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As I have developed this grid idea, one of the things I have enjoyed is being able to use differently scaled fabrics to full advantage. So whether you use fabrics from a coordinated group or select your own, there are areas in the pattern that need the very smallest scale prints and other areas that can show off larger scale fabrics. In the Graduated grid, fussy-cutting can make one fabric look like many. Directional fabrics, such as stripes and plaids, can also be placed to great advantage because you can decide which way you want them to go as the design develops.

In the Graduated grid, you start with four 1” blocks/squares in the center, then evenly surround them with 2” blocks. These are then evenly surrounded with 3” blocks, then 4” blocks, and so on. The three Graduated grid projects vary the size and arrangement of the blocks, but the basic idea is the same.

**Cutting the Blocks**
I like to use square rulers in the sizes of the blocks I need to cut because it is easier to center the motifs before cutting the squares. The sizes I use are 2½”, 3½”, 4½”, 5½”, and 6½”. For the 1½” squares I use the smallest ruler I have. The 5½” size can be hard to find. You do not need all these sizes as long as you can clearly see through your rulers to center the image you want to highlight.

I generally do not cut all the blocks/squares at once. I start in the very center and assemble the 1”, 2”, and 3” blocks first. I then audition different fabrics for scale, imagery, and color to see where I want to use them.

**Using Different Kinds of Symmetry**
Most traditional quilts use simple side-to-side (like the symmetry of a face) and top-to-bottom symmetry. I use both of these plus diagonal symmetry and rotational symmetry to add interest to my color/block arrangements.

Diagonal symmetry is just what it sounds like—pieces match diagonally across from each other. This can be corner-to-corner or at a lesser angle.

Rotational symmetry means the same progression of fabrics repeats as you go around a shape. For example, if a round of squares (an arrangement of same-size squares around a previously pieced center) has twenty squares (the 5” blocks), and you have four fabrics, then every fifth block/square will be the same. I have discovered that rotational symmetry is most interesting when the total number of blocks can be divided by an odd number.
Circle in a Square: Visit to Provence

30” x 42”, made by the author, quilted by Mary Vaneecke
42” x 44”, made by the author
Sudoku in the Afternoon II

21" x 21", made by the author
Cutting Diagram
SPARKLING CITRUS SORBET
Center is 5 x 5 - 1" squares
Matrix: Color Synergy

74” x 84”, made by the author, quilted by Karolyn “Nubin” Jensen