


Paper Pieced Improv Trees & O Christmas Trees Tutorials

 happyquiltingmelissa.com/2013/09/paper-pieced-improv-trees.html

BLOCK TUTORIAL



So to make one 10 1/2" x 10 1/2" finished block you will need the following:

(1) Paper Pieced Pattern that can be [printed from here](#)

(1) 7" x 9 3/4" rectangle from background fabric cut in half diagonally. (Note - if you are not using a solid, you will need to make 2 squares and cut them in opposite directions diagonally, this will make enough triangles for 2 blocks.)

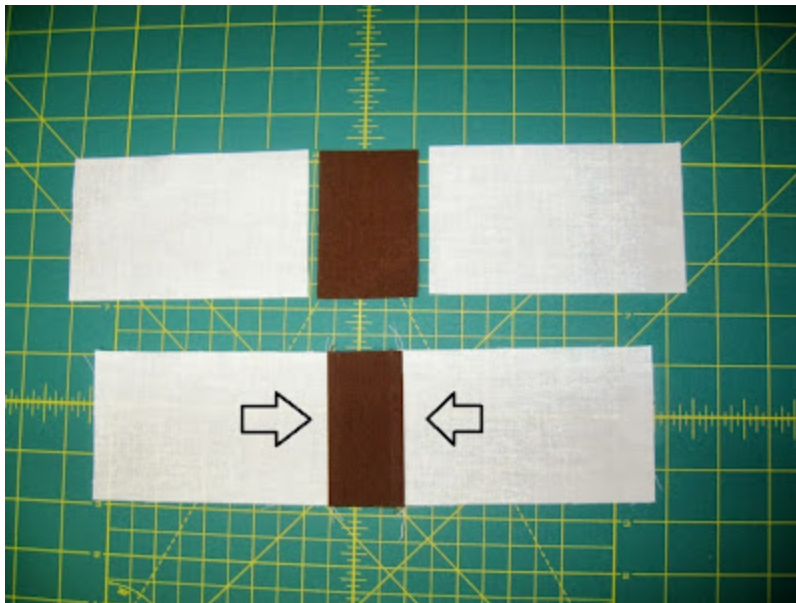
(1) 2" x 3" brown rectangle to be used for tree trunks

(2) 3" x 5" background fabric rectangles

Scraps, any size but it is helpful to have some strip ones.



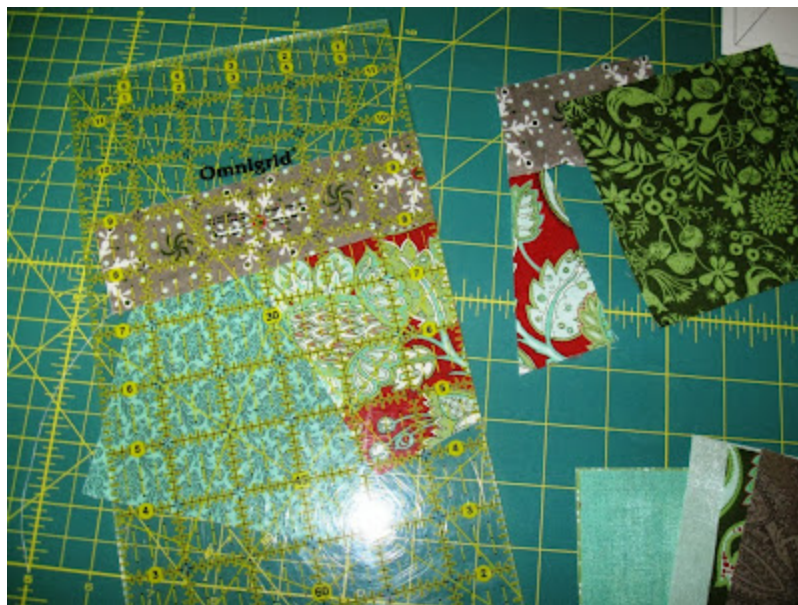
Start with making the trunk. Sew the (2) 3 " x 5" background rectangles onto either side of the brown rectangles using a 1/4" seam. Press towards the brown. Set aside.



Now, grab your scraps. Improv piecing is fun because there are really no rules, just use a straight edge and a 1/4" seam each time you sew and you are good to go. Start by sewing 2 scraps together, I put mine one an angle to give me a little scrappier start. From those 2 pieces, cut one straight edge. This is where you will add the next piece.



After you have added the next piece, cut another straight edge. Add another piece to your newly created straight edge.



Continue this process, cutting straight edges and adding new pieces. As you move out and your straight edges get larger, you might find you need to sew 2 scraps together first and then add them to your improv piece as shown.



Keep slashing and adding until you have created a shape large enough to cover the center portion of your paper pieced pattern with at least a 1/4" overhang. Once yours is this big, you are ready to start paper piecing. (Oh, and don't throw away those scraps you keep cutting off, they make great starts for your next tree :)



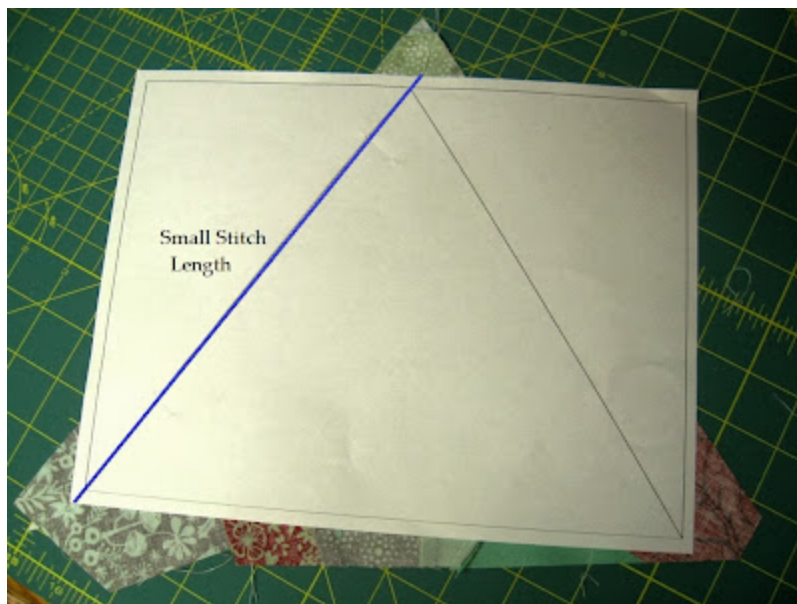
**So I am no expert on paper piecing, but this block is pretty basic, so I am just giving a really brief explanation on how I paper piece this particular block. But feel free to just skip to the bottom if you already know how to paper piece.

Place your paper pieced pattern with right side down. Place your improv piece onto the back of the paper pieced pattern making sure that it overlaps the drawn lines 1/4". (I hold it up to the light to check :) Now, place your background triangle onto the improv triangle

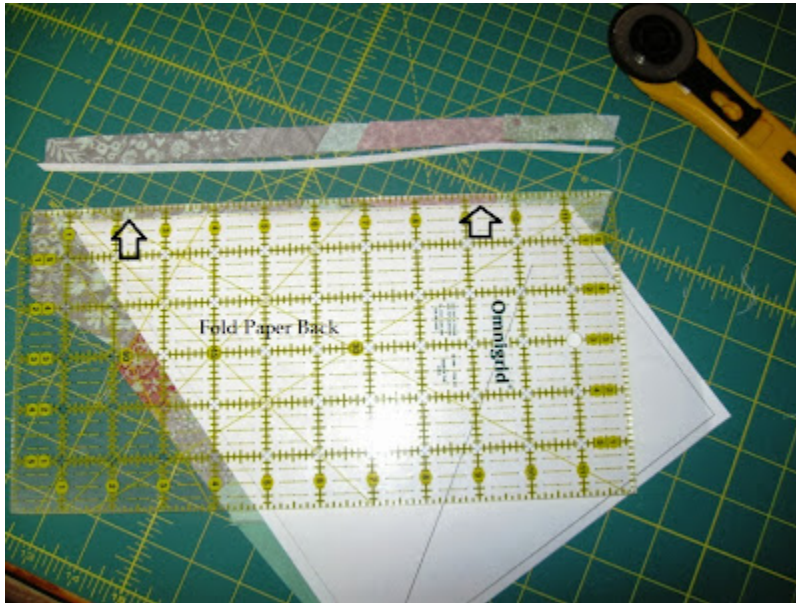
overlapping the seam by 1/4". (I never know how people tell if it is overlapping when you can see anymore because of the other layer of fabric, so the way I do this is by sticking 2 pins from the paper pieced side directly through the drawn line, those are the circle marks. I align my triangle along the edge of the pins, pull out the pins, and then slide the triangle 1/4" over. Super technical, I know :) Pin all three layers in place.



Sew on the paper side of your sandwich directly on the drawn line. It is best to shorten your stitch length so that the paper will come away easy when needed.



Fold the paper back at the seam and trim the excess fabric 1/4" away from the seam.



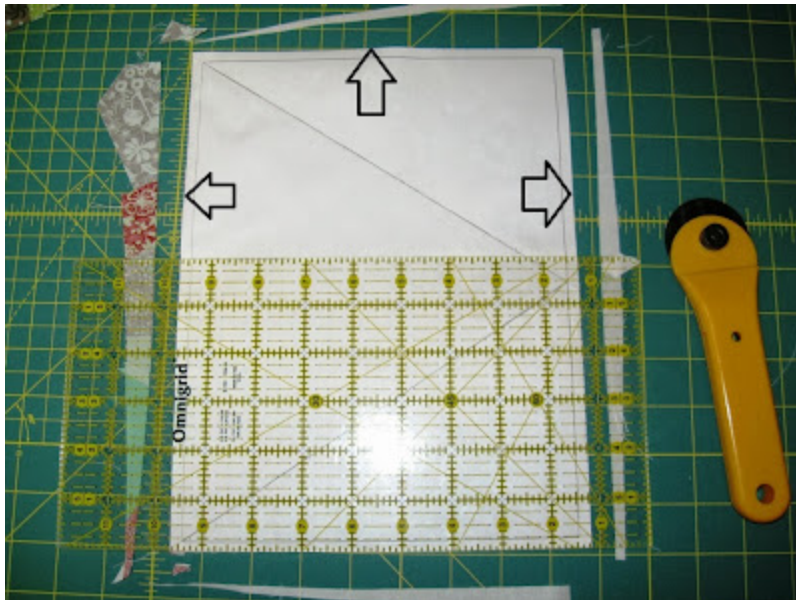
Press the background fabric out. It should cover the paper on both edges.



Repeat the process for the other side of the block.



Now just trim along the edge of the paper all excess fabric. Note - Do not trim on the line around the edge of the pattern, that is the finished lined, the extra space is your seam allowance. The paper edge marks the edge of the block so you will only trim fabric.



And now you have an adorable tree top block. All you need to do now is add the trunk.

Place the trunk piece onto the bottom of the improv block with right sides together and sew a 1/4" seam along the edge. I liked to press mine open so it lays nice and flat.



And you are done, one adorable 10 1/2" x 10 1/2" finished improv tree block. I can't wait to see all of these come in and turn them into an adorable quilt. I like them so much, I might even make a few extras for some matching pillows. So cute!!



QUILT TUTORIAL

Now, if you have so much fun making 1 block, and you want to make it into an entire O Christmas Trees quilt ([see more here](#)) that finishes at 63" x 74" than here is what you will need.

Assorted Christmas Fabric for the trees

- You can use Scraps, A Layer Cake, or A Fat Eighth Bundle

1/6 a yard Brown Solid for tree trunks

3 5/8 yards of Background Fabric

4 yards of Backing Fabric

5/8 yard of Binding Fabric (I used scraps from my Fat Eighth Bundle)



CUTTING

From your Brown Solid cut (22) 2" x 3" rectangles

From your Background Fabric cut:

(4) 11" x 26 3/4" rectangles

(2) 11" x 21 1/2" rectangles

(2) 11" x 16 1/4" rectangles

(2) 11" x 11" rectangles

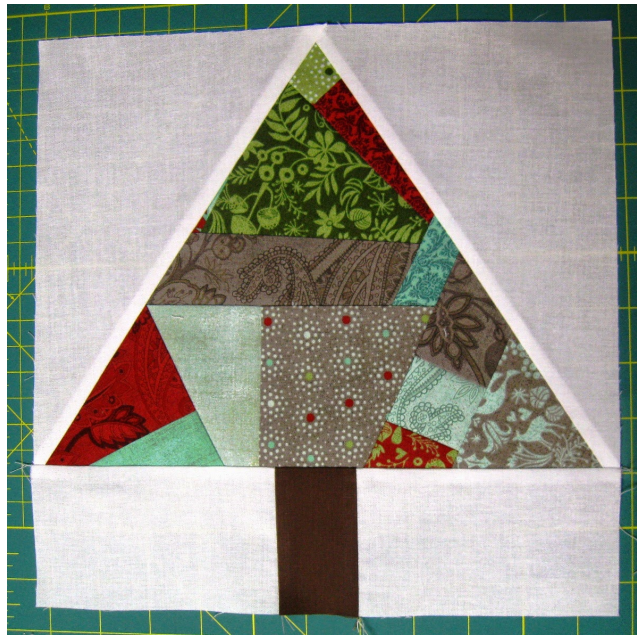
(2) 5 3/4" x 11" rectangles

(44) 3" x 5" rectangles

(22) 7" x 9 3/4" rectangles cut in half diagonally. (Note - if you are not using a solid, you will need to cut half of the rectangles in opposite directions diagonally, this will make a triangle for each side of the tree.)

MAKING THE BLOCKS

Once your cutting is all done, refer to the block tutorial above to make 22 Improv Tree Paper Pieced Blocks.



ASSEMBLING THE QUILT

Layout your 22 blocks and the background setting rectangles as show below. You will be using a 1/4" seam to piece the quilt top.



Sew each of the rows together. Press the seams between blocks open and the seams between the setting rectangles towards those rectangles.



Sew the rows together into a quilt top. I like to do this by first sewing the rows into groups of 2's and pressing the seams open. Then I sew the groups of 2 rows into 2 halves and press, and then finish the final seam in the middle and press.



And you have a beautiful 63" x 74" O Christmas Tree quilt top!! Now you just need to Baste It, Quilt It, and Bind it :) I know, that is a lot of work in one little sentence. If you are new to quilting you can check out these [Finishing Up Videos](#) I created that go over the basics of [Basting, Quilting, and Binding](#) ;)



And now your done!!! I hope you have enjoyed this tutorial and are excited to make your O Christmas Tree lap sized quilt :) If you do make your own, I would love to see it!! You can add it to my [Flickr Group here](#), email me a picture at happyquiltingmelissa@gmail.com or add it to social media with [#happyquiltingwithmc](#) ;)



Have a Happy (and Merry) Quilting Day!!!