

Fabric Swapping

We have been doing fabric swaps in our Free NOCCCD SCE OAP classes for many years. For each swap, a fun pattern is offered giving us a variety of patterns, but you could make these quilts from your stash, from Fat Quarters or from a Layer Cake purchased from your local quilt shop (or online) or... Organize a swap with friends! Here's how...

Organizing a Fabric Swap:

Pull together 20 or more Swappers.

Choose a theme... Could be a color, print type, reproduction era or ????

Choose a swap unit. Could be 10" squares, 8" squares, 2 1/2" Width of Fabric Strips or FatQuarters or any unit of fabric. The Swaps for the patterns in this book were 8" Squares, 2 different 8" squares making up a swap unit with 23 swap units (46 ea. 8" squares) in each swap. The participants needed 1 1/2 yards each of 2 different fabrics (or a stash equivalent.) You may note that these patterns move through the color wheel as well. We swapped one color a month with a light and dark fabric of each hue. The fabrics were semi-solid, mottled or tone-on-tone. The suggestion was that the fabric be 80% the required color and have less than 20% of any other color in it.

Participant Instructions:

Each participant needs 2 ea. 1 1/2 yard pieces of fabric on the theme. The fabric can be required to be prewashed if the group desires.

Cut each fabric into the required size. No Selvedges (except on those 2 1/2" strips), Cut accurately or generously!

Layer one piece of each fabric and fold once (three times for strips). Stack these pairs of fabrics in a crisscross fashion. (This is for ease of swapping.)

Place Folded Stack in a large plastic zip type bag with your name on it.

Go to the Swap Locale and arrive early...

Group Instructions:

Set a time and locale for the swap. Allow no stragglers!

Review the number of pieces and folding instructions with the group so participants can correct any problems. Also remind them to have their names on their bags. One bag per swap. One swap per bag. Place the Participants' Bags on a large table.

Assign a team of 3-4 to actually do the swap. Each must be able to count silently to twenty.

Arrange the bags around the edge of the table. Pull the Folded Stacks out and place atop the bag.

Choose a place to start. First Swapper takes the bag from below a stack and moves to the next stack (This way Participants do not get their own fabric back... most have their scraps/excess) and takes one folded unit from the top of the stack then moves on around the table, pulling a folded unit from each stack and putting it in the bag. Meanwhile the next swapper pulls the bag from below the second stack and follows along behind in the same manner.

IF the order is followed and IF each participant indeed had 20 folded units AND each swapper did indeed count correctly, the swap will turn out evenly no matter the number of actually swappers. Each Participant should count the number of units in their bag to confirm. (NOTE: It always a good idea for the organizer to have a few extra folded units...Just in case!)

Then share this website (www.LynBrown.com) and your participants will have a bevy of patterns from which they can choose to use with their swapped fabrics!