

Snowbound in Valdez

a mystery quilt by Debbie Caffrey

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The finished size of the quilt varies, depending upon how you choose to finish it. The two sizes that are specifically patterned are Option #1 – 55" x 70" and Option #2 – 71½" x 91". There are numerous other ways to finish the quilt, too. Read on!

This quilt can be made from four fabrics or many. Read the entire supply list and cutting information to learn all of your options. If you look at the cutting instructions you will see that it is made from 10" squares, 5" squares, and 2½" x 40" strips (*worms*). If you have a collection of Layer Cakes, Charm Packs, and Jelly Rolls and have been wondering what to do with them, this quilt will be a perfect time to use them.

The final step will present illustrations of many layouts besides the two that are in the instructions. Fabric estimates for the setting pieces for the bonus options will be given there. Fabric requirements for the setting pieces for Options #1 and #2 of the instructions are given on the next page. Setting fabrics, borders, and binding may be purchased after the mystery has been solved, however, more of the same fabrics may not be available.

Here is my suggestion on how to approach this mystery. Choose which version you want to make – four fabrics or multiple fabrics. Cut the pieces from fabrics #1 - #4 as stated. If you think you want a really large quilt, purchase two to three times as much fabric (queen to king, respectively) of each of the four fabrics, but only cut enough for the smaller quilt. It will be simple to cut and make more blocks to enlarge the quilt once you have solved the mystery.

Personally, I do not select setting fabrics until I am ready to complete the quilt. This quilt has a multiple fabric option, and many different fabrics would work for the setting options.


I understand that if you are making the four fabric version you may want more of those four fabrics for setting pieces. In that case, either buy fabric as directed for Option #1 or #2, or buy 2 to 3 yards of several fabrics you are considering, more for larger quilts. If you do not use them, you can piece your back with them or add to your stash!

You will need more border fabric for larger quilts. In general, buy 2½ - 2¾ yards for a queen and 3½ yards for a king.





The most important thing to remember when selecting fabrics for a mystery quilt is contrast. The fabrics should have good contrast among them in order for the pattern to emerge. Use color and/or value to achieve this contrast. Avoid directional fabrics unless you are prepared to ignore their prints.

Fabric Requirements for 4 Fabric Version

Option #1

 Fabric #1 – Light	1 yard
 Fabric #2 – Medium	1 yard
 Fabric #3 – Medium Dark	1 yard
 Fabric #4 – Dark	½ yard
Sashing	1 yard
Border	1 yard
Binding	¾ yard
Backing	3½ yards

Option #2





 Fabric #1 – Light	1 yard
 Fabric #2 – Medium	1 yard
 Fabric #3 – Medium Dark	1 yard
 Fabric #4 – Dark	½ yard
Setting Squares	1½ yards
Side Triangles	1¾ yards, 2¼ yards if narrower than 42"
Border	2 yards
Binding	1 yard
Backing	5½ yards

Fabric Requirements for Multiple Fabric Versions


For the scrappy version you will use twelve different fabric #1, twelve different fabric #2, etc., although, here are other options to consider. Use different fabrics for #2, #3, and #4, but use only one for fabric #1. Fabric #1 is the background in this quilt. Another option is to use one fabric for fabric #1, one fabric for fabric #4, and a jelly roll for fabrics #2 and #3.

* Strips are selvage to selvage. They may be longer than 40". Do not bother to trim them to 40".

Option #1

 Fabric #1 – Light	twelve 10" squares
 Fabric #2 – Medium	twelve 2½" x 40" strips*
 Fabric #3 – Medium Dark	twelve 2½" x 40" strips*
 Fabric #4 – Dark	twelve 5" squares
Sashing	1 yard
Border	1 yard
Binding	¾ yard
Backing	3½ yards

Option #2

 Fabric #1 – Light	twelve 10" squares
 Fabric #2 – Medium	twelve 2½" x 40" strips*
 Fabric #3 – Medium Dark	twelve 2½" x 40" strips*
 Fabric #4 – Dark	twelve 5" squares
Setting Squares	1½ yards
Side Triangles	2 yards
Border	2 yards
Binding	1 yard
Backing	5½ yards

Other Supplies

Sewing machine

Thread to blend with your fabrics

Rotary cutter, mat, ruler(s)

- The mat should be at least 12" x 18". An 18" x 24" is better.
- Rulers that are especially helpful when making this quilt are the following:
 - a 24" long ruler and
 - a 15" or larger square

Cutting for the 4 Fabric Version, Both Options

Strips are cut across the width of the fabric, making them approximately 40" long with selvages on each of the short ends.

Fabric #1 – Light

Cut three strips 10" wide.

Use the strips to cut a total of twelve 10" squares.

Cut each square twice, diagonally, into quarter-square triangles. Yield: 48 triangles



Fabric #2 – Medium

Cut twelve strips 2½" wide.

Cut each of the strips into four equal pieces, 2½" x 10" to 11". Just cut the strip on the fold in the middle. Fold each half and cut again in the middle.

Fabric #3 – Medium Dark

Cut ten strips 2½" wide.

Use these strips to cut twenty-four 2½" x 9" rectangles, twenty-four 2½" x 5" rectangles, and twelve 2½" squares.

Fabric #4 – Dark

Cut two strips 5" wide.

Use these strips to cut twelve 5" squares.

Cutting for the Multiple Fabric Version, Both Options

Strips are cut across the width of the fabric, making them approximately 40" long with selvages on each of the short ends.

Fabric #1 – Light

Cut a total of twelve 10" squares, using one fabric or twelve.

Cut each square twice, diagonally, into quarter-square triangles. Yield: 48 triangles



Fabric #2 – Medium

Cut twelve strips 2½" wide, one strip from each of twelve different fabrics.

Cut each of the strips into four equal pieces, 2½" x 10" to 11". Just cut the strip on the fold in the middle. Fold each half and cut again in the middle.

Fabric #3 – Medium Dark

Cut twelve strips 2½" wide, one strip from each of twelve different fabrics.

Cut the following pieces from each of the twelve strips: two 2½" x 9" rectangles, two 2½" x 5" rectangles, and one 2½" square. Save the scraps from these strips.

Fabric #4 – Dark

Cut a total of twelve 5" squares, using one fabric or twelve.

Bring all of the precut pieces, any leftover fabric, and any pieces that you are considering using for setting and finishing your quilt to class.

Questions? Call or email.

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