

January 2012 Block of the Month Spinning Star



An easy block where you can use your 5 inch charm squares. No special tools are required.

Materials:

Star points: Bright crayon like colours. Do not use pastels.
5" half square triangles of 8 different fabrics

Background: Black fabric like mottles, marbles, tone on tones or solid.
2 – five inch squares cut on the diagonal to produce 4 five inch half square triangles
4 – rectangles 2 1/4" X 6 3/4"

Sewing the Block:

1/4" seam allowances are used throughout.

Chain piecing can be used in several places to reduce construction time.

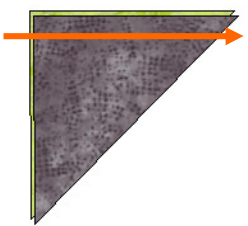
To have all your star points spinning clockwise follow the diagrams for feeding the pieces into your sewing machine.



The triangles have been numbered in the diagram to assist with the instructions.

Step 1: Determine where you want your individual colours to appear in your block.

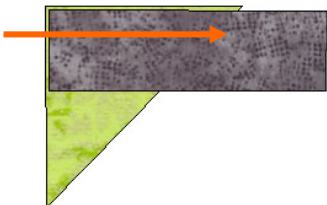
Step 2: Select four triangles for positions 2, 4, 6, and 8 and the four background triangles.



With right sides together, match up a coloured triangle with a background triangle so that all edges are aligned.
With the background triangle on top and starting at the 90° angle sew across the straight edge taking care to hold the points against your seam guide until the seam is complete.

Sew the other three pairs of coloured triangles and background triangles the same way. Chain piece if you wish.

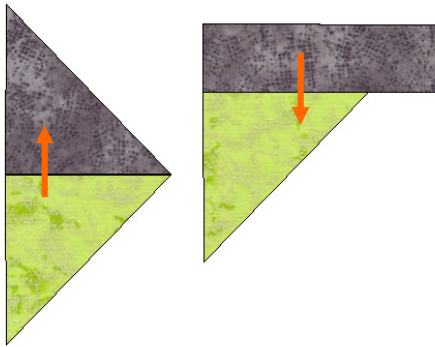
Step 3:



With right sides together, match up one of the remaining 4 coloured triangles with a background rectangle so that the 90° angles, the left side, and the top are all aligned. Note that the background rectangle is about 2" longer than the side of the triangle.
With the background rectangle on top, starting at the 90° angle, sew along the long edge until you sew the entire length of the coloured triangle. Take care that the edges remained aligned right to the point.

Lift the pressure foot, pull the unit out of the way of the needle and chain feed in the next triangle/rectangle section until all four are sewn.

Step 4: Remove all units from your sewing machine and snip threads to separate.

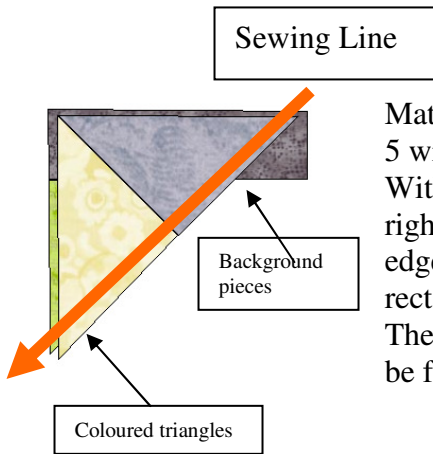


On the double triangle unit, press all the seams towards the background triangle.

On the triangle/rectangle unit, press all the seams towards the coloured triangle.

Trim away the excess seam allowances at the point of the double triangle unit.

Step 5:

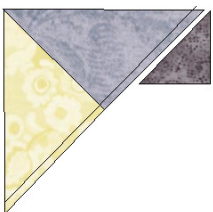


Match up the double triangle units with the triangle/rectangle units; 1 with 2, 3 with 4, 5 with 6 and 7 with 8.

With the triangle/rectangle unit right side up, lay the double triangle unit on top with right sides together. Match the 90° angle, the left side down to the points and align the edge of the rectangle with the top edge of the double triangle. The background rectangle will be slightly longer than the top side of the double triangle unit.

The background rectangle and the background triangle of the double triangle unit will be facing each other.

Sew a ¼” seam along the long edge of the double triangle unit using the edge of the triangle as your guide. Hold the points with your finger or an awl to keep them from wandering off to the left. Chain sew the remaining three units.



Trim away the excess seam allowance at the end of the background rectangle.

Step 6:



Open out the unit and press the seams towards the double triangle side.

Each unit should measure 6 ¼” square.

Trim away any excess seam allowances at the points.

If it is necessary to trim your units, take extra care to maintain the integrity of the points created by the coloured triangles.

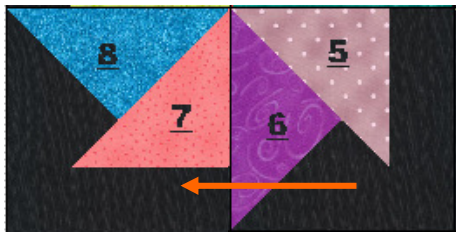
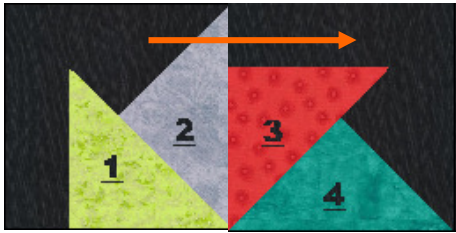
Strive to keep these to points bisecting the 90° angle.

Step 7:

Lay out your units as shown and sew the pairs together.

When you are aligning the pairs, the diagonal centre seams should nest together and all edges align.

Press as indicated by the arrows.

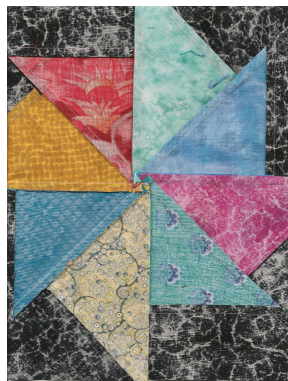


Step 8:

Sew the two units created in step 7 together.



Unpick the 2 or 3 stitches that lie perpendicular to the raw edges and between the last seam sewn and the raw edge. Unpick these stitches on both sides.



After the stitches are removed, lightly push the last seam created in two directions so that it is spiralling around the centre as shown. Ease the centre section open so that a mini pinwheel is created and finger press by pushing down on it with your thumb or finger.

Turn the block over and press the seams.



This is a picture of the front of the block cropped to fit my scanner.

By spiralling the seams, the bulk at the centre is distributed and the block lies very flat. Also when you are sewing blocks together, the seams on the edges will nest together which will help your quilt lie flatter and reduce some of the bulk at these seams.

Your block should now measure 12" square. It will be 11 1/2" when sewn into a quilt.

These last three pictures will be easier to see on our web site where they are in colour and you can zoom in for a better view.