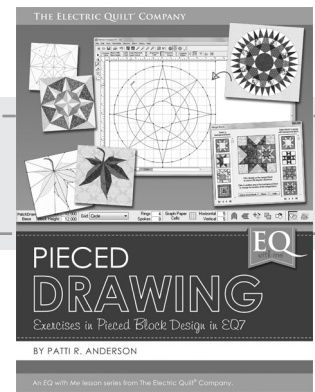


A FREE lesson from the newly republished book

PIECED DRAWING

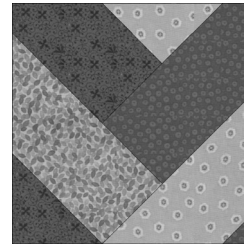
Exercises in Pieced Block Design in EQ7 by Patti R. Anderson



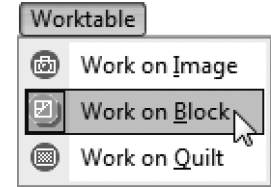
Drawing Prairie Braid Strips

I'm not sure when this string-pieced block was first named *Prairie Braid*. There is a similar block dated 1898 called *Twist and Turn* attributed to Ladies Art Company in Barbara Brackman's *Encyclopedia of Pieced Quilt Patterns* (#481). String-pieced blocks are as popular today as they were over a century ago. This block is ideal for foundation piecing and using up leftover strips of fabric.

Although this block is simple to sew, figuring out how to draw it can be confusing because you need to create a block that is repeatable. In this exercise I'll show you how to create a repeating braid block as well as how to quickly transform it into a long strip.



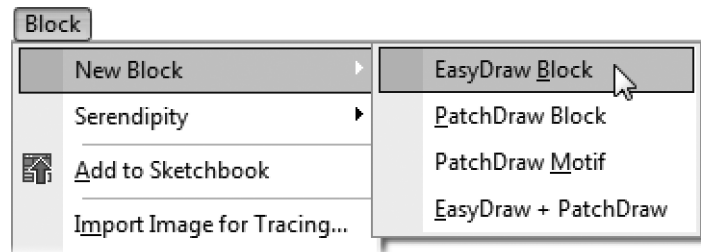
Example of *Prairie Braid* Strip



Step 1

1. Click **WORKTABLE > Work on block.**
2. Click **BLOCK > New Block > EasyDraw Block.**
3. On the Precision Bar, enter these values pressing your keyboard TAB key after each:

- Block Width = **8.00**
- Block Height = **8.00**
- Snaps Horizontal = **8**
- Snaps Vertical = **8**
- Graph Paper visibility is toggled **ON**
- Cells Horizontal = **8**
- Cells Vertical = **8**



Step 2

Drawing Setup	Block Width:	8.000	Snaps Horizontal:	8	Graph Paper Cells:	Horizontal	8
	Block Height:	8.000	Snaps Vertical:	8		Vertical	8

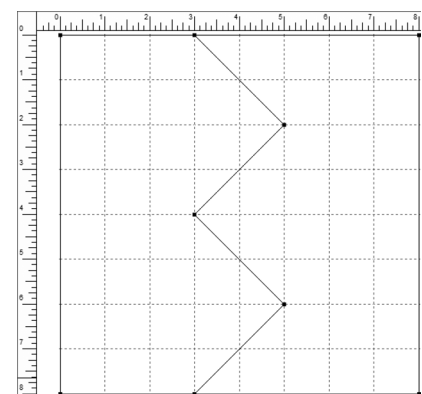
Step 3

4. Click the **Line** tool.
5. Work from top to bottom in the center two inches of the block. Begin at 3" on the top edge and draw 45 degree diagonal lines back and forth every two inches down the center (four lines).



Step 4
Line

I find it much easier to create a *Prairie Braid* block by drawing the zigzag lines down the center first—it's a trait that they all have in common. It shows you right from the start how wide the strips will be, making the rest of the block easier to draw. And most importantly, it establishes the repeat of the patches.



Step 5

- On the left side of the zigzag lines, draw 45 degree lines up to the left from the third and fifth nodes to the block outline creating the diagonal strips on the left side of the block. Do the same on the right side of the block, but draw an additional diagonal in the bottom 1" of the lower-right corner.
- Click **Add to Sketchbook** to save the block.

That's it for creating a square braid block that is repeatable! Try using this *Prairie Braid* block in borders or vertical strip quilts. Keep the blocks square to maintain the right angles of the strips. For quilts with odd dimensions use the Tiled Square border style to keep the blocks square.

Now let's take our repeatable *Prairie Braid* square block and transform it into a long strip block. You can use this block in a vertical strip layout with the strip of the same proportions. Print one long foundation pattern, gather your scraps and start sewing!

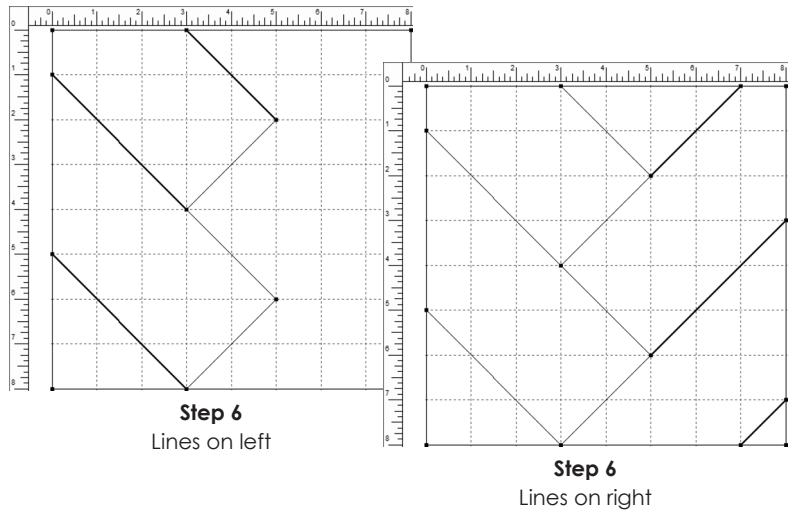
- Click **BLOCK > New Block > EasyDraw Block**.

- On the Precision Bar, enter these values:

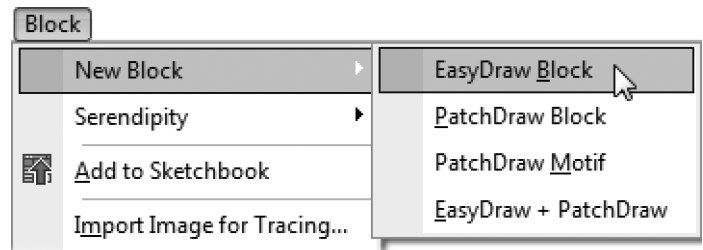
- Block Width = **8.00**
- Block Height = **48.00**
- Snaps Horizontal = **8**
- Snaps Vertical = **48**
- Graph Paper visibility is toggled **ON**
- Cells Horizontal = **8**
- Cells Vertical = **48**

- Click the **Line** tool.

- Click the **Zoom In** tool and drag a box to zoom in on the top-half of the block.



Step 7
Add to Sketchbook



Step 8

Drawing Setup	Block Width:	8.000	Snaps Horizontal:	8	Graph Paper Cells:	Horizontal	8
	Block Height:	48.000	Snaps Vertical:	48		Vertical	48

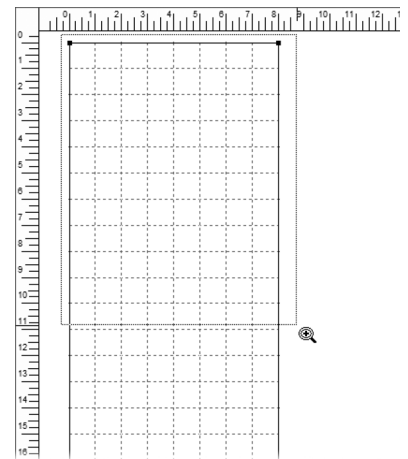
Step 9



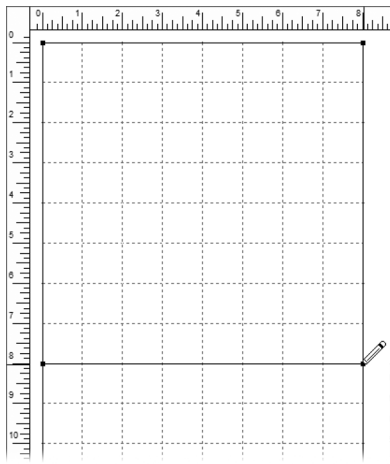
Step 10
Line



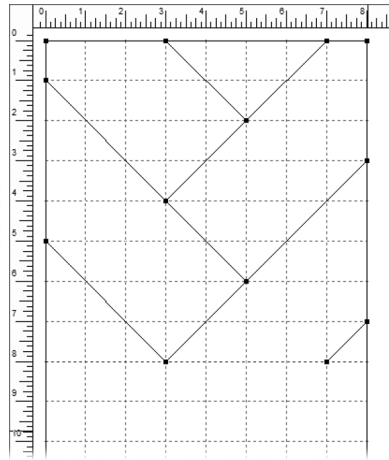
Step 11
Zoom In



Step 11



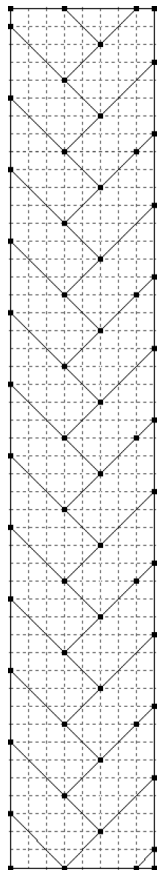
Step 12
Draw horizontal line and convert it to a guide



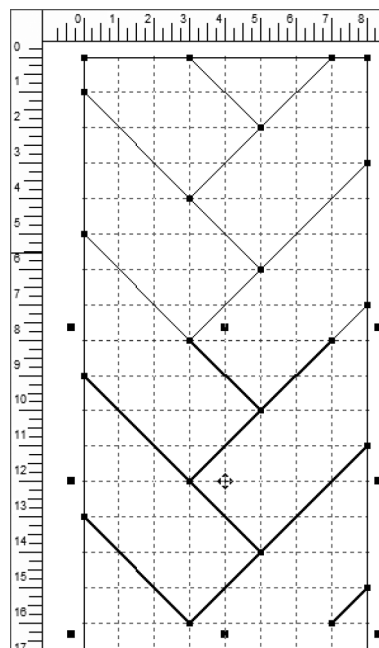
Step 13



Step 14
Pick



Final *Prairie Braid* Strip



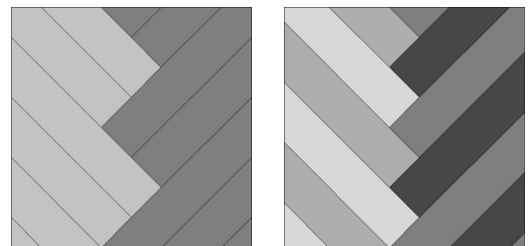
Step 15
Selection cloned and moved into place



Step 16
Add to Sketchbook

12. Count down eight divisions from the top of the block and draw a horizontal line across the block. Press the **SPACEBAR** to select the line you just drew, right-click, and choose **Convert to Guides**.
13. Using the top 8 x 8 divisions, draw the repeatable *Prairie Braid* as in steps 1 through 6. Leave the bottom open, as illustrated.
14. Switch to the **Pick** tool and **Select All (CTRL+A)**, then click on the **small red square** in the corner of the Pick tool to bring up the Symmetry box.
15. **Clone** the selection and move the clone down the block, eight divisions beneath the original, matching up the end nodes and making sure it snaps into place. While the clone is still selected, repeat **clone** four more times, moving each successive clone down the strip until you have filled the block. This strip has a total of six repeats. If you are still zoomed in you will need to scroll the window to move down the block.
16. Click **Add to Sketchbook**.

Now that you have unlocked the mystery of how the *Prairie Braid* repeats you can create other variations. Here are a few for you to try. These two variations use the same proportions as the braid in the exercise, except that I increased the snap points to 24 x 24 so that I could draw narrower strips. Remember to draw the zigzag down the center first!



Variations of *Prairie Braid* Block