

Braided Stripe Quilt Tutorial

 anneandwill.com/2013/04/braided-stripe-quilt-how-to

Fabric

Quilt size: 45" x 60"

Fabric for the front: 8 colors, 20" x 45" (or 43")

Fabric for the back & binding: 2 yards-ish

To pick out the quilt colors I take over the aisle of solid color fabric. I pull out bolts of fabric and line them up against the opposing shelf and mix & match until I like the final fabric selection. I'm that person. I also bring my husband, Will, to the fabric store with me for a second opinion since he's got a great eye for color combos.

For the quilt back fabric I use a pattern with complementary colors or something very subtle that echoes one of the colors from the front.

Prepping for the quilt front

Cut your 8 solid color fabrics into 4-1/2" x 45" strips. You should get 3 strips out of each color. You'll have some leftover fabric for the scrap bag, but I like having a bit too much than too little.

This plan below shows the general outline for the quilt with the stripe intersections running vertically down the quilt. You could follow the same process for a [horizontal orientation](#) (and in fact that was my first pass at the quilt). I like the vertical orientation though because there are more connecting points for the stripes.

Due to geometry & angles, at the edges the horizontal stripes end up at 4-1/2" and the vertical stripes at the edges will be around 7". Think of this pattern as a series of triangles and it starts to make sense.

Assembling the quilt front

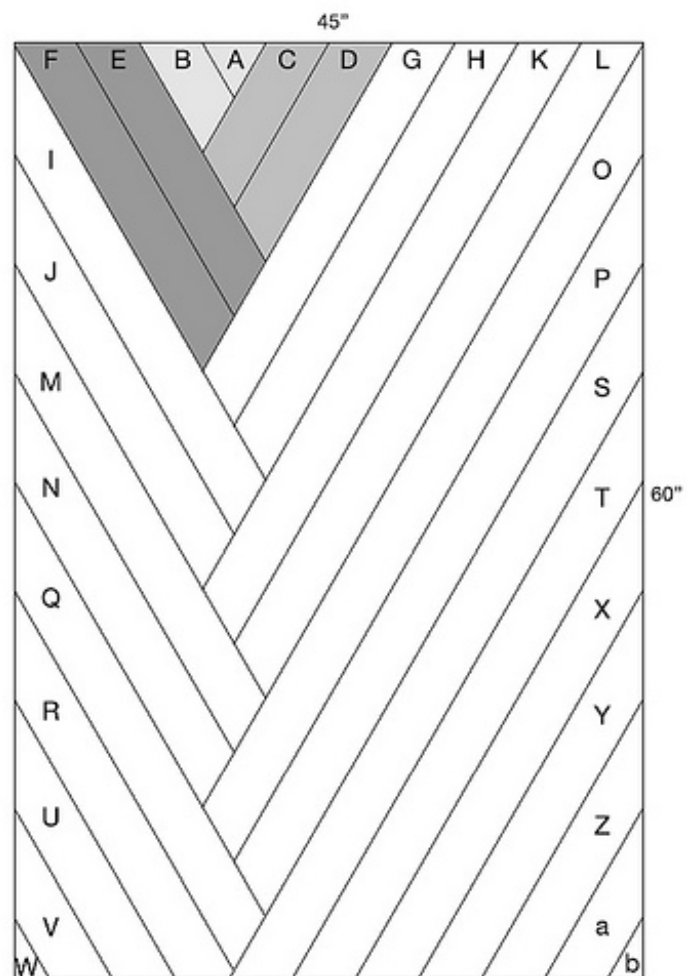
Okay, this is where the adventure begins. Are you ready?

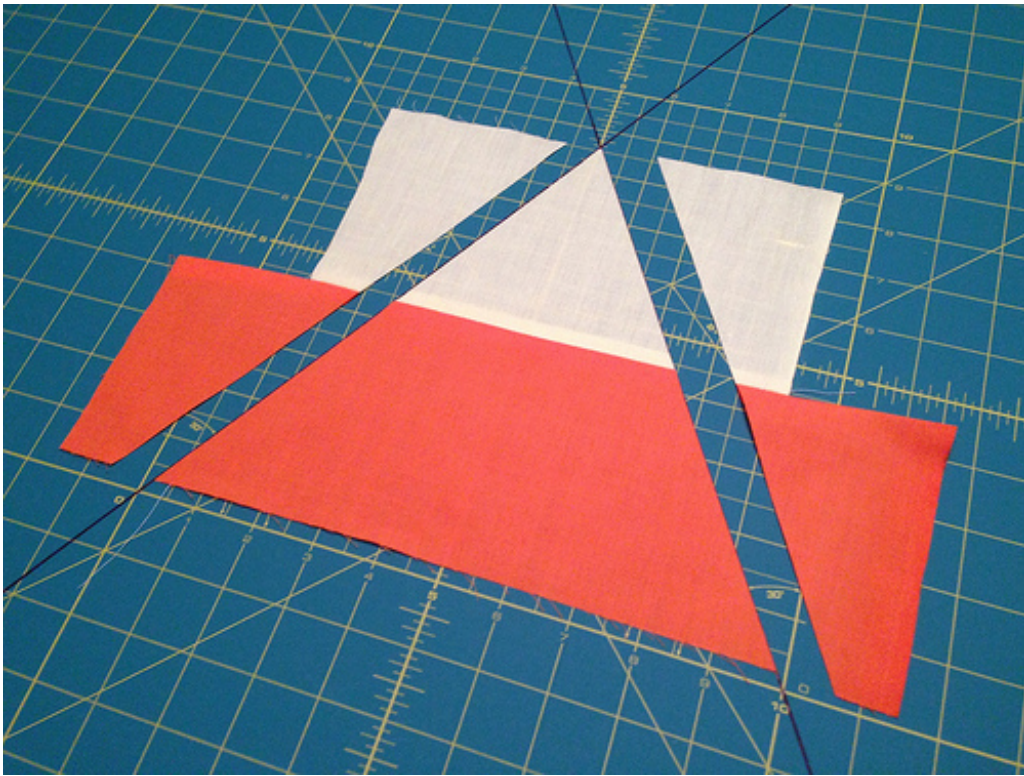
Start by laying out 8 strips of fabric in a pleasing color arrangement (1 strip of each color). I like greens and oranges, but I don't like them next to each other. And I try to space out things like multiple shades of blue so I don't end up with one extra bluesy blue spot in the quilt. Once I like the colors, I start cutting and sewing.

Start with the middle strip (A in the outline) and cut a 7" piece. Then use strip B from the outline and cut a 12" piece. Center the 7" piece (A) on the 12" piece (B), sew with a 1/4" seam allowance, and press



(I'm a press open kinda gal). Center your two colors on your cutting mat and use a 60 degree angle to cut the stripes into an equilateral triangle. The sides of the triangle should each be around 10-1/2." Since we're being adventurous though, don't worry if they aren't exactly 10-1/2" as long as they are each equal.

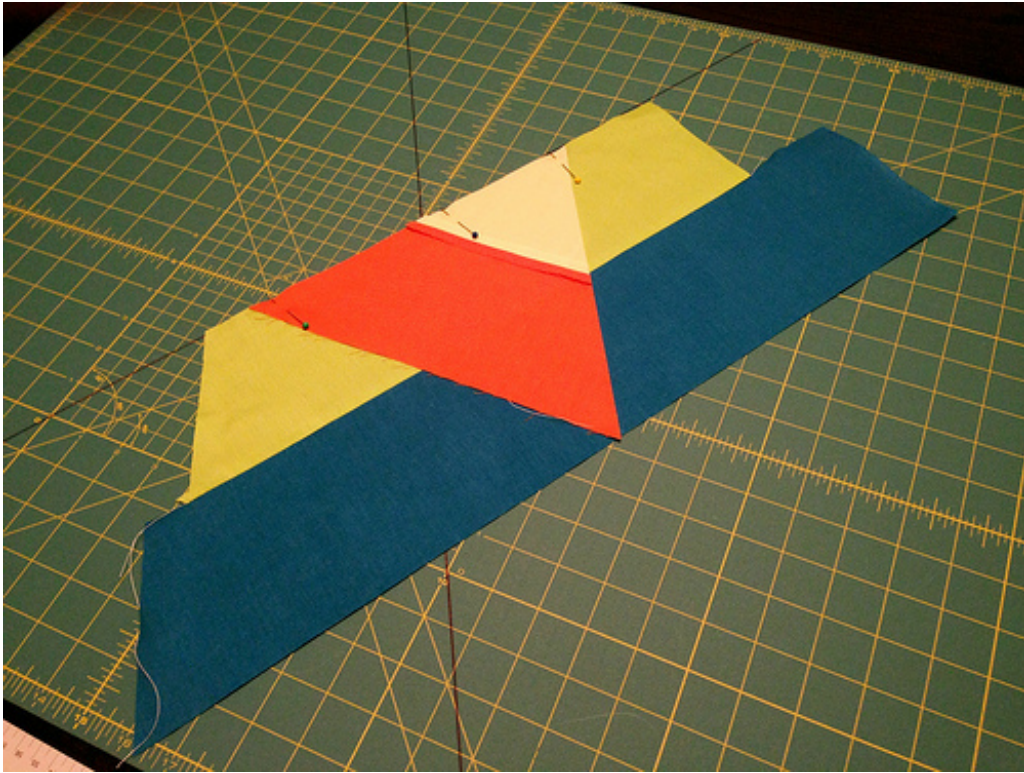




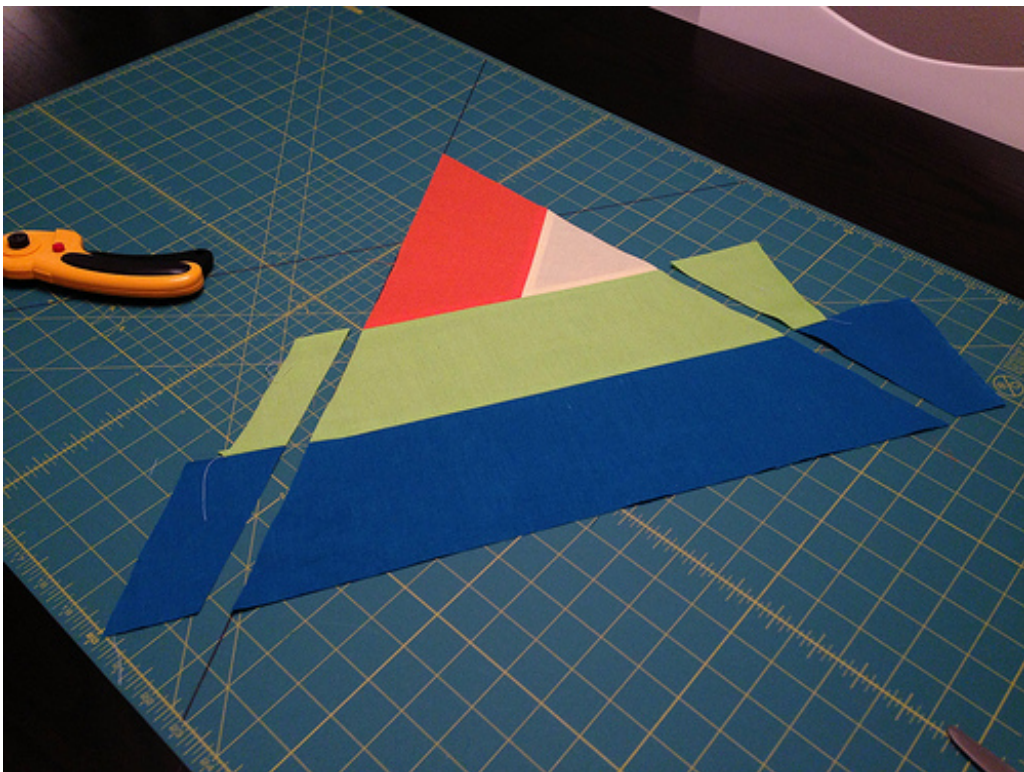
Tilt the triangle so the seam is at the "top" of the quilt and pull out your next two colors (C and D in the outline). Lay them out in order next to the triangle and eyeball where to trim them. Keep in mind where the quilt "top" will hit so that your stripes are large enough. Sew strips C & D together and press.



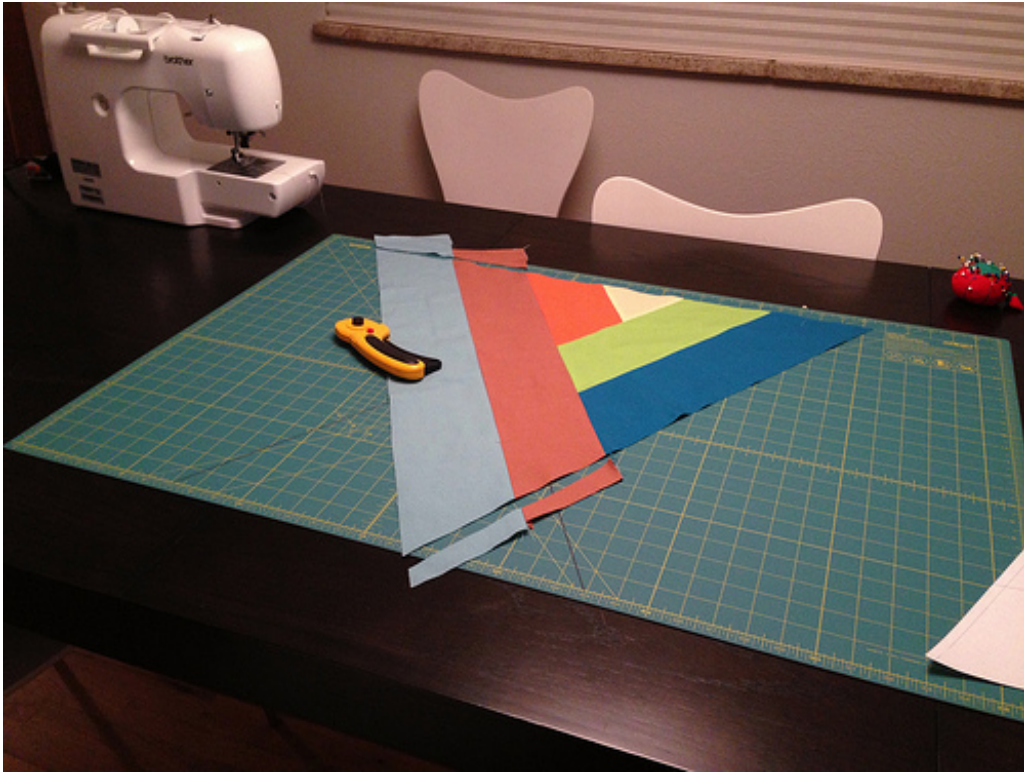
Sew your equilateral triangle to the stripes and press open.



Trim off the excess fabric. Be very careful about keeping the top line straight. It will be the top edge of the quilt and you'll square everything else off of this line. Life is better if you take care to keep it as straight as possible. Also, equilateral triangles are your friend.



Repeat the process on the reverse side with fabrics E & F.



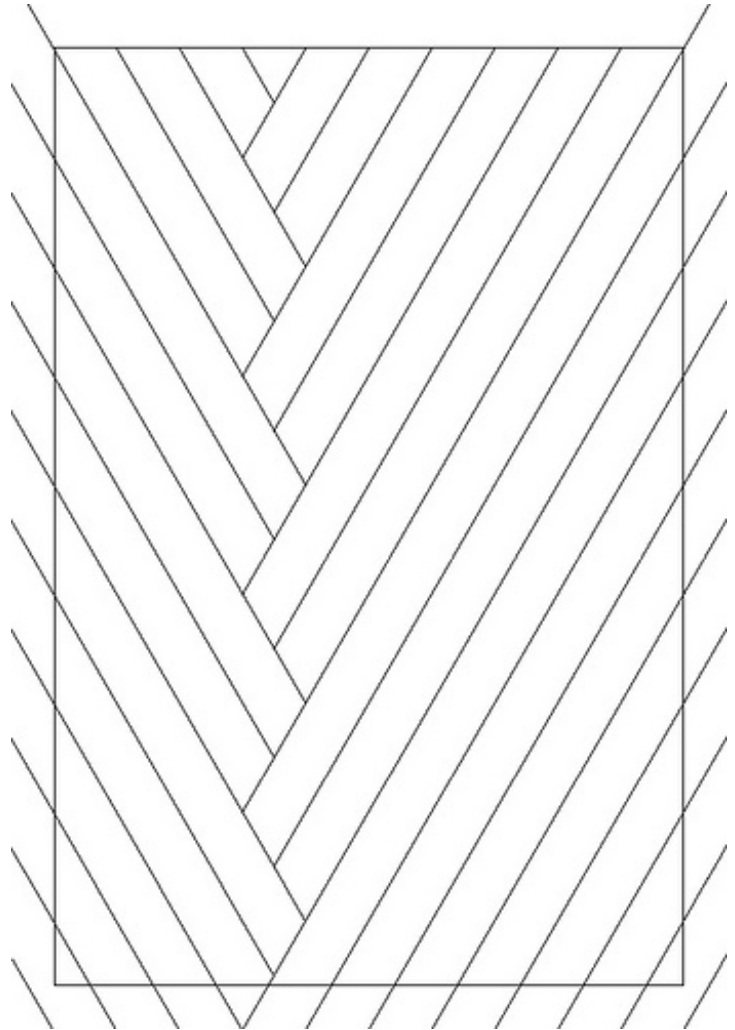
And then just keep on keepin' on. Think of the pattern as expanding the triangle using strips of 2 colors. Follow the pattern sewing 2 strips together and then adding those to the triangle (G-b in the pattern).

Once you get to some of the longer stripes (like K) you will need to sew together strips to make them long enough. This is where some of the pieces that were cut off from the shorter strips come in handy.

After you work through the first 8 strips (one of each fabric color), lay out the next 8 (1 of each color) against what you've already sewn. I like to alternate which "side" of the triangle the colors fall on so there's a tiny sense of symmetry to the quilt.

The idea is to get 10 stripes across, and 8-1/2 stripes down, but add in extra fabric at the edges to make it easy trim the edges square.

The first few quilts I made I tried to square the edges as I went along and it didn't work well. I finally wised up to making the edges wider/longer than necessary and then squared up the quilt at the very end. I had much better results. The pictures below show me squaring as I went along. Do as I say, not as I show. You'll be a happier camper.



Top edge corner getting squared up



Bottom corner getting squared up - a better example of what I recommend doing

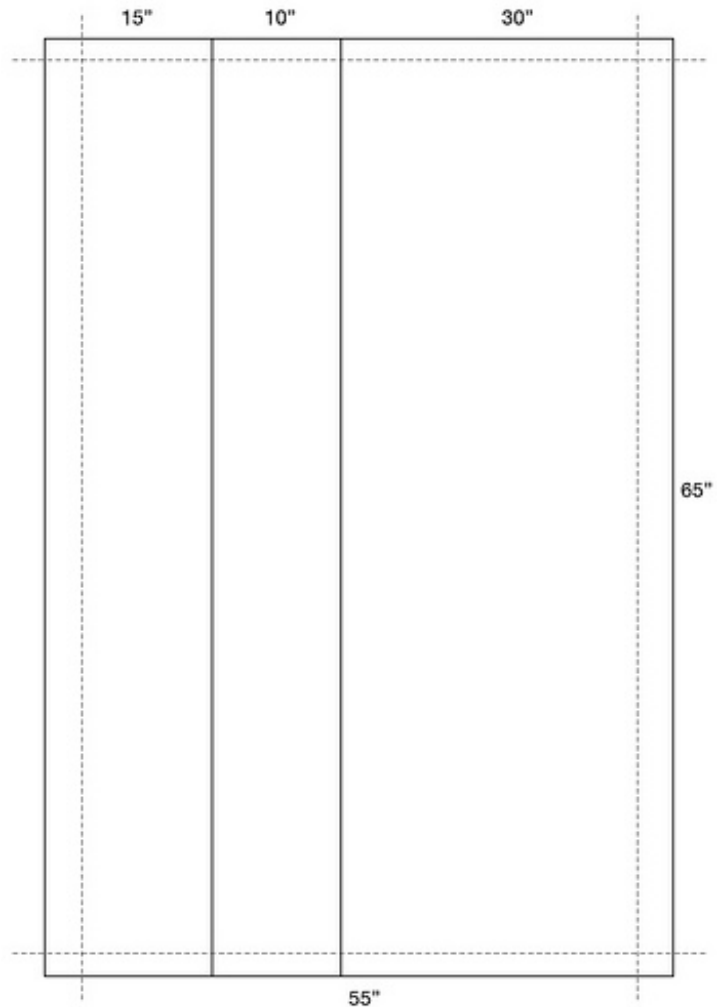
I was able to use the excess from squaring up the quilt for the back, so hang on to those off cast pieces - we'll revisit them!

Quilt Back

All you really need for the quilt back is a piece that is 55" x 65" - so feel free to accomplish that however you see fit. However, my favorite quilt back was one where I used the excess pieces so I'm going to share that.

I squared up the edge cut-offs from the vertical sides of the front and sewed them together to make a 10-1/2" x 60-ish" strip. To flesh out the size I added 2-1/2" pieces to the top & bottom and ended up with a 10-1/2" x 65" strip.

I took my two yards of the quilt back fabric and cut it down to 65" in length. I then cut that piece vertically so I had a 15" x 65" piece and a 30" x 65" piece. I sewed my excess fabric strip in between the two pieces of the quilt back fabric for a final quilt back size of 55" x 65".



Quilting the Quilt

I wanted to echo the triangles in the quilt front with the quilting and I've become a big fan of fairly dense, straight lines.

To keep the triangles tidy and lined up, I needed to create a consistent line down the front of the quilt for the quilted triangle points. I took a very long ruler and lined it up with the fabric points and then

marked that line with tailor's chalk. If you look at the detail shot below you can faintly see the remnants of the chalk line.



To start the quilting lines I put my needle about 1/4" to the right of the "line" between fabrics C & D and sewed to the chalk line. I adjusted the quilt to complete the second side of the triangle, following the line between C/D & E/B . I set my quilting guide to 1" and quilted the lines from there. Each stripe had 3-4 quilted lines running through it. If there was a discrepancy between where the quilting guide thought the line should go and where the quilting line would look best (usually in the points), I would go with what looked best.

Binding

I use the same fabric from the quilt back for the binding. Oh, and I'm a total binding cheater who doesn't make the binding on the bias. Mwahahahaha!

[Here's a link to a good tutorial on binding.](#)

End

This is my first how-to/tutorial. So, what say you? Is this helpful? Any questions? Did my phone pictures and their wacky colors throw you off?

