

Block of the Month: CHURN DASH

Ye ole Churn Dash block has been around longer than any of us (I think!). So when you sew your Block of the Month you will be joining countless quilters who have made this particular block for hundreds of years or at least since the 1800s. Along with making a block to be used in a Guild Quilt, you will be making history!

To be classified of the species 9 patch¹ the block must meet the following criteria:

Pattern must be divided by two horizontal and two vertical seams into a grid of nine major areas and (choose one of the following)

- ✓ Pattern is composed of small triangles and/or edged with small triangles as in the feathered star)
- ✓ Nine areas are of equal size as in the basic nine patch
- ✓ Nine areas are of unequal size and the center square if relatively large

I was surprised at what is classified as a nine patch! Nine patches can contain rectangles and curves. And nine patch classification does not mean that there will be only nine pieces to the block - since the beginning of time quilters have been cutting fabric into multitudes of little pieces just to sew them back together - and the nine patch is no different. Don't overestimate a 9-patch block's potential for complexity! The number of pieces is only limited by the size of the thread and needle and the ability of the quilter to sew it all back together again.

While the basic construction for this family of blocks is the same, variations are achieved by use of fabric and rectangles. Just a few that are included in this classification with the Churn Dash are: Shoo Fly, Eight Cornered Box, Fence Row, Fifty-Four or Fight, Simplicity, Double Monkey Wrench, Old Mill Design, Hens and Chickens, Double T, Sherman's March, Monkey Wrench, Love Knot, Hole-in-the-Barn-Door, Puss-in-the-Corner, Lincoln's Platform, Indian Hammer, Quail's Nest, Broken Plate, Joan's Doll Quilt, Fisherman's Reel, Picture Frame, Ludlow's Favorite, Grecian Designs, Grecian Square, Grecian, Greek Square, Greek Cross, Dragon's Head, and Attic Window.

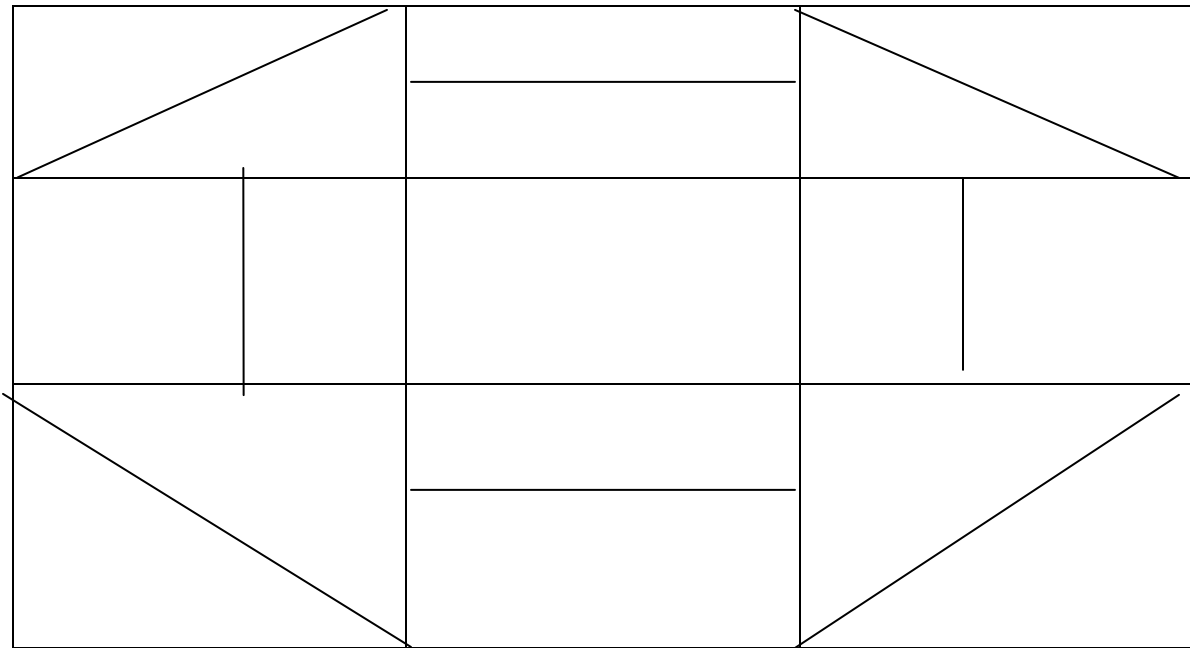
¹ Encyclopedia of Pieced Quilt Patterns, Brackman, Barbara 1993, p 18

This amazing little block is a fabulous tool to explore concepts in color and design!

Creating the Churn Dash block:

1. Cut each LARGE square into two triangles. There are four large squares so you should have eight triangles.
2. (Do not cut the smaller square. It is for the center of the block.)
3. Sew one ORANGE triangle with one PRINT triangle. You now have the four corner squares.
4. Sew one ORANGE rectangle to one PRINT rectangle.
5. Layout the pieces into a 'Nine Patch' -
ORANGE pieces to the inside, PRINT to the outside to make the 'churn'.
6. Sew together three pieces to make the three rows of the nine patch:
Row 1: Corner - Rectangle (horizontal) - Corner
Row 2: Rectangle (vertical) - Center Sq - Rectangle (vertical)
Row 3: Corner - Rectangle (horizontal) - Corner
7. Sew rows together ensuring 'churn' is formed!

Have Fun! And remember to bring your completed block back for next month's drawing to win all the Blocks!



Any questions? Call Kathy McKernan or Susie Alderson