone sews at home or in small groups, then meets in the evening for a potluck and show-and-tell. This would be a great National Quilting Day activity, the third Saturday in March.

If your contributors work independently, be sure to schedule a show-and-tell session several weeks after the last step is given out. This will give participants an incentive to finish, and everyone will enjoy seeing how different the projects look!

Consider making heart-and-hand labels that say "Made especially for you by members of the ..... Quilt Guild" for all the quilts. You might want to give a certificate, a pin, or a "merit badge" to each contributor.

Have fun!

*Judy Hopkins*

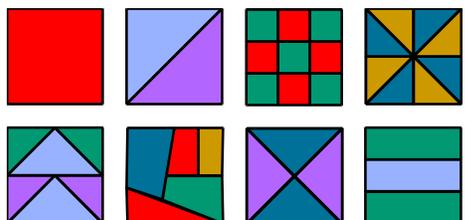
# BlockAid

*This copyright-free mystery project was developed by Judy Hopkins for use by guilds, groups and shops for non-profit community service projects.*

## STEP 1 - FABRIC AND CUTTING

Read all the instructions before you begin.

5" x 5" squares of assorted fabrics. Use as many different fabrics as you want--prints or solids, any colors. Plain squares are just fine, but if you want to add variety (or use up smaller scraps), some or all of these squares could be pieced (finished size 4-1/2").



### You'll need:

- 48 squares for a baby quilt (36" x 48")
- 64 squares for a lap quilt (48" x 48")
- 80 squares for a crib quilt (48" x 60")
- 120 squares for a nap-sized quilt (60" x 72")
- 140 squares for a twin-sized quilt (60" x 84")
- 168 squares for a double-bed quilt (72" x 84")
- 224 squares for a queen-sized quilt (84" x 96")

Print or solid fabric for background--yardage at least 42 usable inches wide. This can be a light, a medium, or a dark--whatever suits your squares. Consider muslin, a pastel, black, red, true blue, turquoise, or fuchsia--these all seem to combine well with scraps. If you use a print, consider a small-scale, tone-on-tone print that is not obviously directional. If you like, use several different prints, all the same color, instead of a single background fabric. You'll need:

- 1 yard for a baby quilt
- 1-1/8 yards for a lap quilt
- 1-1/3 yards for a crib quilt
- 2 yards for a nap-sized quilt

- 2-1/3 yards for a twin-sized quilt
- 2-5/8 yards for a double-bed quilt
- 3-5/8 yards for a queen-sized quilt

From the background fabric, cut selvage-to-selvage strips 5" x about 44". Cut the strips into segments 2" wide, to make 2" x 5" rectangles.



- Baby: 3 strips, 48 rectangles
- Lap: 3 strips, 64 rectangles\*\*
- Crib: 4 strips, 80 rectangles
- Nap: 6 strips, 120 rectangles

- Twin: 7 strips, 140 rectangles
- Double: 8 strips, 168 rectangles
- Queen: 11 strips, 224 rectangles

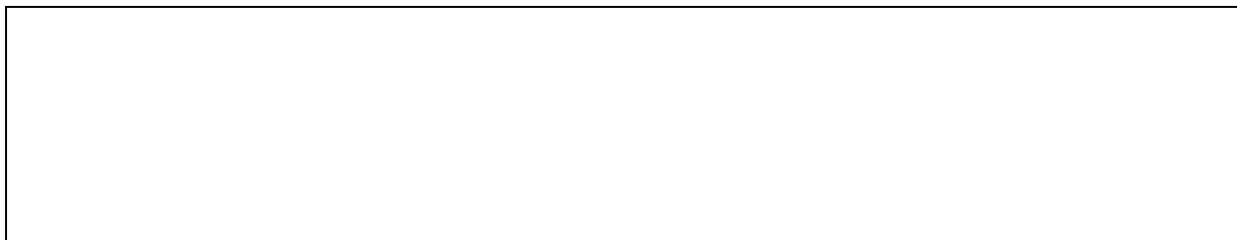
Now, cut selvage-to-selvage strips 6-1/2" x about 44". Cut these strips into segments 2" wide, to make 2" x 6-1/2" rectangles.



- Baby: 3 strips, 48 rectangles
- Lap: 3 strips, 64 rectangles\*\*
- Crib: 4 strips, 80 rectangles
- Nap: 6 strips, 120 rectangles

- Twin: 7 strips, 140 rectangles
- Double: 8 strips, 168 rectangles
- Queen: 11 strips, 224 rectangles

\*\*To get the 64 rectangles needed for the lap quilt, you may need to cut one more rectangle of each size from your scraps.



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## STEP 2 - CONSTRUCTION

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Test your 1/4" seam allowance before you begin:

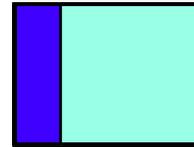
From scraps, cut three strips, EXACTLY 2" wide and about 6" long. Join the strips as shown, and press seams to one side.



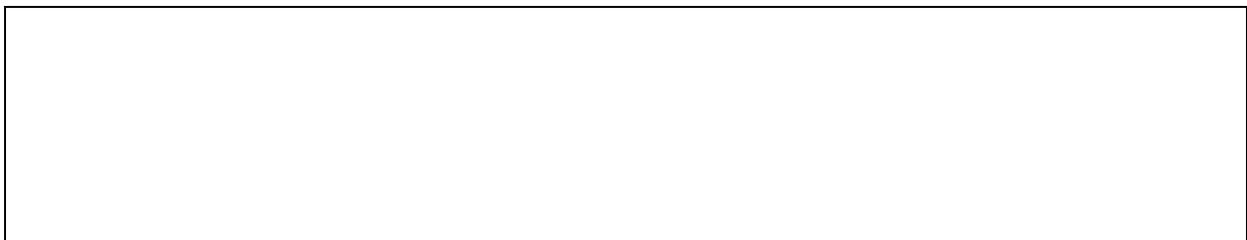
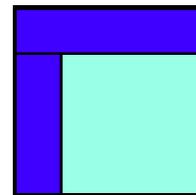
Measure the center strip. It should measure EXACTLY 1-1/2" wide. If it does not, adjust your needle position or seam guide and try again.

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Join a 2" x 5" background-fabric rectangle to each 5" square to make units that look like this. Use a 1/4" seam allowance. Press the seams toward the rectangles. The units should measure 5" x 6-1/2" (raw edge to raw edge) when sewn.



Now, join a 2" x 6-1/2" background-fabric rectangle to each of the units you made above to make units that look like this. Use a 1/4" seam allowance. Press the seams toward the rectangles. The units should measure 6-1/2" x 6-1/2" (raw edge to raw edge) when sewn.

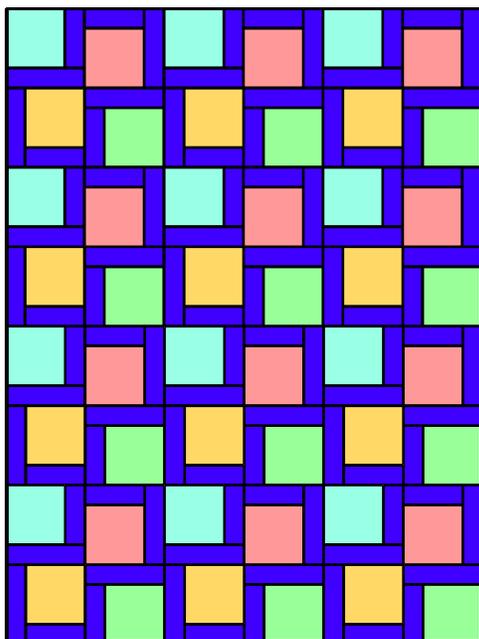
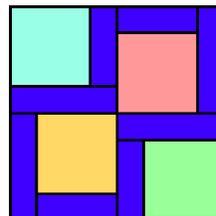


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## STEP 3 - ASSEMBLY

Join the units you made in Step 2 in groups of four to make "Patience Corner" blocks that look like this, combining the "assorted squares" at random. Use a 1/4" seam allowance. Press the seams however you wish. The blocks should measure 12-1/2" x 12-1/2" (raw edge to raw edge) when sewn.



*The drawing shows a baby quilt without borders.*

### Set the blocks together:

- 3 across and 4 down for a baby quilt
- 4 across and 4 down for a lap quilt
- 4 across and 5 down for a crib quilt
- 5 across and 6 down for a nap-sized quilt
- 5 across and 7 down for a twin-sized quilt
- 6 across and 7 down for a double-bed quilt
- 7 across and 8 down for a queen-sized quilt

Add borders, if you wish.

Quilt or tie and bind--and give it with love to someone who needs a quilt!

*Judy Hopkins' Mystery Quilt Singles patterns for individual quilters are available through Feathered Star Productions at [www.marshamccloskey.com](http://www.marshamccloskey.com).*

