

## Pattern of the Month

May 2014

*For Members of the MQG*



**MODERN QUILT GUILD**



## Improv Echoed Hexagons

by Rossie Hutchinson

*Ann Arbor MQG Member*

The Modern Quilt Guild's mission is to support and encourage the growth and development of modern quilting through art, education and community. [www.modernquiltguild.com](http://www.modernquiltguild.com)

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# IMPROV ECHOED HEXAGONS

Improvitational Process by Rossie Hutchinson

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This is an improvisational pattern, which means that I will be providing basic guidelines for construction that I expect you to modify and adjust as you make your quilt. Please feel free to make things bigger, smaller, darker, lighter, fussier, more minimalist, and more YOU as you make your quilt!

## FABRIC GUIDELINES FOR TWIN-SIZED QUILT (67" x 90")

Fabric needed	What I used
7 yards for background (includes 1.5 for hexagons)	Kona Raisin
1.5 yards total of contrasting fabric for hexagons (will be cut into 1.75" strips; you can use scraps or precut strips)	Moda Bella Berrylicious
0.25 yard of complimentary fabric to insert into the background (optional)	Purrfectly Happy in Raspberry by Lizzy House
6 yards for backing	Kona Raisin
0.5 yard for binding	Kona Curry

Other materials:

Needed	What I used
thread for piecing	Aurifil 2570 (Prune) in 50 weight
thread to match background for quilting	Aurifil 2570 (Prune) in 50 weight
batting	Quilter's Dream Poly in Midnight

## CUTTING DIRECTIONS:

**1. Sub-cutting your background fabric and putting it on your design wall.** While a design wall will make this easier, you can make this quilt without one. Just lay your pieces out on a bed or floor as you work on your design and label them if they need to be put away.

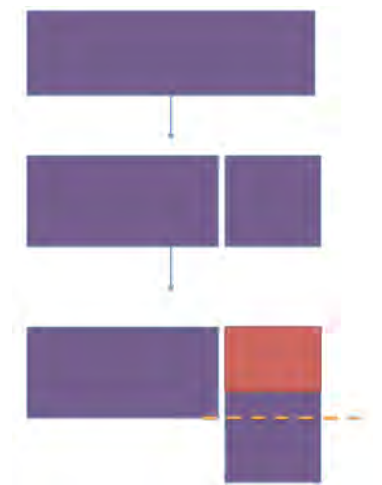
1a. Cut two yards of the background fabric, to make a 44"x72" piece. Press it. Cut this in half length-wise to create two 22" x 72" pieces. The pieces should be square, but do not need to be perfectly square at this time. Place the pieces one under the other on your design wall.

1b. Repeat step 1a.

1c. Repeat step 1a again, except only place one of the pieces on the design wall. Your design wall now has five pieces of fabric on it and combined they are 72" wide and 110" long. As we proceed, the exterior dimensions will shrink.

1d. If you want to insert complimentary fabric into the background of your quilt, do so now. To insert fabric like I did (in the upper right-hand corner of a background fabric strip), simply cut a piece from the background fabric the same width as your insert, attach the complimentary fabric to the piece you cut, and then trim it to be the same height as the rest of the background. You will not want to join it back to the plain background fabric yet (wait until after step 3b).

1e. **The rest of the fabric:** You will be cutting the rest of the fabric into strips and hexagons. I recommend waiting to cut these so that you can decide if you want to vary the width of your strips and the size of your hexagons after you've made a few and placed them on your design wall.



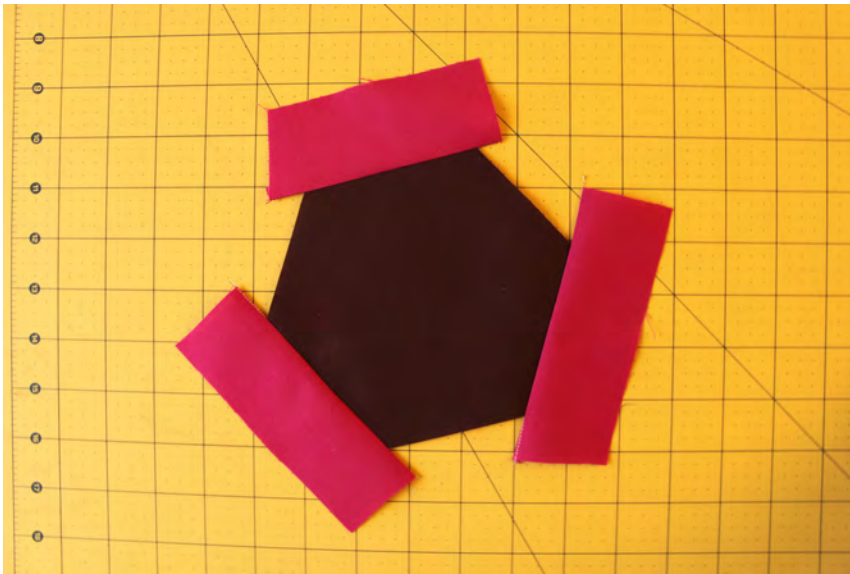
## 2. Make your first echoed hexagon

2a. Cut out a hexagon from background fabric. A template is included on the last page of this pattern.

2b. Cut one 72" x 1.75" from your background fabric (from the long piece you didn't put on the design wall) or two 44" x 1.75 strips from your background fabric.

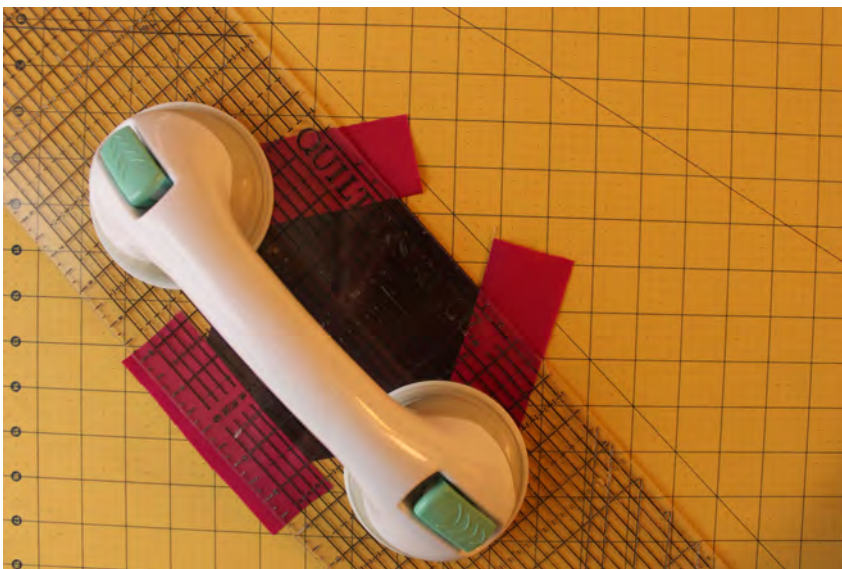
2b. Cut two 44" x 1.75" strips from your contrast fabric.

2c. Using a scant 1/4" seam, attach strips to every-other side of your hexagon as pictured below.



2d. Set the seams (press them with an iron before opening them) and then press the seams out (away from the center of the hexagon).

2e. Trim the edges of the strips as pictured below.



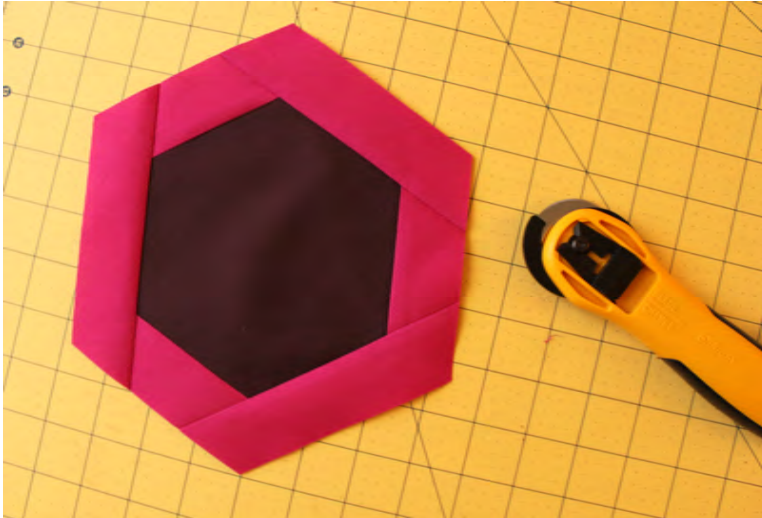
2f. Attach strips of your contrast fabric to the remaining three sides of your hexagon.

2g. Set the seams and then press the seams out.

2h. Trim the overhanging edges of the strips.

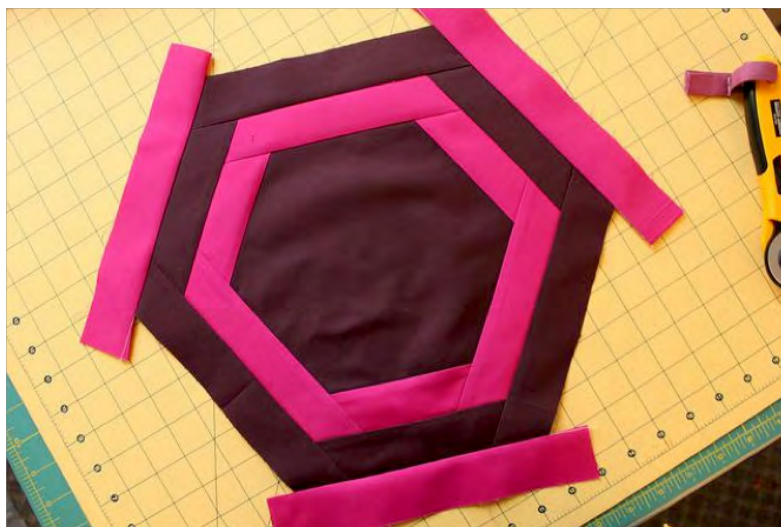
2i. If your seams were inconsistent or your strip wasn't cut accurately, you may have an uneven hexagon. You don't have to fix it if you don't want to (there's nothing wrong with a little bit of wonk, so long as you have strong seams!) If you do want to fix it, the easiest way is to use your rotary ruler to make the echo of the hexagon slimmer by lining up the seam with the 1" or 1 1/4" mark on your ruler and trimming the edges.

You should now have a hexagon with one echo, as pictured below.



2j. You can skip ahead to step 3 now or repeat steps 2c through 2i to add as many echoes to your hexagon as you desire. The last echo should be contrast fabric.

You will want to be consistent about which sides of the hexagon you add to first. In the photo below, I have consistently added the first three strips to the same sides. This makes a neat arrangement. You may also want to alternate it each time and experiment. Just be aware of what you're doing and how it looks and choose something that suits you!



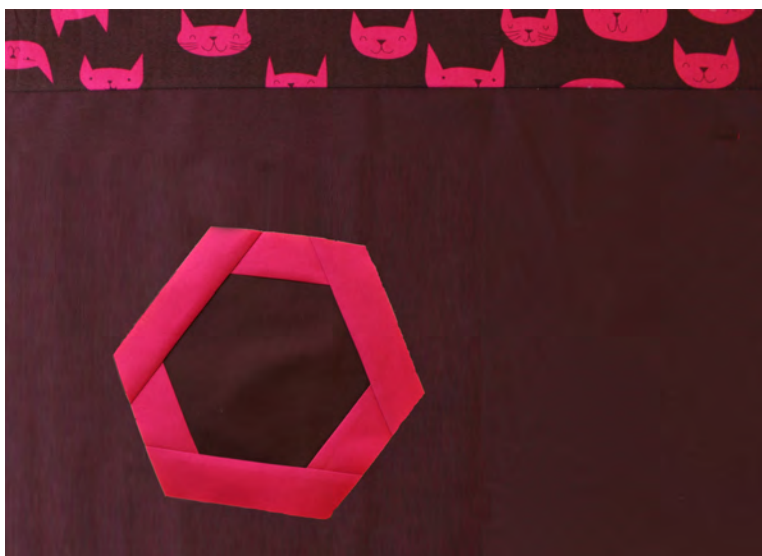
### 3. Inserting your first echoed hexagon into background.

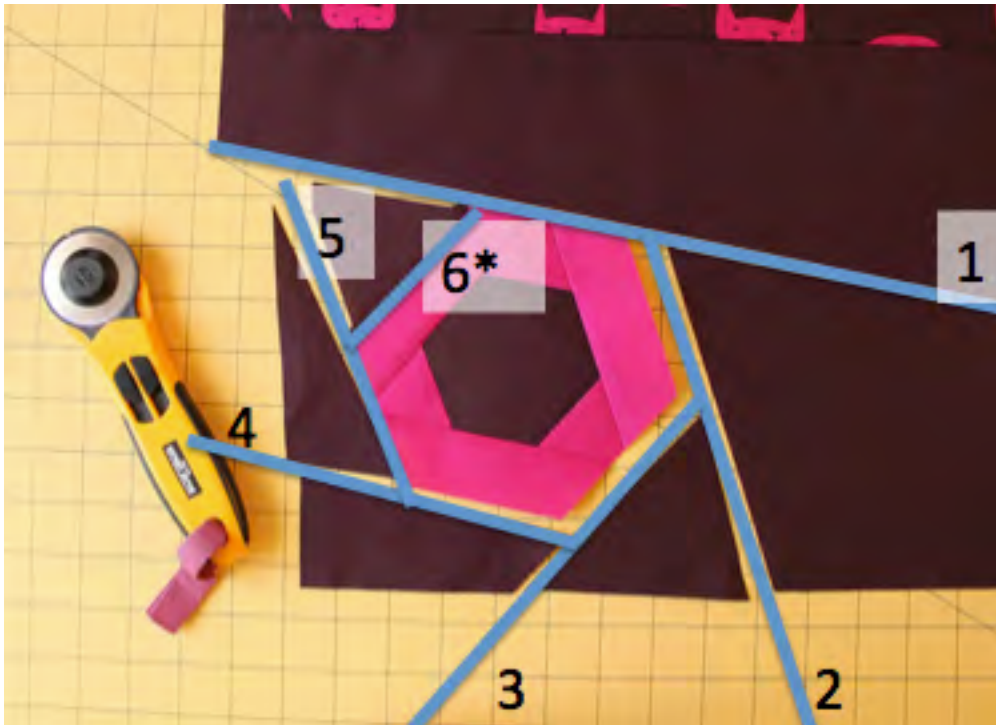
3a. Using your design wall, decide where you'd like to place your hexagon.

3b. Once you have decided where you will insert it, cut a rectangle of the background fabric from around the hexagon. In the picture below, I have marked with a dashed line the type of cut I recommend (vertical through the background fabric.) Please give yourself several inches of fabric between your hexagon and the edges of the fabric.



3c. In the example below, I have decided to place my hexagon in the background fabric that has been pieced with the complimentary fabric.

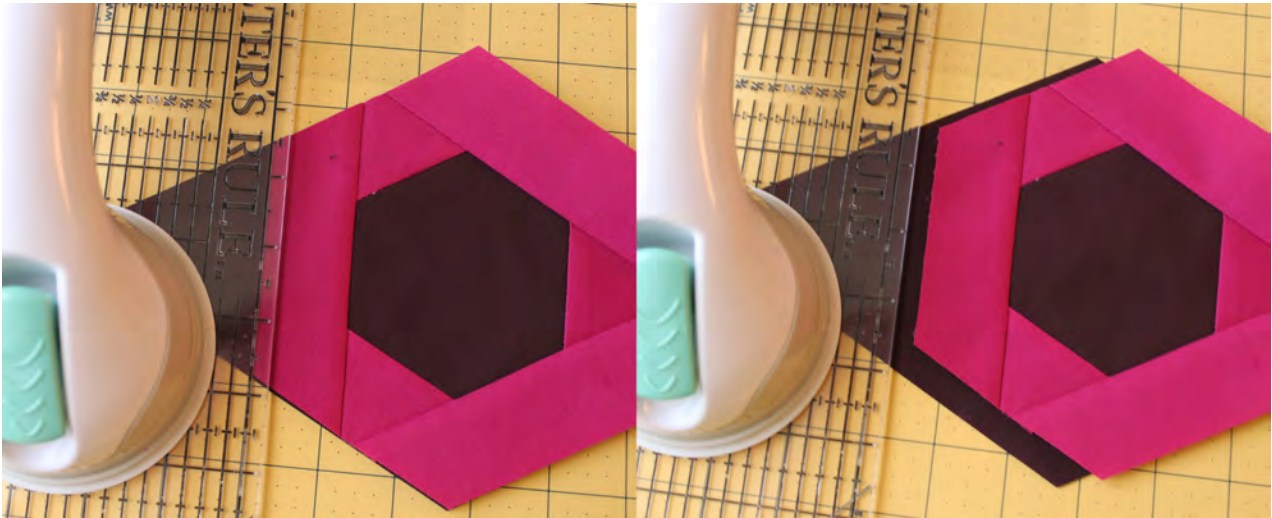




3d. In the photo above, the blue lines show how you should cut into the rectangle so that you can insert your hexagon.

1. Place your hexagon on the rectangle of background fabric in the position and at the angle you would like. Any angle is fine, but please keep the hexagon several inches from the edges of the rectangle.
2. Now, you can begin to cut into that background fabric! Begin at the top of your hexagon (what would be 12 o'clock on an analog clock). Align the edge of your ruler with the edge of the hexagon and slice the fabric from one side of the rectangle to the other (this line is marked "1" above).
3. Pull the fabric above line "1" away so that you don't cut it in the next step. You need to keep the fabric you are removing in order (don't flip it or toss it aside!) so that you can sew it back together correctly, so either place it carefully on your design wall, or mark it with a "1" and put it somewhere safe.
4. Now, proceed to the next cut. This cut is marked "2" on the photo above. It is cut in the same fashion as the earlier cut, Align the edge of your ruler with the edge of the hexagon and slice the fabric from the corner of the hexagon to the edge of the rectangle. As before, pull the piece of fabric you just cut away from your ruler, labeling it and/or placing it on the design wall.
5. Proceed around the hexagon clockwise, making each new cut so that it begins at corner of the hexagon and ends at the edge of the rectangle. **There are special instructions for the last cut (marked 6 on the picture above).**
6. Special instructions for the 6<sup>th</sup> cut: On the final cut, you need to add 1/2" seam allowance to the background fabric. The easiest way to do this is to lay your ruler 1/2" overlapping into your hexagon, then carefully pull the hexagon away and trim the background fabric. If you look at the pictures below, you'll see that the ruler and the

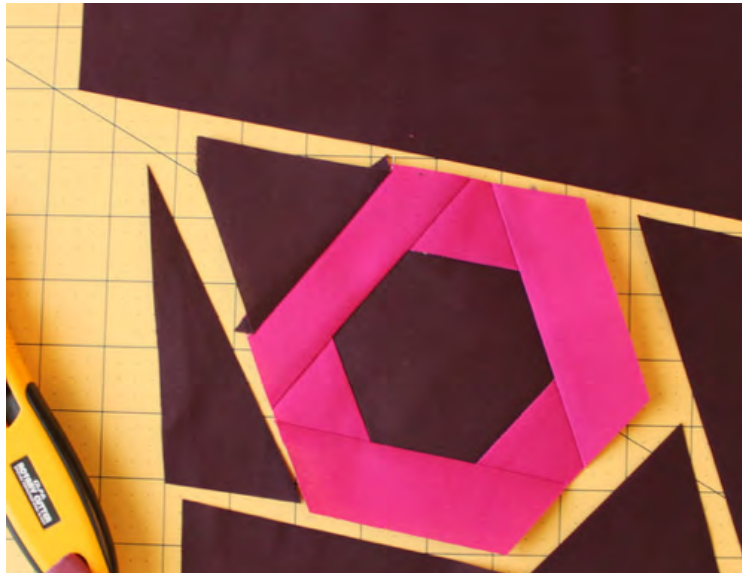
background fabric are in the same position, but the hexagon has been pulled so that it will not be cut. **DO NOT CUT THE HEXAGON.**



7. You now have a hexagon of not quite symmetrical background fabric sitting under the echoed hexagon you made. Set this piece aside to start the next hexagon you make. (You'll want to trim it down first, but that can wait.)

3d. Now it is time to sew the background back around your echoed hexagon. Remember how we cut **CLOCKWISE**? We are going to be sewing **COUNTER-CLOCKWISE**.

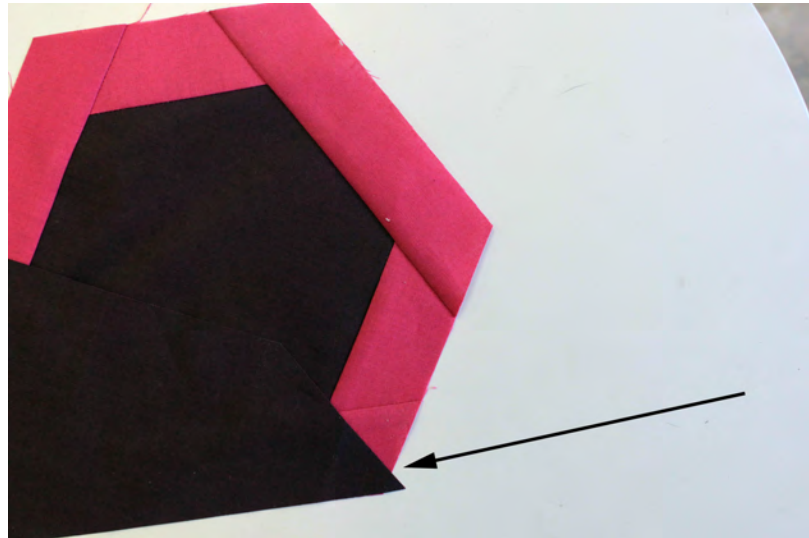
1. Begin by taking the piece 6 (the last one you cut) and attaching it to your hexagon using a scant  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam. Set the seam and then press it out (away from the center of the hexagon).





2. Next, add piece 5. To minimize waste, use the following procedure to line up your pieces:

With your hexagon on the bottom, put the pieces you are joining right-sides together, lining up the edges you need to sew. Slide the top fabric so that the top fabric crosses the lower fabric  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch in from the edge you will sew. The black arrow in the picture below points to the spot that should be  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch from the edge you will sew.



Sew. Set the seam. Press the seam out (away from the center of the hexagon.)

3. Continue around the hexagon, joining piece 4 and so on, counterclockwise, until your hexagon is safely sewn into its rectangle background. While the edges of your background may no longer be completely straight, I don't recommend trimming them yet. You may decide to insert another hexagon into this fabric, so wait until that's all done before squaring up the background.
4. Return the fabric to the design wall.

#### **4. Repeat hexagon making and inserting as desired.**

#### **5. Squaring up and combining all the pieces of your quilt top.**

5a. Once you've added all the hexagons you want, you need to square up all of your chunks and combine them. Begin by trimming off selvages and uneven edges, removing as little as possible in order to keep your options open.

5b. Because of how we cut the background fabric in Step 1, it is likely that the easiest way to assemble the quilt top is to reassemble the rows and then join the rows. If you added many hexagons to a particular section of a row, you may discover that it is an inch or more shorter than other sections of the same row; because we started with extra width and height in the overall background, you should feel free to trim back taller sections; if you don't want to cut back the taller sections (or can't without slicing a hexagon), add extra pieces of background fabric to make the shorter section taller. Similarly, if you have too many seams meeting up as you join sections of the rows, sometimes inserting a 1" vertical strips of background fabric between the sections can save a lot of trouble.

5c. As the top is nearing completion, check that it is at least as big as you need it to be! I like my twin quilts to be at least 65" x 90." Add background fabric to the edges of the quilt if you need to make it larger.

**6. Assemble quilt back.**

**8. Baste, quilt, label, and bind as desired.**

**Congratulations!  
You're done!**

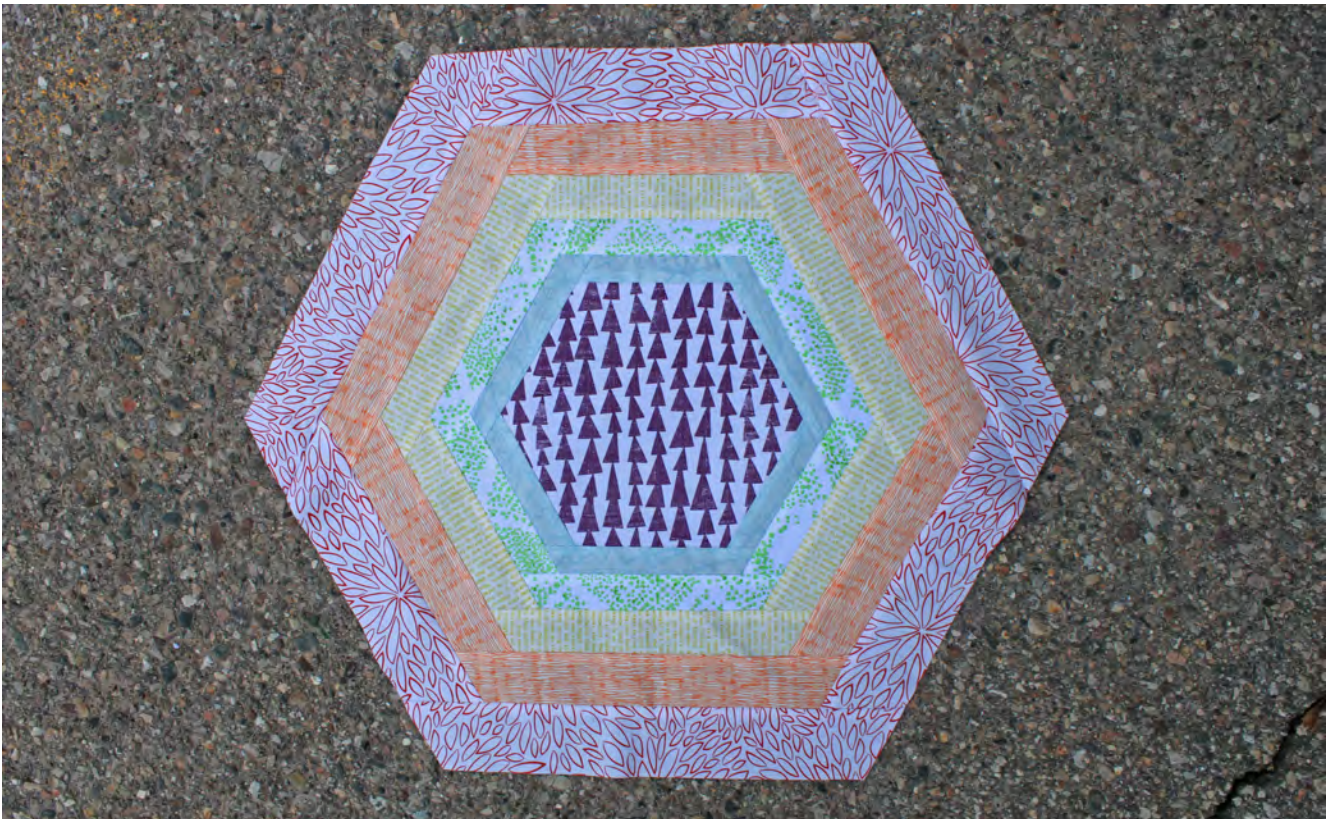
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“Rossie Crafts and Quilts” <http://www.flickr.com/groups/rossie>

“Fresh Modern Quilts” <http://www.flickr.com/groups/freshmodernquilts>

Or via Instagram using the hashtag #rossiecrafts

The possibilities are endless! Have fun!



## HEXAGON TEMPLATES

The smaller hexagon has approximately 2.5" sides.

The larger hexagon has approximately 4" sides.

You do not need to use my templates, nor do any measurements need to be exact!

