

## August Block of the Month

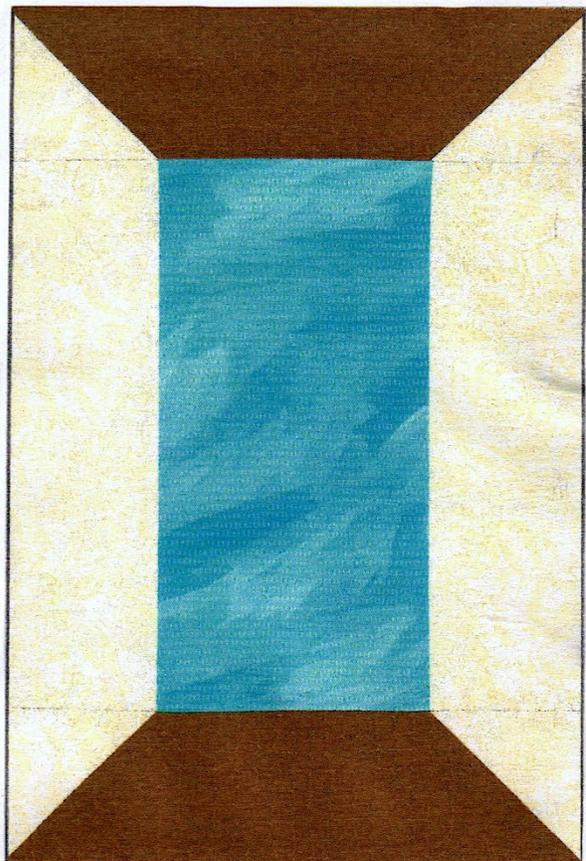
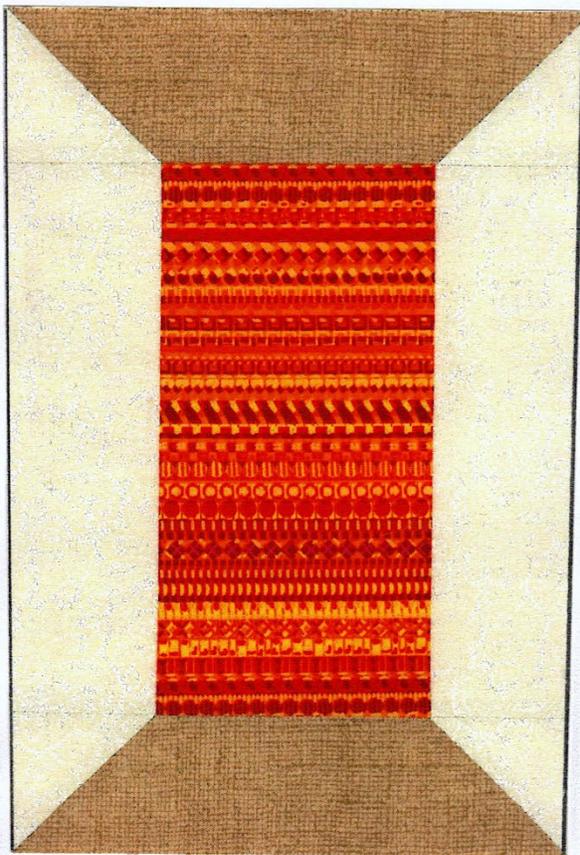
### “Spool”

Karen G. Fisher

As a non-traditional quilter, I’ve often wondered why many traditional quilt designers are so set on turning everything into square blocks. Lots of shapes just don’t fit into a square very well, such as spools. Square spools look like bow-ties to me (even though I know there is a diagonal “bow-tie” block). These square “spools” look like the huge spools used for laying cable and underground wiring—the ones that people used to salvage and turn into tables.

I’ve chosen to make a rectangular “spool” block, using striped fabric for the thread (back to traditional choices), and brown fabric for the wooden “ends.” I can visualize making “stacks” of spools, then piecing rows together to create a whole collection of spools—the bottoms and tops wouldn’t even need to match, so it would be like putting together a jelly roll pack after making the strips of spools.

You could also create a 20” block by combining four spools with 4 ½” center, or a completely random arrangement by filling in with background fabrics and different spool combinations across the whole surface of your quilt.



### Pattern for 12" x 8" block

A "thread": cut one piece striped fabric for center: 4 1/2" x 8 1/2"

B background two pieces: 2 1/2" x 8 1/2"

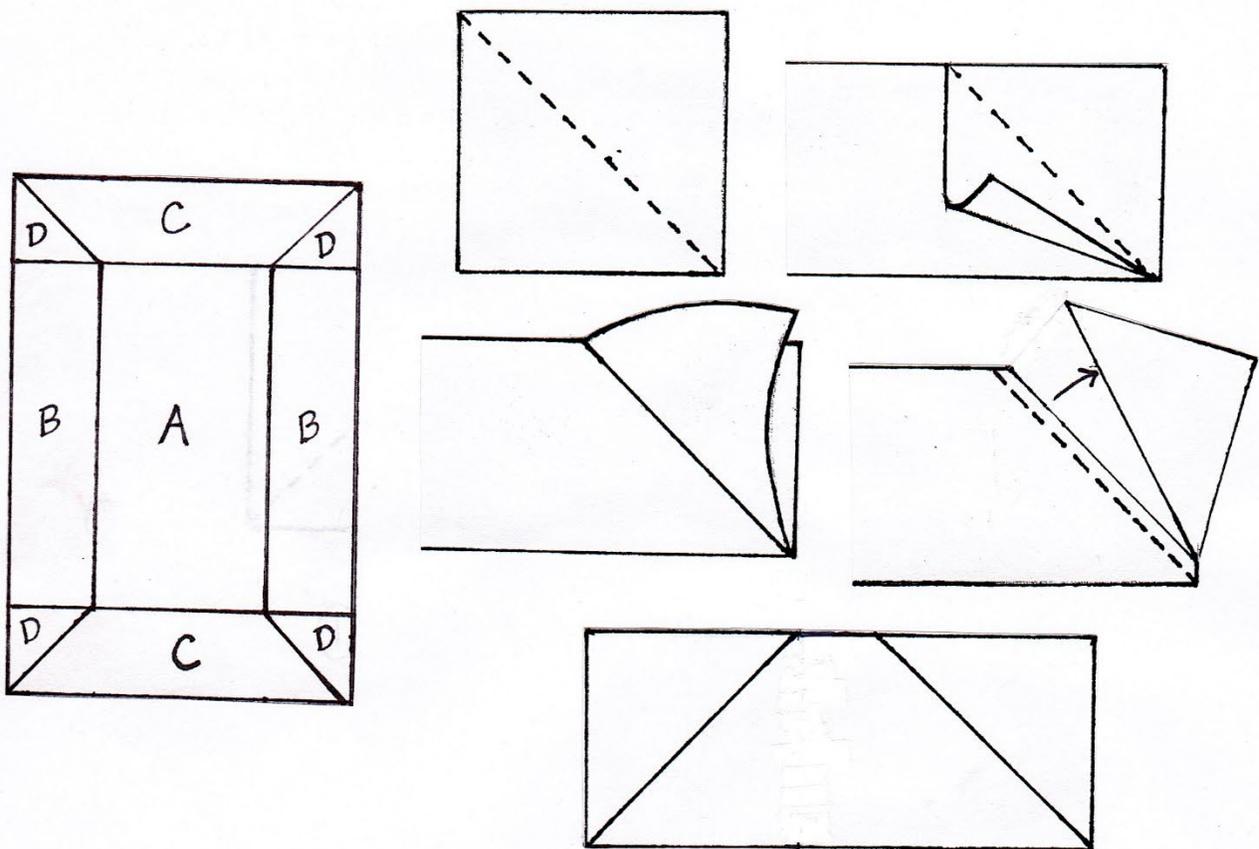
Sew background pieces on either side of center "thread" piece. Press seams toward center.

C bottom and top of spool: cut two pieces: 2 1/2" x 8 1/2"

D background corners: cut four pieces 2 1/2" x 2 1/2"

Draw a diagonal line across each corner square. Sew two squares to the ends of each "spool" end along diagonal line, as shown (like a "Snowball" block). Press square out to corner along stitching line. Trim away corner of spool fabric and bottom layer of background fabric. Press seam open. I have found that pressing the seams open allows them to lay flatter and they're easier to line up with the 90° seams of the center portion of the block.

Sew top and bottom of "spool" to center section of block. Press seams open.



**For 20" block:** combine 4 "spools" plus 4 ½" x 4 ½" center.  
Use partial seam to connect center to first spool, then stitch  
together next three spools. Complete first seam. Press all seams  
either into or away from center.

