

MAKING CRUMB BLOCKS by Nancie V.
from small fabric pieces and long “strings” of fabric

All you need is scraps. Use all colors, or select a palette of colors—both ways produce interesting blocks. This process is speedy and continual. Very little thinking is required!

Have a pile of strings ready at your side, as well as a small cutting mat, scissors, and an iron. And begin.....



1. Start by feeding a long string of fabric, right side up, under the presser foot of your sewing machine. This string must have **one** straight edge on the righthand side.
2. Place a small piece of fabric face down on the string, aligning the righthand edges. Stitch ¼” seam.
3. Continue sewing small scraps of fabric to the first string, leaving about ½” space between the pieces. It doesn’t matter if you sew the long side of the scrap or the short side. Continue adding scraps of fabric until the long string underneath is entirely covered. Do not remove it from your sewing machine yet.
4. Chain-sew directly onto another long string, right side up, and sew more scraps to it, as before.
5. Without removing the current string, snip off the first string. With scissors, cut between the sewn pieces, separating them into uneven 2-patches. Press seams to one side.
6. With a rotary cutter and ruler, straighten any side of a 2-patch and lay it face down on the string that is currently under the presser foot. Stitch a ¼” seam.
7. Continue adding 2-patches until the string is “used up.” Start another string.
8. Cut apart the previous pieces...press seams to one side....straighten one edge and sew them, face, down to the current string.
9. Continue in this manner, chain-sewing one string after another and attaching bigger units to each new string. When a unit gets to be slightly larger than desired, use a square ruler to trim it to size. (I square mine up to 6 ½”.)

Once you get going, the process rolls on like a train. It’s hard to stop!

Crumb blocks can be used in a number of ways:

- Set straight with sashings....with or without cornerstones
- Set on-point, with alternate plain squares
- Sew 4 together, then sash them
- Use a crumb block as the center of another block (such as churn dash, or sawtooth star)

Try it! It is truly liberating.