

Crosstown Transfer

A quilt of routes you could ride all night



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Pattern overview

This quilt features “transfer-route” blocks built from long strip sets trimmed into straight and diagonal segments. Routes are sashed with oat so the colored lines read like a printed map. Small junction circles (appliquéd) suggest where routes meet; a single looping downtown ring anchors the center.

1. Finished size

- Finished quilt size: **64 in x 82 in**
- Block size (finished): **16 in x 16 in**
- Layout: **4 blocks across x 5 blocks down** (20 total)
- Center focus: downtown ring appliqué placed on the middle block row

2. Materials and yardage

Quantities assume 42 in usable fabric width and include a little waste. Adjust for directional prints or your piecing habits.

Fabric	Role	Yardage	Notes
Cream / oat ground (cream background)	Background, oat sashes, pieced foundation	4 1/4 yd	Choose a solid or subtle mottled. Cut sashes and background segments from this fabric.
Persimmon	Route strip sets	1 1/2 yd	Use for straight and diagonal route segments.
Lake blue	Route strip sets	1 1/2 yd	Use for alternating route lanes.
Chartreuse	Route strip sets	1 1/4 yd	Vibrant lane color.
Marigold	Route strip sets	1 1/4 yd	Bright accent lane.
Plum	Route strip sets	1 1/4 yd	Deeper lane color.
Slate-grey	Junction circles + downtown ring	3/4 yd	Medium grey solid.
Backing fabric	Quilt back	6 1/2 yd	Width assumed 42 in. Piecing may be needed.
Batting	Quilt core	75 in x 88 in	Use cotton, cotton blend, or polyester (mid loft recommended).
Binding fabric	Finishing edge	1 1/4 yd	Cut 2 1/2 in strips. Suggested: oat/cream tone or slate-grey for contrast.

Notions

- Rotary cutter, mat, straightedge, quilting ruler
- 1/4 in presser foot (recommended)
- Thread to match background and route colors
- Starch or Best Press (optional, for crisp strip sets)
- Appliqué supplies: lightweight fusible web (e.g., Steam-a-Seam style), fine needle, thread

3. Cutting

You will build each 16 in finished block from a repeating strip-set method. Work from the pattern sizes below, then trim to final segment sizes.

3A. Strip-set sizes (per route lane)

Each route color produces strips for both straight and diagonal segments. Use the same cutting recipe for each route color.

- From each route color (persimmon, lake blue, chartreuse, marigold, plum): cut **5 strips at 2 1/2 in x WOF**.

- Arrange strips in a consistent order to create alternating lanes (you can vary by block).

3B. Oat sashing / background

- Background/oat: cut **20 strips at 2 1/2 in x WOF** for sashing and framing (from cream/oat fabric).
- Background corner/edge filler: cut **12 strips at 1 1/2 in x WOF** for adjustments and to ensure enough extra for trimming.

3C. Junction circles (appliqué)

- Cut **2-inch diameter** circles from slate-grey paper templates (finished circles will be smaller). Trace **40 circles** on fusible web-backed slate-grey. (About 2 per block.)
- Final trimmed circle size: **1 1/2 in** diameter (trim outside edge after fusing, if needed).

3D. Downtown ring

- Make 1 ring from slate-grey: **cut an outer ring template at 7 in diameter** with a **1 1/2 in** ring band width. Total pattern: outer diameter 7 in, inner diameter 4 in.

4. Piecing / block construction

Each block is 16 in finished. Follow one block at a time to keep color placement intentional.

4A. Build the route strip sets

1. Choose two background strips (oat) and one route color strip to create the “floated map line” feel.
2. To make each route unit, sew route strips to oat strips to create a **strip set**: route lane in the middle with oat framing on both sides.
3. Target each finished strip set width of **4 1/2 in** (finished after trimming to segments).
A practical method:
 - Sew **2 1/2 in route** strip to **2 1/2 in oat** strip (right sides together) to form a 4-in wide piece.
 - Then trim and stitch as needed so the route appears centered; see segment layout in section 4C.
4. Repeat for enough strip sets to produce all segments for all blocks (you’ll trim into 4 diagonal and 4 straight segments per block total, plus extras for trimming).

Tip for crisp 45-degree elbows

- Press seam allowances consistently in one direction within a strip set.
- After trimming each segment, lightly starch and re-press the segment flat before assembly.
- Use a 45-degree ruler line-up tool when trimming diagonal segments.

4B. Trim strip-set segments

For a 16 in finished block, cut segments that finish to a consistent “map line” rhythm.

- **Straight route segments (finish size):** 6 in x 2 in (finished)
- **Diagonal route segments (finish size):** 6 in x 2 in (finished), cut to a 45° orientation (make a parallelogram when assembled)

Cutting guidance (because your strip set includes seam allowances):

- Cut **oversized** segments, then true them to final sizes using your ruler. Start with segments cut approximately **6 1/4 in** long and **2 1/4 in** wide before final trimming.
- For diagonal segments, cut at **45°** so the segment's long axis becomes the diagonal "route elbow."

4C. Assemble a Crosstown Transfer block

Lay out the block as a 4x4 grid of squares with routes running through, sashed with oat so they float.

Block layout (finished): 16 in x 16 in

- Outer frame: oat, arranged as 1 1/2 in wide finished strips
- Inner "map" area: four route elbows meeting at junction circles
- One diagonal path crosses the block while a second path bends 45° to form an "L elbow"

4D. Sewing order (recommended)

1. Sew the **top frame** oat strip to the upper edge of the inner layout units.
2. Sew left and right frame strips next. Press seams.
3. Assemble each route into two-piece elbows:
 - Join a straight segment to a diagonal segment along the 45° seam to form the elbow.
 - Repeat until you have four elbows around the center.
4. Place the junction circle positions at the "elbow meeting" points (one circle at each of two junctions per block; alternate positions by row/column to create movement).
5. Sew the bottom frame last.
6. Press the block flat and trim to **16 1/2 in** square if needed (trim to correct for any variance).

4E. Appliqué junction circles

1. Fuse circles to block surface following fusible web directions.
2. Place circles so they overlap the seam junction slightly (about 1/8 in) to hide raw edges.
3. Stitch using a tight satin stitch or blanket stitch with matching slate-grey thread.
4. Trim threads carefully; press lightly from the wrong side.

4F. Downtown ring (center focus)

Place the downtown ring on the single block centered in the quilt (block position row 3, column 3 in a 4x5 layout; count from top-left).

1. Position the outer edge of the ring so it sits mostly inside the block, with the “ring” crossing two route lanes.
2. Fuse and appliqué in the same manner as circles.
3. Optional: add 2–3 small stitch “anchors” across the center band to keep the ring flat.

5. Quilt top assembly

1. Arrange the 20 finished blocks in a grid: 4 columns by 5 rows.
2. Between blocks, add sashing strips in oat/cream.
 - Cut block-to-block sashing: **20 strips at 2 in x 16 in** finished concept (cut oversized then trim after sewing).
 - Align seams so route lines continue across block boundaries; vary route color order across blocks for a “routes on a map” effect.
3. Assemble rows first.
 - Sew four blocks and three horizontal sashing strips into each row.
 - Press seams to one side consistently within each row.
4. Sew rows together vertically with vertical sashing strips.
5. Measure the quilt top; it should be approximately **64 1/2 in x 82 1/2 in** before borders.
6. Add borders (oat frame):
 - Border width: **2 1/2 in finished** (cut and assemble enough for all sides).
 - After border installation, the quilt top should measure about **70 in x 88 in**.

Color placement note

To mimic the photo’s transit map feel, avoid using the same route color in every adjacent block. Stagger two of the bright colors (chartreuse and marigold) so they appear to “turn a corner” across the quilt.

6. Basting, quilting and binding

6A. Basting

- Press quilt top lightly.
- Layer: backing (right side down), batting, quilt top (right side up).
- Baste using safety pins or spray basting.
- Keep edges smooth and squared.

6B. Quilting design: faint street grid

Quilt diagonal straight lines across the surface so they read like a street grid without competing with the route seams.

- Recommended stitch length: **2.0–2.5 mm**
- Diagonal lines direction: choose a first diagonal at about **30–35°** to the horizontal, then quilt a second set crossing it.
- Spacing: about **1 1/2 in** between quilt lines (adjust to your style; keep consistent).

For an understated look, use thread that matches the oat background. If you want more definition, use a slightly darker neutral (warm grey) thread in the bobbin and top.

6C. Binding

1. Cut binding strips **2 1/2 in** wide across the width of fabric; join ends on a 45° angle.
2. Binding length target: **~330 in** total (trim and adjust after measuring quilt perimeter).
3. Sew binding to the front with 1/4 in seam allowance.
4. Turn to the back and hand stitch or topstitch in your preferred method.
5. Press binding flat with a gentle steam or dry iron press.

7. Finishing notes

- **Final measurement:** After binding, expect approximately **64 x 82 in** (or within 1/2 in depending on seam allowances and batting).
- **Pressing:** Press finished quilt lightly, especially around appliqué circles and the downtown ring.
- **Embellishment option:** Add tiny reinforcement stitches on the ring at points where it crosses route seams.
- **Wash/test:** If using fusible web, test one scrap before completing all circles/ring; some fusibles show through as shiny spots.
- **Troubleshooting:** If diagonal seams don't meet cleanly, check that your diagonal segments were trimmed true and that your 45° cuts are consistent; re-trim the segment rather than forcing the piecing.

End of pattern.