

# FRAMED 9 PATCH



## RAINBOW SCRAP CHALLENGE

So I had all these extra nine patches leftover from last year. First I used them for [Mai Tai Sunrise](#), then they made their way into [9 Carat Diamonds](#). Still, I can't seem to stop making nine patches leader and ender style from leftover 2 inch squares. I saw a [great quilt last year](#) on [Quilting is More Fun than Housework](#) though, and was inspired for another year of nine patches. She made her quilt with extra 2.5 inch squares and used 6 inch squares cut in half for the frame. Since I was using 2 inch squares, I needed a slightly smaller version.

### FABRIC

This is a great way to put lots of extra nine patches to good use. You could also use crumb or string blocks, or even fun focus prints. The center square is 5.5 inches unfinished. The setting squares will be cut from 4 inch strips of black and white fabrics.

### CUTTING



Cutting a 5 inch square in half would certainly do the job, but I had my easy angle ruler handy and wanted to try it out. So, to use the easy angle method of making a square in a square, start with 4 inch strips of fabric in black and white. You will need 2 pairs of triangle units for each block. I'm making 10 blocks of each color, but trying to use lots of different black and white prints. You will also need 9 patch blocks made from 2 inch squares. You can use strips or squares to make these. They are handy to have on hand for so many great projects. I found 10 in light blue and 10 in dark blue to start the year. They were mostly ready to go in my 2 inch bin and only needed a bit of finishing.

### SEWING

Take the HST and center it along one side of the nine patch. To get it centered, you can fold the triangle and nine patch in half and match the crease, or just visually find the center of the center square in your nine patch. Notice that there is extra fabric hanging off of each end. These pieces are slightly oversized and will squared up at the end. This is really helpful with diagonal blocks like these, as things can get a little wonky, even with careful sewing.



Repeat for the opposite side and then press the seams away from the center square. Trim away the extra black dog ears hanging off of the edges.

Next, you will repeat the centering and sewing for the left and right sides. Notice that the triangles almost reach the edges of the center block now. Press your block with the seams going away from the center square and you are ready for squaring up.



### FINISHING



Your block is now just over 7 inches. You need to decide on the size to which you want to square up your block. If you square it up to 7 inches, your center block will "float" slightly as the seam allowances at the corners will be a bit larger than a quarter of an inch.

I chose instead, to square my blocks up to  $6\frac{7}{8}$  inches (six and seven eighths) I know this is an odd measurement, but it is a necessary evil when working with diagonally set blocks. The other option would have been to cut the center square to an odd size, but obviously, that doesn't work with a pieced center square.

So, to square up your block, find a ruler with a quarter inch mark on two perpendicular sides. I have a bias square ruler that I used. Line the quarter inch line along the right and top sides with the point where the center square and black fabric meet. Trim the top and right sides.



Rotate the block 90 degrees and find the  $6\frac{7}{8}$  inch mark on your ruler. I know that sounds silly, but it is just inside of the 7 inch line. Trim the remaining two sides.



Here are my first 4 blocks. I am alternating white and black background fabrics so they make an hourglass unit where the blocks meet. The extra fabric at the points will all get taken up by the seam allowance, and all the nine patches will meet at nice sharp points when the blocks are sewn together. I think I'll do 10 of each color and assemble them in rainbow rows at the end of the year. I think I'm going to call this quilt "The Square Root of 9".

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