

TRANSCRIPT: Focal Fabric- Encyclopedia

A focal, or focus, fabric is a fabric that quilters use to help them choose colors for their quilts. This focal fabric has lots of colors in it. And if I'm ready to make a quilt, I would take this to the quilt store and I use it to match the different fabric that I want to use for my quilt. I like this fabric a lot because I like the colors and the pattern in it. But I also like that because it had this little cheat sheet here on the selvage, in these circles are the different dyes that were used in this fabric. So I could use these to match up the different fabrics, but I don't have to use that. As a matter of fact, the fabric that I choose does not have to match up perfect.

For example, this fabric is not in this quilt, it's very close to the background but it's not exactly the same. I could use this fabric to be the background fabric of my quilt or to be in this quilt. It's okay to use as long as you like it. This is another fabric that I think goes well with this, but it's not shown in the background, so I could also use this fabric. Now quilters, when they are looking for fabric, they usually like to have a light, medium and dark. So here's this red, this is pretty close to what's in the background. But I'm thinking that if I use red, I would like to have a dark, a medium and a light. So I've gone and I've found this for my medium and this for my light. It's in the same sort of, well they're all red, it's in the color family but this is like a reddish pinkish and it follows through to this. So are any of these colors in the background of this quilt? No, but I think they could probably work. Just like these two golds. This is a dark, this is a light. If you look in the background of this fabric, you are not going to find these two colors, but I think this would work, as these three blues might work. None of these blues match this blue but it's close enough. And then it's up to you to decide which one of these fabric you're going to use.

So another thing about the focal fabric is the feel, or the style, of the fabric helps you pick your other fabrics. So this is very traditional and conservative, so I've kind of stuck on what I call tone on tone fabrics, where the background and the print are within the same color families most of the time. And the feel of these fabrics are pretty close to that. Unlike this fabric. This fabric has the same colors, or many of the same colors as the focal fabric, but the feel of this, or the style, of this is much different from the pattern that you can see in this quilt. The pattern in here is more traditional and this doesn't really have a pattern; it's a tie-dye or a petite type fabric. So even though the colors are the same, maybe the style, or the feel of the fabric is not the same. So focal fabric helps you choose the fabric of your quilt. You can look for colors and you can look for the style.