



## Christmas Tree Quilt Blocks with Selvage Lights

A while back I had the idea of using the color windows on fabric selvages to decorate Christmas tree quilt blocks. I can't be absolutely certain this was an original idea, but I think it might be. I worked out the kinks and this is how to make Christmas tree quilt blocks with selvage lights.



These are so much fun to make and you can use them in endless ways. Just sew a bunch together for a unique Christmas quilt in any size you choose, or sprinkle them into other Christmas projects at will.

I want to say right up front that this is an adaptation of Amy Smart's [Modern Christmas Tree Quilt Block Tutorial](#). The method for making the trees belongs to Amy at [Diary of a Quilter](#) and I want to give her full credit. The idea of decorating them with selvages and how you do that is mine.



If you head over to [Amy's tutorial](#) and familiarize yourself with how it works, this post will make more sense to you. So I'll wait while you do that.

Now that you understand how to build the trees, the variations for decorating them with selvages will make sense.



To make two trees, you'll need to start with four 8.5" squares: 2 of one fabric and 2 of another fabric. There should be some contrast between the fabrics; in other words, you must be able to clearly see the difference between them when viewed from across the room. I'm using 2 pink and 2 green.

We'll start by decorating one square of one fabric; it doesn't matter which fabric.



Place a selvage with color boxes roughly centered right side down across the square at an angle as shown above. Trim off the ends and discard.



Sew a straight line across the selvage to secure it to the square. Place the stitches about 1/8" to 1/4" away from the color boxes as shown. Use light neutral thread like beige or gray; I used dark thread for visibility in these samples. Press the whole thing gently with steam to relax the stitching. Then flip the color boxes over so the finished edge covers the raw edge as shown below. Press it again, gently.



With matching or neutral thread, sew along the finished edge of the selvage to secure it. First string of lights is hung! You can see below where I stitched the first selvage down with contrasting thread; yours will be lighter unless you choose to use dark thread as decoration. (So many possibilities!)



You'll add the second one in the same way. Keep in mind that you'll need to skootch it up a bit from where you want the lights to end up because of the flipping that will happen. You'll see. Sew it to the square as you did before, press it flat and then flip it so the color boxes show and press it again.

Add a third selvage to the square in the same way.

Then decorate one square from the other fabric with selvages in a similar fashion (shown pink). Two squares (one from each of the fabrics) are left undecorated.





Now the fun begins! Layer all four squares right sides up. It doesn't matter what order they're in but put a decorated one on top.



Following Amy's method, make two cuts through the whole pile to result in a tree shape as shown at left.



Swap things around so that you have two decorated tree shapes with opposite-fabric background shapes.

You'll also have decorated background shapes to discard, and plain trees that you can use in another project.\*



Sew the background pieces to the tree pieces, and create a trunk according to Amy's method. Sew the top and bottom pieces together.

Wait to square them up until you have made all of the blocks. That way you can make them all the same size so they fit nicely together.

I'm very anxious to make more of these. They're just about the happiest Christmas tree quilt blocks anywhere!



\*It would be fun to combine decorated and undecorated plain trees in the same quilt!

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