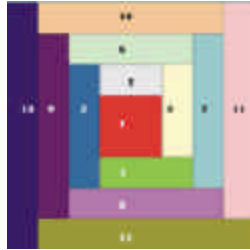


Lazy Person's Easy Log Cabin Instructions

Read all instructions before you begin.

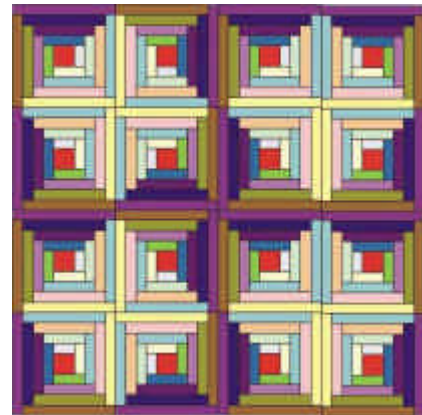
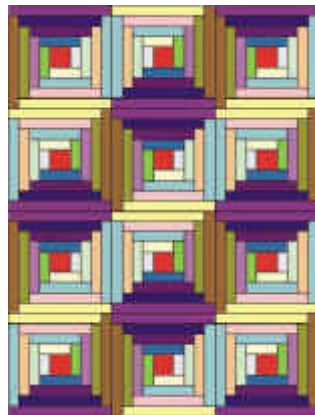
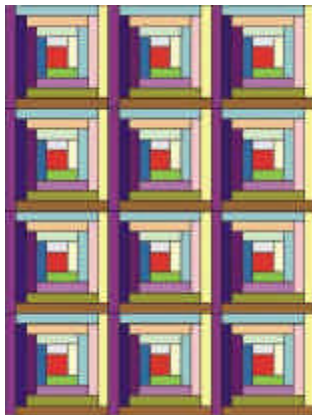
Traditional log cabins are really beautiful. Here's a small view of one square:



The center is called the chimney. The strips are called logs. There are many ways to lay out the individual squares to come up with various overall designs.

Layouts

Here's just a few layouts you can create with your squares. You can decide your layout once all your squares are made; just lay them out on the floor to see which look you like most. Make sure you have an even number of squares for the far-right design, both vertically and horizontally.



Sizing

However many fabrics you choose is half the number of squares you'll make. 120 8-inch squares makes a very generous size Queen top that hangs about 10 inches on left, right, and bottom. You'd need 60 fat quarters for that.

Needs

Half as many fat quarters as you want squares. Fat quarters are best, but you won't use even half of them for one quilt. You'll want to have at least 50 different fabrics for a scrappy looking log cabin, evenly divided between lights and darks; and a chimney fabric—figure 16 chimneys per 2½" of fabric.

Needs tips:

It doesn't hurt to have more yardage of several of the fabrics to make matching pillows, pillowcases, dresser scarves, and for borders. I found that pillowcases are extremely easy to make with some white-on-white fabric. Just measure some of your existing pillowcases, and put a colored fabric border on them. A little ribbon and lace really helps too. The colors in this photo are not nearly as pretty as in real life:



Here it is—this photo was taken outside, so this one is pretty true-to-life; it's called "Seaside" 'cause the fabrics are all colors of the ocean, sea, ponds, and beach:



I really didn't think this one was going to be that pretty, but it's STRIKINGLY beautiful! All blues and greens.



Tips on choosing fabrics

Don't be afraid to go out on a limb with a few really wild ones; they make your quilt really "live".

Try to avoid “medium” fabrics—choosing lights and darks that are really lighter/darker than each other. It’s difficult to place “mediums” into either category.

Solids don’t make your quilt “live”. If you like solids, use all solids; otherwise, just one or two at the most.

Use the brightest fabric, or the fabric that has the most contrast, as the chimney. Often, reds or yellows are used as the chimney. Consider using the same fabric for a 1” border around the completed top.

Preparing and Cutting

Take 13 plastic food storage bags (the cheap ones!) and number them 1 through 13.

Wash, iron, and fold each fat quarter in half, and then in half again, the opposite way, and iron flat. If you have skinny quarters, fold in half the long way, and then in half again the same way. All your quarters should measure ABOUT the same size when folded: 8” by 10” or so.

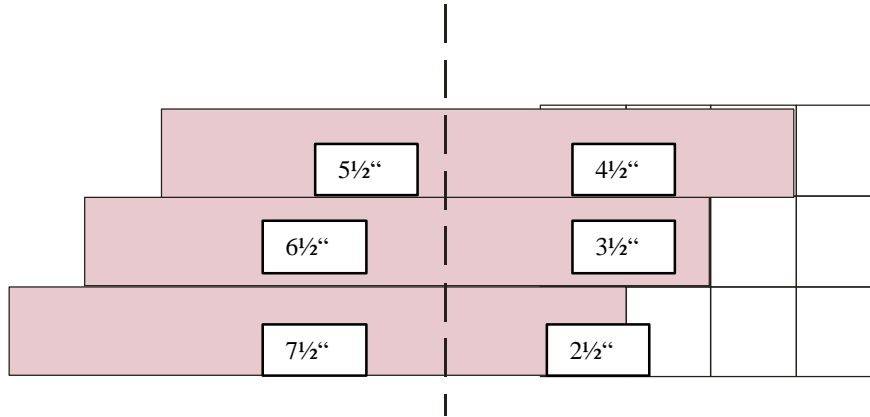
Tips

- If I don’t have a cutting mat and rotary cutter, I would stop right now. I would go buy one, borrow one, or steal one. I would not even think about trying this without them.
- If more than one person is cutting, it is imperative that you both use the same method of lining up the ruler. If half the quilt is cut one way, and half the other way, you can run into trouble during sewing.

Cutting Lights

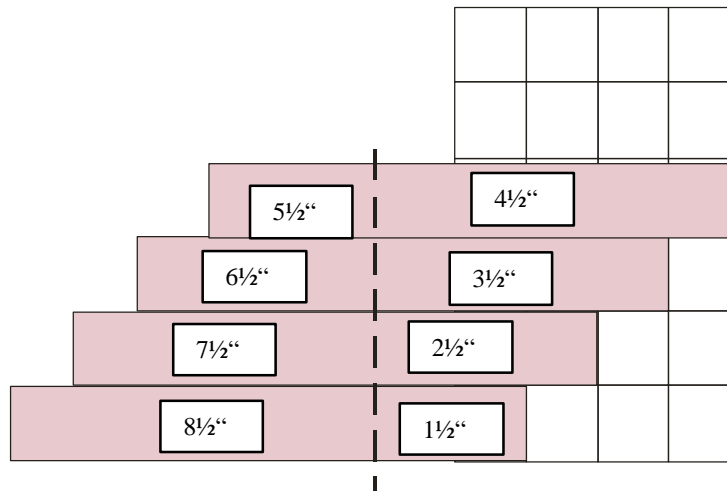
Take the first light-colored fabric and place on your cutting mat. Trim 3 edges so that you now have 4 layers measuring 10” by whatever the width is that remains.

Cut three 1½” strips, 10” long, through the 4 layers. Set the remaining fabric aside for your next project. Offset the 3 strips (all 4 layers) by one inch on your cutting mat. Then cut so that the smallest piece you create is 1½” by 2½”. Begin making piles of each size you’ve cut. You’ll have six piles when you begin.



Cut all the other lights in the same manner.

Cutting Darks



Cut 4 strips 1 1/2" wide, then offset by one inch. Cut as shown above. Set aside the 1 1/2" and 2 1/2" pieces for another project. Begin new piles for darks. You'll have 6 for darks as well, with a total of 12 piles altogether, and a 13th for your chimneys.

Place your strips into bags as follows:

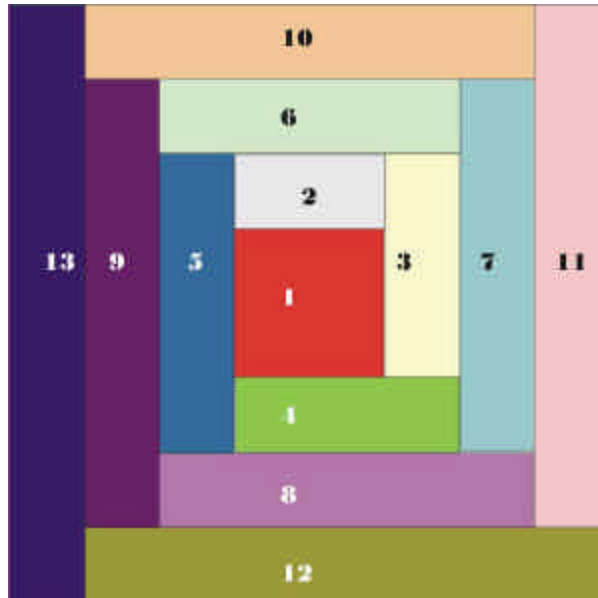
Bag Number	Size in inches	Color
1 (Chimney)	2½ x 2½	Brightest
2	1½ x 2½	Light
3	1½ x 3½	Light
4	1½ x 3½	Dark
5	1½ x 4½	Dark
6	1½ x 4½	Light
7	1½ x 5½	Light
8	1½ x 5½	Dark
9	1½ x 6½	Dark
10	1½ x 6½	Light
11	1½ x 7½	Light
12	1½ x 7½	Dark
13	1½ x 8½	Dark

Sewing

Because you've done all this preparation, the sewing is truly a breeze.

Starting with the chimney and piece #2 as a set, sew one set together. Don't remove it from your machine. Stop sewing just before or at the end of the fabric on the first set. Grab another set and sew them together. Sew all sets together without cutting threads, etc. Once all are done, cut them apart, and press the seams toward the chimney on this and every log you sew on....always iron toward the chimney.

Now take your chimney/#2 set and begin sewing #3 onto them. Watch the order of sewing in the diagram below and sew each log on until you have all squares completed. Remember that you'll have twice as many squares as you have fabrics.



Tips

- While sewing, do not align the first end of the log with the piece onto which you are sewing like it might seem natural to do. Instead, center lengthwise the two pieces that you're sewing together. In this way, if you have a log or a side that is slightly longer or shorter, the *mistake* part is buried into BOTH sides of the length, lessening the error by half, which usually ends up burying the error altogether.
- If your two pieces are more than about $1/16^{\text{th}}$ inch off, then something is wrong. Find out which one measures incorrectly, and correct it, even if it means ripping seams out. You'll be much happier with your finished product if you take caution.
- Use a perfect $1/4$ " seam allowance. How? Tape masking tape to your sewing machine at exactly the $1/4$ " seam mark. Tape it again and again at exactly the same place to make a slight ridge with the tape. This really helps to align your fabric for a perfect seam allowance every time.