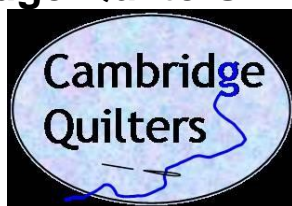


## Cambridge Quilters Workshop



**Nicholas Ball**  
**Improvised Shoal**  
**Saturday 20 September 2025**  
**Great Wilbraham Memorial Hall**  
**Cost: £40 members / £50 non-members**

During the workshop, you will learn how to sew improv fish units. I'll start by showing you the basics of my triangle and freehand curve techniques, before combining them to create unique and varied fish units. As a bonus, I'll share how to add even more individuality to your fish, with extra fins, gills and patterned bodies. They'll even be some seaweed! After making the units, you'll learn my top tips for joining them together using my jigsaw method.

The workshop is suitable for all skill levels. The triangle technique is a great introduction to sewing in a more liberated way and is sure to fuel your creativity. The freehand curves will provide the beginner with a firm foundation to cutting without rulers, upon which they can expand the technique. More experienced sewers can challenge themselves with more daring curves and different shaped fish.

Whilst not essential for the workshop, my book *Inspiring Improv* (Lucky Spool 2019) will expand upon the techniques learnt and provide many more improv tips and tricks. My original Shoal quilt is also one of the 12 projects. My second book *Use & Ornament* (Lucky Spool 2024) features more fish variations.

### **Fabric requirements:**

Whilst difficult to give exact fabric amounts and measurements when sewing in an improvised way, please use the following as a rough guide.

For the fish - an assortment of large scraps in your chosen colours. This fabric will be used for the fish bodies and tails, so a healthy assortment of different sized rectangles and squares will work best.

For the background - an assortment of large scraps in your chosen sea/water colours. This can either be one fabric, for a more cohesive look, or a variety for a scrappy version.

Additional scraps from your stash in coordinating colours for gills, fins and seaweed.

Please don't stress about these requirements. They are simply a guide and I've yet to teach a class where something couldn't be made because of the wrong fabric pieces. If in doubt, gather up a selection of prints and colours you like and you can cut during the workshop. Accuracy at

the cutting stage is not so important using my techniques, so it won't take long at all if you want to cut your pieces along with me. As mentioned, they don't need to be perfectly square, so feel free to use scissors!

This is a technique-based workshop. We will be making fish units which you will then piece into your finished quilt in your own time. Feel free to make as many or as few of the fish units as you like. Don't feel any pressure to cut up all your precious fabric!

**Equipment requirements:**

A sewing machine

Good quality thread in an appropriate weight for piecing (I recommend Aurifil 50wt)

Rotary cutter with a new blade (especially important for the curve technique)

Cutting mat

Patchwork ruler (we can make any size work, but a small 1" x 12" is very handy, as is a 12.5" square.

Fabric scissors

A willingness to explore your own creativity!

