

How to Make a Stained Glass Log Cabin Quilt

(Seattle Streets Stained Glass Quilt Method)



This is an incredibly easy, very fast quilt that only *looks* complicated!

Step 1: Understanding why the math is so simple and the blocks so easily resizable.

The math behind this is the same as for my Seattle Streets quilt. (Pattern also available for free online – www.caritasquilts.com.) In a nutshell, when you add a 1" strip of fabric (in this case, the black) between two other fabrics, you're adding one inch of fabric and subtracting one inch of seam allowance. This means that your finished width will *always* be the same as the starting width of your two colored fabrics, *not adding or subtracting anything for seam allowance*. (Very important).

In this quilt, all of my colored/white strips are 3" wide, so as I go through my steps and add "logs" to my log cabin, my blocks will measure a perfect 3", then 6", then 9" before finishing at 12" square.

Not quite seeing it? Drop down to the photos below.

Step 2: Fabric Requirements

I'm never much help here, because I don't ever measure fabric before I start a quilt, and I buy black fabric by the bolt. BUT for one finished, 12" block, you're going to need **somewhat more than 30" x 3" of dark fabric, and 18" x 3" of light, plus enough extra for squaring, waste, etc.**



If your fabrics are planned and cut in a way that gives you no waste, that's what you'll need. But because the logs are up to 12" long, I kept finding myself running just a little short on the longer individual pieces and having to cut new ones from longer fabric. So plan accordingly, buy some extra fabric, and be sure to cut the longer pieces first. Because some of the pieces are long, this pattern is easier with width-of-fabric cuts than with shorter pieces like fat quarters. (Fat quarters will still work, but you may have more waste. But if you're feeling creative, you can use the leftover pieces in a nice border.)

For black, you'll need 1"-wide strips. The **total *finished* length of the 1" strips will be 45" for each block, but you'll need extra for strip piecing between colored fabrics, and because colored and black strips never match up perfectly.** So cut more. For Seattle Streets, I use about 60% as much black fabric as I do colored fabric, not counting borders, and this quilt is probably about the same.

Cut the black joining strips first -- the width-of-quilt strips of "leading" that will join the rows. You'll need (#rows - 1). My quilt had six rows, so I needed five strips that were a few inches more than 48" long (the width of the pieced section of the quilt). (Of course I couldn't count when I took the photo, so imagine here that I have five strips set aside instead of four.) If you're cutting border fabric from the black, now's a good time. Ditto if you're doing black binding.

To make piecing faster, I just cut up all the rest of the two yards of black I had into 1" strips, cutting along the length of fabric so I could chain piece. Be sure to re-square periodically as you're cutting to avoid dog-legs at the folds.



Figuring your finished measurements:

The quilt above has 24 log cabin blocks and measures 60" x 84", including 6" borders. (Finished size, 6½" unfinished.) Without borders, it was 48" x 72", or 4 blocks by 6 blocks. Because the blocks measure 12", the math is easy: Desired # of feet across x desired # of ft. up and down. If you want a 7' x 8' quilt, you'd need 56 blocks.

I chose the 3" strip size for light and dark fabrics because it made the quilt fast and easy, and the wider width allows the colors to not be overpowered by the black. But the pattern is flexible enough to use other widths if you want. (More details on resizing at the bottom.)

Layout:

You can use any log cabin layout for your quilt. I chose the crosses because it looked good with the twin size I was planning. The 12" blocks are larger than the Log Cabin standard, so a large-scale pattern like Barn Raising might not show up in a smaller quilt as well as it would with smaller blocks. Do a google image search for "Log Cabin Quilts" and play around with your blocks to find an arrangement you like before you start sewing them together.

Making the quilt:

Cut your dark and light fabrics into 3"-wide strips, and your black fabric into 1" strips. Then start strip piecing the black to the colors/lights with a ¼" seam allowance.



Clip pieces apart. Do not press. (It won't ruin anything if you press, but it actually makes measurements harder, plus you'll burn your fingers because the fabric is so narrow.)

One of your 3" squares in each block will not need black fabric. It doesn't matter if it's the dark one or the light one, or if it's the dark on some blocks and the light on others. All that matters is that you end up with a dark and a light 3" square for each block with only one black strip between the two. (See photo below.)

Cut the pieces. With the black still right-sides-together with the colors, cut the individual pieces. For each block, you will need

Light: Cut one each 3", 6" and 9" pieces from the 3" light strips.

Dark: Cut one each 3", 6", 9" and 12" pieces from the 3" dark strips. (In this photo, the blue 3" square is the one with no black leading.)



If you want your lights to be the predominant color, reverse the numbers.

Sew the block together in standard log cabin fashion: Join the two 3" pieces, black in the middle. (I don't always have a perfect $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam, so I square up at each step to be sure I have a perfect 12" block at the end.) Then add a 6" dark on the right.



Then a 6" light on the bottom, a 9" light on the left, a 9" dark on top, and a 12" dark on the right. *Et voilà*, you are done with your 12" block. (I told you it was simple!)



It works well to strip piece several blocks at once to save time.

Join blocks into rows

Once you've finished your blocks, had fun playing with your layouts, and have decided which looks best with your blocks, join the blocks into rows by adding black 1" strips to one side of all your blocks in each row, except for either the far-right or far-left block. Then join the blocks to each other, exactly like you joined your pieces to each other. Be sure to pin anyplace the black line of the "leading" continues in a straight line from one block into another.

After you finish your rows, add your width-of-quilt joining strips to all rows except either top or bottom, then join the rows.

Add borders and quilt as desired. Enjoy!



Resizing strips/blocks:

This quilt block can be done with any strip width. Keep in mind that the narrower your colored fabrics, the greater the chance that the black will overpower. But I think it would work fine with jelly rolls, i.e. 2 ½" strips. For those, your piece sizes would be 2½", 5", 7½", and 10", and your block size would be 10". If you want, you can make the block bigger by adding one 10" light on the bottom and one 12 ½" light on the left. (Or you can reverse all colors, substituting colors for light and vice versa, to keep dark as the dominant color.) Finished block size with 2.5" x 2 extra logs would be 12.5".

Have fun!

This is a copyrighted pattern made available to you free of charge. Like it? I'd be honored if you'd use the money you'd spend on the pattern otherwise to make a donation to an organization to help others. Or you can make them a quilt!

Feel free to enjoy and share this pattern, but please don't sell it as your own or try to profit from it otherwise. (Teaching classes is fine as long as you give credit and a link to my website, www.caritasquilts.com.) I'd also appreciate credit where possible, especially by using the name, Stained Glass Log Cabin, whenever you write something about your quilt. And PLEASE do not market anything from this pattern under any name other than Stained Glass Log Cabin with my name, Laurie Biethan. Since I'm giving away the pattern for free, the name is all I have and the only way I can keep track of where it ends up! Thanks so much!

I'd love to receive photos of your finished quilts using the pattern. Email them to me at [eastsidequilter\[at\]aol\[dot\]com](mailto:eastsidequilter[at]aol[dot]com). That's also where you can send any questions.

Enjoy!

Laurie Biethan