



Alabama Public Television Education

The Pine Burr Quilt: A Treasure from Gee's Bend

On March 11, 1997, the Alabama Legislature designated the Pine Burr Quilt as the official quilt of Alabama. It was created by Loretta Pettway Bennett of Gee's Bend, Alabama, who is the daughter of one of the original Gee's Bend Quilters, Qunnie Pettway. Qunnie Pettway taught her daughter how to make this quilt.



Photo courtesy of the Alabama Department of Archives and History

The Pine Burr Quilt, the state quilt of Alabama.

The finished size of the Pine Burr Quilt, which is part of the Alabama Department of Archives and History collections, is 60 inches wide by 78 inches long. Each of the Pine Burr squares is 8 ½ inches across, and all the squares are edged with [bias binding](#), which is then stitched to the [muslin](#) top of the quilt. The quilt consists of 24 blocks, 4 blocks across and 6 blocks down. The quilt has a 6-inch border around the outside edge.

As you can see from the photo below, this quilt is unusual since it is three dimensional. The points of the triangles are not stitched down.



Photo courtesy of the Alabama Department of Archives and History

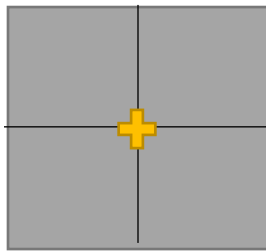
Caption: A square of the Pine Burr Quilt showing three-dimensional design

Let's Make a Square of Alabama's Pine Burr Quilt!

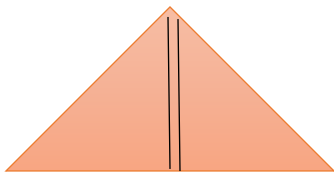
Directions

1. Cut a 12-inch square of paper. (This is the foundation of the quilt "block" or "square." You can use card stock, construction paper, poster paper, etc.)
2. Fold the paper in half horizontally.
3. Fold the paper in half vertically.
4. In the center of the square, you should see a cross where the folds intersect. Mark the center with a small X.

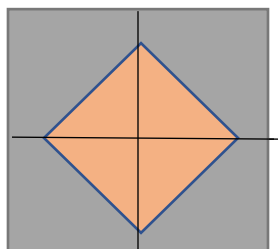
Example:



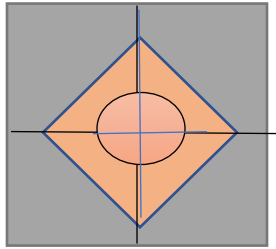
5. To create each point for the Pine Burr block, you will need to cut a 3-inch square out of construction paper.
6. Fold the square of paper into a triangle so that the edges meet in the back. The back of your triangle should look like this:



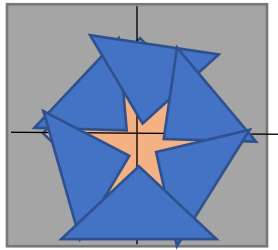
7. Make 4 triangles. Glue them in the center of your paper that you have folded so that the points meet at the X in the center.



8. Draw a circle around the center of your block. This will be the center of your pine burr.



9. Choose another color and make 6 more triangles.
10. Drop back from the center mark approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to add a second row of triangles with points toward the center. (These will overlap and will make a "star" shape in the center.)



11. Add 5 more rows of small triangles in the same manner, using different colors for each row. You may have to add 1 or 2 triangles to fill a row. Trim the outside of the block into a circle.



12. When everyone has completed their circular block, a large piece of bulletin board paper can be used as backing so that everyone in the class can contribute their block to make the Alabama Pine Burr Quilt.

Think About It

This quilt is called the “Pine Burr Quilt.” Look at a pinecone or a photograph of a pinecone. Do you see the similarities in the pattern called the “Pine Burr” and a pine cone? Describe the similarities that you see.