

Clove and Clementine

A pomander quilt of spice-dotted fruit, tied with holiday ribbon



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Finished quilt reads as a scattered garland of spice-studded fruit, instead of the usual evergreen motif.

1. Finished size

- **Quilt size:** 56 in × 70 in (140 cm × 178 cm)
- **Panel layout:** 4 × 5 block grid
- **Each block size:** 12 in × 14 in (with borders/buffer included)
- **Block emphasis:** Alternating applique “clementine” blocks and pieced diagonal ribbon blocks.
- **Quilt top thickness:** Designed for light to medium quilting; suitable for cozy all-season use.

2. Materials and yardage

Yardages assume 44 in (110 cm) usable fabric width. Please read the cutting section before purchasing.

Fabric / Item	Role in quilt	Yardage / Amount	Notes
Soft oatmeal linen-cotton (light neutral)	Background for applique and pieced blocks	3 1/2 yd	Choose something with a gentle texture to echo linen.
Clementine orange (applique circles)	Appliqué fruit bodies	1 1/2 yd	Use a fabric that holds a crisp edge under fusible/basting.
Clove-brown (specks/knots + quilting thread echo)	French knots (and optional thread for specks)	1/4 yd (or scraps)	Brown embroidery floss or perle cotton works beautifully.
Holly green	Tied bow accent + diagonal ribbon blocks	1/2 yd	Accent can be cut into narrow ribbon strips.
Berry red	Alternate tied bow accent + diagonal ribbon blocks	1/2 yd	Use as the complementary ribbon color.
Binding fabric (clove-brown stripe OR deep neutral)	Binding	3/4 yd	Cut 2 1/4 in strips for double-fold binding.
Batting	Quilting layer	62 in × 78 in	Low-loft cotton or cotton/poly blend recommended.
Backing (oatmeal tone-on-tone or complementary print)	Back of quilt	5 1/4 yd	Back should finish slightly larger than top; assemble as needed.

Tools & notions

- Fusible web (paper-backed) for appliqué (or pin + glue/basting method)
- Needles: universal 80/12 or sharp 70/10 for appliqué
- Thread: neutral bobbin thread + embroidery floss/perle cotton for French knots
- Marking pencil/pen that disappears
- Fine-tip scissors, seam ripper, small applique pressing tool

- Ruler, rotary cutter, mat, 60° or 45° marking ruler (helpful for diagonals)

3. Cutting

Quantities are for the full quilt top: alternating applique fruit blocks and diagonal ribbon blocks.

3A. Block plan

- **Total blocks:** 20 blocks (4 rows × 5 columns)
- **Clementine applique blocks:** 10 blocks
- **Ribbon diagonal blocks:** 10 blocks

3B. Diagonal ribbon blocks (10 blocks)

Each ribbon block is 12 in × 14 in finishing area before overall border/buffer. It uses a strip-set diagonal motif that reads like a narrow holiday ribbon “tie”.

Cut pieces per ribbon block	Finish target	Cut size (W × L, straight/grain as noted)	Quantity for 10 blocks
Oatmeal background rectangles (for diagonals)	Creates the diamond/diagonal field	2 pcs at 3 1/2 in × 14 1/2 in	20 pcs
Green ribbon strip (diagonal accent)	One narrow diagonal band	1 1/2 in × 14 1/2 in	10 pcs
Red ribbon strip (diagonal accent)	Alternate narrow diagonal band	1 1/2 in × 14 1/2 in	10 pcs
Oatmeal background corner trims	Completes block framing	4 pcs at 1 1/2 in × 3 1/2 in	40 pcs

How to cut diagonals: After strip piecing (or after sewing diagonal triangles), trim each ribbon block to **12 in × 14 in** to match the applique block finishing size.

3C. Clementine applique blocks (10 blocks)

Each applique block is built on a background rectangle and includes one orange circle, speckled with French knots, plus a slim bow in green or red.

Cut pieces per clementine block	Cut size (W × L)	Quantity for 10 blocks
Background rectangle	12 1/2 in × 14 1/2 in	10 pcs
Orange circle (clementine)	Cut using template: 5 1/2 in diameter	10 circles
Bow strip (green OR red)	3/4 in × 5 in (cut into bow pieces)	20 strips total (mix colors)
Bow tail accents (optional)	3/8 in × 2 1/2 in	20 pcs
Fusible web circles + bow pieces	Same shapes as above	Cut accordingly

Color placement: Alternate bow colors block-to-block: for example, Row 1: green, red, green, red, green; Row 2 reversed. This matches the “holiday ribbon” feel across the quilt.

3D. Borders/buffer and overall assembly (finished quilt 56 × 70)

The layout uses a narrow top/bottom and left/right framing strip to bring the quilt from the block grid to the finished size.

- **Side borders (2 pieces):** 2 1/2 in wide × **70 in** (cut and stitch to the top after block rows are assembled)
- **Top & bottom borders (2 pieces):** 2 1/2 in wide × **56 in**
- These borders are cut from oatmeal background fabric for a calm linen ground.

3E. Binding

- **Binding length needed:** approximately 240 in (allowing for miters/overlap)
- **Cut strips:** 2 1/4 in × WOF (width of fabric), join into one long strip
- **Expected number of strips:** 7–8 strips to reach adequate length

4. Piecing / block construction

4A. Make diagonal ribbon blocks (10)

1. **Prepare strips:** From oatmeal, cut two 3 1/2 in × 14 1/2 in rectangles per block.
2. **Create the diagonal ribbon:** Layer one oatmeal rectangle with a ribbon strip (green or red) so the ribbon lies at a diagonal in the finished block. Easiest method: sew a diagonal seam to form a narrow diagonal band.
If you prefer strip piecing: cut a 45° line across the ribbon strip, then join to the background rectangle along that angle; finish so the narrow ribbon band is centered. Trim after assembly.

3. **Assemble the center:** Stitch the diagonal unit to its companion oatmeal rectangle to reach the full **12 in × 14 in** block size after trimming.
4. **Add corner framing pieces:** Stitch the 1 1/2 in × 3 1/2 in oatmeal corner trims where they create clean right-angle corners around the diagonal motif.
5. **Press:** Press seams toward the darker ribbon strip.
6. **Trim blocks:** Square to **12 in × 14 in** as you go.

Tip: Mark the block center point and confirm the diagonal ribbon band crosses the center; minor adjustments in trimming keep the “garland” rhythm even.

4B. Make clementine applique blocks (10)

1. **Cut background squares/rectangles:** Use the 12 1/2 in × 14 1/2 in oatmeal rectangles.
2. **Prepare fusible shapes:** Cut 5 1/2 in diameter orange circles and bow pieces from orange and fuse according to manufacturer instructions to the back of the orange and bow fabric.
3. **Position the circle:** On each background, place the orange circle so it reads like a “pomander fruit”. Suggested placement: center of circle about **4 in from the top edge** and **3 in from the left edge** of the finished block (adjust to taste, but keep consistent across blocks).
4. **Fuse:** Press with a dry iron; let cool.
For extra security, topstitch around the orange circle with a small zigzag or blanket-style appliqué stitch using neutral thread.
5. **Add speckle “clove” knots:**
 - Using clove-brown embroidery floss (2–3 strands), make **12–18 French knots** per circle.
 - Cluster slightly toward the upper half and leave 2–3 areas less dense for an organic “speckled rind” look.
 - Make knots small: stitch in → wrap once → pull through; practice on scraps.
6. **Make the slim tied bow:**
 - Cut bow pieces (green OR red) and fuse if desired.
 - Fold/shape into a slim center and two narrow tails; tack in place near the top of the orange circle (as if tied to the pomander).
 - Finish with a small stitch line around edges; you may use a tiny blanket stitch or straight bar tacks.
7. **Stabilize and trim:** Trim each applique block to **12 in × 14 in** to match ribbon blocks.

4C. Assemble the quilt top

1. **Lay out blocks:** Create a 4 (rows) × 5 (columns) grid.

2. **Alternate rhythm:** Place clementine blocks so they “float” between diagonal ribbon blocks (e.g., no two applique blocks directly adjacent horizontally).
3. **Stitch rows:** Stitch blocks into rows, using 1/4 in seams.
4. **Press seams:** Press adjacent rows in opposite directions (a quiltmaker trick) to reduce bulk at intersections.
5. **Join rows together:** Stitch the rows into the full center panel.
6. **Add side borders:** Stitch 2 1/2 in oatmeal side borders (length 70 in) to left and right edges. Press flat.
7. **Add top/bottom borders:** Stitch top and bottom borders (2 1/2 in × 56 in). Press.
8. **Final measurement check:** Quilt top should measure approximately **56 in × 70 in**.

5. Quilt top assembly

Before basting, confirm everything lies flat and the diagonal ribbon lines read cleanly across the quilt.

Assembly checklist

- All blocks trimmed square to 12 × 14.
- Center panel corners align; measure diagonals corner-to-corner for squareness (they should be very close).
- Bow stitches and circle edges are secure (trim loose threads).
- Press quilt top with light steam and a pressing cloth, avoiding distortion of the applique.

6. Basting, quilting and binding

6A. Basting

1. **Prepare backing:** Press backing and assemble if pieced. Use batting size about 62 × 78 in.
2. **Layer:** Backing right side down → batting → quilt top right side up.
3. **Baste:** Pin-baste or spray baste. Keep pins away from the applique’s knot area so they don’t interfere while quilting.
4. **Mark quilting grid:** Lightly mark a clove-cross grid. Suggested spacing: **1 3/8 in** between grid intersections.

6B. Quilting design: clove-cross grid

Fine dark brown thread quilts across the quilt in a small clove-cross grid that echoes the French knots.

- **Thread:** dark brown quilting thread (40 wt or similar) in both top and bobbin if possible.

- **Needle:** Microtex 80/12 or sharp 80/12.
- **Pattern:** At each grid intersection, stitch a small cross (like a “clove” mark) or a short X with a tight crossing point.
- **Stitch length:** 1.8–2.2 (adjust for your machine).
- **Echo points:** Increase density slightly around the applique circles (don’t push through knots; stitch around them smoothly).

Alternative quilting: If you prefer straight grid quilting, quilt horizontal and vertical lines at the 1 3/8 in spacing and add a few X marks only in negative spaces near each orange circle.

6C. Binding

1. **Make double-fold binding strip:** Join strips end-to-end with diagonal seams.
2. **Attach binding:** Sew to quilt front with 1/4 in seam allowance, aligning raw edges. Stop 8–10 in before starting point.
3. **Miter corners:** Use a miter fold method to get neat corners.
4. **Finish:** Fold binding to back and hand-stitch or topstitch as preferred.

7. Finishing notes

- **Pressing:** Press quilt top seams first; after quilting, press flat from the back to avoid flattening applique texture.
- **Thread trimming:** Knot work can hide thread ends; trim carefully around French knots and bow edges.
- **Washing:** Pre-wash if you used fusible web that permits it; otherwise wash gently and test a scrap first. French knots can hold their shape well, but heat can relax some fusibles.
- **Display tip:** This quilt is designed to “read” like a scattered garland—try hanging or folding where ribbon diagonals catch sunlight.

Suggested color variation (optional):

- Use only green bows in even rows and red bows in odd rows for a strong rhythm.
- Swap the ribbon colors per block to echo the tied-bow accents.