

Uneven Log Cabin Tutorial by Izy, March 2011



So many of my friends here on the Quilting Board have expressed an interest in how I made this quilt, I have put together a picture tutorial to show you how simple it is using a foundation to ensure accuracy even for a beginner!

I wanted to make mine a scrappy in earth tones and lights so set about cutting 'lots' of strips!

Darks are 1.5" wide

Lights 1" wide

Plus

Small amount of 2" strips in darks

Small amount of 1.5" strips in lights

These are cut wider for your edge strips so we can 'square' up each block!

I have no concept of how much fabric it takes to make a quilt, as a consequence I think I still have enough strips to make another one some day!

This quilt was constructed out of 56 8.5" blocks, with the centre appliqué replacing the centre four blocks.

Finished size was 48" x 72"



I used up any scraps that ‘went’ and cut some strips from my stash to give a good selection!

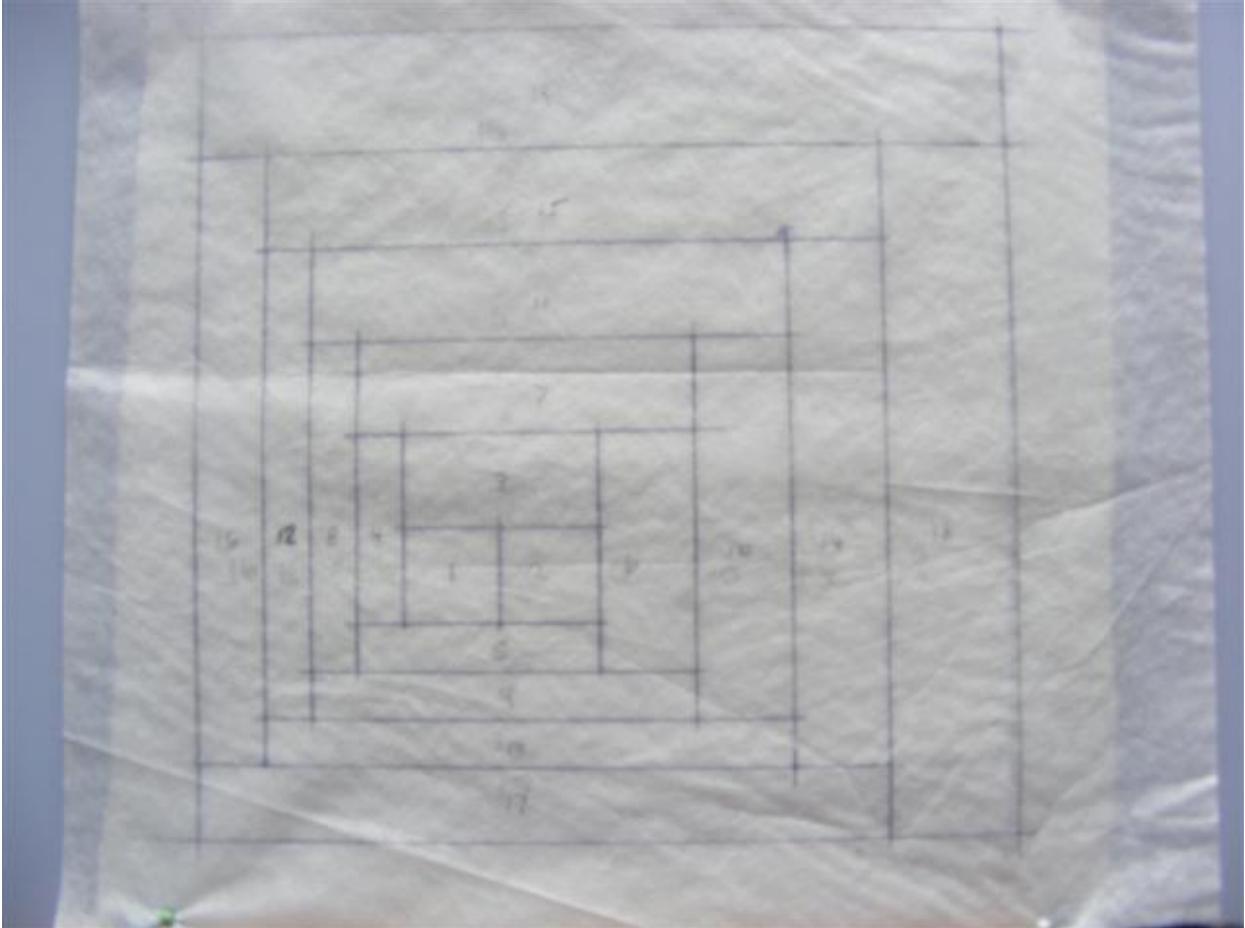


I decided the surest way of getting precise blocks was to use a foundation base, to sew each strip to so I chose ‘Vilene non-adhesive light weight’ interfacing. I found a roll 12” by 25m on ebay for just a couple of UK Pounds!

I was lucky to have received a light box for Christmas and used this to trace the design of an 8.5” uneven log cabin (which I download from the net) onto the Vilene, you can print one off or you can draw it out on graph paper if you prefer. If you don’t have a light box, tape it to your window and trace it!

There is a product on the market called ‘Foundation by the Yard’, which is a calico cotton with the log cabin printed onto it. I actually bought this and returned it as the printing was terrible and every block was squiffed! So making my own ensured that at least the blocks were square plus it was a

much cheaper alternative as it turns out!



This is the first of 56! I traced out 6 at a time as it can get a bit boring! I set my target at sewing 6 each evening!

You can see that each strip is numbered 1 - 19, this is the order in which you will add the strips, starting in the centre No. 1. and working in this case, in an anti-clockwise direction, following the number sequence.

Now let the fun begin!



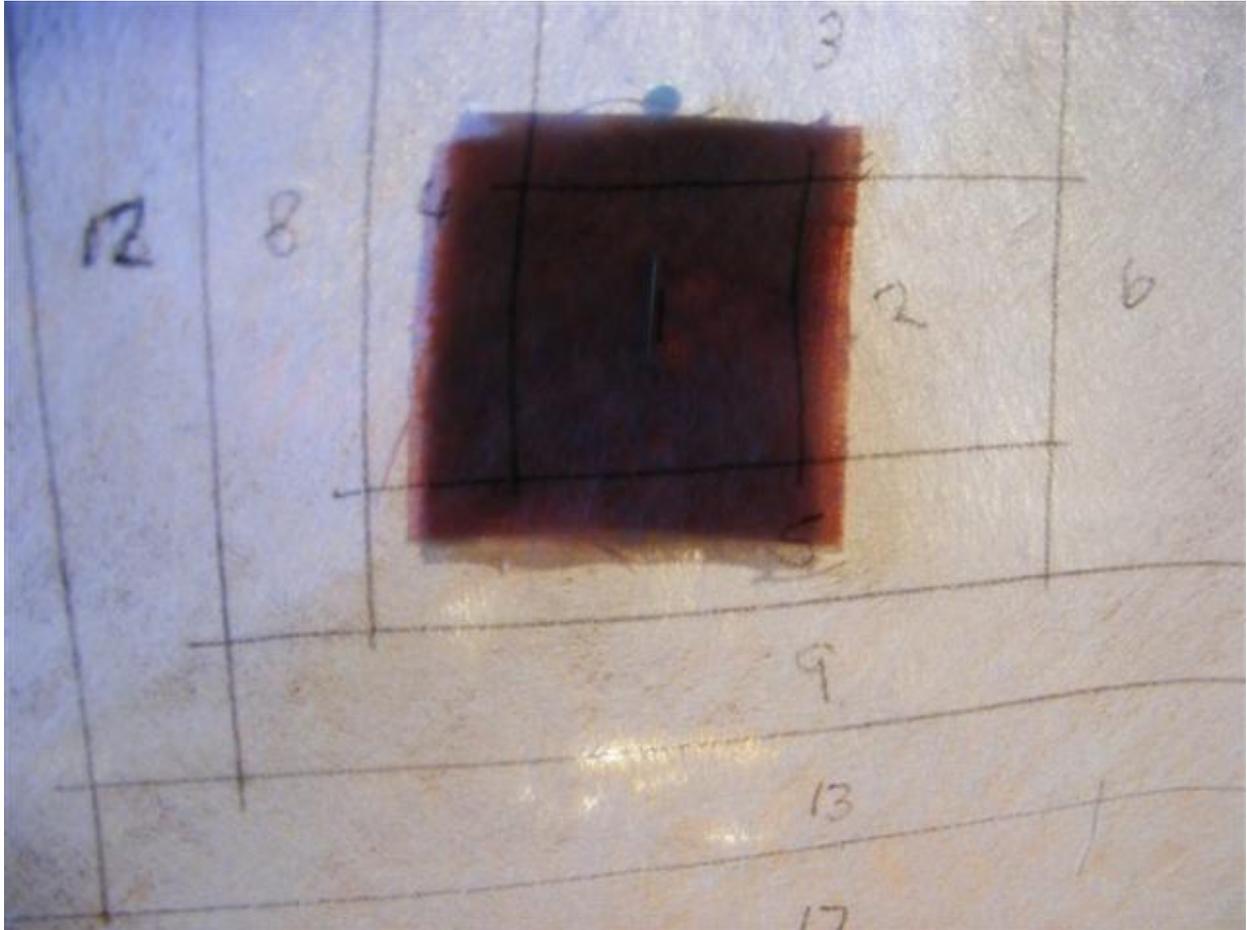
It is traditional to have a red square in the centre, so you can see I chose a bright terracotta, this will ALWAYS be used in No.1. square. Using scissors, cut a piece big enough off the red strip to overlap by $\frac{1}{4}$ " all sides of the centre square, then choose another contrasting strip and cut a piece roughly the same size which will cover no. 2 square. In my case I

**chose darks for the wider side of the block and
lights for the narrower side!**

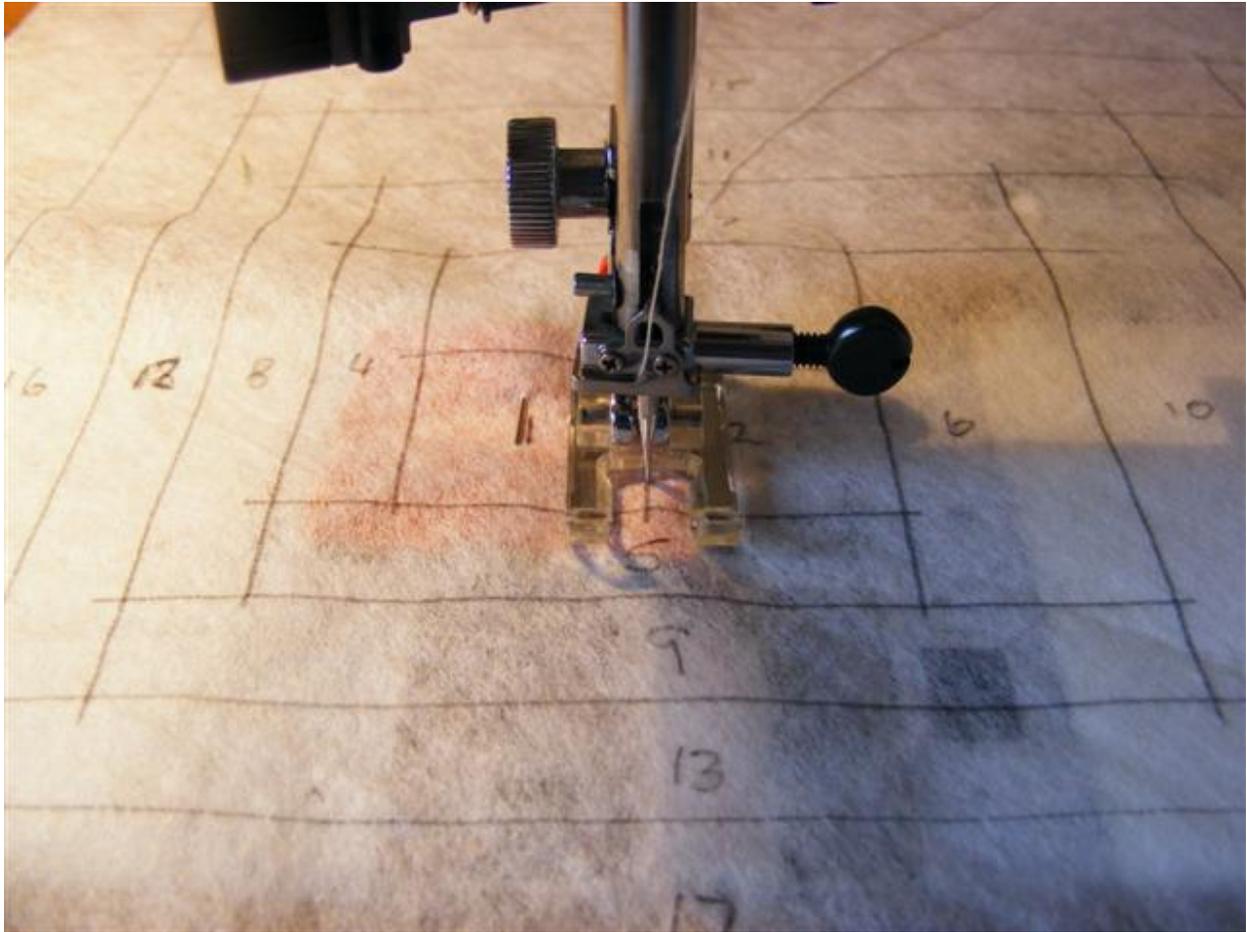
TURN THE VILENE TO THE UNDRAWN SIDE

**Place the two squares right sides together and
making sure that your red fabric goes over the
drawn No. 1. Square. Line up making sure that
all sides have enough fabric overlapping the
drawn lines for the seam allowance and pin in
place.**

Here you can see it is easier if you hold it up against a lamp or to the window to see through to check the positioning.

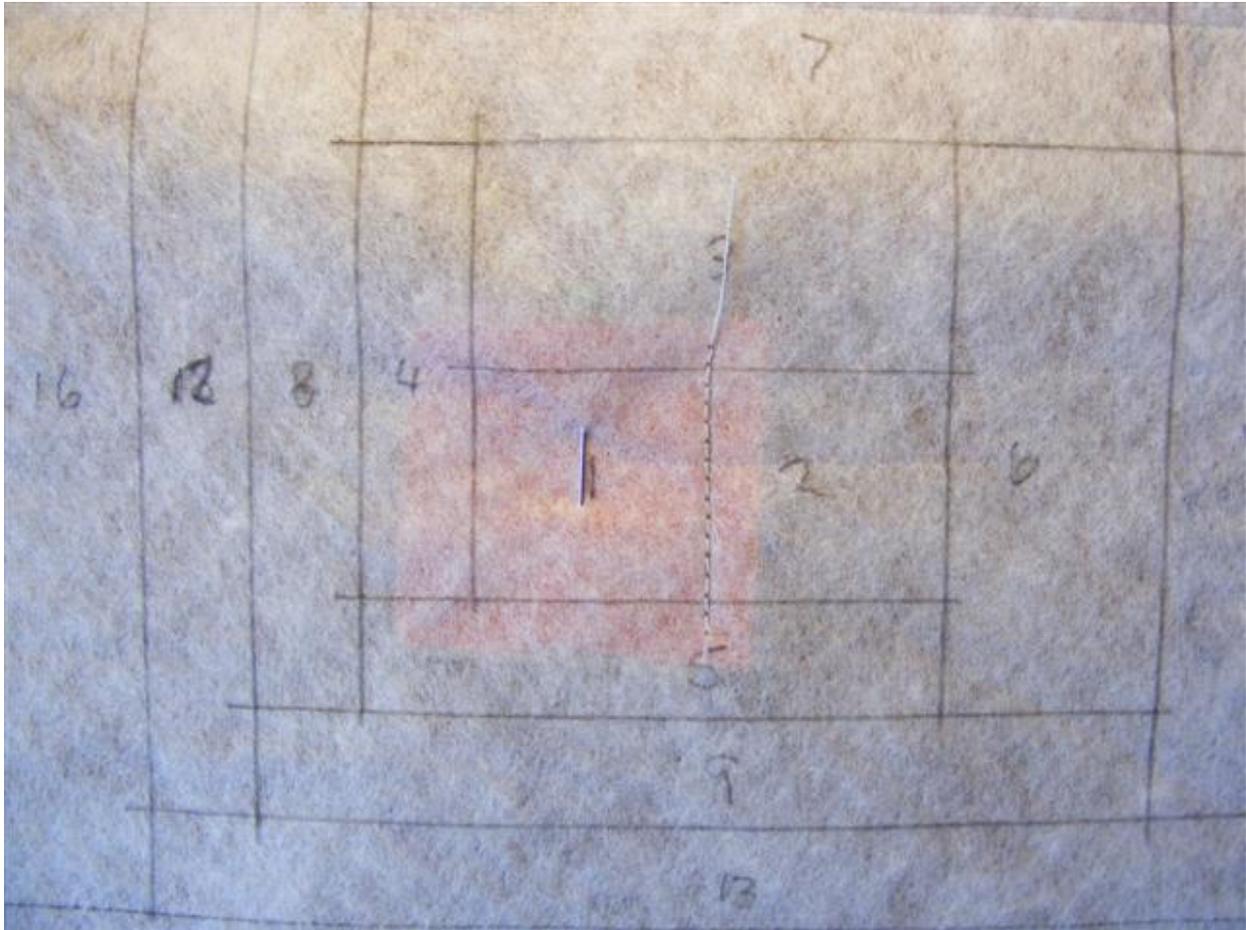


Flip the Vilene over to the marked side and stitch on the line between square 1 & 2, extending a couple of stitches past each end.



Here you can see I choose to use my open toe foot, I just find it easier to see where I am stitching but a regular foot will do!

You can see the pin holding the two squares in place on the back side.



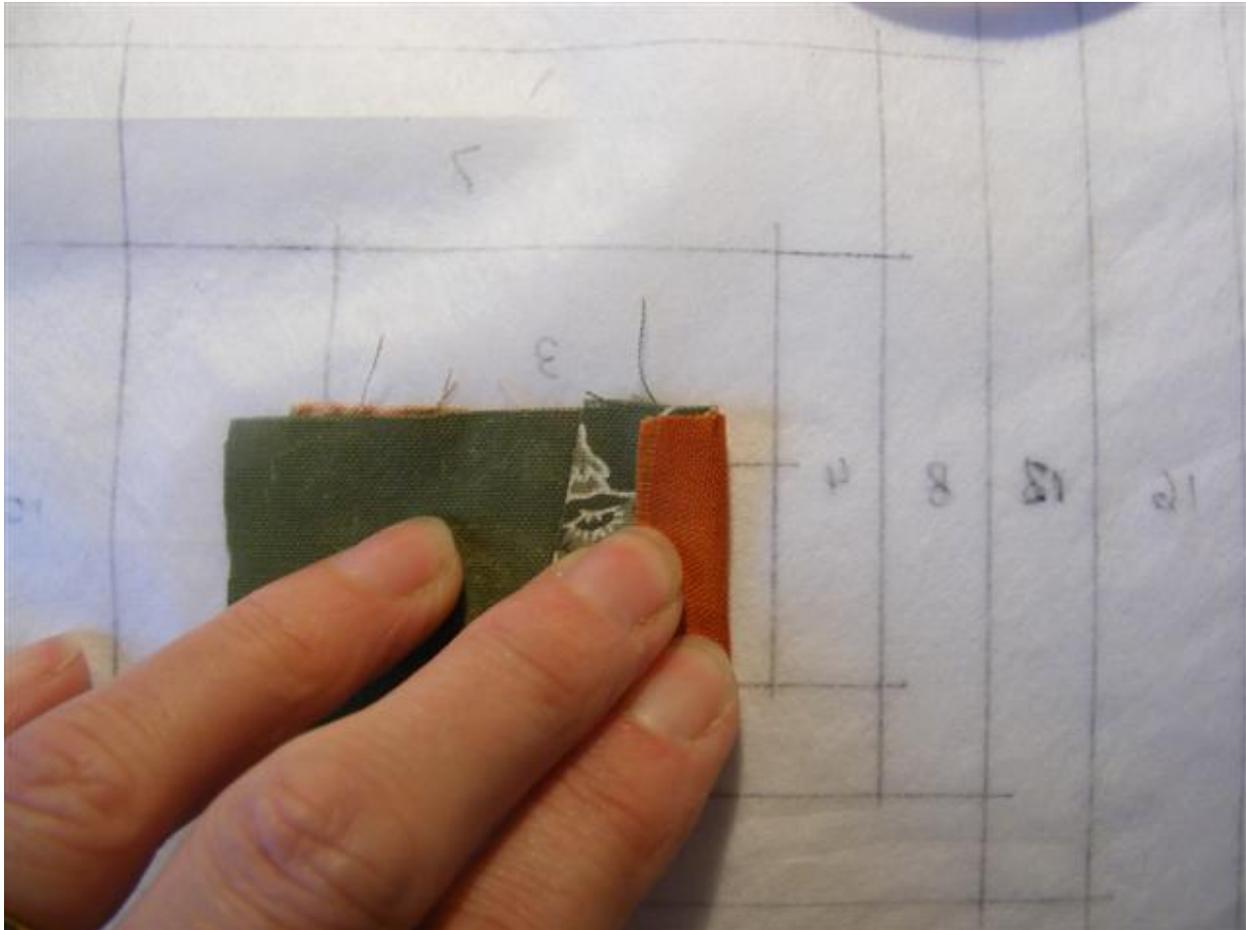
You can see my line of stitching just extending past each end, this ensures no unravelling as the last stitches will be caught by subsequent stitching as you progress around the block!



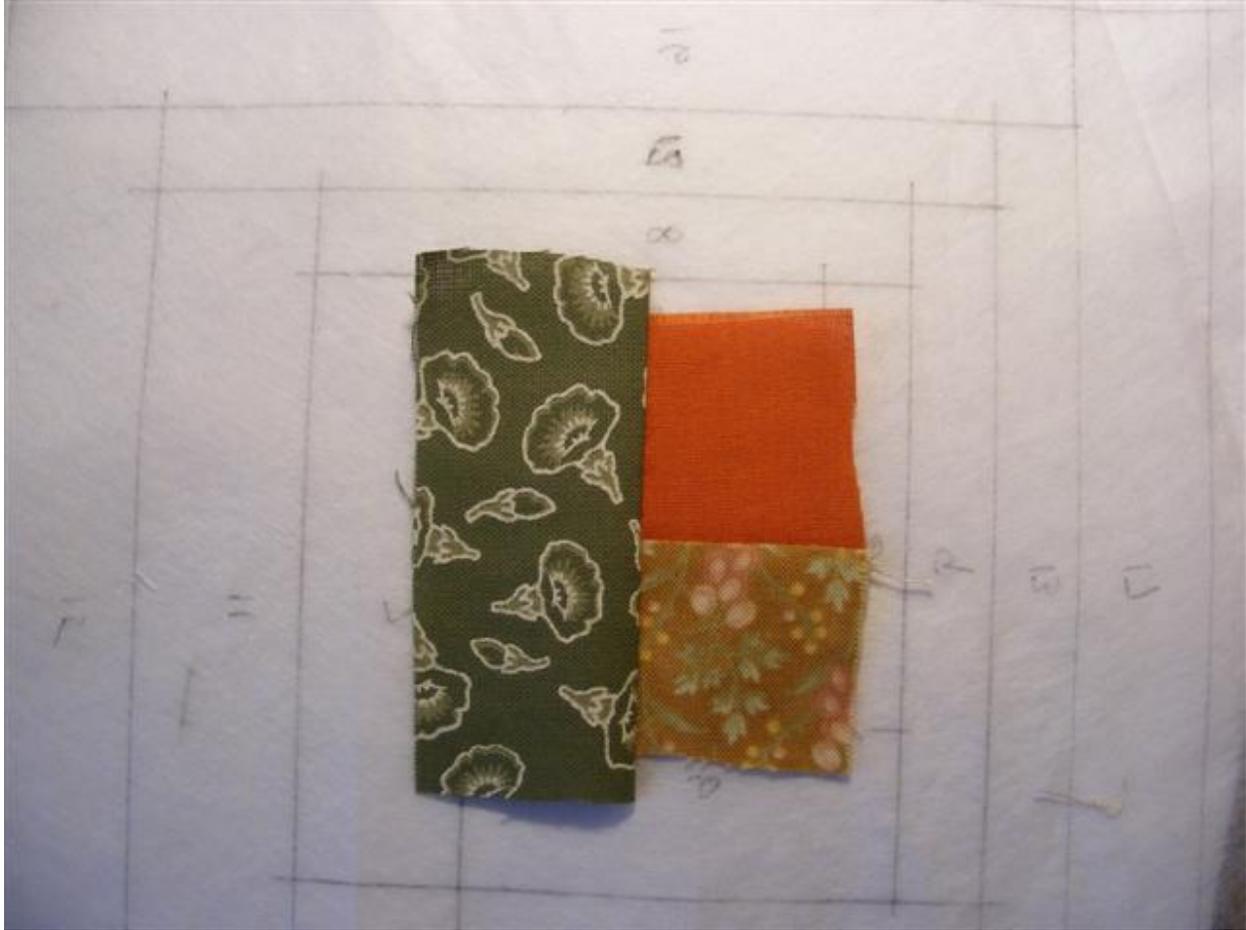
Now I have flipped back over, and opened up the two squares, No.1 square – terracotta, no.2. square, first dark strip. Both extend past outer edges to ensure adequate seam allowances during subsequent rows.



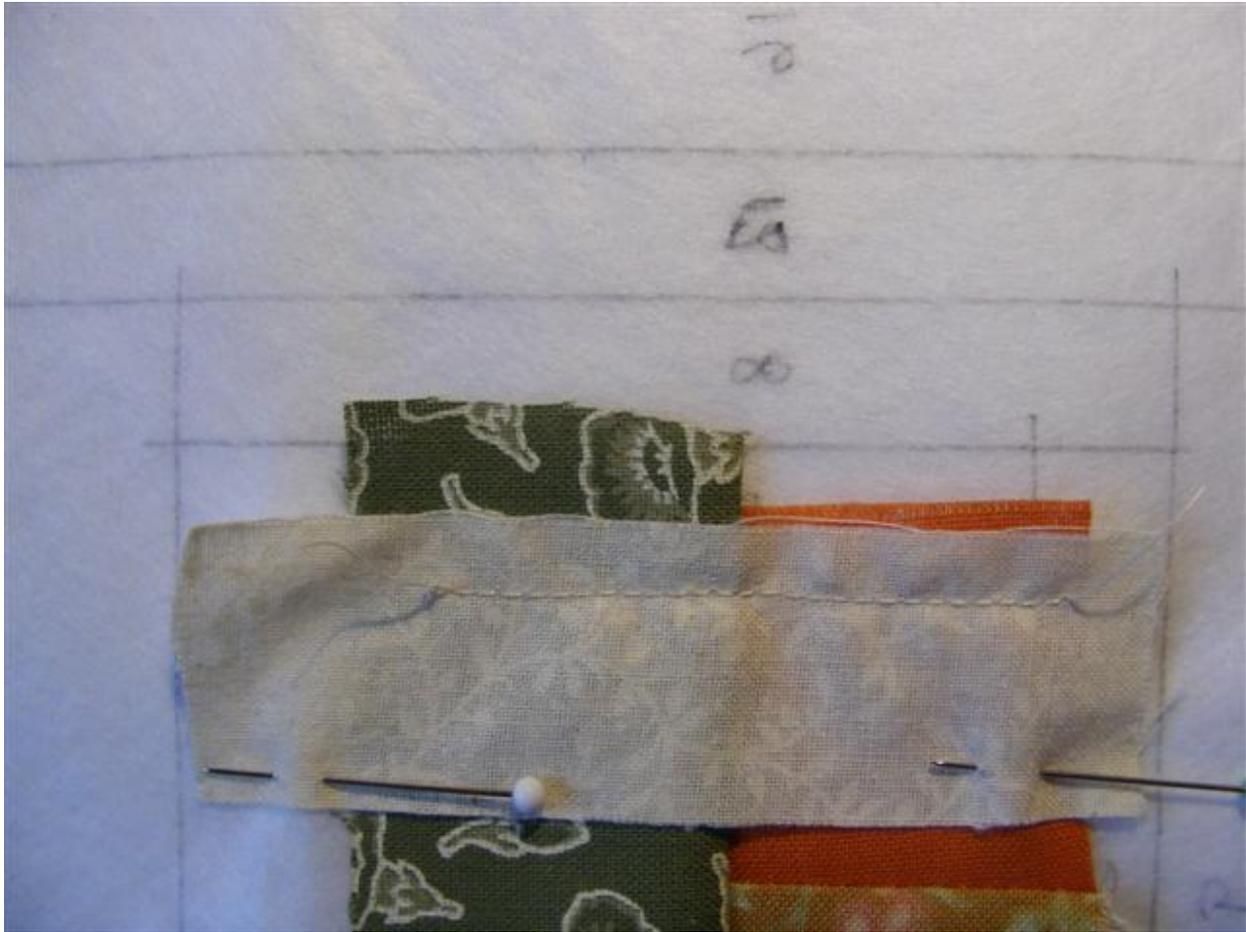
Here, I have selected my next strip, remember to follow your sequence, wide strips – dark fabrics, narrow strips – light fabrics! You can write dark/light on each section to remind you as it can be a bit confusing at first!



On this shot, you can see how I check that I have positioned the new strip before pinning to ensure I have enough seam allowance, I do this at each end. It is important that you don't make it BIGGER than $\frac{1}{4}$ " or you won't have enough for the opposite side! Try and ensure that the strip is placed straight before pinning.... something I struggled with and ended up rip rip ripping...quite a lot!



Now you can see that I have opened, pressed and checked seam allowances as explained above.



You will find you will need to trim up quite often as we are cutting each strip roughly to length.



Just fold back the Vilene out of the way and using scissors trim off the excess!



...all gone!



You can see that I have continued adding more strips, following the colour sequence, wider – dark, narrower – light.



As you iron open each additional strip, now is a good time to make sure the strip hasn't gone squiffy and that adequate fabric is over the next sewing line (I pinned just to hold it back for you to see...need a third hand LOL)



Nearly finished now!

When you get to the final four outer strips, remember to use the wider cut strips, this will give you a little extra to allow us to square up at the end!



When you are ironing, remember to set the seam first, pressing down and not sliding the iron or you may distort the strip!



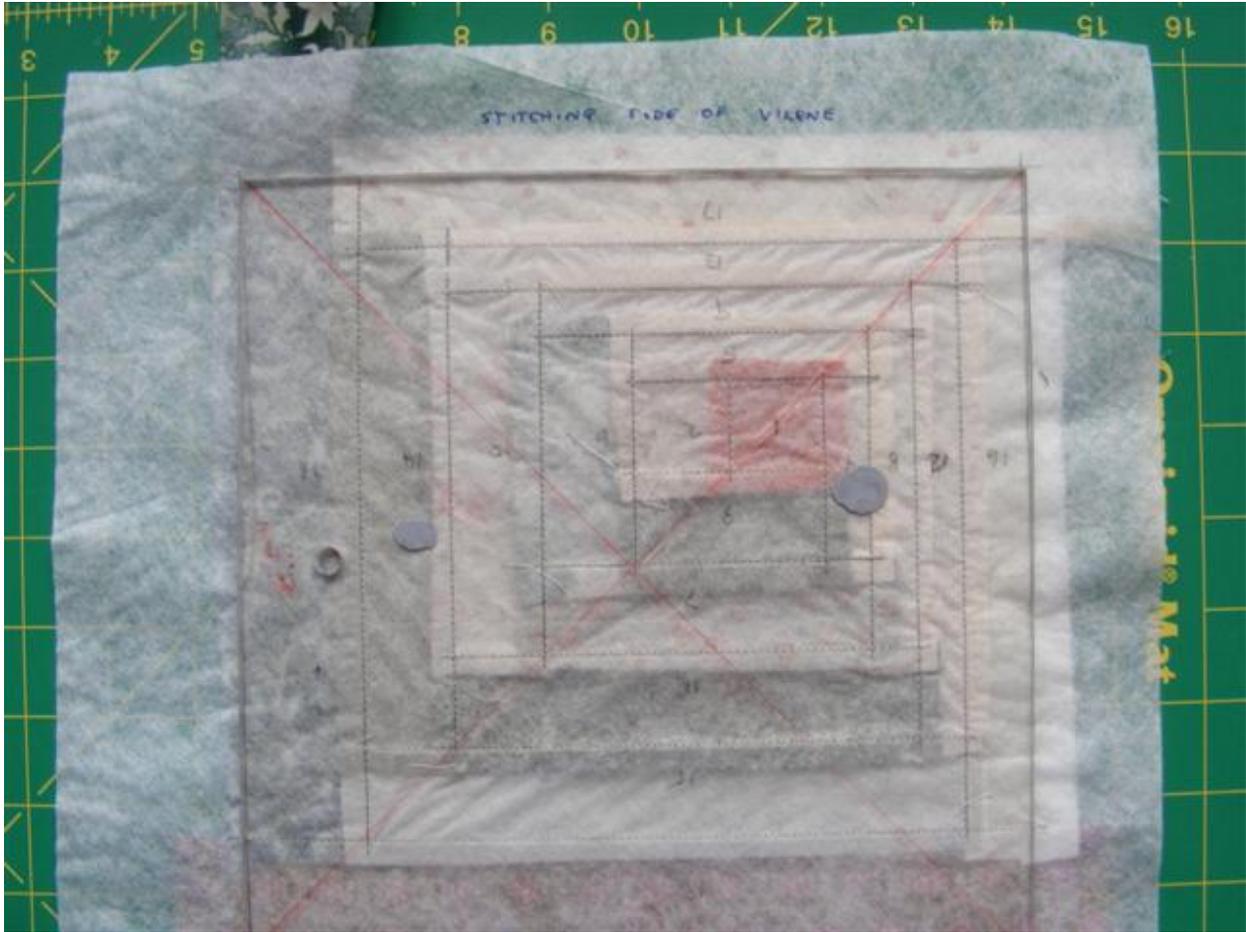
This is the final light strips on...



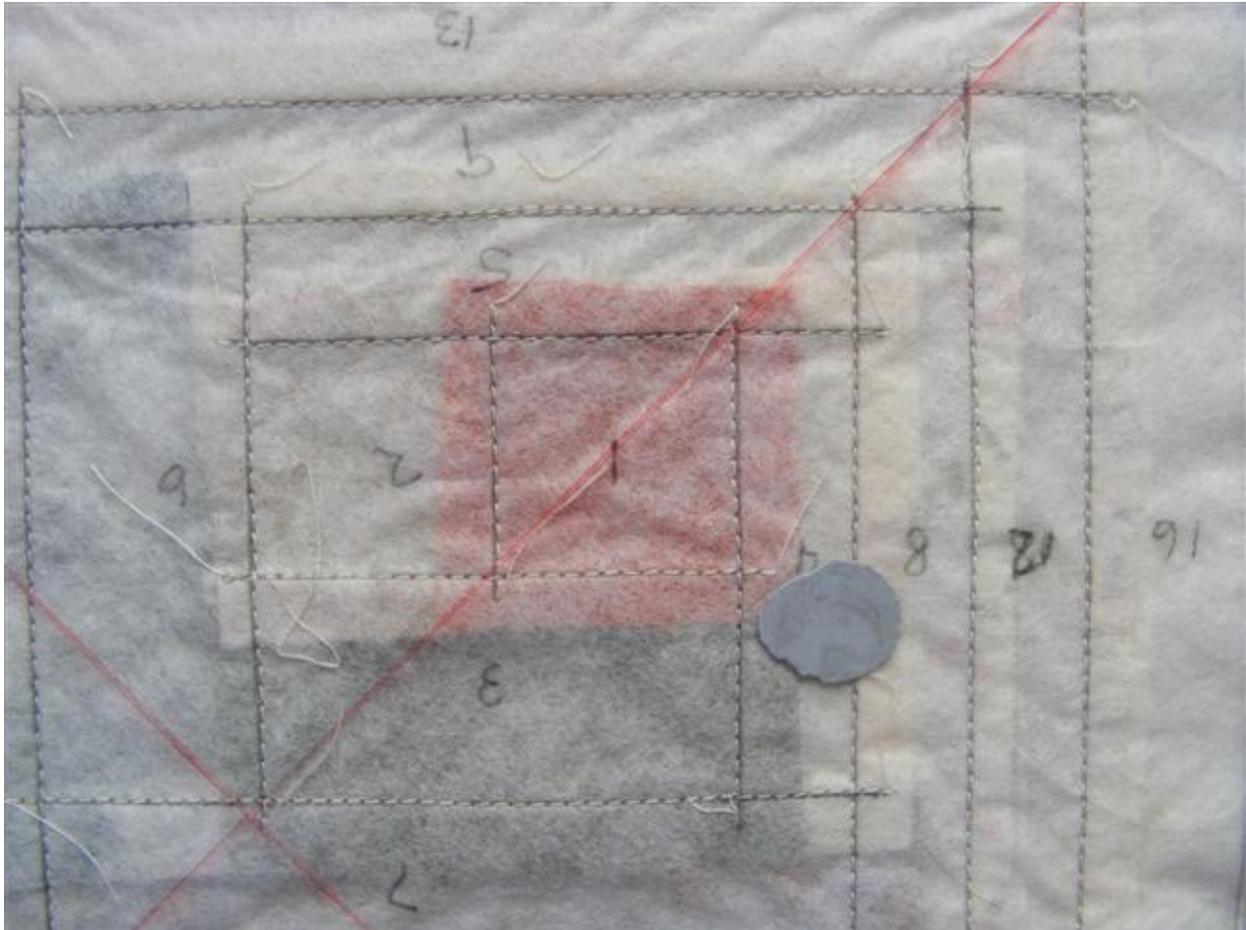
Now the final dark strip is on, just needs a trim then pressing open!



Final trim and it's time to square up!



It's a bit difficult to see, but I have placed my 8.5" homemade template over the block, Vilene side up.



I use two small pieces of blue Tack (sticky stuff) to hold my template to my block. You can see how I have lined up the diagonal line on my template through the corners of my stitching to ensure it is 'square'



Two sides trimmed, I just rotate the whole board, then trim the other two sides. By using the blue tack I am not worried that the template will slip!



And there you have it!!

A perfectly formed uneven log cabin block!

(It looks a little bit squint but trust me it's my camera distorting the image LOL)



This is the reverse side.

Can you see how much the Vilene has ‘shrunk in’ during the process, (check the bottom outer pencil line). This is why I use a template and square up each block. By using slightly larger outer strips, it gives you some room for correction ensure your blocks are all perfectly square which means putting them together will be a doddle – I promise you!

**There are lots of different layouts for this block,
so make a few and have some fun now!**

Don't forget to post pictures of your creations!!

Hope this is of use to you.

Happy stitching!

Izy

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