

**“WHAT’S ON THE MENU?” MYSTERY QUILT - FALL 2017**  
**60" x 72"**

**FABRIC REQUIREMENTS:**

40 strips 2-1/2" x Width of Fabric

Notes on strip selection: You could use either a Jelly Roll, or your own set of strips. If you cut your own strips, choose a nice variety of colors, values (lights, mediums, darks), and prints.

2-1/2 yds. Background

Notes on background selection: This is a chance to try thinking “outside the box” for your background. Try a polka dot or other geometric print, a small-scale floral, a plaid - any fabric that goes well with your strip set will work, whether it’s contrasting or coordinating. Even one of the fabrics in your strip set would work.

4 yds. Backing fabric

3/4 yd. Binding fabric

**Suggested:** A twin-size package of batting, 2-1/4 yds. of fleece, or a flannel-backed table cloth to use as a “design wall.”

**CUTTING & PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS:**

Cut Background fabric into 8 strips 10" wide from selvedge to selvedge (i.e., across the width of the fabric). Remove selvages, and then sub-cut strips into 30 10" squares.

That’s it!

## **STEP 1**

Arrange your strips into 8 sets of 5. Sew strip sets together along the long edges of the strips (i.e., not end-to-end).

**Note:** If your Background fabric is the same as one of your strip fabrics, then be sure that strip is not on an outside edge of a strip set; have that strip be one of the 3 fabrics in the middle.

**Tip:** Put the fabrics you like the best in the center of your strip sets (i.e., strip #3).

Press all seams in one direction.

## **STEP 2**

Square off one edge of your strip sets, and then cut 10" segments beginning at that end. You should be able to get 4 segments from each strip set, for a total of 32 segments.

Next, trim each segment into a 10" square.

**Note:** You will be cutting off 1/8"-1/4" from the top and bottom of each segment, depending on whether you sew with a scant or a generous 1/4" seam. I trimmed about 1/8" from each end so I could remove the pinked edges of the outer strips.

Set 2 of the 10" square aside for another project; you will only need 30 squares for this quilt.

## **STEP 3**

Place a 10" strippy square right-sides-together with a 10" Background square. Sew down each of the four sides using a 1/4" seam. Then cut the squares in an "X" from corner to corner (two diagonal cuts on each square). Press all blocks in the same direction.

**Note on pressing:** It's easier to press toward the Background square. However, if you're using a light background and dark strips, you may want to press toward the strips to prevent dark threads from showing through your light background.

**Piecing Tip:** Here's how I speed-pieced my squares. I did them in three sets of 10. First, I picked up a strippy square and a Background square, lined them up, and then placed a single pin about 2" from the upper left corner on each side, to hold the pieces in place. With the Background fabric facing up, I sewed down the side that had the seams of the strippy square pointing toward me (in other words, the seams fed sewn-side-first under the presser foot). Then I did that same thing with 9 more squares, chain-piecing them together. With the 10th square still under the needle at the end of the seam, I snipped off the other 9 squares, cut them apart, and stacked them with the sewn edge at the top, and the Background fabric facing up. I chain-pieced down the right-hand edge of those 9 squares; then, with the last square still under the needle, I snipped off the other 9 squares, and cut them apart. I sewed the second seam on that last square that I'd left under the needle first, leaving it under the needle again and removing the other square.

I stacked the squares again, still placing the first sewn edge at the top, but this time having the strippy side facing up. I chain-pieced the right-hand edges as before, and then continued in the same manner for the final edge of each square.

When I finished a stack of 10, I cut and pressed them, and then did the next set. That way, I was able to get up and move around periodically.

## **IMPORTANT NOTE!!!**

From this point on, handle your blocks very carefully because all of the edges are on the bias!!!

#### STEP 4

Now comes the fun part - deciding how you want to set your 120 blocks together. There's a whole "menu" of options (now you get the name of the quilt!). There are several ideas shown below, or you may choose to do something entirely different. Have fun with it!

I suggest that when you get your blocks how you like them, you **take a photo** so you'll remember how you want to sew them together. Add borders, if you like, or not for a more modern look. Quilt as desired. Bind and label.

