

Using Panels for a OBW© 2019– By Jackie O’Brien



Have you seen some of the wonderfully creative One Block Wonders (OBW) made using precut panels? If you haven't, you should join the Facebook group "One Block Wonder Quilt Forum"! Plume is my third OBW using panels and I wanted to share how I put them together.

Start by purchasing 7 Panels. One to be incorporated into the top and 6 to be aligned for making the hexagon blocks.

The process is same whether you are using yardage or panels. The only difference is the repeats are already cut for you. I don't trim the panels, I just press them and layer 6 of them assuring they are all going in the same direction. Align them as directed in Maxine Rosenthal's book One Block Wonders or One Block Wonder Encore.

I start by trying to get an idea of how many hexies will fit across the top and/or bottom of the panel. It is just like making a pieced inner border to fit around the center of a quilt. The width of the panel should be divisible by the finished size of my hexagon block. With Plume, it measured 23". That meant if I was going to cut my strips 3.75" my finished hexies would be 6" wide. So my panel needed to either be trimmed to 18" wide or I needed to add fabric to get it to 24" wide. If I cut my panel to 18" wide I would lose too much of my Peacock feathers, so I added fabric to widen the panel to 24".

You have two ways to make sure your hexagons will fit across the top and bottom of your panel. You can trim or add fabric to your panel and/or you can also adjust the size of your finished hexagon so it is divisible by the width of the panel.

Tip: Even if you are using yardage, it is a good idea to measure the width of your repeat and divide by the strip width (23 divided by 3.75 = 6.13) that means you will get 6 strips sets with a tiny bit left over.

Formula To determine the unfinished size of your hexagon block:
Double the size of your strip,
subtract 1" = unfinished block size. Subtract ½"
= finished size.

Strip Width Yields	Finished Hexie Size
3.75"	6.0"
3.50"	5.5"
3.25"	5.0"
3.00"	4.5"
2.75"	4.0"
2.50"	3.5"
2.25"	3.0"
2.0"	2.5"



Once the repeats/panels are aligned, trim one long edge so all the layers are ending in the same place. This panel had a good size design, so I cut my strips 3 3/4" wide by Width of Fabric (WOF). Then using my ruler with a 60 degree line I cut my equilateral triangles and made my blocks. Once the blocks are sorted by predominate color it is time to design.



I usually place the untrimmed panel on my design wall and start the designing process (in this photo I had already added the strip to widen the panel). I always place my blocks on the design wall, so the opening is north and south.

I have established that I will need four blocks wide across the top and the bottom. How deep it goes depends on me. I chose 4 blocks wide and 3 blocks deep on the top, and 4 blocks wide and 2 blocks deep on the bottom.

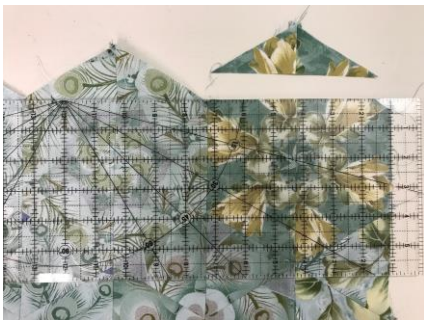


When placing the blocks on the side of the panel, every other block remains whole, while everything other is a half of a block. I don't remove the half until I'm sure the block will remain there, I just fold it in half.



When I am satisfied with the design, I number the rows as always and stitch the rows together in four groups: the top, bottom, right side & left side. I think of this as a giant block that has a rectangle in the center and will be constructed using a partial seam.

Decide whether to attach the top or bottom first. I am going to attach the top rows first by trimming the points that will be stitched to the panel, leaving a 1/4" seam allowance.





Once I have stitched the top rows to the panel, I need to choose which side to attach next, match up dog ears as you would when joining the rows and stitch three quarters of the way down (partial seam).

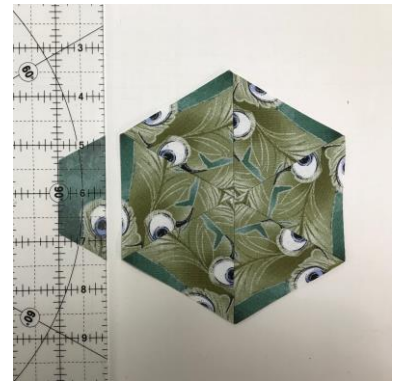
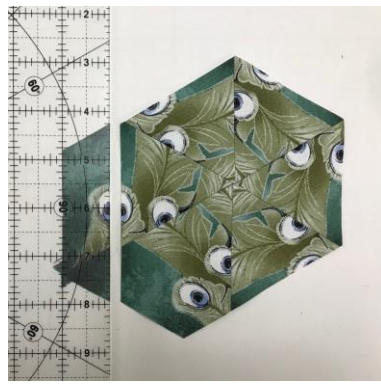
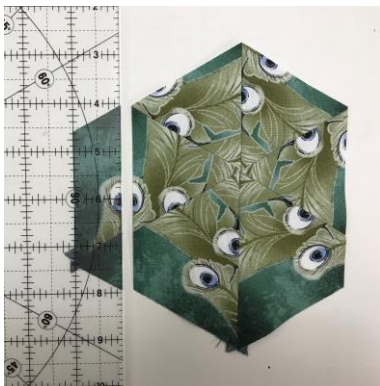
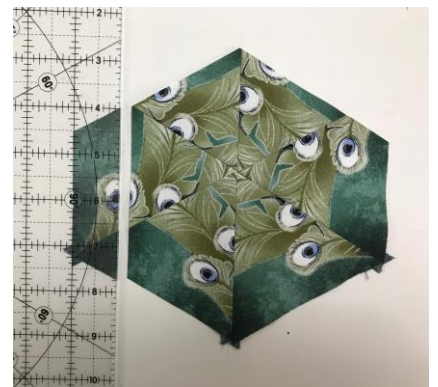
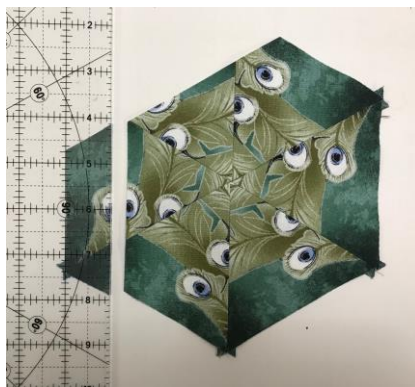
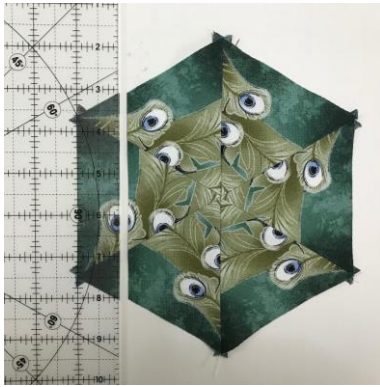


By using a partial seam, it allows you to match up the dog ears of the bottom of the side rows. I will then mark where the panel hits the bottom rows, add a 1/4" seam allowance and stitch to the bottom and then finish the partial seam.



It is now easy to stitch the remaining side rows to the panel, matching the dog ears at the top and bottom.

I made sure I had several leftover blocks. I stitched the two halves together, pressed the seam open and using my ruler, trimmed 1" off every side.





I use a Fusible Knit Interfacing, cut a square slightly larger than the hexagon. Place the bumpy side of the interfacing with the right side of the hexagon. Stitch around the hexagon using a 1/4" seam allowance. Trim off the excess interfacing and snip a hole about 1" wide.



Turn the hexagon right side out. Now the fusible 'bumpy side is on the outside. Finger press the edges to flatten it out. This is a great way to get perfect seam allowance on an edge.



See how well
the small
hexagons hide
my added
fabric?



Dreamscape Panel:

- Design the hexagon blocks around the panel.
- Numbered the rows on the sides and the top and bottom rows.
- Stitch the rows into 4 sections: Right Side, Left Side Top & Bottom.
- Choose top or bottom to attached first.
- Measure, decide to trim panel or add fabric.

With the panel above, the panel is longer than the hexies. My choice is to either trim the panel to fit the hexies or add fabric to the top and bottom row of hexies and camouflage the fabric with mini hexagons. I will trim the panel to match the bottom row of hexagons.