
Double Wedding Ring Quilt with Tara Faughnan

Chapter 1 - Double Wedding Ring Quilt

Overview

(upbeat music) - Hey everyone my name is Tara Faughnan and I'm a quilter, a teacher and a textile designer by trade. In this class I'm gonna show you how to make a scrappy double wedding ring block. Also how to make a template. How to cut fabrics, there's a few tips and tricks in here for the double wedding ring block. And we're gonna go over color interaction, value and contrast because that's one of the things that makes this scrappy quilt so successful. Lots of times people are intimidated by the double wedding ring but I find the process of hand sewing actually makes it easier. Because you can manipulate the fabrics and really get those seams to line up nicely. I've made a lot of quilts over the years but this one is my favorite. And it's one of the only quilts that we use in our house. I wanna see it all the time and I have it thrown over my couch and in fact I'm in the process of making another one.

Materials

- I have all the materials we're going to use to make the double wedding ring block. When I made my first double wedding ring quilt, I literally used the scraps out of my scrap bin. But now, that I'm embarking on a second double wedding ring, I wanted to switch up the color palette. One thing that's important is to have a nice variety of values, from light to dark. The color is your choice. You could even make this a two color quilt, but it's really fun to play with the color interaction as you're making this quilt because there's so much room to play, there's so many variations that you can create. So, here I have, probably, 40 or 50 fabrics, but I've also raided my stash. Gather whatever scraps you have available. The minimum size you want it a 2" x 3 1/4" piece, but you can use linens, you can use quilting cottons, you can use lightweight cottons. I used all kinds of fabrics in this quilt. The things you're gonna need to hand sew are pins, thread conditioner, I like to use a 50-weight thread, but whatever your preference is, go ahead and use that. I have nice, little scissors for clipping my threads when I'm hand sewing. I have a pencil for marking light-colored fabrics, and a Sharpie, or other permanent marker, for marking on the template plastic. This is the template that is available on the pdf, and here, I have heavy-duty template plastic. I really prefer this over the light template plastic because it holds up better. I have a rotary cutter and fabric scissors. This is really important, the 12 1/2" square ruler. Anything bigger than a 10 1/2" will work, but this is for squaring up the blocks after we've sewn it together. Here are sewing needles. And you can use embroideries or sharps, it's your preference. If you're new to hand-sewing, you can start with a larger needle, and as you become more comfortable with the stitching, you can reduce the size of the needle. I have a thimble, highly recommended (laughing), and these scissors, for cutting out template plastic. I found this roller to be really useful for pressing open seams while I'm sitting on the couch and sewing. And here, I have tape to tape the template down so that I can trace over it, and nothing will move. If you use a rotary cutter, you'll need a mat, but you can also just cut everything out by hand with scissors. When I made my quilt, I made it slowly over the course of the year and I would often sit on the couch and just cut fabrics and trace without using a rotary cutter or a mat.

Templates and Arcs

Making templates

- This block measures 10 inches finished. So here I've printed it out on an 11 by 17 piece of paper. If you don't have that capability at home you can take it down to the copy store or you can print it out on eight and 1/2 by 11s and splice them together. Once you have your template printed tape it down and tape the template plastic down on top of it. You don't want anything to move while you're tracing. You're gonna copy all of the lines from the printout onto your template plastic. Be very precise when you're doing this, because you're only making one set of templates to use for your entire quilt. So take your time. I'm using my pencil for this first part, because if I get a little wobbly on the lines I can just erase them. What you are going to want to trace is one corner piece, one of the square pieces, the center melon, and one arc. You don't need to trace two sets of that, just one of each. Again, take your time, especially when you're drawing along this curve. You also want to transfer all of these markings here that go into the other piece. That will help you line up your pieces when you're sewing them together. Be sure to extend the mark all the way into the center melon and the corner. Sometimes you gotta get right in there to see what you're doing. Again, really take your time with this part. The accuracy of your block is going to depend on the accuracy of how you trace and cut out these template pieces. I'm gonna lift a little corner to make sure I've copied all of the parts. I see I'm missing my square and the far side of my melon. Be sure to transfer these marks as well. They are very important. We're not adding seam allowance to this block. You're gonna add the seam allowance when you're sewing. Take everything off. And now comes the really important part of labeling your pieces. This is what you use the permanent marker for. So I like to label not only what the piece is, but what size block it is. 10 inch double wedding ring corner piece. 10 inch double wedding ring, it's obviously a square, but it's always nice to put all of this information on your templates, because let's say you leave this project for six months and you come back to it. And maybe your template pieces have become scattered. You'll be able to know that that goes to your double wedding ring. Now this you can label it any way you want. A, B, C, D. If you wanna label it one through eight that's great. But also put 10 inch double wedding ring. I have more than one double wedding ring size at home, so that's why I found it was really useful to put all of the information on the template pieces. As you're sewing, and if this project, if you decide to make a large quilt and this project takes many months you might need to reapply some of that information, because eventually it will rub off of your templates. I also like to ink over these tick marks. These marks are gonna be really useful when you sew your arc together and are lining it up with the central melon and also the corner piece. I have all of my information transferred to my template and now I'm ready to cut it out. Be sure not to use your fabric scissors or your rotary cutter when you're cutting out these template pieces. Not only will you dull your scissors, but the rotary cutter is not accurate enough. Again, take your time with this part. The other reason why you're labeling on the front of the template is that when you're laying down to trace on the fabrics it let's you know what is the front and what is the back side of the template. So there is a little tricky part right here on this corner. What you don't wanna do is end your cutting right here at this point. You really want to extend the cutting all the way to the very end. So on the outside you can fudge it a little bit and cut right on the outside of that line. And then I want to make sure that I have a little piece that extends all the way to the square. Cutting out that corner piece is the only tricky little part to cutting out this template. I would suggest you start there and finish cutting the template along the lines.

Selecting and cutting fabric

- Once you've cut out all of your templates, we're ready to cut out the fabric. For each block you're going to need 16 arc pieces, two squares, two corners, and one melon. I like to pre cut a lot of pieces so that I can then go sit on the couch and just sew for days, without having to get up and go cut more pieces of fabric. If you're using a bunch of scraps from your stash, you can cut them down to size. You can either keep them at this size, or you can cut them down to the two inches, by three and a quarter that you're going to need, for the arc pieces. I like to leave a generous quarter inch around each of the templates, so that when I trace the fabric, I will cut out the piece more closely. If you want to pre cut a bunch of pieces first, I find the easiest method is to cut the fabrics into strips and then sub cut that for the arc pieces. I like to cut off all the little bits so that everything's nice and neat. I'm just gonna cut this three and a quarter inches. And I'll layer a bunch of strips all together. You do want a sharp rotary blade for this. I have ten layers of fabric right here. And what I'll do, when I'm cutting, is leave a generous quarter inch all around the template. That's why I'm giving you the two by three and a quarter inch size to cut. And I'll just cut a bunch of pieces so that I'm ready to go. I like to be really efficient and cut my fabrics at two inches by three and a quarter, but if you feel like you'd like a little bit of a wider piece to work with, you can just scoot your ruler over, cut it at two and an eighth inch, two and a quarter inch. And I like to sit in my studio, and cut a bunch of fabrics all at once, and have them ready to go. Now we're gonna move on to cutting squares. This square template measures two and a half inches on each side. But there's a little trick to cutting this, which is going to help us square up the block at the end, so I don't like to cut the pieces with only an extra quarter inch seam allowance. I like to cut the squares quite a bit larger, that will become clear at the end why we want some extra seam allowance. For the squares, I like to cut a three and a half inch strip. Three and a half inches. And you can layer these together, like so. Be sure to cut off the selvage where there's all the little holes. You don't want those holes in your quilt. And I'll cut a bunch of the squares as well. For the melon pieces, you can either cut these out in a strip and then sub cut, but sometimes I find that it's easier for the melons and for the corners, to just lay them directly on the fabric, trace them out, and then cut them out individually. Now that we have a bunch of pieces cut, we're gonna trace all of the pieces. For the melon and the corner pieces, it's best just to directly lay them onto the fabric, trace around each shape, and cut them out individually. You can cut out strips, but I think it's easier to just trace and cut each shape individually, rather than cutting a bunch at once. Lay your fabric out, and place your corner on the wrong side of the fabric if you're using prints. The side of the fabric that you trace along, is the back side. For solids it doesn't really matter. I like to lay the template directly on the fabric and hold it in place. You don't need to press real hard to get a mark. And trace all around the edges. Especially when you come to the little corners here, sometimes it's helpful to lay your thumb down towards the end of the template to keep this little piece from wiggling. Be sure to transfer all of these marks onto the fabric. And here we have our corner. So I'm gonna go ahead and trace out another piece right here, and then you can also trace out the melon. You can get really efficient. There's a little trick when you come to cutting these pieces out. You can cut out the melon right on that quarter inch line. You're gonna eyeball a quarter inch, because this trace line is your sewing line, and you're just gonna eyeball the seam allowance. As you practice this, you'll get more accurate in eyeballing a quarter inch seam allowance. For these corner pieces, you wanna cut it out a little bit differently. Again, you wanna have a little bit of extra fabric on the edge. And this is for, when we square up the block at the end, you will have extra seam allowance and your block will be sure to not be too small. If that's confusing to you now, once we sew up all the pieces, it'll make sense. For the corner piece, I cut right along that inside edge at a quarter inch. You can trim off. And I leave the outside edge alone.

And you can just rough cut this. Don't cut off too close to the edge right here. Leave a generous half to three quarters of an inch, just as you are around the edges. And you can cut that inside line approximately a quarter inches away from the drawn line. I'll do this process in my studio and cut a bunch of different colors so that I have all of those options when I go to sew the block together. I have big stacks of corner pieces traced and cut, and the melon pieces traced and cut, and now we want to trace the squares and the arc pieces. For the square, you want a nice quarter inch seam allowance on two sides. The other two sides, you want a half an inch seam allowance. At least a half an inch. You can go bigger if you'd like, but don't go smaller. Again, this is gonna help us when we square up the blocks at the end, because sometimes in the piecing process, even though we're hand sewing, and it's slow and precise, things can get out of whack, so when you iron your block all out, and it's all put together, you might find that your lacking a quarter inch of seam allowance. It's really a bummer, so I've learned to cut the corner pieces and the squares a little big bigger to allow for any issues like that. Hold your piece firmly. And you could use a gentle touch with your marking tool. If you press really hard, you can kind of stretch the fabric out and distort it. I'll trace a bunch of squares. Pretty easy. Quarter inch on two sides, half inch seam allowance on two sides. For each block you're going to need two squares. And this is where I'll use a pencil on this lighter fabric because that white chalk pencil just wasn't showing up. Before we start tracing the arc pieces, we're going to get into color, which is a really fun part of this quilt. For each arc, there's eight pieces to it, and you get to play with color in every single arc of this quilt. Here I have a bunch of pre cut arc pieces, and you can see some of them, I pulled from my scrap bin and just cut down roughly to size. So what I like to do is to start with one color and pick out a color that I like with it. I like those two colors together. And then I put that color aside, and I take this color, and I pick out a color that I think goes well with that. Ooh, loving that together. I put those two colors aside, mm, and I just choose two colors that I like that go together. And I'll continue. I love those two together. And then I put all of those aside and I pick out a color that I really like that goes with this color. Maybe I want more of the pink. Nope, I want, ooh, I want that color. Something that's really interesting that's happening right here, is that I might not put those two colors together, but because I like this color with this color and I like this color with this color, these two colors don't really talk to each other, they talk to the color that's in-between. So you can take two colors that you might not like together, for me that's this pink and this purple, and if you put a color in-between, that they both interact well with, they stop talking to each other as much and start talking to this color. If you add another color, even more so. So you can put two colors that you don't think go together very well in the same arc, and just separate them with other pieces. So I've got these six pieces right here laid out, and what's really fascinating is, look what happens, I just wanna show you something. Look what happens when I put black in there, and when I put white in there. Do you see that difference? It both grounds it and gives the colors a lot of pop. It's really interesting. You can play with near black colors like dark blue, dark green, dark purple, and it acts in the same manner, but it's not quite as severe as black. Same with white. You can play with a near white, which is like a light blue, a light yellow, a pale purple, and it does the same thing. It grounds it and it gives the arc a lot of pop. For each block we're going to need two arcs. I'm gonna pick out the other pieces now. I just pick out one color at a time, forgetting all the rest. I added my black and white. I'm not really happy with how this little situation is happening. It looks, it's just not working for me. So I might just swap it out. That yellow, and then I'm not happy with how these two are reacting to each other, so maybe I'll just choose a real pale pink. I'm pretty happy with that. Lay your templates down, a, b, c and so on, through the alphabet. The other thing that's useful about writing on the template, is that if you put it down backwards,

you're gonna see that, whereas if you just write a, you might not notice that this piece is backwards. For additional reassurance, you could also write front on the template. For this darker fabric I'm gonna go with the white chalk pencil. And on the lighter fabric, I'm gonna go with the regular lead pencil. A light touch is best here. Again, you don't wanna distort your fabric. You can really pull it out of place. This drawn line is your sewing line. That's why we don't need to worry so much about having an accurate quarter inch seam allowance. Be sure to transfer the identification of the template, whether you've chosen two or b. Whatever it is, be sure to transfer it to the fabric. If you have really light fabric I like to do it in the seam allowance so that it doesn't show through on the front, on the dark fabric. You could do it on the side or in the middle. We have all the pieces traced, and all the information transferred, and now we need to cut out along the drawn line, leaving a quarter inch seam allowance. You can do this with your rotary cutter or with scissors. I find this part enjoyable on the couch, so I'll trace a bunch of pieces, and then take it to the couch, and just give it a little trim. Some might need more trimming than others. Again, your accuracy will improve as you cut hundreds of pieces. You can also trim the pieces again after you've sewn them if you're not happy with your seam allowance. I've traced and cut out one arc. Repeat that for the second arc.

Sewing the block

Sewing the block

- We're ready to sew the arc pieces together. I've threaded a needle with, well it's quite a long piece of thread. I wouldn't suggest when you're starting that you cut more than 18 inches of thread at a time. The longer the thread, the more likely it is to tangle. I like to use thread conditioner as well. It really helps with the tangling. Run that through. I like to place the thimble on my middle finger. I would highly recommend using a thimble. I've had so many times where the back of the needle has gone into my hand before I was comfortable wearing a thimble, that I finally started wearing one, and it's been great. Now it's like a second finger. You wanna start with A and B, and place the right sides together, like so. This will take a little adjustment to start getting used to how these line up with each other, because we don't have an exact quarter inch seam allowance. Place your needle right in the that point, right there. Check to see that it's on the same point on the back. Put that in place. Go to the other end. Put it right there on the corner. Check to see if it's lined up on the back. It's not, so I just need to scooch that fabric a little bit. Reinsert the needle, check. That's lined up nicely. And do the same in the middle. Now we're ready to sew. Hand sewing is really simple. It's just a running stitch. And you start and end with a knot. Place your needle right down into that corner, and bring it back up again. If your stitches are really large at first, don't worry about it. My stitches were really large when I started sewing, but with practice they get smaller. Bring your needle through, until you have about an inch, inch and a half of thread left. And then just bring it down and up again. Until you have a little loop. Put the needle through the loop, and pull it. You can do another backstitch in place. And if you're worried that that's not quite tight enough, you can just check. Is that coming out? No, that's in there pretty secure. Alright. And now we start the running stitch. You just put your needle down into the fabric, and back up again. And just rock the needle up and down along that line. You should check to make sure that your needle's hitting on the backside, where it needs to be. I've chosen a sharp needle, probably size four or so, five. And you can start large, and work your way to a smaller needle. Smaller needles will lead to smaller stitches. Every time I bring the needle up, I place it back in, just right behind where it came out. This helps lock the

stitches in place, and create a stronger seam. So when you come to that pin, just pull it out and keep going. When you first get out a fresh needle, it can be a bit sticky. Maybe there's residue on it from the manufacturing process. So the first few seams might be a bit harder to pull the needle through. That's what I've noticed, no matter what needle I use. I place the needle back, right behind where I came out. When you get to the end, you also wanna stop on that sewing line. And let's say you can't go back down and then come back up, because you go past the sewing line, you can just come up, and create a backstitch and come up right on that corner. Create another backstitch. Come through that loop. And you can check, if you're a little nervous, is that gonna come out? And you can always do another backstitch if you'd like. Cut off your thread, an inch, inch and a half away. And you can either finger press it open, or this is when we use this great roller, to set the seam. It creates a nice crisp seam. And now we want to add C. Place it right sides together with B. If you ever get confused on the order, you can just lay it right back down, A, B, C. Right there in that corner. Continue adding pieces until you've worked your way across the arc, and then repeat the same process for the second arc. After you have two arcs sewn together, you can layout all the pieces for your block, to make sure that you're happy with your color choices for the melon, and the corners. I've a lot of pre-traced pieces to choose from. I'm going for this nice pink that's buried down there. And on the other side, I might keep it real mellow with a dark brown. Here you can see I've used a print. Very, very subtle print. Front side is solid. And this is the print side, what I've traced on. I'm pretty happy with that layout, so I'm gonna start sewing all of the pieces together. First you wanna take your two squares, and sew them to one of the arcs. Be sure, and I'm gonna move all of these pieces out of the way. It's really important at this part, to layout your squares, so that the quarter inch seam allowance is towards the inside. And the excess seam allowance is towards the outside. So you don't wanna lay it up like that. You want that excess to the outside. Sewing on the squares is just like sewing the arc pieces together. You start at that corner point. I need to nudge it a little bit. Go to the other side. Insert a pin right at that corner. And you can begin sewing. Again, you start, put your needle in. Bring it up. Leave a one to one and a half inch tail. Create a backstitch in place. Bring your needle through loop. And it should be very secure. That can't, I can't move that thread. And then you can just begin sewing with your running stitch. Always remembering to check on the backside to make sure you're sewing along that line. Some people ask if hand sewing creates a strong seam. And I can attest to the times when I have mis-sewed something, and had to pick apart the stitches, that I could not pull them out with my hands. I had to use a seam ripper. The smaller your stitches are, the greater the integrity, and the strength of your seam will be. But don't worry. If you have big stitches, don't take it out and redo it. Just practice. And probably by the end of a few hours, your stitches will be much smaller than when you started. Sew all the way up to the end. And, create a backstitch or two. Go through that loop. Make sure it's nice and secure, until you feel confident that it's not going to fall apart on you. And press it open. Repeat this for the other side. Making sure that your quarter inch is there. So really, right here we have a very big seam allowance, because apparently I didn't cut that out very well. But I just noticed that, when I'm putting it together. And I'll start. I'll line them up to take that into account. If you want, you can trim that down to a quarter inch. Or you can trim it down after you've sewn it together. Line it up, and begin sewing. And repeat that whole process for this square. We've sewn on both squares to one of the arcs, and now we're going to sew the other arc to the melon. You always want the concave piece on top. It bends better. You can't bend this piece to ... You just can't. You'll find out when you lay it out, if you lay it out with the wrong side on top, that you can't bend that piece to fit the other piece. I like to find the center mark on the melon, right there. And the center of the arc, I like to put a pin in

right there. We're going to repeat. So I have to nudge that fabric over just a little bit, to get it to line up. This is why I think sewing the double wedding ring by hand is sometimes a bit easier, because the process is so slow, you get to really adjust all of the pieces, instead of sometimes when you're speeding through something on the sewing machine. You get to take your time, and really nudge the fabric around to get everything to line up nicely. So I'm just nudging the fabric with my fingers, to get that to line up. Until I'm satisfied. Nothing is perfect. And then I just use my needle to find that spot on the corner, on the front and back. As soon as I've found that spot, I do a backstitch in place. Or two. If you only do one backstitch, be sure to go through the loop on the first backstitch. Just adds a little bit more anchor. So what you're gonna wanna do, is kind of nudge this top fabric into a little bit of an arc. You don't want that arc on the backside going up, and this arc going down. So you just kind of nudge it into place. Check that you're hitting that line on the back. And when you get to this pin, you can remove it. And come up right at that intersection, before you hit the seam. You don't wanna sew through the seam, like you would on a sewing machine. You wanna do a backstitch here. The other thing that the backstitches do, is if you start pulling your thread too tight, it stops that tension problem from going all the way back down the piece. You can't really pull those threads tight. Once you've made your backstitch, go through right there at that intersection, at that seam, and come up on the other side. And keep sewing. Oops. Make sure you're hitting that line. And I'll show you that intersection again. So come right up at that intersection. Take a backstitch. You don't have to do the loop on this one. You're just trying to hold the seams in place. See if I pull it, it's not pulling tight on those stitches down there. Go right through. And take it up on the other side. Keep sewing all the way down. You can pin all of this in place, but I find that it gets really pokey for my hands. But definitely if you wanna try pinning everything into place before you start sewing, no problem. I'm left handed, so I start sewing on the left side. You might wanna start sewing on the right side, if you're right handed. So I like to sew halfway. Place it down, pin the other side, and continue sewing to the end, where you'll backstitch and cut off the thread, leaving an inch to an inch and a half tail. Once you've sewn the second arc to the melon, finger press the seams open, with the seam allowance going towards the melon. You can use an iron at any point in this process you want. You might find it's easier to make a bunch of arcs, and iron them all before you add the squares, and sew the arc to the melon. You might want to iron at this point. You might want to iron after you put them all together. It's up to you. I encourage you to experiment, and find out where in the process it's easier for you to start ironing. I like to iron once I get this whole piece put together. But that's just from trial and error, and what I've found works for me. Once you have this arc sewn to the melon, you're gonna wanna sew the two arcs altogether. This is similar to the first arc, in that I like to start in the center. Find the center on this arc, and the center on the melon, to pin it in place. Right there at that intersection. I need to nudge it over a little bit. It might take you quite a few tries to get it lined up. That's okay. Hopefully you're sitting on the couch, enjoying the process. Again, if you're right handed, you might want to start pinning in the other direction. I'm not right handed, so I can't speak to experience, but I assume if you're right handed, you're gonna start on the right side. Again, you want the concave side on top. If you mess up, and put this side on top, you're gonna find you really can't move that piece into place. And then you'll end up with this side on top. It's the same for sewing on your sewing machine. Some curves do not want to be budged. Pin at all the seams. Then when you come to this intersection, where you have a seam here, and a seam on the backside, I flip both of the seams back, and match the corner to the corner. Match corner to corner. I like to go to the far end, and find this other corner, and then do the center. I find it's easier for alignment. You'll find what process works for you. This is how I've found it works easiest for me. So I

have all of that pinned. Again, I'm not pinning this other side, because as I hold it in my hand, I start poking myself, so I just pin half at a time. I gather all of that up into my fist. And I go down and up. Definitely put on my thimble. Pull it through, until we have an inch, inch and a half tail. Create your backstitch. And just sew along. Trying to let you guys see what I'm doing here. I just sew along, check on the backside, to make sure that you're hitting that line. Take the pin out. And you can see my stitches aren't really super even. That's okay. This isn't quilting. No one really sees this. I put my needle down right behind where I came out. And that's just habit. Every time I bring that needle out of the fabric, I just do a little backstitch. Doesn't hurt, could only help. You go until you hit the end. You remove that needle. Both of your seams are still pulled to the back. You do a little backstitch in place. And then I go through, and I flip that seam to the front. Flip the seam on the backside towards the front. So that when you come down, you're coming down right into that corner. Again, you don't wanna sew through the seams when you're hand sewing. It's different than sewing by machine. You just move the seams out of the way when you come to them. The rule of thumb is to sew up to the seam. Take a backstitch. Move the seam to the other side. And we take a backstitch. Gonna go through and move the seam to the other side. And keep sewing. Continue sewing the entire length. You'll have to stop halfway if you're like me and you only pinned half of your piece. And then pin the other side. So you'll see here, I didn't come all the way to the end, because I didn't have room to go down and come up and make another stitch, so I'll just do a backstitch here, in that place. Maybe two backstitches. Go through the seam to the other side. Continue sewing along the seam. End with a backstitch, and cut the thread off leaving a one inch tail. At this point, I like to press the piece. So we're going to take our piece over to the ironing board. I find it's easier to press at this point, before adding the corners. But please experiment for yourself, and maybe you don't wanna press the block until it's completely together. Be sure to iron this seam allowance towards the center. And I like to iron this seam allowance towards the square. I find the pieces fit together better when I iron this seam allowance towards the square. If that's confusing to you, iron one seam allowance first. Then push this over, and iron this on top. Now we've sewn both of our arcs to the central melon. Our squares are on. We're all pressed, and we are ready to add the corners. We're so close to being done. Layout your pieces. Again, just like with the arcs, I like to start in the center. I find if you start on this edge, and you start getting off, this mark can end up like a quarter inch off. So I always start in the center and go out to either edge. Center of the corner. Center of the arc, which is four arc pieces in. Line it up. Stick the pin in right there at the intersection. Move this out of the way. And just gently nudge these fabrics, because here you have a bias edge, so you can really whip this out of shape quite easily by being too rough with your fabrics. But it also means that you can adjust it quite easily, to make that hash mark line up with the seam. Just notice that it's a bias edge, and it will be very stretchy. Be gentle. This might look difficult, to try to line up the seam allowance, but as you practice, it will get a lot easier. I promise. It was hard for me when I started too. It took a lot longer. So, I'm ready to go. Needle down and up. Create my backstitch. And, start sewing. Gonna check to make sure I'm on that seam. This works for me. Don't worry about how this dark fabric is extending past the light fabric. Once you've sewn the seam, you can trim that even, and then press it open. So I'm going to remove the pin. Before I do my backstitch, do you see if I pull on the thread, all of that tension issue down there? That's why you do a backstitch. So I did a backstitch. I still have tension issues. Maybe I need to do another backstitch. Oh, I can't pull it tight anymore. You've sewn up to the seam, and now you need to flip that seam to the backside, and just keep sewing. End with a backstitch. Cutoff your thread, leaving a one inch tail, and repeat for the other side.

Squaring the block

- We've sewn on our corners, and we're ready to press the final block. You'll notice it's not looking super pretty at the moment. A little raggedy. I like to press the seam allowance towards the corner, away from the arc. Give it a nice press. And then you're gonna tuck these pieces behind, because we did not sew through the seam allowance, you can do that. Tuck them behind the square. Let's flip it over. We just want to cut down the excess to within a quarter inch of the sewing line. Just like that, all the way around. And now we're ready to square the block. You might have noticed that the sewing order is different than if you sewed a double wedding ring on your sewing machine. The reason for that is, like I showed you here, we can simply tuck this behind. If you're sewing a double wedding ring on your sewing machine, your sewing order is going to be different. You're going to be adding these corner pieces to the arcs first, then adding the squares, then sewing everything together. But because we're hand sewing, we have the luxury of doing it in whatever order we want, with regards to these corner pieces. The reason why I like to do it in this order is because I like this central part of the block to be really scrappy and random. And I like to have a little bit more thought put into what colors I'm gonna put on to the corners. So what I'll do is create a bunch of the central parts of the block, I'll lay them out, and then choose with a little bit more thought and less randomness, what colors I'm gonna place in the corners. We are ready to square up this block. So this is where the fine art of fudging comes in. One of the greatest tools we have as quilters is how to fudge it to make it look right, even if we didn't sew it perfectly. So to start with, to understand your block, you can see all around the edge where I've given you the instructions to leave more than a quarter inch seam allowance, why? We have all of this extra room to play with. And this is a great trick for all kinds of blocks, is to make them bigger than you need, and trim them down to size. So you can start by just seeing where you're at. Are you off on your block anywhere? Remember this is a ten inch finish block. So this square in theory should be ten inches. What I find is that no matter what, no matter how many of these blocks I have made, somewhere along the way, I'm not perfect, and the block just doesn't come out to ten inches square. Which is why I developed that extra seam allowance technique to help. We're not too far off on the measurement of this block. This side is a nine and seven eighths. This side, same thing. We're at about nine and seven eighths. So, the reason why I wanted you guys to draw all of these lines on the corners is that perhaps your block did come out to a perfect ten inch, and that's fantastic. Then, you can just trim off from the back side, adding a quarter inch seam allowance. And you're ready to sew your blocks together. But if you're like me, and your block's not really ten inches, I find it easier to do this whole process from the front side, where we can really fudge it, and make it work. Place my ruler down. You want a ten and a half inch block that will finish down to ten inches, right? You want a quarter inch extra around on all sides. So where this intersection is right here, we're gonna start there. That's gonna be where we start the measurement. And what we want is we want an extra quarter inch on the side, and an extra quarter inch on the top. Right? Because our sewing line is right along that edge, right here, that's where we want it to hit. Right there. So we add an extra quarter, we measure out. A quarter of an inch here, a quarter of an inch there. This might be confusing to you, but after you square up a few blocks, you're gonna really get it. Then I look down to this side. We want this block to measure ten and a half inches. And if I look at the ten and a half inch line, it's actually about three eighths of an inch beyond this intersection. So remember, these are our two intersections that we can use to square up this block, to have a beautiful block, no matter how wonky we've sewn it. So we start off here, quarter inch above, quarter inch above, look down here. We're really three eighths of an inch off. 'Cause that's my ten and a half inch line. And do you see that three eighths of an inch between here

and here? So what I like to do is split the difference. So I have a quarter of an inch, plus a millimeter. And then on this side, same thing. I have a quarter of an inch plus a tiny millimeter. Let's go see what we have over here. We have a quarter of an inch, plus a millimeter, and a quarter of an inch plus a millimeter. Notice too that these lines on the ruler line up very nicely with that square piece right there. So we are ready to cut our block. Double check everything, two and three times, because you only want to cut once, and you don't want to make a mistake and have to resew your corners on. Ten and a half inches over here, and here's our line that we're gonna cut on. Hold your ruler, nice and firm. And cut. Alright. Flip it around. We'll put the ten and a half inch line right on this edge that we've just squared. And yep, we've got a quarter inch plus a millimeter or so, a quarter inch plus a millimeter or so. So what we've done is we've split the excess evenly between all the four sides. And there we are. I want to show you the back. It's not too far off. You can see from this drawn line. But if I had cut away everything except for my quarter inch seam allowance, I would have been too short. I want to show you all how to square this block up one more time. 'Cause it can be a bit confusing. So this time, I'm gonna do it for a right handed cutter. Put this corner in the upper right side. And again, these are the intersections that are sweet spots. That's how we will square our block, using those intersections. Place your ruler down, and give yourself an extra quarter inch here, and an extra quarter inch there. Then let's see what's happening on this side. It's beautiful. Our ten and a half inch line actually falls a quarter inch beyond that intersection, perfect. On this side is a different story. We have a little bit extra. So what we're gonna do is we're gonna scooch it over and split that difference between the two sides. So probably, each seam allowance will be three eighths of an inch. Closer to three eighths of an inch instead of a quarter. These two seam allowances are still gonna be a quarter of an inch. We're off by an eighth of an inch. I think that is livable. Once you've double checked everything... Cut along the top sides. You're gonna flip your block over. Place that ten and a half inch line right there, on the corner that you just cut. We've got about a quarter of an inch. Perfect, right there. This almost an extra eighth of an inch on that side. It's okay. I can live with it. And voila. Beautiful double wedding ring block. I've got four blocks all squared up. And I'm just gonna show you guys some different ways you can play with the layout. Again, these are ten inch finished blocks. So if you want to make an 80 by 80 inch quilt, you're gonna have to make 64 blocks. We're gonna pretend that this is the edge of the quilt. You can lay it out so that these guys start creating the ring from the very edge. Or... So that they create more of this flower shape from the edge of the quilt. If you wanted to, you could even lay it out like that. Why not, it's your quilt. One thing I'd like to point out when looking at these quilt blocks is the value. So we talked about color earlier, and let's talk more about value. There's quite a lot of difference in values. We have light fabrics, we have dark fabrics. We have areas of high contrast. And we also have areas of low contrast. And this is important because the areas of high contrast will really pop when you're looking at the quilt, and the areas of low contrast will recede and give your eyes a place to rest. What I like to do is have areas of high contrast and areas of low contrast in my quilt. That way, your eye keeps moving all around the quilt. It adds a lot of interest. I have a lot more fun when I'm creating a quilt to play with the value, and take that time to have differences in light, dark, contrast, color. It just keeps it really interesting. Sewing an entire quilt by hand might seem a bit daunting. But I think if you give it a try, you're gonna find that hand sewing is not only calming and relaxing, it's also super addictive. And I'm really excited to get on with my next double wedding ring quilt.