

## **Quilt As You Go Log Cabin block**

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Quilt As You Go (QAYG) quilt blocks were first made popular in the 1960's, which is about as far back as I can remember. Georgia Bonesteel wrote several well known books on the technique which she called "lap quilting" and incorporated QAYG. Since then, the technique has traveled in and out of the spotlight and been updated.

QAYG blocks offer several benefits. First and foremost, in Georgia's own words, "the faucet can drip, the creek can rise, and the sewing room can be a mess—but I have control over the outcome of my pieced blocks". QAYG blocks offer the quilter a time-saving process that quilts the blocks as they are assembled. *For those quilters who would rather not tackle free motion quilting, this is a wonderful option.* And for those who would like to take on a timeless technique...here we go....

For purposes of this tutorial, we will be assembling a **Log Cabin** block, the completed version of which will measure 10 1/2". As the quilter, you have choices throughout the process. I enjoy using the multitude of scraps I've collected but you can choose to cut the "logs" from your yardage. Begin by deciding whether you wish to make your block multi-colored or monochromatic. Would you prefer to use the traditional light vs. dark placement, repeat fabrics (or not) or strive for a scrappy effect. All strips should be cut 1 3/4" wide. No further prep is needed. You will be cutting the length of the logs as you go.

### Materials needed are:

Sewing machine with regular sewing foot or walking foot attached  
Fabrics for the top, batting for the middle and muslin for the backing  
Fabric scissors, pressing implement and pressing surface, snips  
Thread that doubles for sewing seams and as topstitching

Optional but nice to have: wool pressing mat and small travel iron or small roller, hopefully next to your machine. A 10 1/2 square cutting ruler is extremely helpful if you plan to make this one of your favorite techniques and like the larger sized block. Using a square ruler affords you the opportunity to audition how your block will be cut before doing so.

## Directions for making a 10 1/2" QAYG Log Cabin block...

1. Cut a piece of backing fabric (muslin is fine) to measure at least 11 1/2" square. Lay your fabric face down. Please a piece of batting the same size on top of it.
2. Choose and cut your fabrics strips to measure 1 3/4" wide. Choose your center fabric and cut it to measure 1 3/4" square.
3. Find the center of your batting/backing sandwich by folding it in half in both directions and marking the center. Do the same with your center square. You may also choose to build your block from a corner area or create a "wonky" block if you're comfortable doing so.
4. Position the center square face up over the center of the batting/backing piece. Sew even rows of parallel topstitching across the square. I prefer to topstitch my rows 3/8" apart which is the measure of from my needle to the edge of my presser foot.
5. Rotate your piece 90 degrees. Lay the second log face down with a short edge matching an end of the square and a side of the second log matching a side of the square. Sew 1/4" seam.
6. Flip the second log facing upwards and press the seam using only heat and the pressure of the iron. Steam tends to distort the bias of fabric scraps. A wool pressing mat and a small travel iron are my favorite choices. A second option is to use a small sewing roller to press the seam. Finger pressing would be a third choice.



7. Use fabric scissors to trim the length of the second log to equal the edge of the center square. Sew rows of topstitching across the second log perpendicular to those topstitched in the center square. Turn the block 90 degrees.
8. Choose a third log and continue the process until your block measures nearly 11" square.
9. Use a ruler to trim your log cabin quilted block to measure 10 1/2" x 10 1/2".



Log cabin blocks are indeed timeless and work well when paired with a multitude of other blocks. They act as a stash buster and all colors and fabric patterns work. In addition, when sewn using the QAYG technique, this block can be sewn and quilted in under 10 minutes.