



Sweetest Things Sampler

1. Introduction – Materials and equipment



Thank you so much for subscribing to the Sweetest Things Sampler Quilt-along, it's really lovely to have you along. The first post in this 13 month Quilt-along, covers materials required and an Irish Chain block tutorial.

- Each completed Irish Chain block measures 10½” before piecing into the quilt-top.
- Combined with the monthly Sampler blocks, the completed quilt-top measures 50” x 50”, and can be made into a 60” x 60” quilt with borders.

The blocks could be used individually for smaller projects too, such as a mini-quilt, cushions or a table topper.

If you happen to miss a block in the series, you can still find it in the Sweetest Things Sampler section of Honeybee Cloths www.honeybeecloths.co.uk/sweetest_things_sampler

So pop the kettle on for a cuppa, pull up a comfy chair, and let's begin:



Throughout the Quilt-along, both myself, and Michelle of Creative Blonde, will be using quilting weight cottons for our blocks, including Brenda Riddle collections – Caroline and Bespoke Blooms. These are such pretty collections, and will make a gorgeous quilt. However if you have a stash-full of prints in need of a good home, the Sampler is for them too ☺

Using different colour combinations or colour values (light and dark) can produce very different effects in your Irish Chain. Skip to page 3, to view the block in different colourways. The Irish Chain blocks in the Sweetest Things Sampler use at least 8 different prints, which lend a lovely scrappy effect to the quilt.

Material requirements for Quilt-top:

- 1.8 metre / 2 yards - 45" wide / - Plain Off-white or Low volume print cotton fabric
e.g. Moda Bella Solids Off-white 9900-200
- 16 Fat Eighths (25cm x 55cm) in pretty cotton prints Caroline/ Bespoke Blooms
Or 8 Long Quarters (25cm x 110cm)
- 3 Fat Quarters in Solid colours
(e.g. Moda Bella Solids -Taupe 9900 310, Light Lime 9900 100, Pale pink 9900 26 or similar.)
- Border: (optional) 1.6m / 60" – 45" wide cotton fabric
- Binding: 0.5 metre / 20"- 45" wide cotton fabric
- **Notions:** Thread for piecing, fusible interfacing or webbing (for applique); Quilting thread. Some of the blocks also include optional trimmings e.g. seed beads, embroidery thread etc.
- **Equipment:** Rotary cutter, ruler and mat, sewing machine, iron and pressing board, pins and needles, scissors, erasable marking pen. Optional: freezer paper, basting glue, basting spray.
- **Backing and batting:** will be covered in more detail in the next blog post. As well as piecing and quilting as a whole, there will be the option of Quilt as you go.



Materials required if make blocks individually for smaller projects, such as a mini-quilt or cushion, given below.

To make one Irish Chain block

- 1 – 2 ½" x 45" (110cm) strip Plain Off-white or Low volume cotton fabric
- 1 – 2 ½" x 20" (55cm) strip pretty cotton prints - Caroline and Bespoke Blooms
- 1 – 2 ½" square pretty fabric

Each Sampler block requires

- 10½" square* Plain Off-white or Low volume cotton fabric.
(*Or 11" square, if you Quilt as You Go)
- Small amounts of cotton prints.

If you're ready and eager to sew, skip to page 4, for how to make the Irish Chain blocks.

Our next post in 2 weeks' time covers Quilt assembly and quilting options.

Till then from our hive to yours, Happy sewing

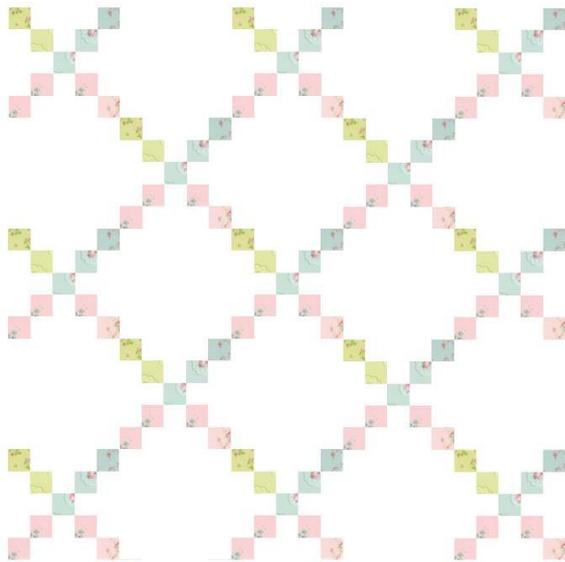
Dawn x X

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Sweetest Things Sampler Quilt



Sampler blocks are combined with Irish Chain blocks to make the quilt top. See plan below.

Every month from February a new Sampler block will be posted on Honeybee Cloths blog.

The first Sampler block in February is so pretty! It's made and designed by Michelle of Creative Blonde, who will be returning to our blog every other month throughout the year. There are lots of gorgeous blocks to look forward to!



	Feb Sampler Block 1.		March Sampler Block 2.	
April Sampler Block 3.		May Sampler Block 4.		June Sampler Block 5.
	July Sampler Block 6.		August Sampler Block 7.	
September Sampler Block 8.		October Sampler Block 9.		November Sampler Block 10.
	December Sampler Block 11.		January 19 Sampler Block 12.	





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2. Irish Chain block

Irish Chain block is a lovely versatile pattern. In this method, each block is made from four quick and easy 4-patch units. These are quick to make, sew one or two 4-patch units whenever you have a few minutes to spare, and before you know it you have enough for the Irish Chain blocks in the Sampler.

There are 13 Irish Chain blocks, in our 50" x 50" (1.27m x 1.27m) quilt top.

Please note: ¼" seam allowance used throughout



If you're new to sewing, or just need a refresher, Irish Chain blocks are ideal, as you get to practice the basics in piecing precisely....

- **Measure twice, cut once** - Cutting strips precisely makes piecing a lot easier
- **Check the ¼" mark on your machine** - Where this is can vary from machine to machine – use a ruler to check.
- **Squaring up** – Trimming the 4-patch units to 4 ½" square, helps when joining everything up.



To make the scrappy version of the Irish Chain blocks you'll need:

- (1 yard / approx. 92cm) – 45" wide Plain Off-white or low volume cotton fabric
Sliced into (14) - 2 ½" x 45" strips (reserve 6 strips to be made into 4 ½" pieces in step 8)
- Either 16 Fat Eighth pieces - **OR** - 8 Long Quarters in assorted pretty fabrics.
From each piece cut
(1) - 2 ½" square
(1) - 2 ½" strip e.g. 2 ½" x 22" strip cut from Fat Eighth - **OR** - 2 ½" x 45" strip cut from Long Quarter



If working with strips cut from a Fat Eighth, you'll first need to cut the 45" x 2 ½" off-white strip in half to make a 22" x 2 ½" piece.

1. Pair up a plain and patterned 2 ½" strip.
Sew right sides together.
2. Press seams open, or to one side, towards the darker strip – whichever you find easiest to piece.
3. Group the strips into complimentary pairs.
(Photo of 4 pairs of 8 strips cut from Long Quarters.
If using Fat Eighths group 16 strips into 8 pairs.)



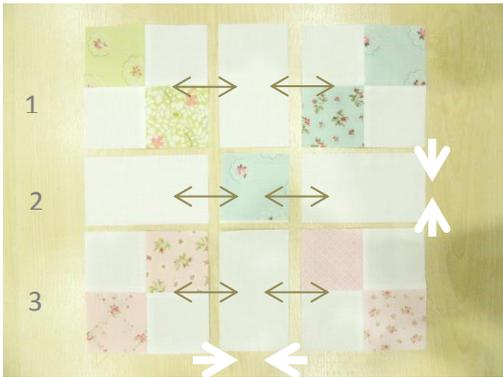
4. Working with one group at a time. Line up the strip sets on your cutting mat, and slice into 2 ½" units.



5. Place units right sides together, so the plain and print fabrics are next to each other.
6. Match centre seams, so they nest closely. Sew to make 4 patch block



7. Press and square up the 4-patch unit, to 4 1/2" square.



8. Place the 4-patches in order, together with 2 1/2" x 4 1/2" off-white strips and 2 1/2" centre square.

9. Sew units together into rows, as shown by grey arrows. Press seams open or in direction of white arrows. Sew rows 1 to 2, and 2 to 3 together, and press.



10. Your first Irish Chain block is made!

We'd love to see the Irish Chain blocks you make, so please do post them on Instagram using the hashtag – #SweetestThingsSampler.



Our next post skips to quilting, and the option of using a Quilt As You Go technique.

Then in February, our first Sampler block, is an absolute darling. It's made and designed by Michelle of Creative Blonde, can't wait to show you.

Till next time, from our little hive to yours,

Happy sewing,

Dawn x X



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