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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS A MODERN QUILT?	4
NEW TO MODERN QUILTING?	5
MODERN QUILT MYTHS	6
WHAT IS A FREEFORM PATTERN?	7
A WORD ABOUT SKILL LEVELS	7
MAKING A MODERN PATRIOTIC QUILT	7
RECOMMENDED SUPPLIES	8
USING A DESIGN WALL	9
ABOUT YARDAGE	10
SEAMS AND SEAM ALLOWANCES	10
SETTING SEAMS: STARCHING AND PRESSING	10
QUILT BACKING, BASTING AND QUILTING	11
PREWASHING FABRIC	11

## PROJECTS

<b>1</b>	FRACTURED DISAPPEARING NINE PATCH QUILT	12
<b>2</b>	TROPICAL GARDEN QUILT	20
<b>3</b>	MODERN IMPROV RAIL FENCE QUILT	28
<b>4</b>	PARISIAN CURVES #1 QUILT	34
<b>5</b>	DISAPPEARING FOUR PATCH #1	40
<b>6</b>	DISAPPEARING THREE PATCH / FOUR PATCH QUILT	44
<b>7</b>	MARSALA IMPROV #1 QUILT	48
<b>8</b>	SPRING GARDEN DISAPPEARING NINE PATCH QUILT	56
<b>9</b>	DISAPPEARING NINE PATCH WITH IMPROV BLOCKS	60
<b>10</b>	LAYER CAKES AND RAIL FENCE IMPROV QUILT	72
<b>11</b>	FLAMINGO MINI QUILT	76

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# INTRODUCTION

## WHAT IS A MODERN QUILT?

Let's start with the basic question: What makes a quilt modern? This is a question I often hear when talking with quilters I meet in local quilt shops, online or when I make presentations to guilds.

Modern quilting is a relatively new movement that has flexibility and innovation at its heart. Modern quilters build on and honor the many years of quilting tradition. But, don't worry about the "modern quilt police" showing up to squint at your quilt. The basic elements of modern quilt design are fairly straightforward. Modern quilting is a movement that is inclusive, open, welcoming and—most of all—*fun!*

The projects in this book were designed to introduce you to the elements of modern quilt design. Through completing these projects, you will learn how to use these design elements and then how to develop your own creative approaches to designing your own modern quilts.

Here is my list of modern design elements to look for when you wonder "What makes a quilt modern?" You won't see *all* of these elements in a modern quilt, but the modern quilter usually has one or two (or more) of these elements in the quilt.

- › *Simplicity and minimalism*
- › *Modern traditionalism*: reinterpretations of the past (using traditional blocks in a new way)
- › *Infinite edge*: no binding and no borders *or* making the binding and borders from the background fabric
- › *Asymmetry and alternate grid layouts*
- › *Use of negative space*: incorporating a background fabric that covers a noticeable percentage of the quilt top
- › *Exaggerated or varied scale*: experimenting with block scale/size, such as making a quilt top that is just *one* large block floating in a lot of neutral space or making the same block in very different sizes in the quilt
- › *Bold, modern graphics in print fabrics*
- › *Modern color palettes*
- › *Improvisation*: experimenting and playing with block design, quilt layout, fabric choices and all other aspects of the quilt design. Improvisation means seeing what emerges when you let go of pre-planning and measuring!



1

# FRACTURED DISAPPEARING NINE PATCH QUILT



FINISHED SIZE: 60" x 65"

12

FRACTURED DISAPPEARING NINE PATCH QUILT

## GETTING STARTED: CREATING THE FIVE BASE BLOCKS

Start by making five Nine Patch Base Blocks, each measuring 22½" square. Each Base Block has nine 7½" squares.

Nine Patch Base Blocks use a different combination of your fabrics. It's important to use the background fabric in each Base Block so that the blocks blend into the background. In other words, you are drawing the negative space into the blocks themselves.

The Base Blocks are all oversized because you will be making several cuts into them. The cutting table shows how many squares to cut from each fabric.

### FREEFORM TIP: FUSSY CUT!

You can fussy cut one of your 7½" squares to show off a special motif in your fabric. This example shows how it looks in a finished fractured block.



## CUTTING TABLE

Fabric	Number of 7½" squares to cut
Background fabric <i>Gray in my sample</i>	12
Focus print <i>Option: you may want to fussy cut one or two of these blocks to feature a motif in the center.</i>	6
Coordinating Print #1	4
Coordinating Print #2	3
Solid #1	4
Solid #2	4
Solid #3	4
Solid #4	4
Geometric print	4

## SPECIAL NOTE: ADDING A PIECED CURVE IN THE BASE BLOCK

You can add one or more curved blocks to the Base Block. When I fracture a Base Block that has a curved block, I usually only fracture that block once because I want to preserve that curve as a strong visual element. In the example here, I *started* the fracturing by adding the gray and white diagonal strip. After that, I avoided cutting the curved block in the next fracturing steps. Don't worry! Once you start, you will quickly get the hang of it!

To make this block, start with two fabric squares that measure 9" square. For step-by-step instructions on cutting and piecing freehand improvisational curves, see the instructions in the Parisian Curves Project.

