

# ROCKFORD TREADLE & ELECTRIC SEWING MACHINES

## The Free Sewing Machine

In 1895 the Illinois Sewing Machine Co was founded using assets from the former Royal Sewing Machine Co of Rockford, Illinois. Will C. Free became the president by 1910, and organized a parent company - the Free Sewing Machine Co. Production continued in Rockford until 1958, when it relocated to Los Angeles, California. Manufacture of the machines finally ceased about 1969.

### Rockford Sewing Machines

#### Treadle and Electric Styles

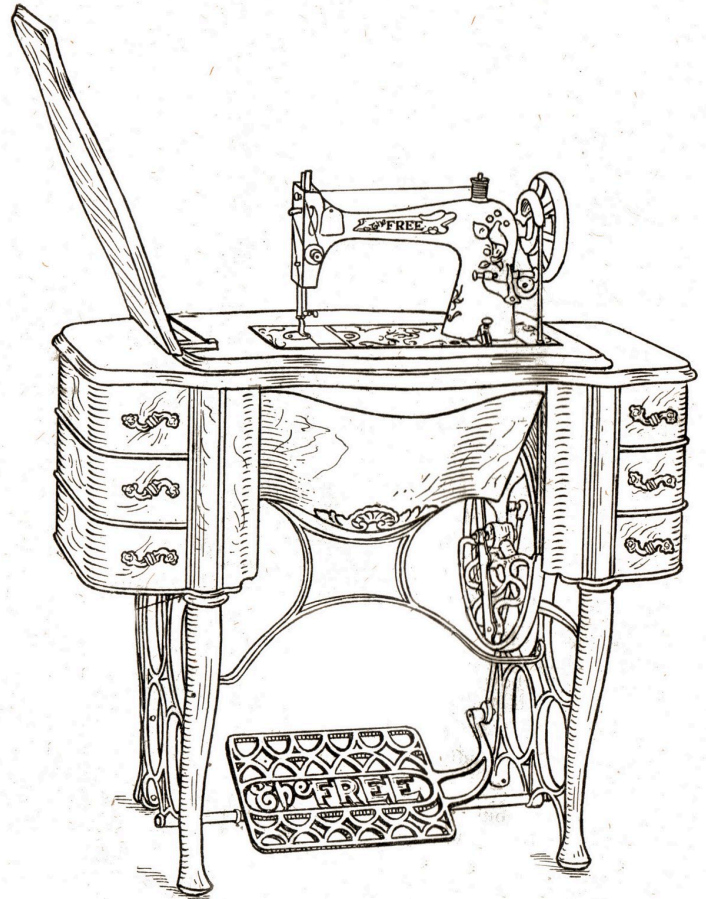
Desks, cabinets and stands which will add to the attractiveness of the furniture in any home. The prices are much lower than you would expect to pay for these high grade machines.

*Electric Styles Have Westinghouse Motor Built in the Head*

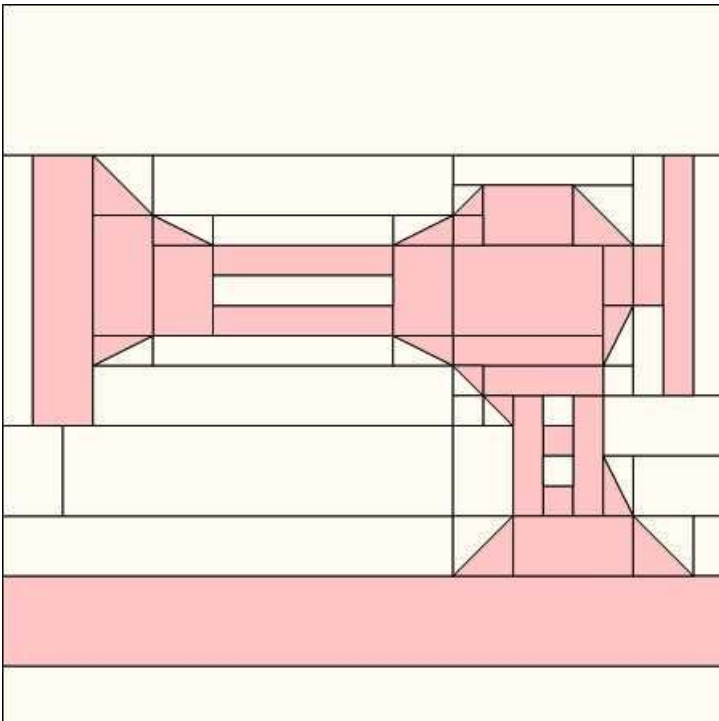


MANUFACTURED BY  
**Free Sewing Machine Co.**  
Rockford, Illinois

(Picture Courtesy of  
Dorothy Brumleve)



For our final month, we are making an 18 ½" square sewing machine block. This is my representation of the 1895 Free Sewing Machine produced here in Rockford, IL.



This Block has about 70 pieces, so lots of bits to keep track of. I have divided the block up into sections and this helps tremendously with putting the block together. One thing that has greatly helped me with this project was making little “trays” made of batting wrapped cardboard from about 8” square to a 12” square. I simply took a piece of batting, trimming it 1” wider than my square, and making it long enough to fold in half to make an envelope to slide the cardboard in. I used ¼” seam allowance. These worked really well to keep track of the little bits of fabric.

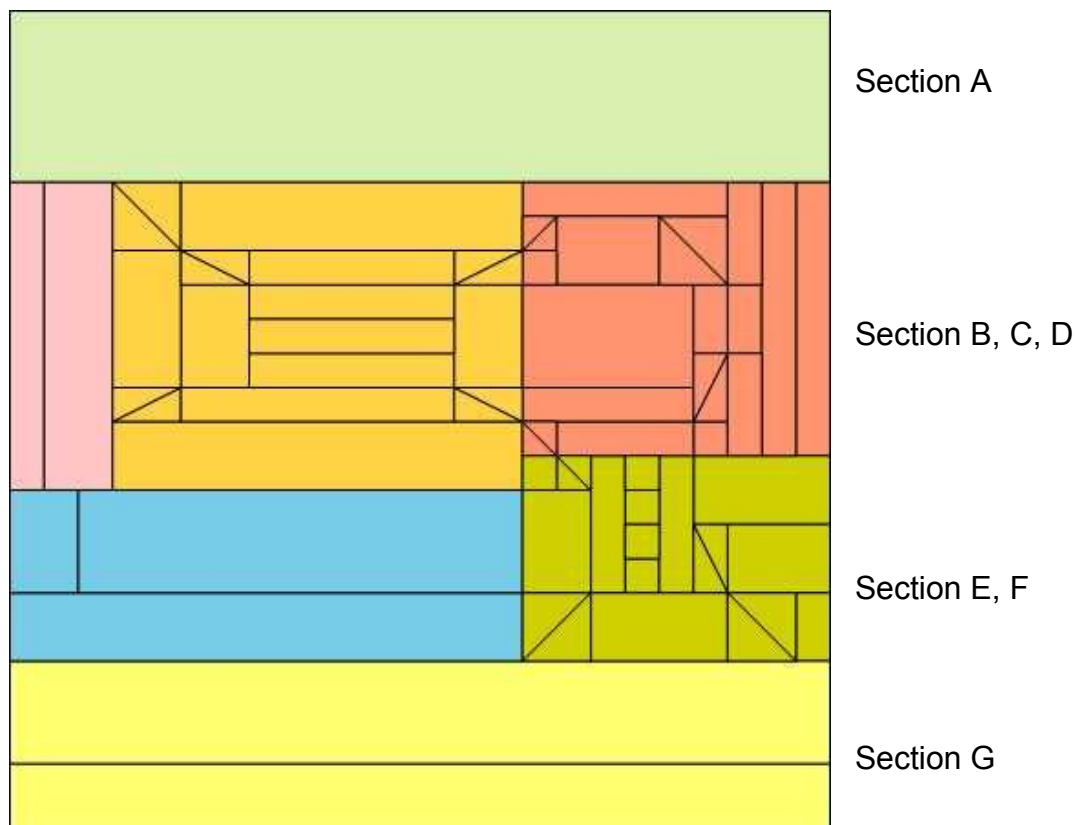
#### NOTES:

- Accuracy will be key
  - Use a scant ¼”
- We will cut and sew all of the triangle units before we start the sections, along with the smallest squares
- As we do each section, measure the size of your finished piece to verify your finished piece will work. Checking frequently will help you make corrections before they become big problems
- It’s handy to have a design board big enough to hold an 18 ½” square block that you can stick each completed section on.
- Be sure to follow the order of sewing or you may end up doing some unsewing.
- Take your time
- Have fun with this adventure!

What color will your sewing machine be?

You will need fabric for your sewing machine, the background, and a tiny bit for accent

Below is an image showing the different sections we will be making.



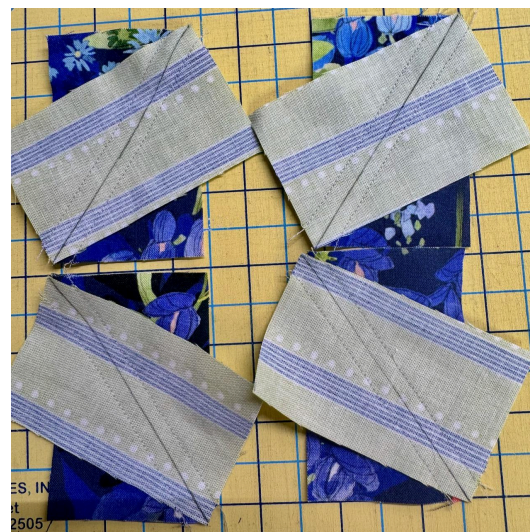
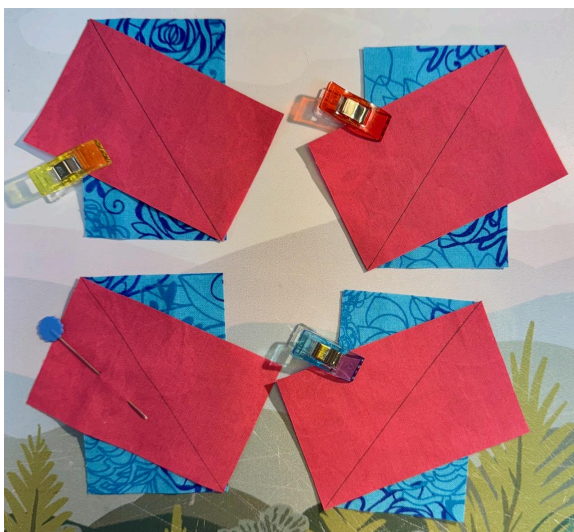
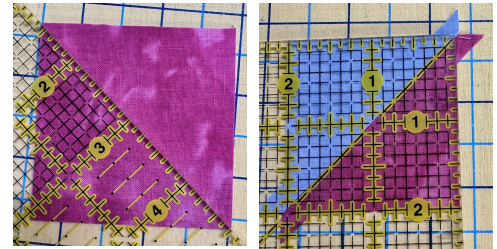
Let's get started!

You will need three fabrics: Background, sewing machine fabric, accent (on the sewing machine)

First we will prepare some smaller subunits that will be used in the Sections we will be making. Make these and set them aside.

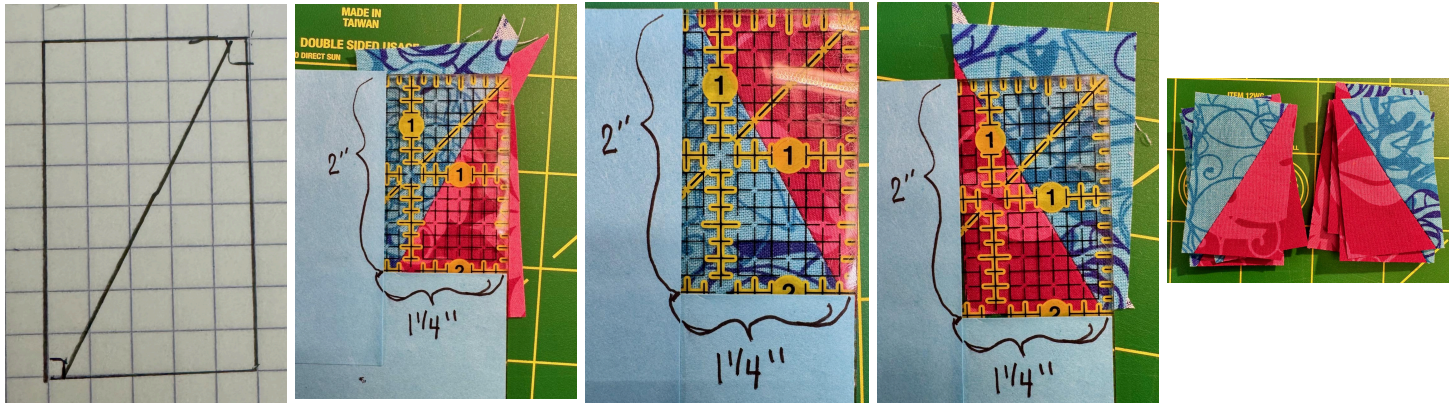
Triangle units!

1. Make four 2" square, half-square triangles
  - a. From the two main fabrics, cut two  $2\frac{3}{8}$ " squares
  - b. Place squares right sides together
  - c. Cut diagonally
  - d. Sew each triangle pair using  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance
  - e. Press seams open, trim to 2" square
2. Make three  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " square, half-square triangles
  - a. From the two main fabrics, cut two  $1\frac{5}{8}$ " squares
  - b. Follow steps b through d from above
  - c. Press open, trim to  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " square
    - i. You do end up with an extra block if you sew all four triangle units, (seeds for another quilt - I have so many seeds!)
3. Make six Half-rectangle triangles, finished at  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " X 2": BUT NOTE, 3 of the diagonal lines will go bottom left to top right, the other 3 the diagonals go bottom right to top left.  
\* \* \*Refer to this reference for detailed instructions on these tricky guys! ("Understanding the Half Rectangle Triangle": <https://www.alderwood-studio.com/blog/half-rectangle-triangles>)
  - a. From both the sewing machine fabric and the background fabric, cut four  $2$ " X  $3\frac{1}{8}$ " rectangles
  - b. On the back of 2 of the lighter fabrics, draw a diagonal line from bottom left to top right. On the back of the other 2, draw a diagonal line from bottom right to top left.
  - c. Using the diagonal line, place fabric on angle on top of other fabric matching ends to opposite corners. Pin, (one should be enough)
  - d. Stitch  $\frac{1}{4}$ " on both sides of the line, cut on the line, press the seams open





- e. Here is the tricky part. When trimming each rectangle to  $1\frac{1}{4}" \times 2"$ , you need to line up the ruler so that the corner of the ruler lines up  $\frac{1}{8}"$  to the right of the tip of the top triangle. Line up the bottom left corner  $\frac{1}{8}"$  to the left of the diagonal line. (note the hand drawn diagram below)



Set all of these sub-units aside. They will be needed as we assemble the next units

## **PIECING THE SECTIONS:**

The easy ones first:

**Section A:** From Background fabric cut  $4\frac{1}{4}" \times 18\frac{1}{2}"$  (place on top of your design wall)

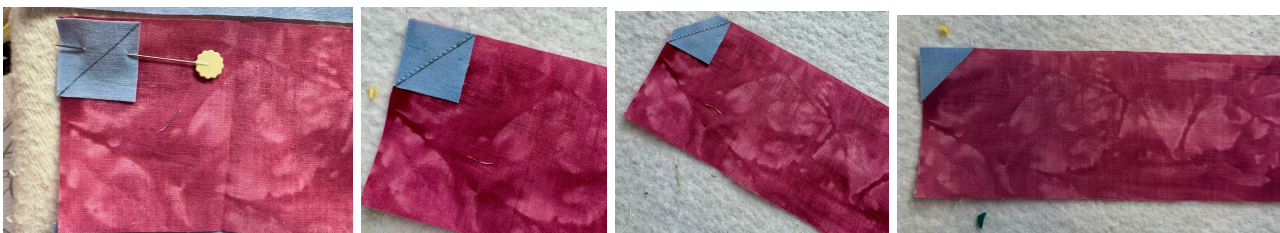
**Section G:** (finishes at  $4\frac{1}{2}" \times 18\frac{1}{2}"$ )

From Background fabric cut (one)  $2\frac{1}{4}" \times 18\frac{1}{2}"$  (place on bottom of your design wall)

Cut (one) 1" square

From Sewing Machine fabric cut  $2\frac{3}{4}" \times 18\frac{1}{2}"$

Piecing section G: draw a diagonal line on the 1" background square. Place this square on the upper left side of the  $2\frac{3}{4}" \times 18\frac{1}{2}"$  rectangle of Sewing Machine fabric as shown in the photo. Stitch on the line, trim seam and press open. Stitch the background rectangle to the bottom of the sewing machine fabric. Press seam. Make sure it finishes at  $4\frac{1}{2}" \times 18\frac{1}{2}"$ . Place on the design wall.



**Section B:** (finishes at  $2\frac{3}{4}" \times 7\frac{1}{4}"$ )

- From background fabric, cut one rectangle  $1\frac{1}{4}" \times 7\frac{1}{4}"$
- From sewing machine fabric, cut one rectangle  $2" \times 7\frac{1}{4}"$

Piecing Section B:

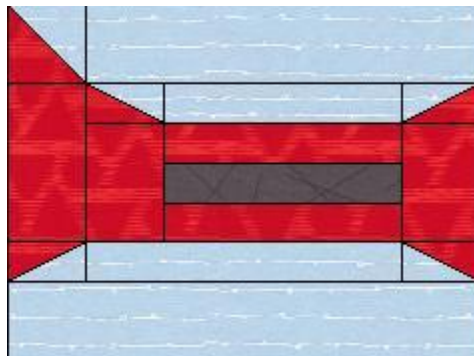
- Stitch the background fabric to the left side of the sewing machine fabric, lengthwise
- Put in place on the design wall





### Section C: (finishes at 7¼" X 9½")

- From background cut:
  - One 2" X 8" rectangle
  - Two 1¼" X 5" rectangles (or optional):
    - One 1¼" X 5" background
    - One 1¼" X 5" accent
  - One 1¼" X 6½" rectangle
  - One 2" X 9½" rectangle
- From sewing machine fabric
  - One 2" X 3½" rectangle
  - Two 2" X 2¾" rectangles
  - Two 1¼" X 5" rectangles



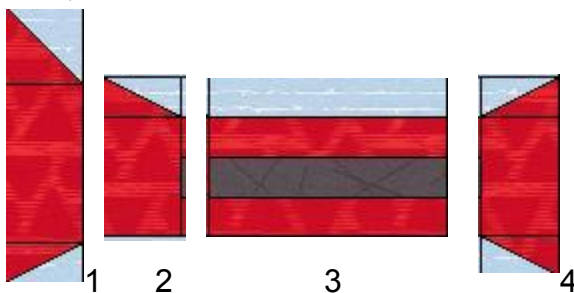
### Piecing Section C:

- Using the diagram of Section C, lay out your block. As you build it, you will be using some of the subunits we pieced in the beginning (a half-square triangle and four of the ½ rectangle triangles)
- Take your time laying these out, making sure the angles are all facing the correct directions
- Using the following sewing order of this section will lead to success!



I organize my pieces into sub sections of a good piecing order. I will show you the order by sharing my progress via the following DIAGRAMS...

FIRST, sew these four subunits:

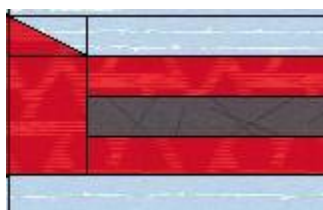


- 1 finishes at (2"x 5½")
- 2 finishes at (2"x 3½")
- 3 finishes at (3½"x 5")
- 4 finishes at (2"x 4¼")



Attach 2 to 3

-finishes at (3½"x 6½")



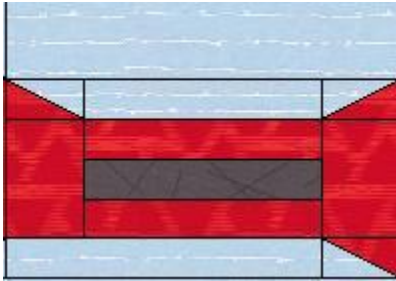
Add 1¼" X 6½" rectangle  
on the bottom

-finishes at (4¼"x 6½")

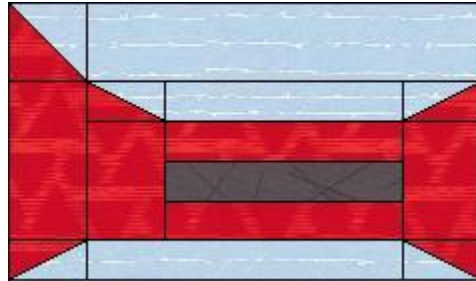


then add sub section 4 to that piece

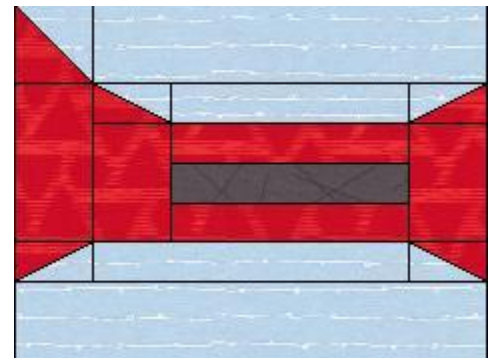
-finishes at (4½"x 8")



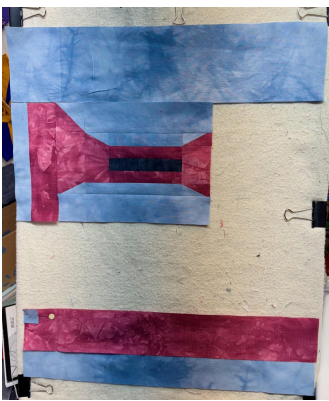
Attach 2" X 8" rectangle  
-finishes at (5 $\frac{3}{4}$ "x 8")



Add subunit 1  
-finishes at (5 $\frac{3}{4}$ "x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ ")



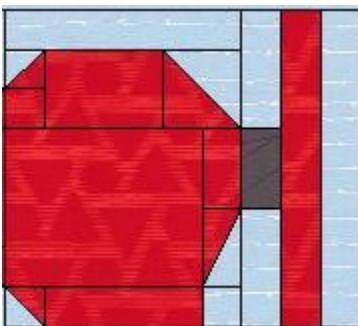
-Add 2" X 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ " rectangle to bottom  
-finishes at (7 $\frac{1}{4}$ "x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ ")



Add completed unit to the design wall

(Design wall progress showing sections A, B, C, and G)

## Section D: (finishes at 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " X 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ ")



### Background:

(one) 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " X 5"  
(two) 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " X 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ "  
(one) 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " X 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ "  
(one) 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " X 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ "

### Sewing Machine:

(one) 2" X 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ "  
(one) 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " X 4  $\frac{1}{4}$ "  
(one) 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " X 2"  
(one) 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " X 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ "  
(one) 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " X 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ "  
(one) 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " X 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

### Accent color:

(one) 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " X 2"

Lay out your block (using previously prepared units that you set aside)



Stitch this block in the following order:



Sew the 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " half-square triangle unit to the 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " square



Then sew the 2" X 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " rectangle to the 2" half square triangle unit



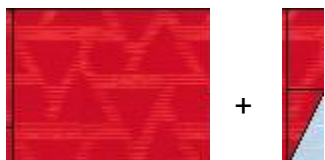
Stitch the two units together as shown



-finishes at (2"x 5")



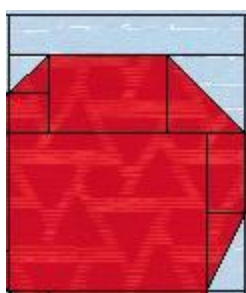
Add the 1¼" X 5" background rectangle to top of that unit.



Sew the 1¼" X 2" sewing machine fabric on top of the half rectangle unit.  
Attach that unit to the right side of the 3½" X 4¼" sewing machine rectangle



-finishes at (3½"x5")

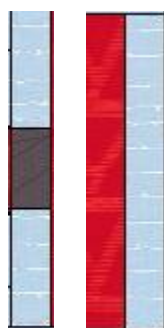
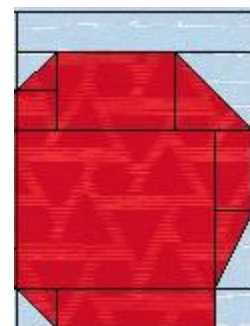


Then you can attach the top unit to the middle unit  
-finishes at (4½"x5")



Piece this row and attach it to the bottom to get this section...

-finishes at (6½"x5")

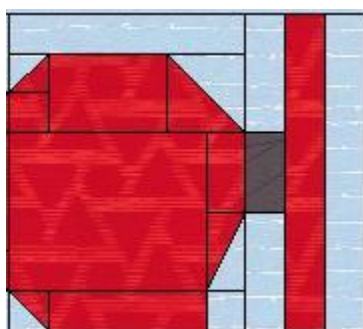
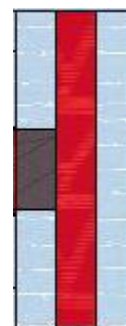


Stitch these two units...

Stitch them together to get this unit.

-finishes at (2¾"x7¼")

Then you can attach this unit to complete  
Section D!



-finishes at (6½"x 7¼")

## Section E: (finishes at 4¼" X 11¾")



### From Background:

Cut (one) 2¼" X 11¾" rectangle

Cut (one) 2¼" X 11¾" rectangle

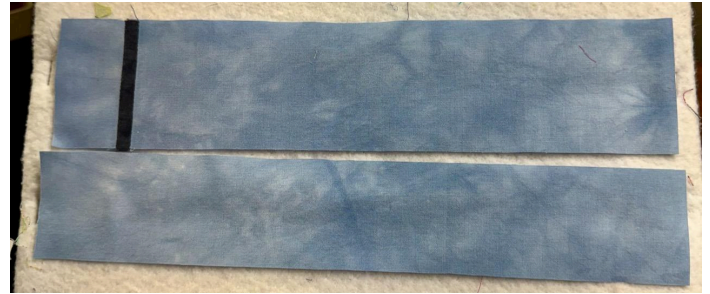
Cut (one) 1¾" X 2½" rectangle

Cut (one) 2½" X 10¼" rectangle

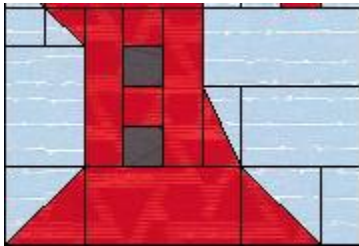
**From Accent:** Cut (one) ¾" X 2½" rectangle

Piecing Section E: Stitch sewing machine needle ( $\frac{3}{4}$ " X  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ") to the right side of the background  $1\frac{3}{4}$ " X  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " rectangle. Then attach background  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " X  $10\frac{1}{4}$ " rectangle to right side of the sewing machine needle. Stitch the remaining  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " X  $10\frac{1}{4}$ " rectangle to the bottom of that piece. Stitch the remaining  $2\frac{1}{2}$ "x  $11\frac{3}{4}$ " to the bottom of that piece.

Add this unit to the design board.



**Section F:** (finishes at 5" X  $7\frac{1}{4}$ "")

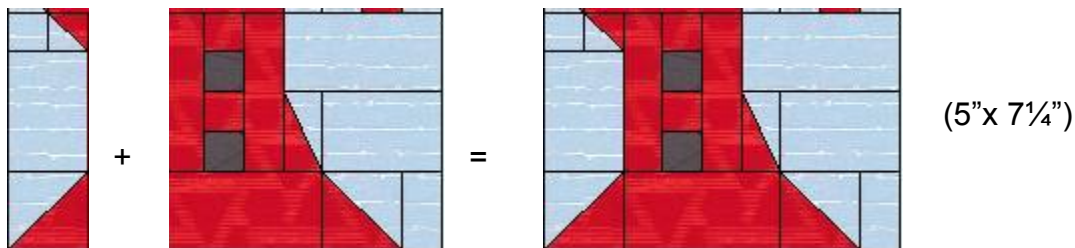
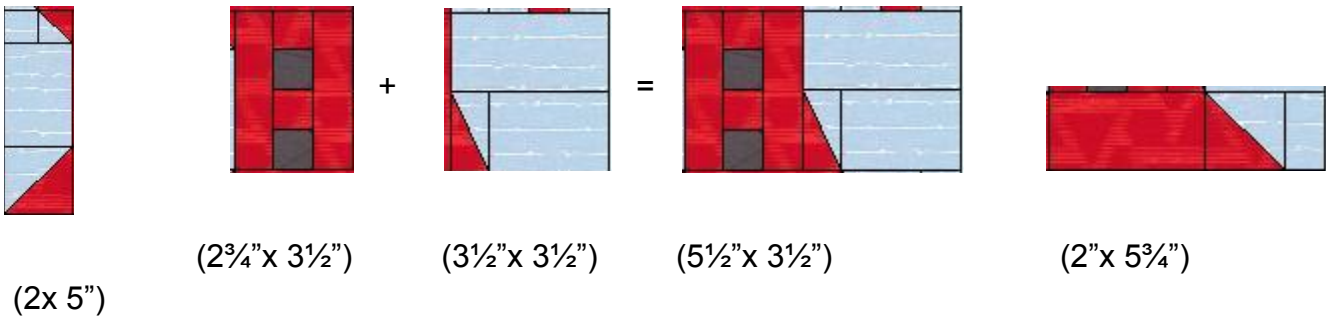


Background:  
 (one) 2" X  $3\frac{1}{2}$ "  
 (two) 2" X  $2\frac{3}{4}$ "  
 (one)  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " X 2"  
 (one)  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " X  $1\frac{1}{4}$ "

Sewing Machine:  
 (two)  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " X  $3\frac{1}{2}$ "  
 (one) 2" X  $3\frac{1}{2}$ "  
 (two)  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " X  $1\frac{1}{4}$ "

Accent:  
 (two)  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " X  $1\frac{1}{4}$ "

Order of piecing:





Add section F to the design board.

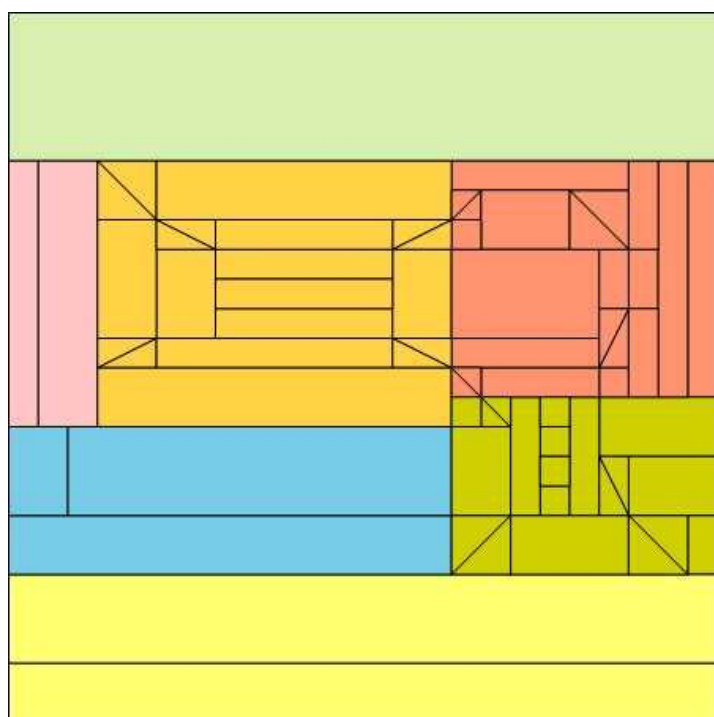
Time to piece your block together!!



Stitch section G together then put back on the design wall



Referring to the diagram of the sections of our block, stitch your block together in the following order:

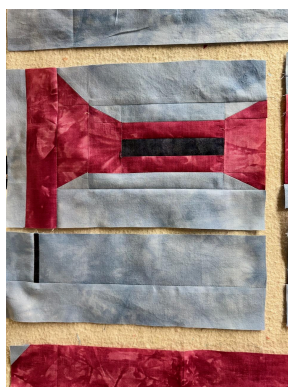


Section A

Section B, C, D

Section E, F

Section G



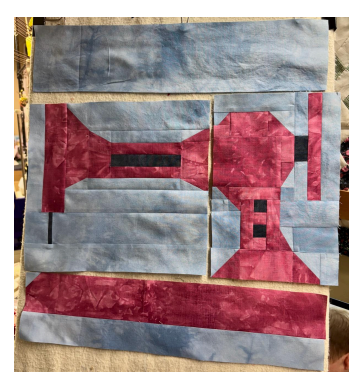
Stitch B to C



Stitch B-C to E



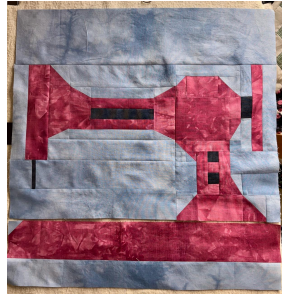
Stitch D to F



Stitch B-C-E to D-F



Stitch A to B-C-E-D-F



Stitch G to A-B-C-E-D-F

CONGRATULATIONS!

YOU HAVE FINISHED YOUR FINAL BOM  
OF THE SQG ROCKFORD BOM!!!

18½" square



NEXT MONTH:

Directions for block placement.

AS ALWAYS: CONTACT ME WITH ANY QUESTIONS!

Quilter Kate Hall

269/436-0531

[quilterkatehall@gmail.com](mailto:quilterkatehall@gmail.com)

