

## QISS Club Quilt Builder Deck Series - Episode 3

### *How to Choose Fabric Colors & Precision Cut Blocks*

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Welcome back to the QISS Club! In this episode, we move from preparation to action. We are going to choose our colours, master the art of fabric preparation, and cut out our very first block: the *Sawtooth Star*.

#### Understanding the Card Deck

- **Grayscale Block:** Look at the grayscale diagram on the card. This shows you the value placement (Lights, Mediums, and Darks). *Example:* You might see a light background, dark star points, and a medium centre.
- **Colour Block:** The coloured diagram might show a different variation, perhaps reversing the light to the centre. Use these as inspiration, but remember - there are no rules!
- **Sizing:** We are making 12" blocks, so we will follow the cutting instructions in the 12" column on the card.

#### Choosing Your Colours

Colour balance is vital in patchwork. Most designs need a distinct contrast between Lights, Mediums, and Darks to make the design stand out. I use the [PQW Colour Balance Tool](#) to help define the shades.

- Lay all your fabrics out. Use the Colour Balance Tool tool to group them into three separate piles: Darks, Mediums, and Lights. Using the Colour Balance Tool strips away the colour and shows you the true value (light vs. dark).
- Go through each pile and choose combinations that work well together. If a colour doesn't look right once cut, put it aside! You can always use it in a different block later.

#### Fabric Preparation & Tools

- **Pressing:** Use a water mister to remove creases and press with a hot, dry iron.
- **The Fold Test:** Fold your fabric and align the selvages. If you see a twist or a "dogleg" at the bottom fold, slide the fabric layers until it hangs perfectly flat. If you cut on a twisted fold, your strips will have a "V" shape (dogleg) when opened.
- **The Rotating Mat:** I highly recommend a [round rotating mat like this one](#). Unlike square ones, round mats are stable and don't wobble when you lean on the edges, which is critical for accurate diagonal cuts.

#### **Refer to the Quilt Builder Deck #2 for Cutting Instructions for the Sawtooth Star (Block 1)**

Tip: Always cut your largest measurements first so you don't accidentally cut fabric you need for a big piece!

- **Cutting Triangles:** We will be cutting many squares in half, and the cutting direction matters.
  - **Half-Square Triangles (HST):** Cutting a square in half diagonally once. This puts the bias on the long diagonal edge.
  - **Quarter-Square Triangles (QST):** Cutting a square in half diagonally twice (an 'X' cut). This puts the straight grain on the outside edge and the bias on the inner edges.
- **Cutting Tip:** When cutting diagonals, use a small rotary cutter (18mm). Large blades can push the fabric and distort the bias edge; small blades create less drag and give a perfect cut.

**Homework - Prepare for Next Lesson:** For the next lesson, please select your fabrics and cut out the next two blocks using the 12-inch measurements on your cards:

- **Block 2:** New Album + **Block 3:** King's Crown

In the next episode, we will start sewing these blocks together!