

Constructing the block, cont:

Follow the diagram on Page 2 to lay out and assemble the block alternating **A** and **B** units as shown. Sew the units in each row together and press, then sew the rows together. Once the rows are sewn together the block center should measure 9 1/2-inches square. Sew the top and bottom borders in place, trimming as necessary. Press to the border pieces. Repeat with the side borders; press.

Erik's tips:

An accurate 1/4-inch seam allowance is essential to make this block. If you have trouble with accuracy, do not hesitate to cut your 2 5/8-inch squares larger, trimming the finished squares to the 2 1/4-inch squares that you need. Careful pinning will help you match all of the seams in each row and while sewing the rows together.

Use as many **Red**, **Blue**, and **Beige** scraps as you like! The colors themselves should unify the finished block. We used 2 **Red** scraps, 1 **Beige** scrap, and 2 different **Blue** scraps. Audition the scraps if you want to be sure of your choice before you cut and sew. We used a **Dk Beige** for the borders

Again as before, we added a 'courthouse step' style border to bring the block to the full dimension needed for the finished quilt; you may trim the finished block to 12 1/2-inches square now, or wait until you are ready to assemble the rows of the quilt later during the project. We chose not to give exact measurements for the border pieces in the cutting instructions. If your block is accurate you will need two pieces 2 1/2 by 9 1/2-inches for the top and bottom border, and two pieces cut 2 1/2 by 13 1/2-inches for the side borders. Trim your pieces as needed. If your block center is a little off in the 9 1/2-inch square dimension, do not worry since the added border will allow for little inaccuracy that will be easily covered. If you have trouble at any point, refer to our on-line tutorial for help.

Your finished block will measure 12 1/2-inches (unfinished), *once trimmed*.

Notes about our (slightly modified) Strength in Union Block:

The name of this classic pieced block dates from the late 1930's (N Cabot, 1938) and the name could be interpreted with both political or romantic overtones. Each unit is easily read as a 'bricks in a wall' or 'links in a chain'. It has a strong, almost fortified, feeling. It is easy and quick to make since all of the pieces are the same size. It is a versatile block that would be lovely done in three colors for a wedding gift for a special couple or a Civil War reproduction quilt in muted historic tones.

The original pattern calls for the **B** units to made as a solid one-patch square cut 2 1/4-inch square. We chose to break the **B** patches into two pieces for our scrappy look, though you may decide to use a single square. Cutting the **B** unit pieces from one color scraps, as we did, will keep the solid patch look original to the design.

We hope you enjoy making this simple block.