

Warm-Hearted Woman's Puzzle (Old Maid's Puzzle) Current Project Warm Hearts Block

by Betsy Stewart

I've always thought this is a graceful block that can be incorporated into many quilt settings with delightful results. I've also always thought it has a terrible name!

Quilts blocks with this design were included in quilts made as early as the 1850s. Nancy Cabot documented the version we are using in 1934 and 1936 as "Old Maid's Puzzle." Since we know quilting is an ever-expanding and adapting craft, I think we should rename the block the "Warm-Hearted Woman's Puzzle." After all, by making and donating these blocks, you demonstrate you are indeed a warm-hearted woman.

Block Directions

This block finishes at 9" x 9" in the quilt. This means the block you submit should be 9½" x 9½". Make the background from white fabric and the colorful portion of the block from either one print or colored fabric or two complementary fabrics. A variety of print and colored fabrics may be used when making multiple blocks.

Cutting

White fabric:

- Cut one 5⅝" x 5⅝" square*
- Cut four 2¾" x 2¾" squares
- Cut two 3⅝" x 3⅝" squares**

Print/colored fabric:

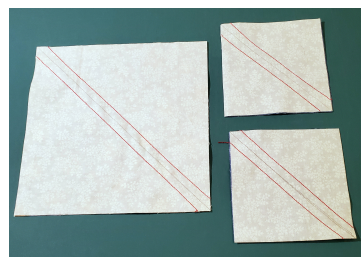
- Cut one 5⅝" x 5⅝" square*
- Cut two 3⅝" x 3⅝" squares**

*You may choose to cut 5½" x 5½"

squares and trim the half square triangle (HST) units to 5" squares.

**You may choose to cut 3¼" x 3¼"

squares and trim the HST units to 2¾" squares.



Assembly

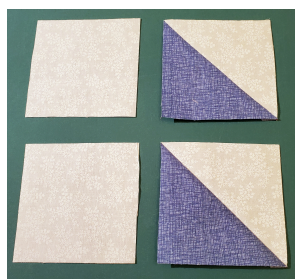
Step 1: Draw a diagonal line on the wrong side of each white 3⅝" square and on the white 5⅝" square.

Step 2: Place each white 3⅝" square right sides together with a print/colored 3⅝" square. Place the white 5⅝" square and the print/colored 5⅝" square right sides together.

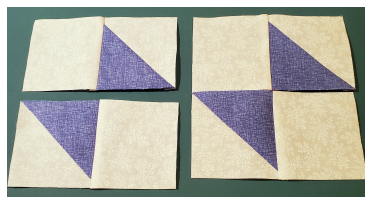
Step 3: Stitch ¼" away from the drawn diagonal line on both sides of the line on all the 3⅝" and 5⅝" squares.

Step 4: Cut on the drawn lines.

Step 5: Press the triangles open, pressing the seam toward the print/colored fabric. At the end of this step, you will have four 2¾" HSTs and two 5" HSTs.



Step 6: Referring to the photo, place a white 2¾" square on the left side and a 2¾" HST on the right side. Note the position of the print/colored triangle next to the white 2¾" square. Place these pieces right sides together and sew. Press open, pressing the seam toward the print/colored triangles. At the end of this step, you will have four units measuring 2¾" x 5".



Step 7: Referring to the photo, place two 2¾" x 5" units from Step 6 so the print/colored points meet in the center. Join the units. Reduce bulk by swirling the seams open at the intersection of the points,

then press the seams in opposite directions. Repeat with the remaining two 2¾" x 5" units. This will yield two 5" x 5" squares.



Step 8: Referring to the photo, arrange the two 5" HSTs and the two 5" squares from Step 7 as shown. The print/colored points of the 5" HSTs should meet in the center. Join the top 5" unit from Step 7 and the top 5" HST. Repeat for the bottom 5" HST triangle and the remaining 5" unit from Step 7. Join the two rows. Press the seam to one side, or to reduce bulk, swirl the seam and press open.



The block is complete. It should measure 9½" x 9½".

If you'd like to piece your blocks into a quilt top, the size for Project Warm Hearts quilts is about 40" x 50".

Project Warm Hearts: Submit 1 form/block

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