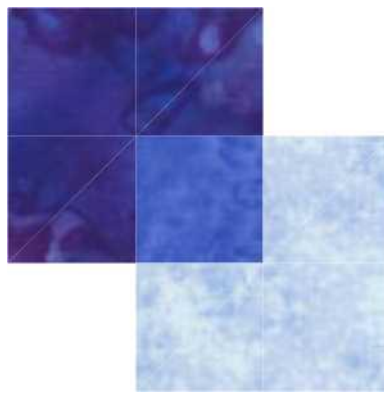


Article 11 – Transparency

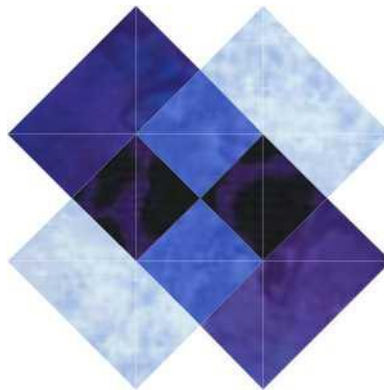
Transparency is a very cool concept for quilters. You can get some fantastic effects in your quilt if you incorporate transparency effects. It's not appropriate for all quilts but it can make a good quilt extra special.

Transparency is not something that I have mastered in any way but I will share what little I know. If this is something you want to pursue further you should get *Transparency Quilts* by Weeks Ringle and Bill Kerr. They wrote this entire book on the subject for us.

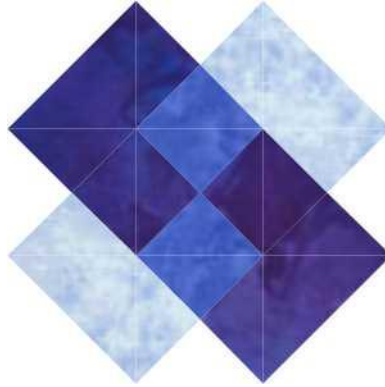
Transparency in a quilt is the effect of one piece of fabric laying on top of another with the appearance of the top layer being transparent. Where the 2 "overlap" a third color is created.



Here's a simple example. It appears that a light blue square of fabric has been placed over a dark blue square of fabric. Where the two overlay the effect is of a medium value blue. This is accomplished but paying attention to the value of the 3 fabrics.

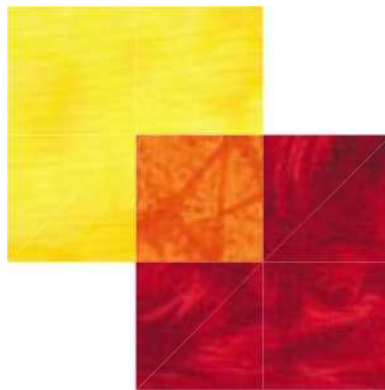


Here's an example using the Card trick block and 4 values of blue. Where the dark blue overlaps the light blue I have added a 4th value if a darker blue. This is very much a design decision.

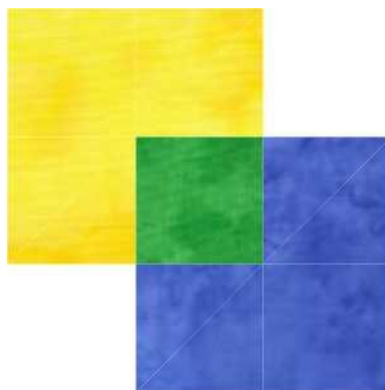


It is just as valid to make the assumption that the dark blue is opaque and therefore would not be affected at all by the underlying light blue.

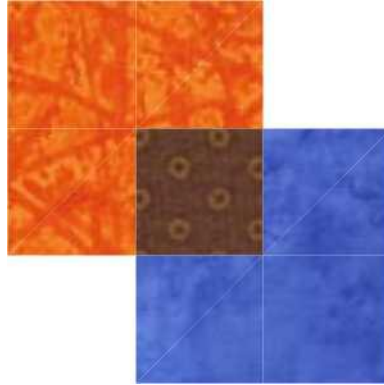
Transparency can also be accomplished using color, often in conjunction with value.



Here's an easy one. Where yellow overlaps red, the result is orange. These are easy because they are all next to each other on the color wheel.

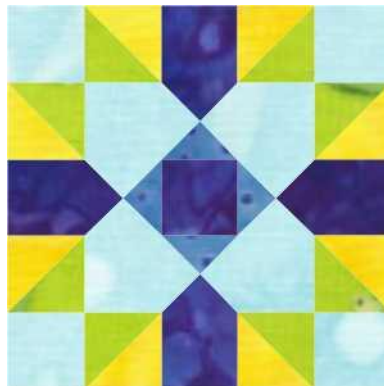


Just like this one combining yellow and blue for an overlap of green.



But you can also accomplish it with any colors that you want to work with. It requires some knowledge of color mixing and a bit of persistence to find just the right resulting blended colors. In this example, orange overlaid on blue results in a brown.

When working with transparency it's often best to start with very simple blocks to get comfortable with the concept. But don't rest there. You can create some very cool effects when using transparency concepts on more complex blocks.



In this block I have placed a yellow square over the blue diagonal stripe and created a green overlay. I also have created some transparency in the middle with the light and dark blue.



In this block I have the dark brown and tan half square triangles as the background and every other fabric is transparent except for the center circle. It's not perfect but I think you get the idea.

Maybe you can have some fun with transparency in your next quilt. It's the perfect color tool to liven up a traditional block.