

President's 'teachable moment.'

2025 September

Log Cabin Block

Feedback from the Spring 2025 Members' survey, had multiple requests to learn or make Log Cabin Blocks

As with many quilt blocks there are many layout possibilities from traditional to modern. Over the next months, we plan to present the log cabin block and variations of it to make each month.

You can make one block or a group of blocks for placemats, table runners, pillows, insert into a garment, or a bag, or any size quilt

This is a great way to use scraps!

Month 1:

The Original log cabin block:

Historically the centre block represented the hearth. It was traditionally red or sometimes yellow to represent the warmth of the fire. One side of the block consisted of 'logs' of light colours, graduating from light to medium on the outside log. The other side was darker (shadow contrasting 'logs' graduating from medium to very dark in a contrasting colour 'family'.

The 'logs' are sewn to the centre in a spiral.

The resulting block looks like an HST as diagonally, there are light logs and dark logs

Scrappy works well.

Modern Log Cabins:

Anything goes: the principle of adding logs in a spiral is the same, however colours can vary.

This is where very scrappy works very well.

The number of logs can vary. In this sample, all the 'logs' are the same width.

You can make one block at a time.

When making multiple blocks you can strip piece, as in an assembly line

E.g, If you are making 6 blocks, sew step 1, 6 times, then step 2, 6 times,

Pressing and trimming, if necessary, before adding the next round of logs.

Tip: Use a colouring sheet if you want to co-ordinate colours.

When assembling multiple blocks you can spiral counterclockwise or clockwise as long as you maintain the same direction for each block.

Directions for one block, 9 ½ inches unfinished

From Light Fabric **and** Dark fabric

Cut :

- 1 ½ inch square
- 1 ½ x 2 ½ inch strip
- 1 ½ x 3 ½ inch strip
- 1 ½ x 4 ½ inch strip
- 1 ½ x 5 ½ inch strip
- 1 ½ x 6 ½ inch strip
- 1 ½ x 7 ½ inch strip
- 1 ½ x 8 ½ inch strip

From the light fabric cut 1

- 1 ½ x 9 ½ strip

You should now have 2 strips the same length: 1 will belong to your light side and one to the dark side, from your 1 ½ inch square to your 8 ½ inch strip.

Sewing:

Using ¼ inch seam, attach light 1 ½ inch square to contrasting 1 ½ inch square. (piece 1 to piece 2 below)

As in the diagram attach the 1 ½ inch x 2 ½ inch dark strip to the first piece. (piece 3)

Press outward.

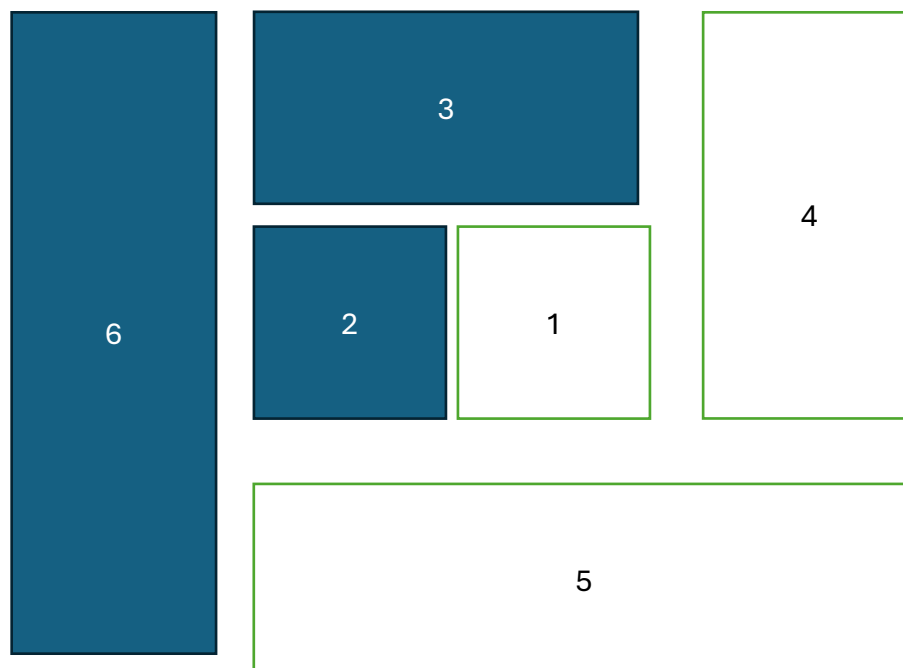
Attach light coloured 1 ½ inch x 2 ½ inch strip to the side. (piece 4)

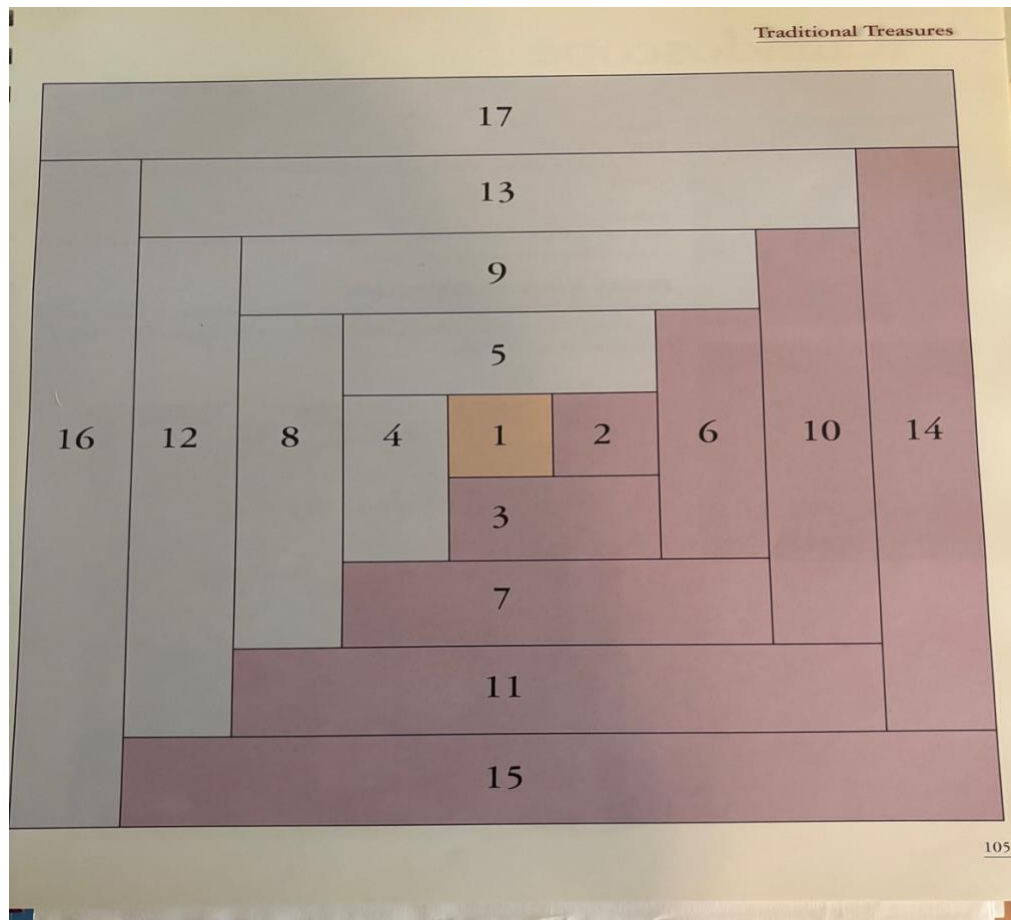
Press each seam outward

Attach the light 3 ½ inch strip to the 'bottom' of the 2 one-inch squares. (piece 5)

Spiral to the dark 3 ½ inch strip to the left side of the 2 one-inch squares. (piece 6)

Continue with this 'pattern rotation' until complete





For sample layouts: APQ has 30 free ideas

<https://www.allpeoplequilt.com/quilt-patterns/creative-log-cabin-quilt-layouts>

Besides piecing, the block can be adapted to paper piecing, by using graph paper. Use actual finished measurements of the centre and then the finished width of each log.

For more tips on sewing a larger quilt using the same fabric for each log, there is a variation of strip piecing by Eleanor Burns in this video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQsSwzncdeU>

Samples of blocks and layouts below

