

Low Tide Ripples

Sea-glass rings for a sun-bleached shore



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1. Finished size

- **Finished quilt size:** 74 in × 86 in (188 cm × 218 cm)
- **Design layout:** 4 × 5 blocks (20 blocks total)
- **Block type:** Quarter-circle Drunkard's Path (D.P.) with octagonal "pool" at the center
- **Block finished size:** 16 in × 16 in
- **Sashing:** 1/2 in finished white sashing between blocks, creating foam-line rings
- **Quilt top finished:** concentric ripple rings arranged as a spiral impression around each block's corner pools

2. Materials and yardage

Choose fabrics from the cool coastal palette below. Yardage assumes 44 in usable width and includes a small amount of overage for cutting errors.

Fabrics (5 colors + sashing + background + backing + binding)

- **Sea-glass aqua** (rings, some quarter sections): ~ 1/2 yd
- **Kelp olive** (ring accents, pool wedges): ~ 1/2 yd
- **Wet-sand taupe** (ring accents): ~ 5/8 yd
- **Urchin magenta** (pool detail, occasional ring wedges): ~ 1/2 yd
- **Sun-bleached coral** (pool detail, some ring wedges): ~ 1/2 yd
- **Narrow white sashing/foam lines** (includes corner framing strips): ~ 1 1/4 yd
- **Backing** (single sage-aqua print): ~ 4 1/2 yd
- **Binding** (use one of the coastal solids or a coordinating stripe; shown as white-leaning coral/foam mix): ~ 3/4 yd

Tip: If you prefer more contrast in the rings, increase aqua or taupe by 1/4–1/3 yd and reduce the least-used pool color accordingly.

Batting and notions

- **Batting:** 80/20 cotton/poly or 100% cotton, 90 in × 104 in (or larger)
- **Thread:** Match piecing threads to each fabric; quilting thread can be neutral or light aqua
- **Marking:** Mechanical pencil or disappearing fabric marker
- **Tools:** rotary cutter, ruler, 60 mm rotary blade (or 45 mm), sewing machine, iron + pressing supplies

Drunkard's Path yardage note (block math)

Each 16 in block uses **4 quarter-circle units** plus sashing-like framing strips to form the octagonal pool. Across 20 blocks, you'll cut pieces in a repeatable set. Use the cutting chart below to avoid piecing-by-guessing.

3. Cutting

Read this section fully before cutting. Measurements are for finished block geometry with a standard **1/4 in seam allowance**.

Cutting guide (per quilt)

Item	Quantity	Cut size	Notes
Quarter-circle templates (fabric)	20 blocks × 4 = 80	Each unit cut as a square then circle-cut: 5 1/2 in × 5 1/2 in	Square is oversized; you'll round into quarter-circles. See template method below.
Pool octagon background	20 blocks × 4 pools = 80	2 7/8 in across (finished)	Cut from contrasting fabrics (coral/magenta/taupe/olive). Use the provided method.

Item	Quantity	Cut size	Notes
wedges (corner pools)	octagon sections	using cut-and-trim method	
Ring wedge segments (straight edges)	20 blocks $\times$ 4 = 80 segments	2 1/2 in $\times$ 4 1/2 in	These form the octagon frame/ripples around each pool.
White sashing strips (between blocks)	Top: 5 rows $\times$ (4 vertical seams each) + bottom seams = 60	1 1/2 in $\times$ 16 1/2 in strips	These become 1/2 in finished sashing after seam allowances.
White sashing strips (horizontal between blocks)	4 columns $\times$ 6 seams each = 24	1 1/2 in $\times$ 16 1/2 in	Cut to 16.5 in so they sit cleanly; adjust if using different block measurements.
Inner corner framing (white)	20 blocks $\times$ 4 = 80	1 1/2 in $\times$ 1 1/2 in	Small squares to complete the “foam line” look at block corners.
Border strips	Not used	—	This quilt is designed without a traditional border; sashing forms the overall edge rhythm.

Quarter-circle cutting method (recommended for accuracy): Draw/trace a 5 1/2 in square and cut a quarter circle by using a compass or a corner-to-corner arc template. The quarter circle produced should yield the correct inner curves for the Drunkard’s Path unit with a center octagon. If you have a known Drunkard’s Path template set, use that instead and scale quantities as needed.

Fabric placement plan (ripple ring effect)

For visual spirals, use a consistent assignment pattern per block location:

- **Corner pools** (octagon sections) alternate coral and magenta, with aqua/taupe in between.
- **Ring wedges** follow a sequence that moves clockwise around each block so the rings appear to continue from block to block.
- **Sashing** remains white for maximum “foam line” definition.

Optional: Print a simple 4 $\times$ 5 block grid on paper and label each block with the pool colors (C=coral, M=magenta, T=taupe, O=olive, A=aqua) before cutting to keep the ripple motion consistent.

4. Piecing / block construction

Each 16 in block finishes as an octagonal pool framed by ring arcs (Drunkard's Path). Work in batches for best accuracy: make all quarter-circle pairs first, then assemble rings and pools.

General seam and pressing rules

- Use a **1/4 in seam allowance** (check with a scrap test).
- Backstitch at the start and end of each seam; pivot carefully on curves.
- **Pressing:** Press seams toward the curved fabric pieces to reduce bulk. Use steam and finger-press on curves.
- Trim dog-ears from curved seam allowances without cutting into stitching.

Step A: Create 4 quarter-circle units per block

1. For each unit, pair a quarter-circle from one fabric with its coordinating fabric behind it (use contrast fabrics for depth). You will cut rounded pieces from two different fabrics per unit set.
2. Sew along the straight edges to form the Drunkard's Path unit so the curve mirrors correctly.
3. Repeat until each block has **4 DP curved units** (one in each corner quadrant of the block).

Step B: Build the octagonal "pool" center frame

1. Lay out the 4 ring wedge segments around the center. Place one octagon section at each corner of the octagon frame.
2. Stitch ring wedge segments to adjacent pool edges using careful curve-to-straight alignment (pin at seam intersection points).
3. Press seams to lock the octagon shape. The pool should appear as a sun-bleached octagon surrounded by "ripples."
4. Check block size; it should measure approximately **16 1/2 in** before adding sashing/corner framing. After adding framing, block will finish at 16 in.

Step C: Assemble the full 16 in block

1. Place the 4 quarter-circle DP units around the octagon center so the curves form concentric-looking rings.
2. Stitch the quarter-circle units to the pool frame edges in sequence: top-left, top-right, bottom-right, bottom-left.
3. Add the **white corner framing squares** (1 1/2 in × 1 1/2 in) at each block corner to sharpen the foam-line appearance.
4. Final block should finish at **16 in × 16 in**.

Accuracy check: Lay each completed block on a 16 in square ruler/board corner-to-corner. If a block is off by more than 1/8 in, correct early by trimming the longest edge before proceeding to quilt assembly.

5. Quilt top assembly

The quilt top is assembled with white sashing strips between blocks, creating the appearance of foam lines and strengthening the ripple ring spiral.

Layout

- Arrange **20 blocks** in a **4 columns × 5 rows** grid.
- Place white sashing strips between every neighboring block.
- Use corner white squares where needed to maintain a crisp grid rhythm.

Step-by-step assembly

1. **Build rows:** Sew blocks together in horizontal rows with 1 1/2 in wide white sashing between them (sew sashing to block sides, press seams open if needed to reduce bulk).
2. **Pressing consistency:** Press seams in the same direction within each row so intersections lay flat.
3. **Join rows:** Sew the horizontal rows together using the remaining 1 1/2 in white sashing for vertical seams.
4. Lightly steam-press the full top, keeping the ripple motion. Do not stretch; let the top relax flat.

Final top measurement

- Expected finished size: **74 in × 86 in**
- Top should measure about **75 1/2 in × 87 1/2 in** before quilting (depends on seam/pressing accuracy).

6. Basting, quilting and binding

Quilt the design to emphasize the “pools” and rings: pebble swirls in pools and long wavy lines through the surrounding ring arcs.

Basting

- Press the quilt top lightly to remove creases.
- Layer: backing (right side down) + batting + quilt top (right side up).
- Baste using safety pins or spray basting; smooth from center outward.
- Keep layers flat on curves; use extra basting along the sashing grid lines.

Quilting plan

Stitch map (general):

- **Pools:** Quilt small “pebble” swirl motifs inside each octagon. Fill with a gentle spiral or clustered curves, staying about 1/4 in away from seams where possible.
- **Rings:** Quilt long, wavy horizontal/diagonal lines that travel through the ring arcs across each block, echoing the Drunkard’s Path curves.
- **Sashing:** Quilt light stipple or straight echoes just into the white to keep it crisp and foam-like.
- **Overall:** Maintain a consistent stitch length (typically 2.0–2.5 mm) for an even coastal texture.

Needle/thread note: A Microtex 80/12 or 90/14 needle is ideal for pieced cotton. If quilting heavy, consider 1/3 spool extra thread and test tension on scrap.

Binding

1. Cut binding strips for a total length of approximately **320 in** (enough for 74×86 with overlap). For 44 in fabric, this is commonly 8–9 strips depending on strip width.
2. Use **1 3/4 in finished** binding width (cut strips about **2 1/4 in** wide).
3. Join strips on the diagonal to reduce bulk; press seams open.
4. Sew binding to quilt with right sides together, using 1/4 in seam allowance.
5. Turn and hand-finish or machine-finish on the back.
6. Press binding gently; do not distort corners.

7. Finishing notes

- **Wash and dry:** If desired, prewash fabrics that you prewash (test one fabric). After quilting, wash cold and line dry for best color stability.
- **Blocking:** After quilting and before binding press/steam flat; slight steam can help curved sections relax.
- **Label:** Add a fabric label inside the back binding seam with date and fabric details.
- **Storage:** Store flat or rolled around a clean tube to protect the pebble-swirl texture.

Assembly confidence check (quick): If your blocks measure slightly under 16 in, keep sashing widths consistent and do not force-fit—measure between block edges and adjust strip lengths to land clean at each seam.