Half Moons AFIRE

By Leanne Parsons for The Quilter's Planner

Finished Size: Quilt as pictured approximately 53" x 53"

Pattern Notes: WOF is assumed to be at least 42"

FABRIC REQUIREMENTS

Assorted blue prints – 3½ yards total

Dark orange print – ¼ yard

Light orange print – ¼ yard

Dark blue sashing/binding – 1½ yards

Backing – 4 yards

Batting – 62"square

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Print the Half Moons Afire ¼ circle templates. Be sure to print them at 100%. The outer grey line on the long side of the outer template should measure exactly 6½". Cut out both templates on the outer grey line and trace onto either template plastic or thin cardboard (such as a cereal box) to make a more durable template.

If desired, you could also add ¼" to each of the long sides of the outer template to give you a little extra room for trimming when your blocks are completed.

CUTTING

From assorted Blue prints, cut:
　　(30) matching sets of 2 inner templates and 2 outer templates.

From Dark Orange print, cut:
　　(1) matching set of 2 inner templates and 2 outer templates.

From Light Orange print, cut:
　　(1)matching set of 2 inner templates and 2 outer templates.

From Dark Blue sashing/binding, cut:
　　(6) 2¼" x WOF for binding

　　(14) 1½" x WOF
　　　　Subcut into (12) 1½" x 12½"

Piece WOF strips together to make:
　　(5) 1½" x 51½"

　　(2) 1½" x 53½"

SEWING CURVES TUTORIAL

Curves have a reputation for being almost impossible to sew, but I'm here to tell you it can be done! It takes a bit of prep and patience, but beautiful curved designs can certainly be part of your quilting repertoire. I'll be sewing the popular ¼ circle, or Drunkard's Path, block for this tutorial, but the same method will apply to other curved blocks.

Getting Started

1. Sewing curves well starts with your template. If you're working from a digital pattern, you want to be sure your template printed at the right size and that you cut it out accurately. Then use the paper template to create a more durable template, either with template plastic or cardboard (like a cereal box), which is what I usually use.

2. If you want a little extra assurance that your blocks will turn out well, you could add a little to your template so you can trim it later, just like we often do with HSTs. In that case, add ¼" to the two long sides of the outer template. I recommend making a test block first to see if you need to add the extra, before cutting out all of your blocks.

3. To make each ¼ circle, you need one piece cut from the outer template and one cut from the inner template. Trace the templates onto your fabric and cut carefully. You can also line up your ruler along the straight edges of the template and cut those sides with your rotary cutter. I find it's best to cut the curves right

when I'm ready to pin so there's no chance of the bias edge getting distorted from repeated handling.

Pin the Curve

1. Some people can sew curves without pinning, but I'm definitely not one of them! Pins add stability so that the pieces don't get pushed out of position as I'm sewing and that just makes life easier.

2. Start by folding each piece in half and pressing to make a crease.

3. Right sides together, match up the creases and pin. At this point it looks like this seam will never work, but this is where the magic of those bias edges starts to work for us.

4. Pin one corner of the curve. Put this pin really close to the edge you'll sew to stabilize it as much as possible. I put another pin further down this edge too. I find that keeps the fabric from shifting and helps to keep the block square. Repeat for the other corner.

5. Put a pin halfway between the middle and corner pin on each side. There will be a little fullness in the outer piece, but just distribute it evenly. Be sure not to create any folds in the outer fabric with your pins.

6. Put a pin halfway between again. Again, there will probably be some fullness, but as long as you don't create folds with your pins you'll be able to avoid creating puckers when you sew the seam.

Sew the Curve

Now that all the pinning is done (whew!) it's time to sew. I like to use a little piece of fabric as a 'leader' to avoid starting right on the corner and I chain piece as many of the curves as I can at one time.

1. Use a ¼" seam and stop as you get close to a pin. Remove the pin and then use your fingers to feel the bottom fabric, checking for any folds that might be developing. With your right hand, press down on the raw edge of the fabric to keep the edges aligned.
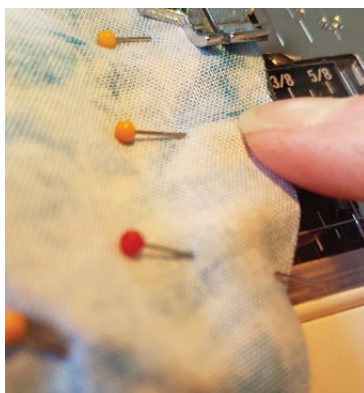
2. With your left hand, straighten out the fold. Sometimes you can do this by spreading out the section of outer fabric between the two pins and other times you can push the excess towards the back of the sewing machine. Experiment to see which will work best for you, and you may end up using a combination of both techniques. Either way, you only need to straighten it out enough that there isn't a fold in the ¼" seam allowance. As long as the fold

won't get stitched into the seam, it won't create a pucker, so any folds beyond the ¼" stitching line don't matter.

3. Press the seam allowance towards the outer fabric, which is what it will naturally want to do anyway.

4. If you added extra to your template, now is the time to trim your block to the proper size.

5. And now you have a completed ¼ circle block!
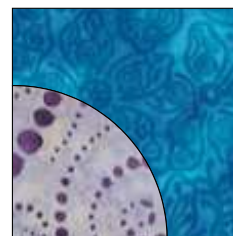
PIECE THE BLOCKS

For each of the 15 blue blocks, pair 2 blue prints together, aiming for good contrast between the prints so the half moons will be obvious, rather than being lost if the prints are too similar.

Refer to the **Sewing Curves Tutorial** to piece the ¼ circle units.

1. Make 30 Unit A in blue and 2 Unit A in orange.

2. Make 30 Unit B in blue and 2 Unit B in orange.
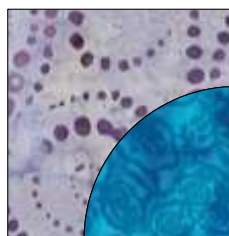
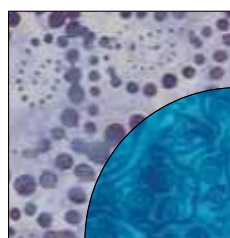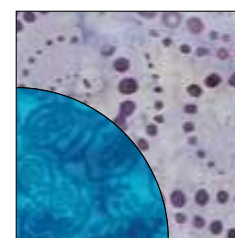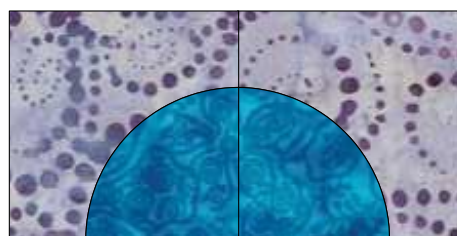Unit A   Unit B

3. If you added the extra ¼" to your template, trim the units to 6½" x 6½".

4. Join two matching unit A as shown to create unit AA. Make 15 unit AA in blue and 1 unit AA in orange.
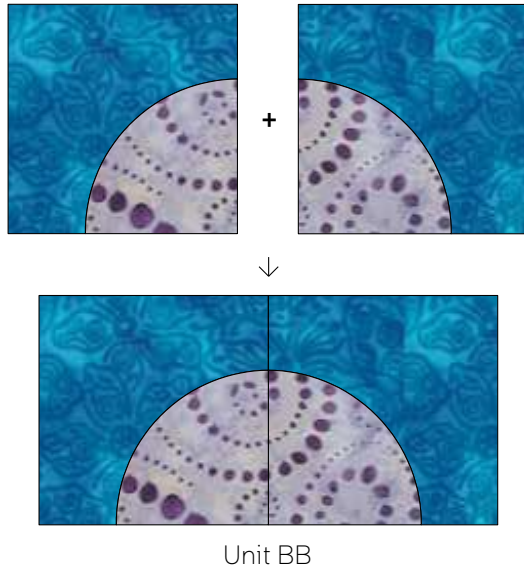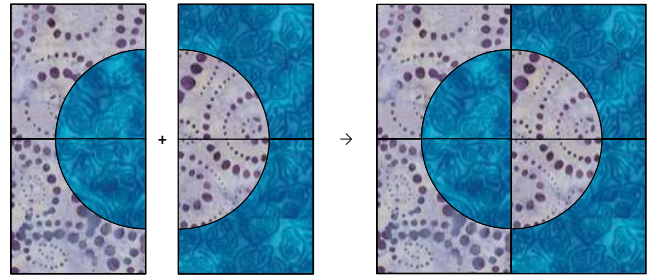

Unit AA

5. Join 2 matching unit B as shown to create unit BB. Make 15 unit BB in blue and 1 unit BB in orange.

Unit BB

6. Join a unit AA and unit BB as shown to make a block. Make 15 blocks in blue and 1 block in orange.
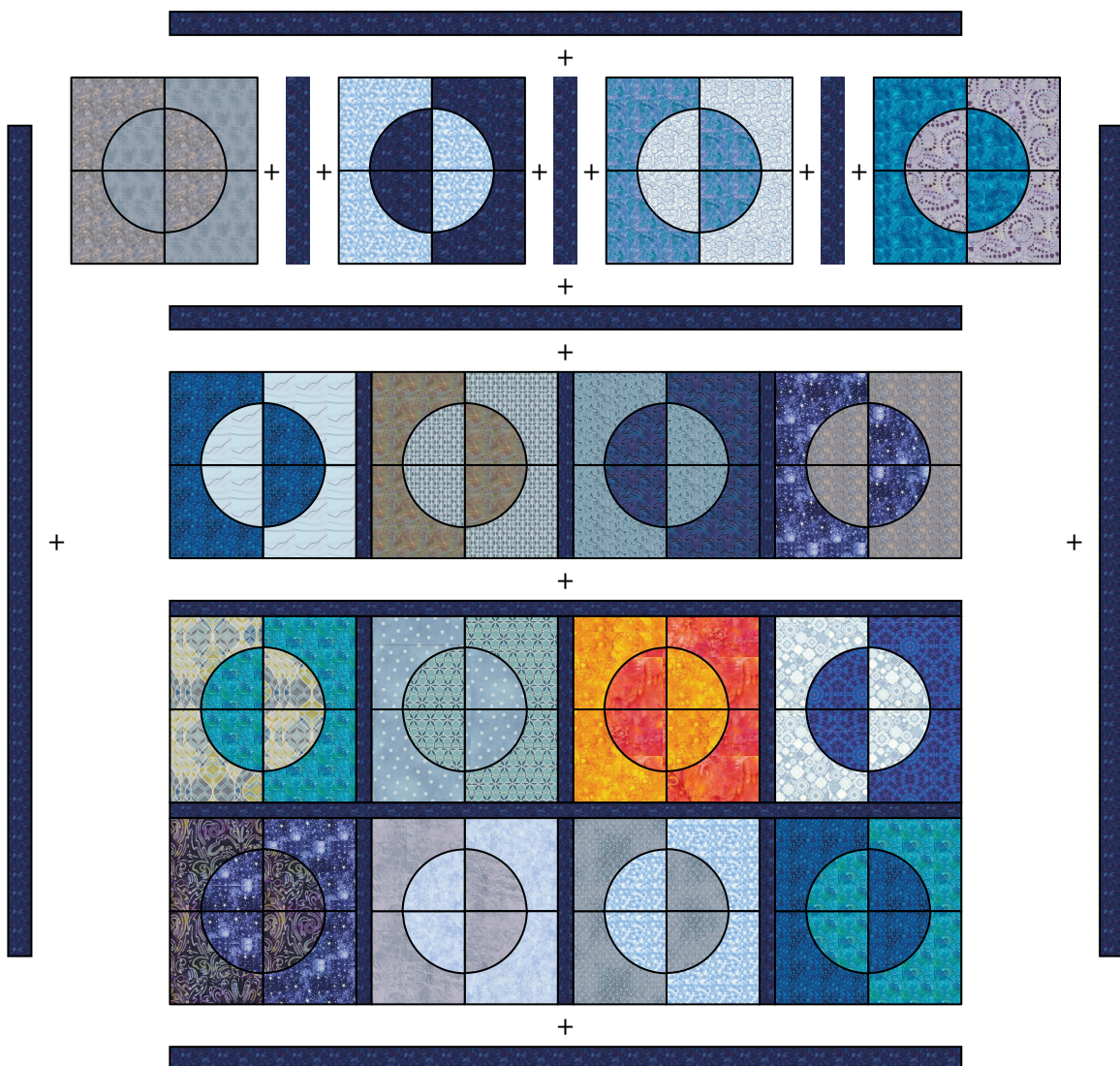

QUILT TOP ASSEMBLY

Following Quilt Top Assembly diagram below, lay out the blocks in 4 rows of 4 blocks. Join blocks and 1½" x 12½" sashing into 4 rows.

Join the rows together with the (5) 1½" x 51½" sashing strips to make quilt top center.

Add the 1½" x 53½" borders to the sides to complete the quilt top.

BACKING ASSEMBLY

Cut the backing fabric into two 62" lengths. Join together along the long side.

FINISHING

Baste and quilt as desired. Leanne used a loop-and-stipple in the backgrounds of the blocks and matchstick quilting in the half moons. The darker half moon in each pair was quilted vertically and the lighter half moon was quilted horizontally to further emphasize the two different halves.

ABOUT THE DESIGNER

Leanne is passionate about making and designing quilts, which means she's happiest when surrounded by fabric and her family. Find her at DevotedQuilter.com, on Facebook @DevotedQuilterDesigns and on Instagram @DevotedQuilter.

Half Moons Afire
Inner Template

Half Moons Afire
Outer Template