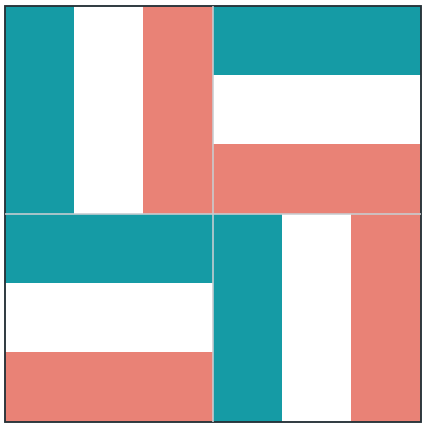
MY FIRST QUILT / BLOCK 01

Rail Fence

12" finished • 12½" unfinished • Beginner strip piecing



Block layout - diagram not to scale

CUT FOR ONE BLOCK

All cutting sizes include ¼" seam allowances.

Fabric	Cut one strip
Turquoise	**2½" × 28"**
White	**2½" × 28"**
Coral	**2½" × 28"**

Use quilting-weight cotton in turquoise, white, and coral to match the series palette.

SEW THE BLOCK

1. Make a strip set.
Sew the three strips together along their long edges in turquoise-white-coral order. Use a ¼" seam. Press the seams away from the white strip. The strip set should measure 6½" wide.

2. Cut four units.
Square one end of the strip set. Cut four 6½" lengths. Each unit should measure 6½" × 6½". The extra strip length allows for squaring the ends.

3. Arrange and sew.
Follow the block diagram: vertical rails at top left and bottom right; horizontal rails at top right and bottom left. Sew the units into two rows. Press the row seams in opposite directions.

4. Join the rows.
Nest the row seams, pin, and sew the rows together with a ¼" seam. Press. Check that your block measures 12½" × 12½" before it goes into the quilt.

Size check: each rail finishes at 2" wide; each unit finishes at 6" square. The block finishes at 12" square after its outer seam allowances are sewn into the quilt.

A LITTLE HISTORY

The Smithsonian holds a Rail Fence bedcover dated 1840-1860, with pieced blocks arranged in strips to create a zigzag effect. This lesson uses a simpler three-rail variation; it is not a reproduction of that bedcover.

History source: Smithsonian, National Museum of American History

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