

## Foot of the Month > Pinwheel Patchwork Tote

Our Brother Foot of the Month project is a quilted tote bag made from pinwheel patchwork blocks. Making this tote is a fun way to dabble in patchwork and quilting techniques while creating a bag for toting summer essentials. This project highlights the Brother Open Toe accessory for the Brother MuVit™ Dual Feed Foot. The MuVit™ foot is a powerful, motor driven with digital controls for precision and accuracy. It is designed for use with Brother V-Series machines. You will find this foot to be the ultimate even feed foot, providing powerful feeding for a multitude of sewing tasks. Alternative Brother models can substitute with a standard or open toe walking foot for quilting the tote.

### Materials and Supplies

- [Brother Sewing Machine](#)
- [SA195](#) Open Toe Brother MuVit™ Dual Feed Foot for use with [V-Series](#) Brother machines.
- [Brother Standard Walking Foot](#) Or [SA188](#) Brother Open Toe Walking Foot for alternative Brother model machines.
- [SA185](#) Brother ¼-inch Piecing Foot with guide.
- Basic sewing notions including sewing thread to match or blend with fabrics and a wash out marker.
- Machine Quilting needles, size 11 for patchwork and size 14 for bag construction.
- Optional, but helpful quilting notions include a 24-inch quilt ruler, rotary cutter, and cutting mat. As an option you can carefully draw cutting lines with a fine wash out marker and then cut pieces with scissors.

### Fabric and Notion Requirements:

- Pink quilting cotton, ½ -yard total for patchwork and bag lining.
- Orange quilting cotton, ½ -yard total for patchwork and bag lining.
- Thin cotton batting, two pieces measuring 16 inches square.
- Ribbon for handles: 1 ¾ yds. of 7/8-inch wide pink grosgrain ribbon and 1 ¾ yds. of 1 ½ -inch wide orange grosgrain ribbon.

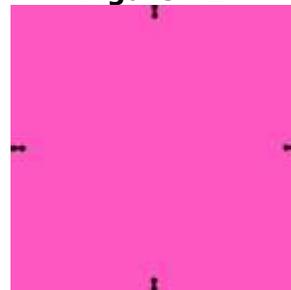
**Introduction to the project:** These instructions show you how to cut and piece a pinwheel patchwork block, quilt the layers together, and make a simple tote. Cutting and sewing instructions are written for those with limited quilting experience. Simply follow the color coded, illustrated guide. Substitute two different colors if you wish, making notations for your selected colors in place of the orange and pink used in this project. Experienced quilters may wish to use their own tried and true methods for creating pinwheel blocks.

### Instructions for Cutting Patchwork Pieces

1. Cut one 16 ½-inch square from pink fabric. Cut one 16 ½-inch square from orange fabric. Reserve remaining fabric yardage for cutting lining in a later step. **NOTE:** Only one block is shown in many of the illustrations. You will need to create two identical pinwheel blocks, block one for the front of the tote and block two for the back.
2. Follow the steps below to mark and cut each of the two 16 ½-inch squares in preparation for piecing:
  - Mark a small dot or a dash at the precise center of the top, bottom, and sides of each square. \*See **Figure #1**.

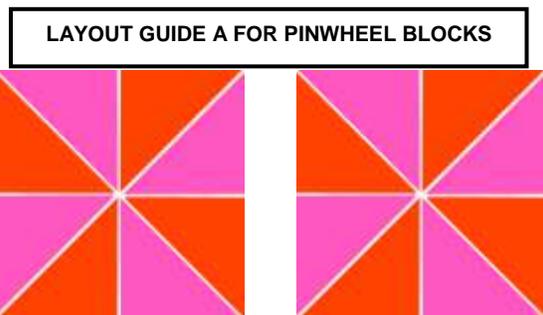


**Figure #1**

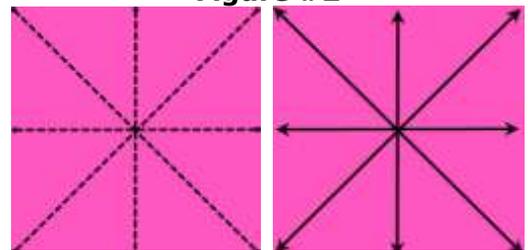


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- Place the squares on your cutting surface, having the right side of the fabric facing up. Cut each square into eight triangles, cutting diagonally from corner to corner, and then cutting across the square from top to bottom and side to side. Cut, but do not separate the pieces until the next step. \*See **Figure #2**.
- For this step, layout each of the two blocks in preparation for sewing them together. You need to divide the pink and orange triangles to create the two pinwheel squares. Each block should be identical. Arrange the blocks using Layout Guide A below, positioning each of the triangles having the right side facing up.

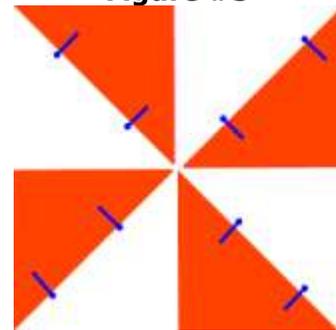


**Figure #2**



Dashed lines indicate cutting lines.  
Arrows indicate cutting direction.

**Figure #3**



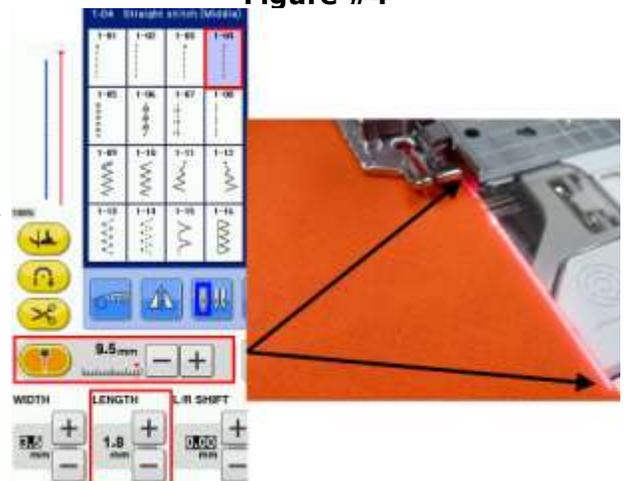
### Instructions for Sewing Patchwork Pieces

- Prepare to sew pieces together for each of the pinwheel blocks as follows:
  - Working from left to right in a clock wise fashion, layer one orange triangle on top of a matching pink triangle.
  - Prepare to sew by pinning along the long edges of the triangles. For each block you will have four sets of triangles. \*See **Figure #3**.
  - Keep each of the four sets separate. You may wish to label the sets, Block One and Block Two.

**NOTE:** Handle the cut and pinned pieces gently to avoid stretching the edges and causing a distorted seam. For increased accuracy, cut, layer, and then pin the pieces together while working on a flat surface.

- Set up the machine for sewing a  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch seam by selecting a center needle straight stitch. If you are working on a V-Series machine you can further enhance the accuracy of your  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch seam by using the Sew Straight™ Laser Vision Guide in addition to the  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch foot. \*See **Figure #4** for more information. Set the stitch length to 1.8 to chain piece your patchwork and avoid backstitching the seams. When sewing, it is important to watch the edge instead of the needle. Once you have positioned your fabric along the edge, watch the fabric along the edge guide as you stitch and your seams will remain consistent.

**Figure #4**



The  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch piecing foot with guide is designed for sewing a precise  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch seam. Select a center needle straight stitch and then attach the  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch foot. When sewing the seam, keep the raw edge against the guide on the foot. Think of the guide as a fence, preventing you from sewing a seam allowance more than  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch.

To use this foot in combination with the Sew Straight™ Laser Vision Guide, touch the Guideline Marker icon and set the marker to 9.5. This places the Sew Straight™ Laser along the raw edge of the fabric as it is positioned against the guide on the foot. This helps you to sew straight as it essentially becomes an extension of the edge guide on the foot.

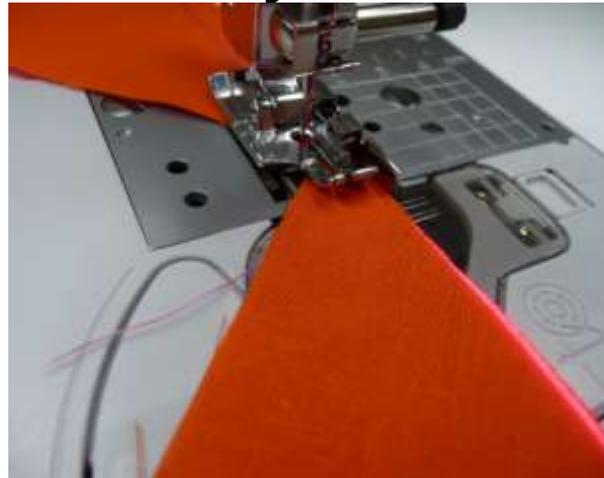
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**TIP:** When sewing a  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch seam you can adjust the settings as desired for a scant  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch, or a deeper  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch. Move the needle position slightly to the left or the right to adjust for the thickness of the fabric layers. Moving to the left results in a slightly deeper seam, moving to the right results in a scant seam. Make certain your needle stays within the opening of the foot. Different fabrics produce different results. If you require a scientific  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch seam, test your  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch seam on scraps before sewing your quilt blocks. In many cases the main consideration is consistency rather than having a scientific seam.

3. Take the pinned pieces to the machine. Begin to sew the first piece, having pins facing you. Remove pins as you stitch and push the beginning of the next set of pieces right up against the end of the first. This is a method known as chain piecing. If necessary, lift presser foot slightly to position the next piece. \*See **Figure #5**. Sew all pieces for block one, and for block two, keeping each set separate to avoid confusion. Leave the thread tails connecting the pieces together until you reach the ironing surface.
4. Take pieces to your ironing station. Clip the thread tails holding the pieces together. Open up the triangles and press each one with a dry iron, pressing seams toward the orange fabric.
5. Snip off points extending from each piece. \*See **Figure #6**. Layout four squares for each block using Layout Guide B. \*See **Figure #7**. Pin and then chain piece the squares together so that you have two halves for each block. For this step, leave the joining thread tail in place and press seams toward the orange fabric. Snip off points as you did previously.
6. For the final seam on each block, begin by pinning the two halves together, paying careful attention to the center area where the seams meet together. In this area you will need to finger press the seams so they are opposite one another. In other words, the seams should not be on top of one another. Instead, each one is pushed in the opposite direction from the other. It is important that the seams are pushed snugly together at the center, having all of the seams come together for a neat center point. The thread tail holding the pieces together will help you accomplish this. To check seams prior to sewing, push a pin into the center intersection. When seams are properly aligned the pin should intersect the seam on both sides.



**Figure #5**



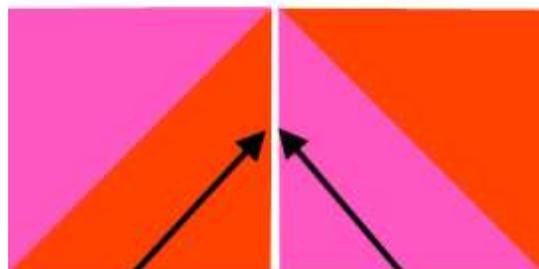
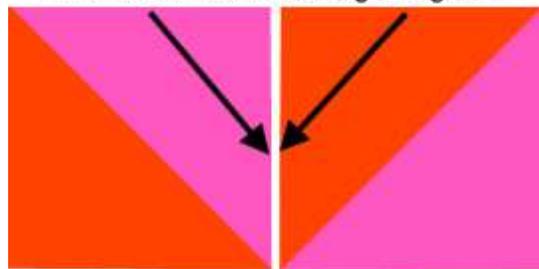
**Figure #6**



**Figure #7**

LAYOUT GUIDE B FOR PINWHEEL BLOCK

Pin and sew these two edges together



Pin and sew these two edges together

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7. Sew the last patchwork seam on each block, making certain seams stay flat, facing in the proper direction as you stitch.  
\*See **Figure #8**. Raise the presser foot and adjust if necessary as you sew.
8. Press each finished block flat. If you have any uneven edges trim away the excess. Each block should be equal in size and finish at 15-inches square.

### Instructions for Quilting the Blocks

1. Prepare blocks for quilting by layering each block on top of a 16-inch square of batting. Pin around outer edges.  
\*See **Figure #9**.
2. Attach the MuVit™ Dual Feed Foot and the Open Toe accessory, or the walking foot appropriate for your machine. Select a zig zag stitch set for 2.5 (width) and 2.5 (length). Working from the center toward the edge, zig zag along each of the seams to quilt the patchwork block.  
\*See **Figure #10**. Your zig zag stitch should evenly pierce the fabric on the right and left side of the block. Working with an open toe foot makes this easy. When finished, trim away excess batting. Each block should be equal in size and finish at 15-inches square.

**NOTE:** V-Series machines can use the Sew Straight™ Laser Vision Guide, setting the laser in a position directly on top of the seam, for enhanced guidance while quilting the blocks. Use the Set Mode to adjust the dual feed as necessary. We used a setting of +02 for quilting the patchwork and a higher setting during construction of the tote. Touch plus key to ease in more fabric on top. Read the manual for further details.

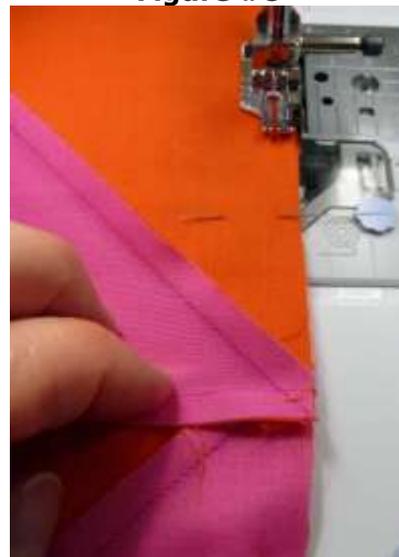


### Instructions for Finishing the Tote

1. Select the ribbon to make straps. Center one piece of pink ribbon on top of one piece of orange ribbon. Zig zag down both sides to attach the ribbons. Repeat for second set of ribbons.



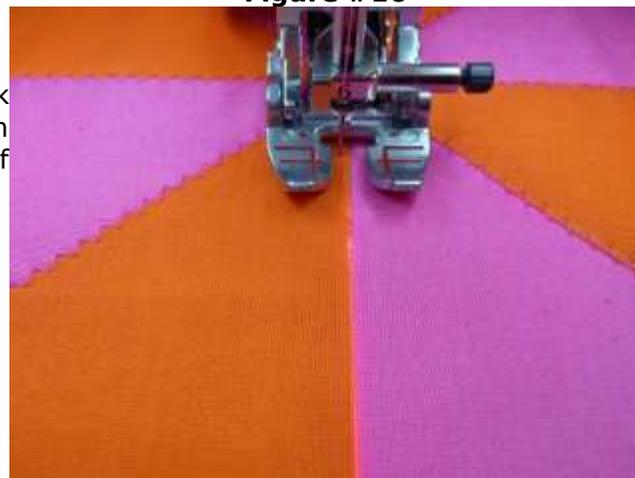
**Figure #8**



**Figure #9**



**Figure #10**



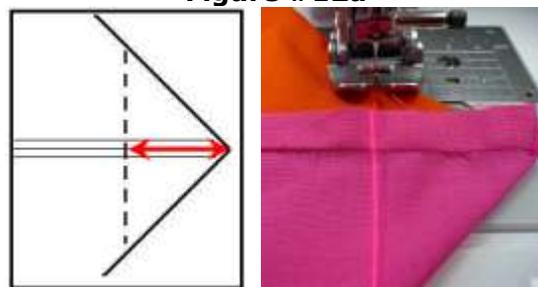
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- For lining pieces, cut two 15-inch squares from the remaining pink and orange fabric. Remove the open toe accessory and replace with the closed toe or use an ordinary sewing foot for all remaining steps. Note that the dual feed on the MuVit™ foot can be disengaged to sew without dual feeding. Engage the foot where necessary and disengage it when it is no longer needed. Sew all seams using a ½-inch seam allowance to construct the tote.
- Place quilted blocks right sides together and sew a bottom seam. Place ribbon straps along top edges on each side, centering ribbon within the top two blocks. Machine baste ribbons a scant ½-inch from the top to temporarily secure them. \*See **Figure #11**. Having right sides together, sew both side seams. Place right sides of lining pieces together. Sew a bottom seam as you did for the quilted pieces, leaving a 5-inch opening in the approximate center of the bottom seam to allow for turning. Sew side seams of lining. Press all seams, pressing quilted seams open and lining seams toward one side.
- Create "boxed" corners on the bottom of the quilted bag and bag lining piece as follows: Match the bottom seam to the side seam, forming a triangle. Mark a line measuring 1 ½-inches from the point. Stitch along marked line. Trim boxed corners of the quilted bag to eliminate bulk. Tack seam allowances to bottom seam. \*See **Figure #12a** and **#12b**.
- Turn quilted tote piece right sides out. Slip inside the lining piece having right sides together, with side seams matching and top edges even. \*See **Figure #13**. Using the free arm on the machine, sew the top seam in a circular fashion around the entire top edge. Turn right sides out through bottom opening. Close bottom opening with hand or machine stitches.
- Carefully press top edge of tote. Top stitch close to the edge to reinforce the straps and keep lining from moving. V-Series machines can use the MuVit™ foot and engage the Sew Straight™ Laser Vision Guide to help with topstitching.

**Figure #11**



**Figure #12a**



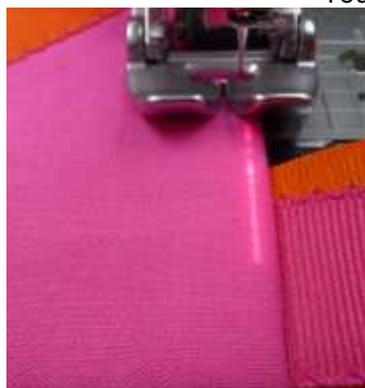
**Figure #12b**



**Figure #13**



You are finished!



### Options and Ideas:

- **Make a larger tote by increasing the size of your initial squares. Add yardage as necessary for a larger tote.**
- **Sew a colorful button to the center of the pinwheel.**
- **Add pockets to the lining prior to construction.**