

String-piecing workshop with Linzee McCray

Quilters of the feed sack era embraced string piecing as a way to use up every last fabric scrap. But it also offers countless design opportunities, which we'll explore. Then you'll use your own scraps to create quilt blocks on a paper foundation.

You can string-piece “free-form” or use the pattern Signs of String by Clark Street Quilts. They use slightly different techniques and we'll learn both. (The Signs of String paper pattern is available through some quilt shops, online, and a PDF version through my website: linzeekullmccray@gmail.com.)

If you choose to piece “free-form,” you'll need:

Fabric strips ranging from 1.5” wide to 3” wide—a variety of widths is preferable. They can be as short as 5” or 6” but many should be longer. You can also cut strips in class, so bring a variety of extra fabric. You may want to choose one fabric to repeat in every block—it will enhance design options. Depending on the size quilt you make, a ¼ to ½ yard is of the repeated fabric is plenty—wait to cut these in class.

Newsprint or other easy-to-tear paper (approximately 12–11×17 sheets. Printer paper not recommended). I'll bring some to class to get you started.

Glue stick

If you choose to work on the Signs of String baby quilt you'll need:

Pattern: Signs of String by Clark Street Quilts. This pattern offers layouts for a 37” x 50” baby quilt and a “64” by 64” quilt. The fabric requirements below are for the baby quilt. (The blocks for the baby quilt and the larger quilt, are the same—you'll just need more for the larger one. The yardage requirements for the larger quilt are on the pattern back.)

For the workshop, you will only need to bring the fabrics for Blocks, Center Squares and Center Spokes, and possibly (if you're incredibly speedy) the Background.

This quilt was designed using a four-color line of fabrics and the materials list and instructions reference those colors. You can, of course, use any colors you choose. To keep track of color placement, cross out those printed on the pattern and write in your substitutions.

Blocks:

1 yard total of assorted red prints

1 yard total of assorted blue prints

2/3 yard total of assorted yellow prints

1/3 yard total of assorted green prints

Center Squares and Center Spokes: (these fabrics should contrast with your assorted prints-solids or tone-on-tone prints work well)

1/3 yard red fabric

1/3 yard blue fabric

¼ yard yellow fabric

⅛ yard green fabric

Background: ⅞ yard

Binding: ½ yard

Backing: 1⅔ yards

Newsprint or other easy-to-tear paper (approximately 12–11×17 sheets for the quilt. One piece is fine for the class. Printer paper not recommended. I'll bring some to class to get you started.

Glue stick

90-degree Quarter Square Triangle ruler [I'll bring a couple to use during class]

No matter which kind of string-piecing you choose to do you'll need:

Sewing Supplies and Tools:

Rotary cutter

Cutting mat

Quilt rulers (12" is fine, longer is okay, too)

Sewing machine in good, working order

Iron and ironing surface

Basic sewing supplies—scissors; pins, fabric marking pen or pencil, thread for machine sewing