

Luscious Luster

By Julia Graves
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40" x 40" Finished Quilt

Fabric Materials:

- **Black background** - 1-1/4 yards
- **If using eight colors, for each of the eight colors:**
5-7 strips in a full range of value, at least 9" long by various widths (between 1-1/4" - 2-1/2"). These must total at least 9" wide after being sewn together, so account for seam allowances.
- **If using one color family only:**
select 5-7 fat quarters, one of each value to progress from light to dark
- **Border fabric** - 5/8 yard
- **Binding fabric** - 3/8 yard
- **Backing fabric** - 1-1/4 yards (if width of fabric is at least 44"; get extra fabric may be needed if quilting with a longarm)
- **Batting** - 44" x 44" (this allows for 2" extra around each side; 48" x 48" for longarm quilting)

Create a quilt filled with light moving across the quilt by carefully arranging fabrics from light to dark.

This pattern can make great use of your scrap pile or a fat quarter bundle! To create luminosity, tone-on-tone fabrics, solid color fabrics, or fabrics that look solid work best.

Try a version in multiple colors (I used eight colors - magenta, violet, purple, blue, blue-green, green-blue, green and olive green). The black background fabric sets off all the colors and makes them shine.

To achieve the sense of light moving across the quilt, it is very important to have a large value range in the fabrics from very light to very dark with a smooth transition in between. I recommend using 5-7 fabrics in each color family.

Cutting

This quilt is made with eight strip-pieced color blocks that are paired with a black square and cut diagonally to form 16 half square triangle (HST) blocks.

Note that each strip-pieced color block yields one HST block that has more of the darker fabrics and one HST block that has more of the lighter fabrics. Because having the very light fabric is important to create luster, make the light fabric strip a little wider (2" or more) so that it still shows at least 1-1/2" after trimming and seam allowances.

Cutting (cont.)

Color Strips

- **If cutting from fat quarters**, cut four strips from the long side of each fat quarter (at least 18") in a variety of widths between 1-1/2" - 2-3/4". (If you like more regularity, cut the same width from each value.) Leave the lightest and darkest strips a little wider than the rest so that they will still be visible after trimming the block down to 9" and allowing for the seam.
- **If using scraps**, select strips at least 9" long. To see if you need to trim any strip widths, add up the width of the strips you plan on using for each color block, then subtract out 1/2" for each seam. If the total is more than 9", trim width from some of the middle value strips to bring the total down to 9". Leave the lightest and darkest strips a little wider than the rest so that they will still be visible after trimming the block down to 9" and allowing for the seam.
- Here are some sample cutting plans that will total 9" wide after sewing together:

5 fabrics		
Value	Cut Strip Width	Finished Strip Width
Very Light	2-1/2"	2"
Light-Medium	2"	1-1/2"
Medium	2-1/4"	1-3/4"
Medium-Dark	1-3/4"	1-1/4"
Very Dark	2-1/2"	2
Total Width	11"	9" Unfinished (8-1/2" Finished)

7 fabrics		
Value	Cut Strip Width	Finished Strip Width
Very Light	2"	1-1/2"
Light	1-3/4"	1-1/4"
Light-Medium	1-1/2"	1"
Medium	1-3/4"	1-1/4"
Medium-Dark	1-3/4"	1-1/4"
Dark	1-1/2"	1
Very Dark	1-1/2"	1-1/4"
Total Width	11"	9" Unfinished (8-1/2" Finished)

Black Fabric

Cut two strips 9" wide by the width of fabric (WOF) and sub-cut into four 9-inch squares for eight squares total.

Borders

Cut two strips 32-1/2" long and 4-1/2" wide for side borders. Cut two strips 40-1/2" long and 4-1/2" wide for top and bottom borders. Note - these are exact measurements. You may want to add additional length for insurance.

Binding

Cut five strips 2-1/2" wide by WOF

Sewing

- Sew the strip sets together, in value order from light to dark. Press seams to darker fabric. See Figure 1. If using fat quarters and long strips, sub-cut into two 9" units.
- Draw a line diagonally on the wrong side of each black square (a white marking pencil works well).
- Layer each strip square with a black 9" square, right sides together (RST) with the black square on top.



IMPORTANT NOTE: Fabrics must all be oriented the same way so the triangles come out correctly. When sandwiched, always have the lightest fabric of the strip set farthest away from you (darkest fabric closest to you), and have the marked diagonal line on the black fabric go from the bottom left corner to the top right corner. See Figure 2. If you are inconsistent, your triangles will not spin in the same direction.

- Stitch a scant 1/4" away on both sides of the marked diagonal line (dashed lines represent sewing lines in Figure 2).
- Cut along the marked diagonal line (solid line in Figure 2). You will now have two HST squares, one with a lot of light fabric showing and one with a lot of dark fabric showing. See Figure 3.
- Press seam to the black fabric.
- **Square blocks to 8-1/2"**



Figure 1 - Strip set sewn together



Figure 2 - Layered squares

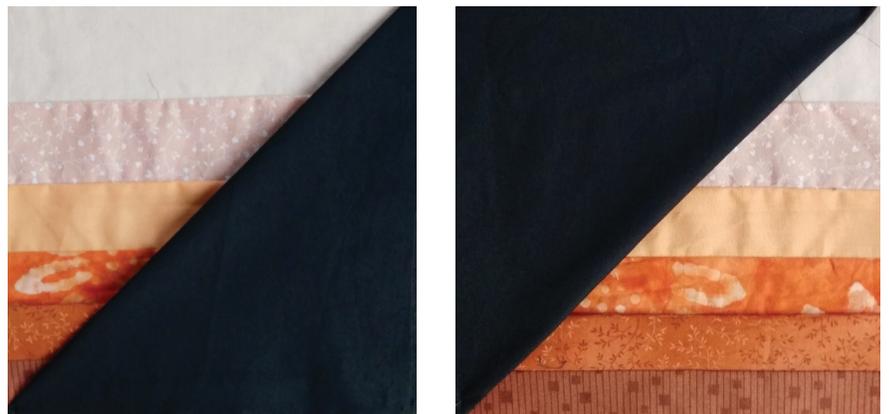


Figure 3 - Each set of layered squares will yield two blocks - one with more light fabrics and one with more dark fabrics.

Sewing (cont.)

Layout and Sew Top

- Arrange the squares on a design wall following the photo of the finished quilt, or in whatever way looks good to you. It's your quilt!
- Sew blocks into rows. Sew rows together.
- Sew side borders on. Sew top and bottom borders on.

Finishing

- Layer quilt top with batting and backing. I quilted molar feathered arcs in the strip sections, loop feathers in the black section and arcs in the border using monofilament thread, but a medium gray would also work well. See Figures 4, 5 and 6.



Figure 4 - Feathered Arcs in the strip sets



Figure 5 - Loop feathers in the black section



Figure 6 - Arcs in the border

Bonus Instructions for a Sofa Throw

Make a sofa throw version (56" x 72") by making 48 blocks (3 times as many). Borders will be cut 4-1/2" x 64-1/2" and 4-1/2" x 56-1/2". In this version, I used dark brown instead of black for a softer look.

Pink Ribbon

