

City Traffic

DESIGNED AND MADE BY PAM ROCCO

“In the beginner’s mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert’s mind there are few.” This Zen proverb inspired Pam Rocco of Santa Cruz, California, to look to children’s art as a source of quilt design inspiration. In the spirit of Rocco’s approach to design, we’re giving you the basic components and approximate measurements for her seven different vehicle blocks. Keep your tape measure and scissors close at hand to cut your blocks the size you want. Read the basic instructions, then put your “beginner’s mind” – or the minds of the kids in your life – to work to make your own version of *City Traffic*.

You can read Rocco’s full column, “Words to Quilt By,” in the October/November 2012 issue of *Quilters Newsletter*. *City Traffic* was machine quilted by Linda Barbin of Hollister, California. ▶

MATERIALS

Assorted Medium/Dark Solids

Yellow/Orange Solids

Background Fabric

Also Needed: foundation paper

TECHNIQUES USED: foundation piecing, improvisational piecing, machine piecing, machine quilting

Make sure your printer is set to 100% “no scaling” before you print your pattern.



Basic Instructions

Choose fabrics for each block: a medium or dark solid as the main vehicle fabric; a yellow or orange solid for the windshield(s); a dark solid for the wheels; and an additional fabric for the tailpipe if called for. You will also need a background fabric, which in *City Traffic* is light blue.

Each block finishes at 6" high and is made up of three horizontal components – a windshield unit, the vehicle body and a wheels unit. The blocks are constructed in the same general manner regardless of what vehicle you're making. For each block you will need the following:

VEHICLE BODY

The vehicle bodies finish at 2½" tall, but the length is determined by the type of vehicle you want to make. Cut a strip from your main vehicle fabric that is 3" wide and trim it to the desired length – don't forget to add ½" for seam allowances (Fig. 1). Add a tailpipe unit if desired.

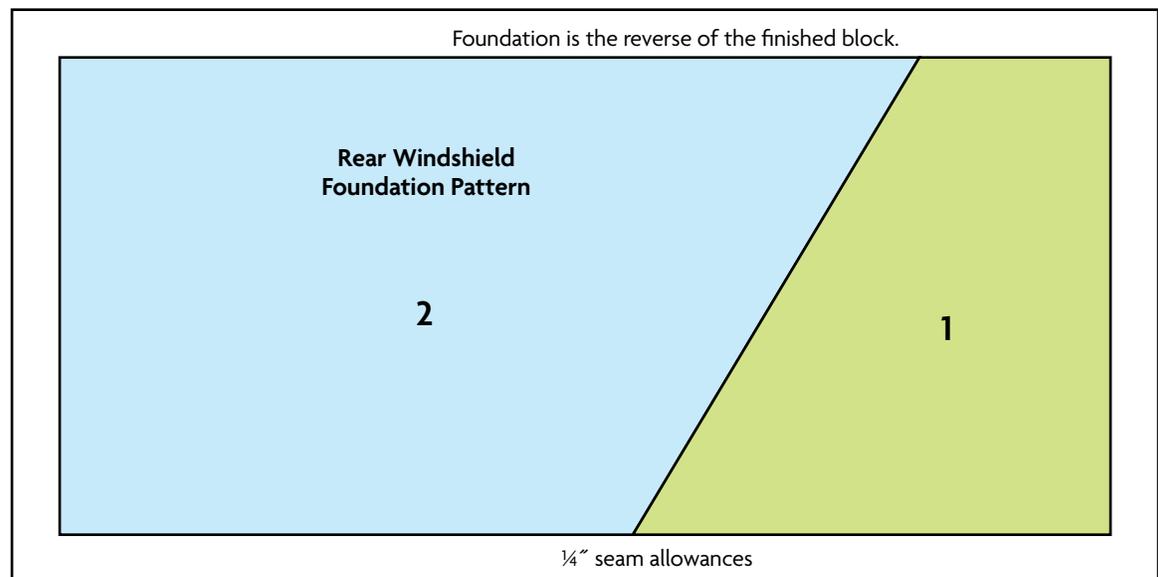
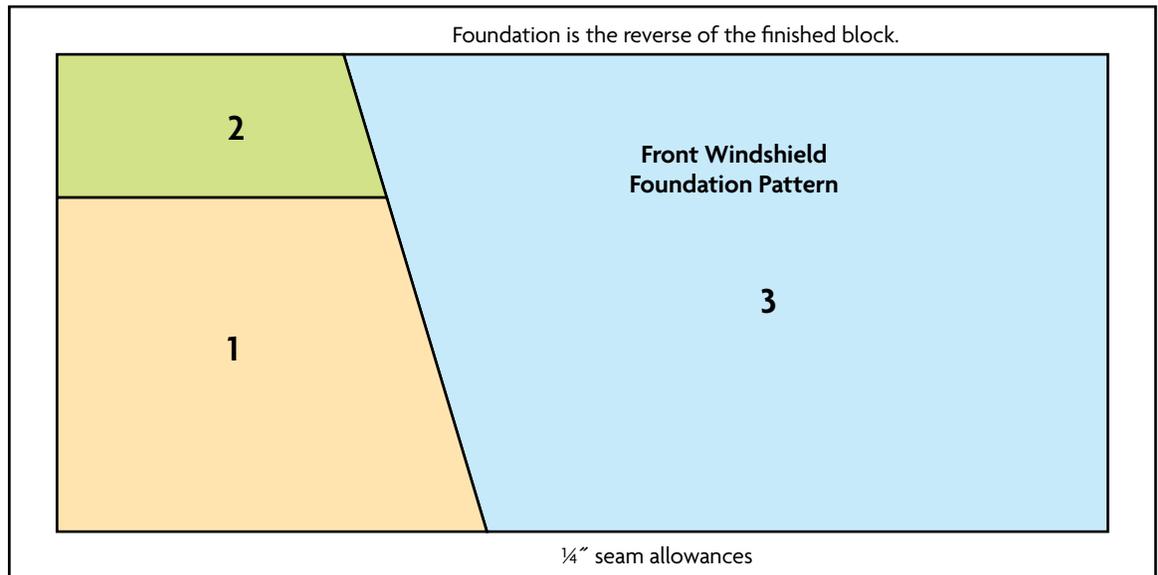
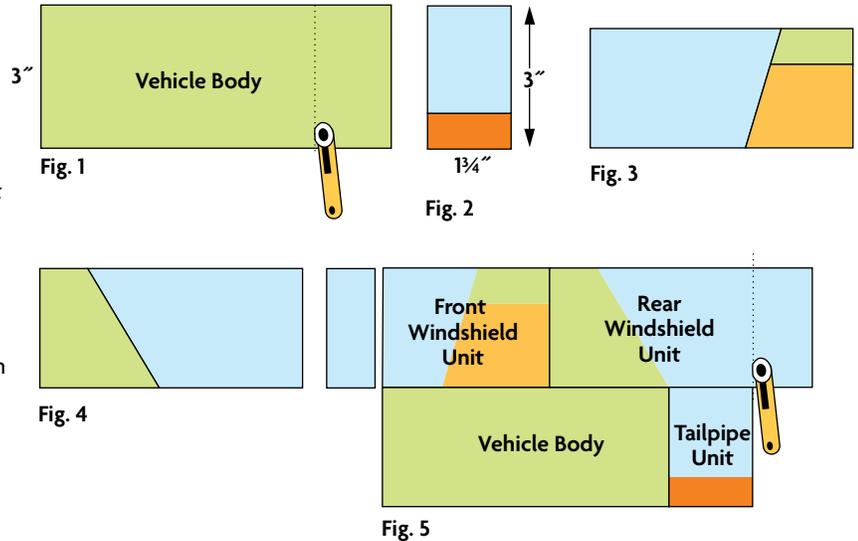
TAILPIPE UNIT (OPTIONAL)

Join a 1¼" x 1" dark solid patch to a 1¼" x 2½" background patch (Fig. 2).

WINDSHIELD UNITS

For each vehicle, print or trace a foundation pattern for the front windshield. Foundation piece the front windshield using your main vehicle fabric, yellow or orange for the windshield, and the background fabric (Fig. 3). Print or trace a foundation pattern for the rear windshield if called for. Foundation piece the rear windshield using the main vehicle fabric and the background fabric (Fig. 4), or piece

the rest of the windshield unit according to the instructions given for the specific blocks. Join the foundation units and patches to make the windshield unit then trim it as necessary to make it fit the length of the vehicle body. Join the windshield unit to the vehicle body (Fig. 5). ▶



FREE PATTERN

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WHEELS UNIT

For each vehicle, cut two $2\frac{1}{2}$ " x $1\frac{1}{2}$ " patches from a dark solid for the wheels. Cut a $1\frac{1}{2}$ " strip from the background fabric. Arrange the wheel patches along the bottom edge of the vehicle body to determine their placement. When you are satisfied, improvisationally piece the wheels unit by joining the wheel patches to patches cut from the background strip. Trim as necessary to make it fit the length of the vehicle block (Fig. 6).

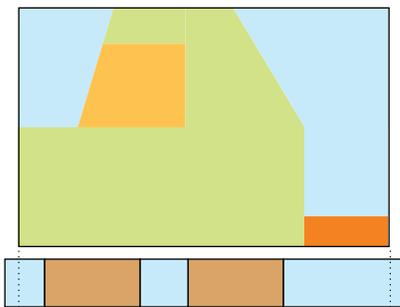


Fig. 6

Making the Vehicle Blocks

Referring to the basic instructions above, piece patches and foundation units as described for each type of vehicle.

PICKUP TRUCK

1 Rocco's pickup truck blocks finish at approximately $9\frac{1}{4}$ " long. Decide how long you want your pickup to be and cut a vehicle body patch to this length plus $\frac{1}{2}$ " for seam allowances.

2 Foundation piece the front windshield. Join a $1\frac{1}{2}$ " x 3 " patch of your main vehicle fabric to the right edge of the foundation unit to make the truck cab (Fig. 7). Position the truck cab along the vehicle body. When you are satisfied with the placement, measure the distance from the right raw edge of the truck cab to the right raw edge of the vehicle body. Cut a 3 " strip from the background fabric then trim it to the length you just measured plus $\frac{1}{2}$ " for seam allowances. Join the background patch to the truck cab to make the windshield unit then join it to the vehicle body. Trim raw edges as necessary.

3 Piece a wheels unit as described at left. Join the wheels unit to the bottom of the vehicle body to make a pickup truck block.



Fig. 7

SMART CAR

1 Rocco's smart car blocks finish at approximately $7\frac{1}{2}$ " long including the tailpipe. Decide how long you want your smart car to be and cut a vehicle body patch to this length plus $\frac{1}{2}$ " for seam allowances. Add a tailpipe unit.

2 Foundation piece a front windshield and a rear windshield, then join them to make the windshield unit. Referring to the quilt photo, position the windshield unit along the vehicle body, aligning the seams of the rear windshield with the vehicle body patch as shown. Join the windshield unit to the vehicle body. Trim raw edges as necessary.

3 Piece a wheels unit as described at left. Join the wheels unit to the bottom of the vehicle body to make a smart car block.



SEDAN

1 Rocco's sedan blocks finish at approximately 10 " long including the tailpipe. Decide how long you want your sedan to be and cut a vehicle body patch to this length plus $\frac{1}{2}$ " for seam allowances. Add a tailpipe unit.

2 Foundation piece a front windshield and a rear windshield, then join them to make the windshield unit. Position the windshield unit along the vehicle body. Join the windshield unit to the vehicle body. Trim raw edges as necessary.

3 Piece a wheels unit as described at left. Join the wheels unit to the bottom of the vehicle body to make a sedan block.



BUS

1 Rocco's bus block finishes at approximately $11\frac{1}{4}$ " long. Decide how long you want your bus to be and cut a vehicle body patch to this length plus $\frac{1}{2}$ " for seam allowances.

2 Foundation piece the front windshield. Depending on the length of the bus, cut three patches approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ " x 3 " and two patches approximately $2\frac{3}{4}$ " x $1\frac{1}{4}$ " from the main vehicle fabric. Cut two patches approximately $2\frac{3}{4}$ " x $2\frac{1}{4}$ " from the windshield fabric. Join the patches to make the bus roof and windows, then join the front windshield to make the windshield unit. Join the windshield unit to the vehicle body. Trim raw edges as necessary.

3 Piece a wheels unit as described at left. Join the wheels unit to the bottom of the vehicle body to make a bus block. ▶



Putting It All Together

On a design wall or large, flat surface, arrange your vehicle blocks in rows of roughly even length. When you are satisfied with the arrangement, cut sashes from your background fabric to join the blocks. Adjust the width of the sashes as needed to make the rows even with one another; the vertical rows in *City Traffic* are 55" long. From a medium solid fabric, cut strips 6½" wide and trim them to the length of the block rows. Matching centers and ends, join the block rows alternately with the solid strips. Measure the quilt vertically through the center and cut two borders this length that are 7½" wide. Add these borders to the sides of the quilt. In the same manner, measure the quilt horizontally through the center, including the borders you just added. Cut two borders this length that are also 7½" wide. Add these borders to the top and bottom of the quilt.

Layer the backing, batting and quilt top. Baste. Quilt an allover design or quilt as desired. Bind the quilt to finish. 

BIG RIG

1 Rocco's big rig blocks finish at approximately 14" long; the cab portions are approximately 3¼" long and the trailer portions are approximately 9½" long. Decide how long you want your trailer to be. Cut a dark solid patch 5½" tall and the desired length plus ½" for seam allowances for the trailer patch.

2 Foundation piece a front windshield. Decide how long you want your cab to be and cut a vehicle body patch to this length plus ½" for seam allowances. Join the windshield unit to the vehicle body and trim raw edges as necessary to make the cab.

3 Join a 1½" x 4" background patch to a 1½" x 2" dark solid patch to make a connector unit (Fig. 8). Referring to the block photo for placement, join the cab, connector unit and trailer patch.

4 Cut patches for a wheels unit as described in "Basic Instructions;" cut an additional wheel to go under the cab. Piece the wheels unit then join it to the bottom of the vehicle body to make a big rig block.

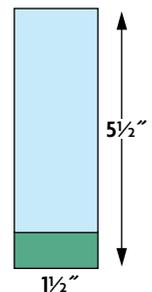


Fig. 8

VAN

1 Rocco's van block finishes at approximately 9" long. Decide how long you want your van to be and cut a vehicle body patch to this length plus ½" for seam allowances.

2 Foundation piece the front windshield. Position the front windshield along the vehicle body. When you are satisfied with the placement, measure the distance from the right raw edge of the front windshield to the right raw edge of the vehicle body. Cut a 3" strip from the main vehicle fabric then trim it to the length you just measured plus ½" for seam allowances. Join this patch to the front windshield to make the windshield unit, then join it to the vehicle body. Trim raw edges as necessary.

3 Piece a wheels unit as described in "Basic Instructions." Join the wheels unit to the bottom of the vehicle body to make a pickup truck block.



TRAILER

1 Print or trace a foundation pattern for the trailer unit. Foundation piece the unit.

2 Piece a wheels unit as described in "Basic Instructions." Join the wheels unit to the bottom of the trailer unit to make a trailer block.



Pattern for
the Trailer on the
next page.

