

Virginia Reel

This is one of many quilt blocks with this same name. One that goes by this name is an old one which is also known as “Snail’s Trail.” It is a more complicated block, but is probably available from McCallsQuilting.com or Quilterscache.com if you would prefer to do that one. We felt this would be somewhat easier. The pattern is actually “Dutchman’s Puzzle,” which is available at either site, but the choices of fabrics varies from the “Puzzle” block. You can download that pattern, and then make the changes in the fabrics when cutting.

You will need three fabrics, either a background and two darks, or a background, one medium and one dark fabric. Cut $3\frac{1}{2}$ inch strips of all three fabrics. You will need twice as much background as you do of the other two fabrics. Cut 8, $3\frac{1}{2}$ inch squares of the fabric you’ve chosen for the outside triangle, and 8, $3\frac{1}{2}$ inch squares of the background. Cut 4, $6\frac{1}{2}$ inch strips of the background fabric and the same of the third, preferably darkest fabric that makes the interior pinwheel.

Draw diagonal lines on all $3\frac{1}{2}$ inch squares. Place one background square exactly on the corner of each dark strip, and one square of outside triangle fabric on the corner of a background strip. Sew carefully, staying just to the outside of your line. Check the fit, trim corner at $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. Press toward the corner.

Repeat with the second corner piece. Press “geese” block so that the seams point toward the outside corners.

Join the edges with the most background fabric together, sewing on the side where you can see the point that you need to hit perfectly as you sew the seam. Press toward the large triangle or press seam open. You will have four quarter blocks.

Turn one quarter block 90° and sew to the second block. Repeat with the other two quarter blocks, making sure they will go together in such a way as to create the pinwheel in the center of the block. We suggest laying out the block first, then turn one side over on top of the other, and sewing both seams. Press seams in opposite directions, and sew the final seam to complete the block. Your block should measure $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and will finish at 12 inches.

