

Bird Block Pattern

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ABOUT THE BLOCK



BASIC BIRD

I've been seeing a lot of birds flying (or walking) on quilts in blogland for a while. It's about time we invited some of these feathered friends to the Block Lotto.

This 6 by 9 inch rectangle (finished size) basic bird block is inspired by Lynne Tyler's [Bird How-to](#) tutorial on her blog, Patchwork Menagerie.

FABRIC GUIDELINES

CHOOSING FABRICS FOR YOUR BLOCK

Basic Bird block is made from FOUR fabrics:

SKY—a soft blue fabric. It may be solid, a tone-on-tone (TOT) print or a multi-color low-volume print that “reads as blue” if you are looking at it from across the room

BODY—may be any BRIGHT fabric, solid, tone-on-tone or multicolor print.

WING—may be any BRIGHT fabric, solid, tone-on-tone or multicolor print that has good contrast with the BODY fabric.

BLACK (or Black and White) — may be solid BLACK, black on black (BOB) print or black and white print. Used for both beak and legs.

If you make multiple blocks, you may use the same SKY and BLACK (or BLACK and WHITE) fabric in all your blocks. You may use the Bright BODY and WING fabrics in multiple blocks, as long as each body + wing combination is unique.

CUTTING FABRICS



CUT FABRICS FOR ONE BLOCK

In this example, the BODY is yellow, WING is orange and I used a BOB for beak and legs.

From SKY cut:

One $4\text{--}7/8$ inch square cut in half diagonally *

One $1\text{--}1/2$ inch square

One rectangle $1\text{--}1/2$ by $4\text{--}1/2$ inches

One rectangle 3 by $6\text{--}1/2$ inches

One rectangle 3 by 8 inches **

From WING, cut:

One $4\text{--}7/8$ inch square cut in half diagonally *

From BODY cut:

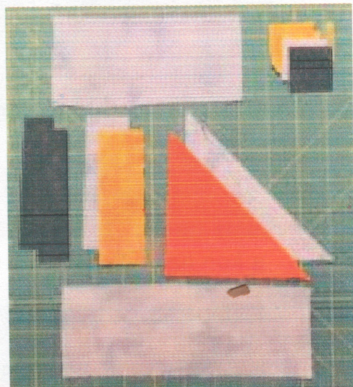
One rectangle $1\text{--}1/2$ by $4\text{--}1/2$ inches

Two $1\text{--}1/2$ -inch squares

From BLACK (or Black and White), cut:

Two 1-inch by $4\text{--}1/2$ -inch rectangles **

One $1\text{--}1/2$ inch square **



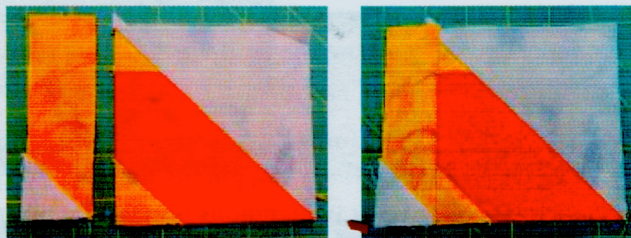
NOTES

* If you'd like to cut the square for the large triangles larger, that's OK. (I cut mine at 5 inches square. See the note about when/how to trim the HST unit to $4\text{--}1/2$ inches.

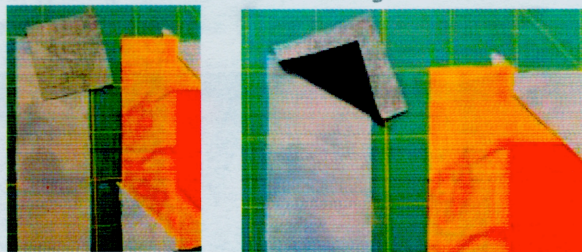
** These pieces are cut larger and trimmed after used in Improvisational piecing technique. Several of the sneak peekers suggested cutting the longer rectangle (SKY for the leg section) a bit taller to make it easier to square up and trim during the sewing/assembly of the block.

SEWING THE BLOCK

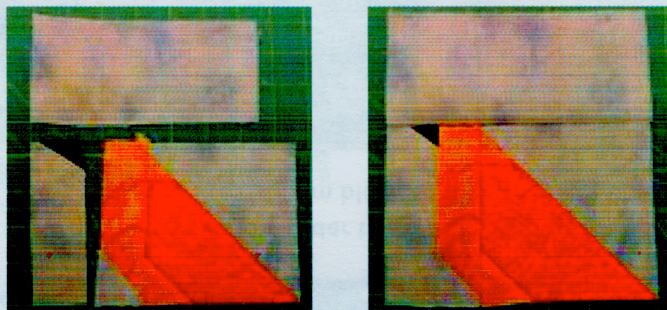
1. Trim and press. Then sew the two units together.

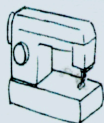


2. Create the beak by using the small BLACK square to the SKY rectangle. The beak should be smaller and slimmer than just adding a square and stitching diagonally. Position it as you like, making sure the folded back BLACK portion will cover the corner of the SKY after it's sewn. I creased the fabric so I would know where the seam should go.



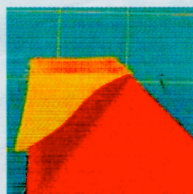
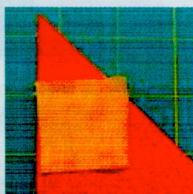
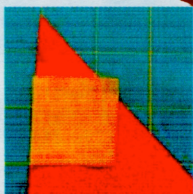
3. Stitch. Press. Trim to maintain the rectangle shape.
4. Sew the sky/beak rectangle to the bird.
5. Add the 3 by 6 1/2 inch SKY rectangle to the top.



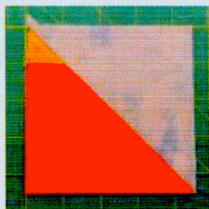
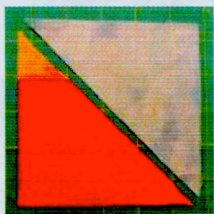


ASSEMBLE THE BLOCK

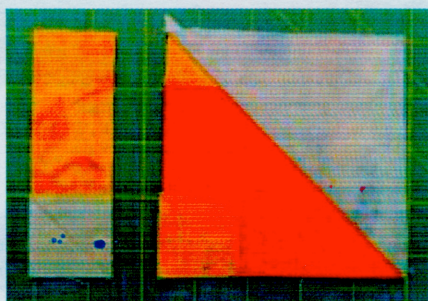
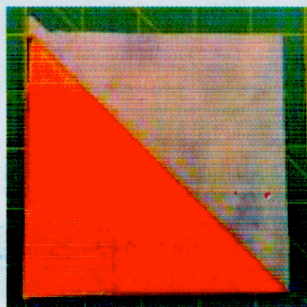
6. Add one small square of BODY fabric to the WING triangle by positioning it as shown, sewing, then trimming to original triangle shape.



7. Add the SKY triangle to sew a half square triangle. Square up to 4 1/2 inches square by trimming from the sides without the piece of BODY before continuing.

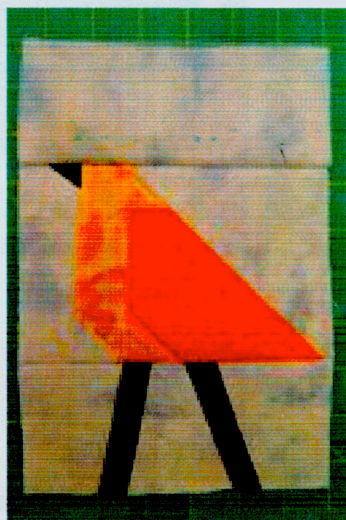


8. Add the other small square of BODY fabric to the corner of WING fabric, by placing it, right sides together, aligning the corner and edges, drawing a line diagonally across the small square and sewing on the line.
9. Repeat the process with the rectangle of BODY fabric and the square of SKY.



FINISHING THE BLOCK AND VARIATIONS

10. Place the leg section under the bird and put it into position and sew in place. Press. Trim block to $6\frac{1}{2}$ by $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches.



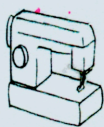
EXTRA!
EXTRA!

VARIATIONS OF THE BASIC BIRD BLOCK

To make a TALLER or SHORTER bird, change height of the two large SKY rectangles. In the basic block, each is cut at 3 inches high. You can change the proportions to make a shorter or taller bird. The two (new) heights should add up to 6 inches. The height of the leg section should be at least 2 inches. The height of the sky above the bird should be at least $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The taller you make your bird, the longer the skinny BLACK rectangles will need to be.

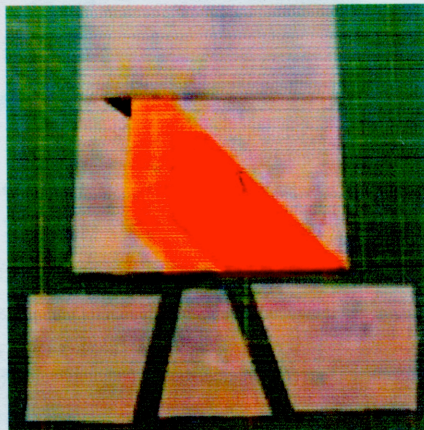
To make a RIGHT-FACING bird, you'll use exactly the same pieces to create a mirror image of our bird.

SEWING THE BLOCK

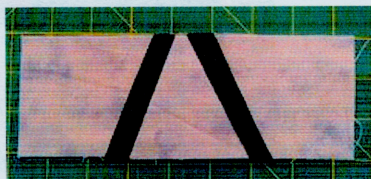
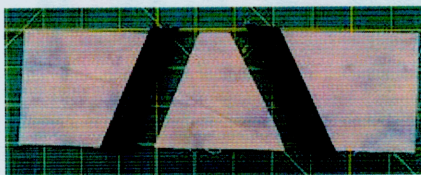
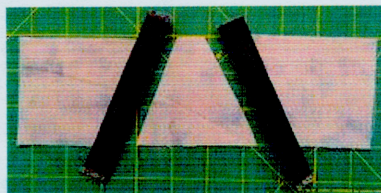
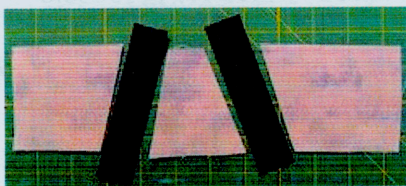


ASSEMBLE THE BLOCK

11. Create the bird's legs by laying the 3 by 8 inch rectangle at the bottom of the bird and, using your rotary cutter, "draw" two slashes where you'd like to position the legs. Keep in mind that the space between the slashes will shrink by approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ inch after the seams are sewn.



12. Insert the BLACK (or black and white strips and sews the rectangle back together again, first sewing the legs to one of the sky section, then trimming them even with the top and bottom of the sky section to make it easier to line things up.



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