

Spool Block



The Spool Block is very old, dating back to at least the 1800s. It likely came about when thread was sold commercially on wooden spools. The representation of this spool has a different shape from the wooden spools some of us have collected in antiques stores. (Jan's collected a few...)

This is a scrap-friendly block and we have varied the "thread" on the spool using 4 fabrics or a stripe. You will choose the "thread" fabrics and the fabric for the spool itself.

This makes a 12 inch finished block.

We have provided the background fabric, Fabric A.

You will choose Fabric B which is the spool and 4 fabrics or a stripe to make up the Fabric C—the "thread".

SUPPLIES:

Background Fabric A-provided

Spool Fabric B—you will need 2 pieces 7"x7". You will use 1 piece to make half square triangles (HSTs); the second piece will be used to make 2 rectangles for the spool top and bottom pieces.

Thread Fabric C—you will need 4 strips of different fabrics, 2 x 6 ½ inches each. You can use a multi-colored stripe or a 2 color stripe. If you use a stripe, Fabric C would be a 6 ½ inch square, as noted in the cutting instructions.

CUTTING:

FABRIC A (provided 2 white 7"x7" squares):

Cut 1-6½ inch square of the background fabric provided AND

Cut 2 strips 3½ x 6 ½ inches.

FABRIC B:

Cut 1-6½ inch square of your spool fabric for the HST AND

Cut 2 strips 3½ x 6 ½ inches from your 7 inch square.

FABRIC C:

Cut your 4 "thread" fabrics into strips 2 x 6 ½ inches.

For one striped fabric, cut a 6 ½ inch square

HOW TO MAKE YOUR SPOOL BLOCK

1. Follow the directions below for fast-piecing the half-square triangles (HST) using the background Fabric A and Fabric B, your spool fabric.
2. Sew 4 Fabric C strips together unless you are using a stripe. Be sure to place the strips or stripes going horizontally.
3. Lay out the pieces as shown.
4. Sew the pieces together to make 3 rows as shown

How to Create Four Half-Square Triangles (HST) at a Time

Note: This method creates bias edges, so it is recommended that the blocks be treated gently and well treated with starch or something like Mary Ellen's Best Press as the blocks are ironed.

These instructions will product somewhat oversized blocks that you will trim down to 3-1/2".

1. Take 1 of the white 7" background square provided in your BOM packet and trim it to 6 ½" square. Match it, right sides together, with the 6-1/2" fabric you've chosen for the spool. Line up all 4 sides.
2. Using a ¼ " seam allowance, stitch along the perimeter of the square. You will stitch all 4 sides and finish with a standard knot/backstitch.
3. Press to set the seam, using a liberal dose of starch or Best Press on both sides.
4. Draw a diagonal line from corner to corner, then repeat the diagonal line connecting the other comers.
5. Cut along the diagonal lines. You will have 4 triangles; open them to find half square triangles.
6. Press the seam toward the darker fabric, using a liberal dose of starch or Best Press to avoid stretching the bias edges.
7. Trim the blocks to 3-1/2".
8. Sew the rows together to complete the block as shown.
9. Press the top and bottom rows to the outside.
10. Admire your unique Spool Block!

Need additional help/advice?

<https://stitchobsessed.com/half-square-triangle-chart/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tfdlR1N1vEU>