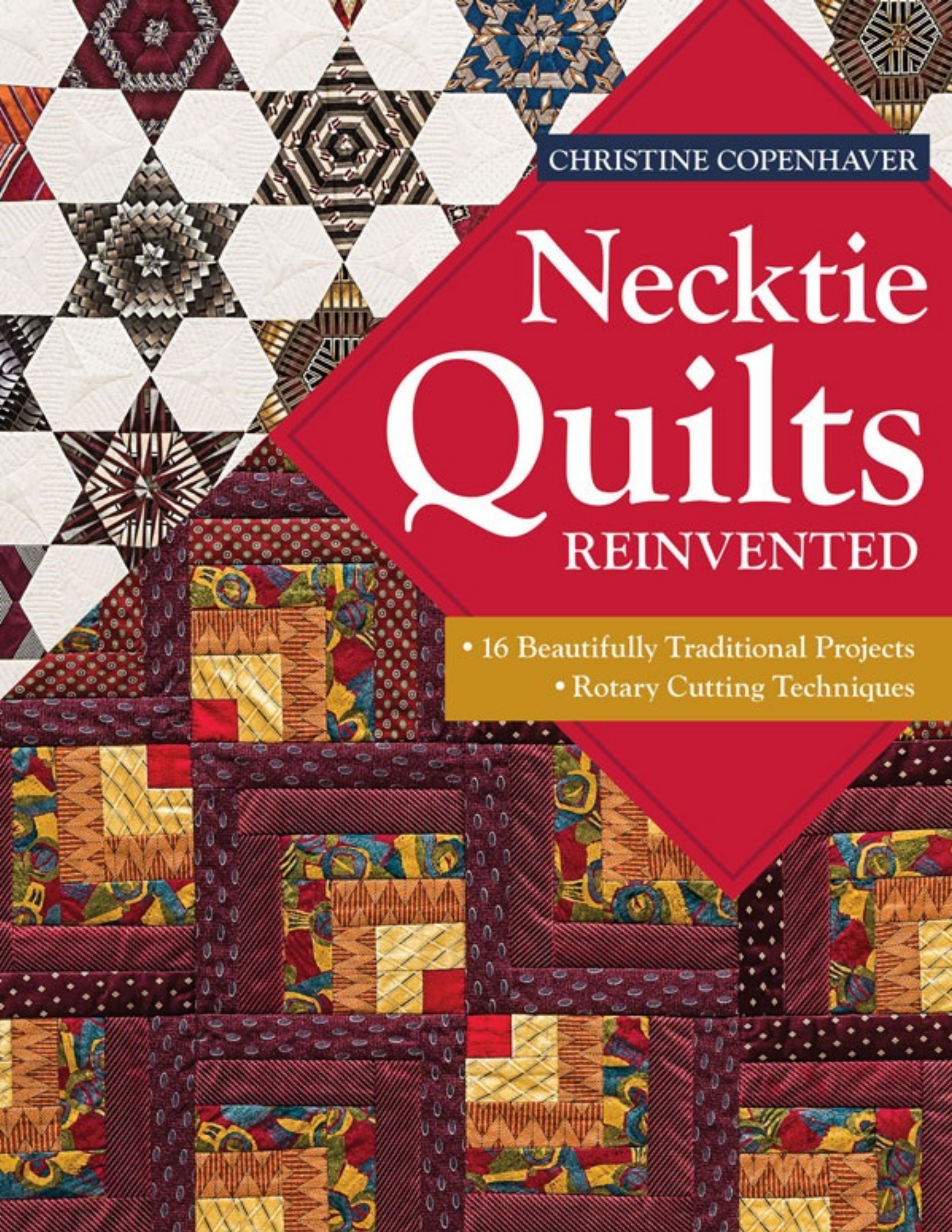
CHRISTINE COPENHAVER
Necktie Quilts
REINVENTED
• 16 Beautifully Traditional Projects
• Rotary Cutting Techniques

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Preface

My infatuation with neckties began at the New England Quilt Museum in Lowell, Massachusetts. I was inspired—not by a quilt, but by a darling little evening bag from the gift shop that was made from a single silk tie! I studied it closely and made some mental notes on its construction and the improvements I would make. As soon as I got home, I stitched one together. In fact, I had been so excited with the idea that I had even bought a necktie at a shop in the airport—on sale it was $15! (I gasp to think of it! Since then, I haven't paid more than $2.99 for a tie.)

I began collecting ties, choosing those that I thought would make good purses and many that I thought were too beautiful to even think of cutting up. I made lots of little purses, saturating my family and friends with them as gifts. One day I looked around and took stock of the number of ties and tie scraps I had accumulated and decided I needed to make some bigger projects. Being a quilter, the answer was obvious—quilts!

I thought fusible interfacing was the way to go, but I didn't find much on the Internet or in available books. So, I started experimenting and came up with a method that worked well for me. As I began to make quilts out of neckties and to talk about what I was doing, I was amazed at the number of people who confessed to having a stash of ties that they were planning on doing something with, "one day." Not just quilters, but nonquilters as well.

I decided to write this book for three reasons: (1) to share my technique of using fusible interfacing to stabilize the necktie material and to facilitate rotary cutting, (2) to provide practical information on sewing with neckties that will be of use to quilters at any skill level, and (3) to provide some fresh ideas for making quilts with neckties. I approached the project as a quilter. Now I find myself constantly looking at quilt patterns and asking, "Can I do that in neckties?" As a result, many of my quilts are not what you would normally think of when someone says to you, "necktie quilt." I hope you will be pleasantly surprised.

It is my ambition to give quilters the tools to approach a necktie quilt project with confidence and to see that the exquisite fabrics so often found in neckties can be repurposed to make stunningly beautiful quilts.

Managing Your Ties

To Wash or Not to Wash?

The first thing that people ask when they learn that I am sewing with neckties is, “Do you wash them?” The answer to that question is—it depends. If you would like your quilt to be washable, then, yes, wash the ties and use whatever survives. For those of you who have a collection of ties you wish to use in a remembrance quilt, the sentimental value of the tie is a consideration. You may not want to risk washing a tie that has a strong sentimental connection to you.

If you do want to wash your ties, be aware that certain colors have a tendency to bleed and, unlike cotton, may continue to bleed in subsequent washings. Silk is wonderful at taking up dyes, which is why silk fabrics can be clear and vivid with color. However, silk is not so wonderful at hanging onto dyes and will give up certain colors readily—red more readily than others.

What can happen in the wash

Some silk ties and some synthetic ties wash up beautifully, without loss of color or sheen. However, some of the more open weaves of silk shrink and become a very different texture when washed. This seems to be more common in striped ties, which are often in a twill weave—some come out of the wash with tiny crease marks that cannot be pressed out.

I wash ties only occasionally. I’m very particular about which ties I collect. If they’re stained or smell bad, they don’t go in my collection—unless, of course, they are very special and I think I can work around the stain or wash it out. As a consequence of choosing not to prewash, I am careful how I use the quilt (often as a wallhanging) and recognize that there may be a large dry-cleaning bill at some point in the future.

To forestall that date, handle and clean your necktie quilts in the same manner as you would handle antique quilts and textiles. Remove as much dust as possible with a soft duster before

storing. Occasionally, use a low-powered, handheld vacuum with a few layers of gauze or cheesecloth taped over its mouth to pull out dust that may have settled in creases made by the seams. Roll up some archival tissue and place it in the folds when storing the quilt.

Deconstructing Neckties

Always take a tie apart before washing it. All ties have a coarse interfacing that gives them body and maintains their shape. This interfacing will shrink and bunch when put through the wash, so it has to be taken out. Removing the interfacing also cuts down on the amount of bulk to be washed.

Remove the label first. Whenever possible, put the label between the seam ripper and the tie, attacking the stitches from the top of the label first. If it is necessary to go between the label and the tie, do so carefully. Use the smallest seam ripper available, as these stitches are in the middle of valuable tie real estate.

Taking the rest of the tie apart can be a snap. The seam in the center goes from one end to the other and is usually sewn with one long thread. To open the seam, cut the tacking stitch at both the skinny and fat ends of the tie. In most ties, once the tacking stitch is clipped, the seam will begin to open itself.

Find the thickish thread that holds the seam together—it goes the length of the tie and also keeps the interfacing in place. If it is tacked down, clip it on both ends and start pulling. It’s a very long thread (most ties are more than 50″) and may be easier to take out in two pulls; if so, clip the thread at the halfway point of the tie and then pull each end. If you’re so inclined, you could save this long length of silk thread for other purposes. Once the thread is out, the tie will unfold easily, and you can then remove the interfacing.

The magic thread

Do not take the lining off the ends of the tie before washing it. The lining will help reduce the

amount of fraying that sometimes occurs in the wash. Keep the fiber content label with the tie for your information.

NOTE

Occasionally, some very tight, tiny stitches hold the end of the long seam together. For these, it is best to pull out the end of the interfacing and turn it over. Rip the stitches from the back of the interfacing to avoid tearing the silk. Once those stitches are removed, find the long thread and pull.

Approach these tight, tiny stitches from underneath the interfacing.

Sometimes, but not often, a pull on the thread can be met with much resistance. In fact, the harder the thread is pulled, the tighter the stitching becomes. Unfortunately, there is no easy trick to undoing this seam, and the stitches must be clipped one by one the entire length of the tie.

Cleaning the Ties

It is not a good idea to do one big wash load of ties, as they will likely turn into one huge knot! I wash most ties, except reds, with my regular laundry, using a warm wash, cold rinse, and regular agitation.

DEALING WITH STAINS

There are several options for dealing with stains:

- Wash the tie without treatment, but do not put it in the dryer; the heat can sometimes "set" the stain, making it permanent. Do not iron the tie for the same reason. You will know whether the stain washed out after the tie dries.
- If, after washing, the stain is still there when the tie is dry, try a spot-treatment product and wash the tie again.
- Alternatively, go ahead and spot treat the stain before washing and hope that the treatment product doesn't take the tie's color out with the stain.

I have, more than once, overlooked a stain only to discover it after I have pieced the tie into a block. In these cases, I have had some success in removing the stain with spot treatment and a cotton swab: I put a few drops of the spot treatment on the cotton swab; then I dab the stain with it. I then use a wet washcloth to remove the spot and the stain treatment. I go over the spot several times with a very wet cloth to remove not just the stain but also the treatment product, as I don't know what long-term effect it may have on the fabric.

CLEANING TIES

- Set apart the red ties and wash them with a dark load. It must be very dark because some reds bleed a lot.
- Use a mesh laundry bag designed for delicates. The number of ties will depend on the size of the bag, but don't overcrowd them. I recommend no more than six or eight per bag. If you don't have a mesh bag, throw a few (no more than six) in with a regular load. Mixed with larger pieces of clothing, they will not tangle as much as you would think.
- Take the ties out of the mesh bag and dry them (permanent press temperature works fine) for about five to ten minutes. It's best to press them soon after they come out of the dryer. If they are a thicker weave and are still wet after ten minutes in the dryer, hang to finish drying, but try to iron them before they are completely dry. It will be easier to iron out the wrinkles when the ties are slightly damp.

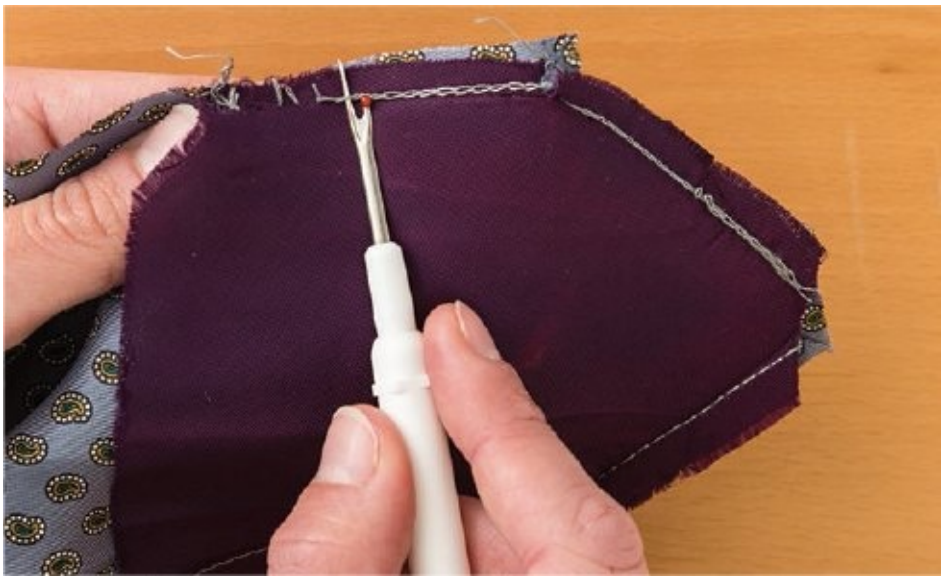
Removing the Lining

Keep the linings on the points of the tie until you are ready to use the tie. Follow these steps once you are ready to use the tie.

1. Turn the lining inside out, fold out the tip, and cut off the tip just below the seam. That little seam is usually stitched with very small stitches, and taking it out with a seam ripper is not worth the effort.

2. To remove the lining, start at the outside seam and work toward the point. Three kinds of stitching are commonly used to attach the lining. A tie will usually have just one type of stitching.

- **A simple straight stitch:** This usually is a very long stitch length for most of the seam, with shorter stitches at the ends and the corners.
- **A chain stitch:** These are fun to take out. Hold the tie with the point going to the right and the seam allowance up. Look for the looped stitches. Clip a stitch at the left end of the chain and gently pull up the loops to unlock them. Let the loops stick up from the fabric. Pull on one of the free loops sticking up. The thread should come out in one easy pull.



Chain stitches on the tie lining

- **A two-threaded chain stitch:** These are not so easy to unlock—at least, I haven't figured out a secret key. I just snip and pull threads, until, suddenly, I hit on the right one and the stitches pull out in a snap!

TIE LININGS

Sometimes I don't have patience for picking and pulling on the linings. In those cases, I just cut out the lining: I cut the tie fabric just inside the seam and take the lining off in a few snips. I won't do this if I'm trying to get as many pieces as possible out of the tie. Sometimes the extra ⅜″ in the seam allowance can make a difference.

As for the other seams in the tie, leave them until you know you need to take them apart.

Pressing the Ties

The most important thing in pressing is to know your iron. The second most important is to know the tie's fiber content, so read the tie label. Most irons have a "silk" setting that is great

for silk, but be sure to test it before you trust it. To test your iron, use a tie that you aren't that fond of and that you know is silk. Begin at a temperature below the silk setting to see how well it works on the silk, especially in ironing out folds. Gradually increase the temperature until you reach a setting that gets the folds out efficiently and doesn't scorch the fabric. Be careful—the silk setting can be too hot for some synthetic materials, causing them to melt and gum up the iron.

IRONS

An iron is one of the most important tools a quilter can have. Get one that is comfortable for you to use. If possible, choose one that doesn't have a nonstick surface. The nonstick is nonstick *at the right temperature only*. It's still possible to melt something to it, and there's no removing the mess. I prefer an iron with a shiny metal bottom, and I always have a tube of hot iron cleaner on hand.

I have tried many, many brands of irons and have found no difference in performance between an iron that costs around $30 and one that costs more.

Start ironing from the wrong side of the fabric. If the tie has not been washed, you will have many folds to iron out. For some of the deeper creases, turn the tie over and iron the right side. These creases often need a good spritzing of water to get them out. Because silk sometimes will cling to the iron and wrinkle as you move the iron, press straight down on the fabric, and then pick the iron straight up and place it down on the next spot. Lift the iron up and down until the silk is dry enough for the iron to glide over it.

Assessing the Tie's Condition

Whether you already have a stash of ties waiting to be used in a project or you are building a collection by shopping at garage sales and thrift stores, you should scout out problems before deciding which ties to use in a project.

Before purchasing, take the ties to a well-lit spot to look them over carefully. If they are stained or frayed or otherwise damaged, don't buy them. Key places to look for wear and stains:

- Center front, where most stains are
- Near the middle of the tie, in a place that I call the "dewlap area" (*dewlap*: loose skin hanging under the neck)—This is the spot on the tie where the extra chin rubs; it's usually the middle of the knot. Sometimes it's barely noticeable; other times it's a distinct dark blot. This area of the tie also gets frayed from whiskers. However, even with staining and fraying, other areas of the tie may be quite usable, and the spot can be worked around.
- The tip and edges, where most wear occurs
- The front of the tie, compared to the back, for fading—If the front is faded, this will be quite noticeable when the tie is unfolded.

After you have taken apart the tie and removed the interfacing, hold the tie up to the light to check for any worn spots or holes. Circle the problem areas with chalk or put a safety pin in their center so that you won’t overlook them.

Organizing Your Tie Collection

Storing ties by color is one way to keep them organized. However, depending on the project, grouping ties by overall pattern may sometimes make sense. For example, categories could be striped ties, large-patterned abstracts, paisleys, and small even-patterned designs.

I have a dresser full of ties. Since the drawers are shallow, I store the ties like socks. I have dividers in the drawers, and I roll the ties so I can see them easily. I have plastic storage boxes for scraps, which I also sort by color. I also have a tall cupboard (too full of projects other than neckties), where I have draped the doors with some special ties that I just like to see.

Designing with Ties

To understand the nuances of the necktie, one must appreciate how limited a man's choice is in business attire. Think of it—men have worn the same outfit, the suit as we know it, for more than 150 years!

In 1860, the "sack" coat (the boxy jacket that we are familiar with) was introduced as a casual alternative to the frock coat (black, fitted to the waist, with a knee-length skirt split in the back). After the First World War, the boxy "lounge suite" (as it was called) was accepted as appropriate attire in the office. It has persisted into the 21st century.

In comparison, during this same period, women's fashion went from corsets and hoop skirts to hot pants and halter tops. True, the suit has had some slight variations in the cut, the width of lapels, single- or double-breasted, pant waist high or low, cuffs or no cuffs. However, except for a regrettable period of polyester in the 1960s and 1970s, suit material for business attire has mostly been limited to black, navy blue, or dark gray.

The one part of attire where men can add a little color (and, if they dare, personality) is their choice of tie. Ironically, the necktie is the one item of clothing that most men abhor. When they retire, this little spot of personality is banished from the wardrobe with declarations that they will "never wear a tie again!" And that's where we come in … with our scissors! (Or should I say rotary cutters?)

Color—Why So Much Red?

The first distinguishing feature of a tie is color. And the color has more meaning than one could imagine! The necktie can reflect a great deal about a man's personality. What do the colors of your man's ties tell you about him? Are there any surprises?

DESIGNING WITH TIES

TIE COLOR	MEANING
BRIGHT, CLEAR RED	Signifies authority, strength, and leadership. Ronald Reagan made red ties popular among politicians. Not a good choice for a job interview, as it can give the wearer an image of being too assertive and possibly arrogant.
BURGUNDY (MAROON, CLARET)	Combines the power of red with the maturity of brown. This is a safe business classic; good for almost any occasion.
NAVY	Connotes confidence, reliability, honesty, elegance, and maturity. Considered a good choice when dealing with tense situations or hostile people.
LIGHT BLUE	Has some connotations of navy, but conveys a certain youthfulness or liveliness.
BROWN	Conveys confidence, resiliency, and maturity, but also tends toward boring stodginess.
ORANGE	Bright tones are seen as happy colors but may be viewed as a little quirky with risks of not being taken seriously. Burnt orange, with the addition of brown, brings stability and acceptability to the color.
YELLOW	This cheerful color, radiant like the sun, may be a little too playful for business, unless worn by someone with an outgoing, forthright personality.
GREEN	Green is a symbol of rebirth and growth and can signify a team player willing to grow and learn new skills.
BLACK	Acceptable with a conservative, black business suit if it has a small, regularly spaced white pattern. Solid black is more formal (as in "black tie" social events).
MULTICOLORED	Can be distinctive in brighter colors for people who dare to stand out from the crowd. In more muted colors, a multicolored tie can connote versatility.
NOVELTY	Anything "flamboyant" should never be considered business attire. A tie should not be a conversation piece; it should anchor the outfit, drawing the eye up to the face. It should not compete for attention with the face.

Value

Value is a critical component of quilt design. For most classic patterns, like the Log Cabin, the play of light and dark makes the setting emerge, whether it is set as "barn raising" or "streaks of lightning." You may need to introduce fabrics other than neckties to achieve the range of values necessary for your quilt patterns (see Adding Other Fabrics). Assess your tie collection in terms of color and value to help you decide the type of quilt to make or whether you need additional material for it. An easy, quick way to evaluate value is to step back and squint at a group of ties.

Refer to the Design Wall tip to set up a place to evaluate your ties. Ties that are lighter in value will be easy to identify.

A slightly more sophisticated tool is a chromatic value finder, or a viewer that usually comes with a piece of red-colored and a piece of green-colored plastic film. For a tie collection dominated by reds, use the green film, as the red film will not work on reds. You also could use a reducing glass (or look through the wrong end of binoculars) to help you identify the lighter values.

TIP DESIGN WALL

A design wall sounds so "artsy," but really it is just a piece of felt or batting pinned on a wall. Put up a design wall, and your sewing room suddenly transforms into your *studio*! The difference between looking at your quilt layout spread on the floor or bed and viewing it at eye level will surprise you. If you don't have the wall space to pin up a bed-sized quilt, even a few feet of wall space will help when working out the colors for a block.

The design wall doesn't have to be a permanent fixture. Put it up and take it down as needed. You will find it especially useful for choosing ties for your necktie quilts. I spend a lot of time "auditioning" ties for a block. A combination that looks good on the cutting table doesn't always look good in the block. Being able to look at your choices on a vertical plane is one of the benefits of a design wall.

VALUE IS RELATIVE

Red is probably the most common color of tie in our culture. I have a lot of reds in my tie stash and find that reds can be divided into three categories, based on value:

- Red-reds: Bright power reds, like Santa Claus's suit; these are easy to sort from the others.

- Dark reds—reds tending toward black

- Medium reds—everything in between

The distinctions among reds can be important in design. For example, the reds in *Red and Black Runner* are brighter reds. If they had been any darker, the contrast between the red and the black would not be strong enough for the distinct dark-and-light pattern to stand out. While red-reds may not be considered light in comparison with other colors, they read as light when paired with black.

Swingin' on a Star in Red has one dark star that seems to disappear into the black background (third row down, third column in from the upper left). The reds in this quilt are mostly medium reds, yet they contrast with the solid black. The darker red of the "disappearing" star recedes into the black background.

Pattern

You can also categorize neckties by pattern type. For some collections, the scale of pattern, rather than the color, will dictate the quilt design. Ties with large-scale patterns will probably not be successful in a quilt with a lot of small pieces. Conversely, small-scale patterns may be a little boring when cut into large pieces.

SMALL, OVERALL PATTERN

The most conservative ties have a small, usually geometric pattern with a regular repeat. A classic example is navy with small, regularly spaced white polka dots. Other common patterns are small repeating diamonds and small-scaled paisleys. Small-scale patterns are good choices when the pieces of the quilt block are small. See, for example, *A Gaggle of Geese* or *Ohio Superstar*.

Small-scale patterns in blacks and grays

MEDIUM-SCALE, REGULAR-REPEAT PATTERNS

These patterns can range from a subtle monochromatic “tone on tone” to a distinctive white on dark. These patterns do well in many styles of quilts, but especially lend themselves to diamonds—see, for example, *A Trellis of Ties* or *Lone Star Meets GQ*—or half-square triangles, such as *Barn Raising* and *Red and Black Runner*. Many could hold their own in quilts with larger pieces, such as *Swingin’ on a Star in Blue*.

Medium-scale ties

LARGE-SCALE AND ABSTRACT PATTERNS

These ties present their own special challenge. Cut into small pattern pieces, a single tie may yield solid green diamonds, for example, and another part of the tie, solid red diamonds. Someone looking at the quilt would never know that they came from the same tie. To enjoy the abstract patterns, leave them in larger pieces, as in *Big Stars* or *Swingin’ on a Star in Red*.

Abstract tends to be unconventional. Jerry Garcia has a line of ties in this category.

STRIPES

The stripe is another common pattern in neckties. Originally, the colors of the stripes identified membership in a club or organization in Great Britain. They were also school colors, worn with a jacket as part of the school uniform. In Great Britain, the stripes cross the body from upper left to lower right, from the heart to the sword handle on the right hip. When striped ties first became popular in the United States, the stripes went from upper right to lower left to distinguish oneself from the British. Stripes can be problematic in designing quilts because they usually have a strong visual that can upstage your block pattern. However, they can also bring liveliness and movement to a plain design. *Yikes! Stripes!* takes striped ties to the extreme!

Stripes range from lively to dull.

WHITE IN THE DESIGN

Because neckties tend to be medium to dark, white can stand out in contrast. Dark tends to recede in our eyes, and white comes forward, which can create a design challenge. Our eyes are attracted to white and will move from white to white. In *Yikes! Stripes!*, the stripes with more white tend to stand out from their darker neighbors, making the eye move around the quilt. In my first arrangements of the blocks in this quilt, all of the light stripes were clustered together, drawing the eye to one spot and not moving it through the quilt. The arrangement I chose instead does a better job of moving the eye.

In another project (that didn't make it into this book), two ties with bright white on a dark background proved to be too lively to look at for any length of time!

The bright white in these ties contrasts with the dark background in a way that overstimulates the eye.

Adding Other Fabrics

Since light values are often limited in a tie collection, making a quilt with some contrast in value may require bringing in other fabrics, such as silk or shirting. See, for example, *Swingin' on a Star in Blue* or *Lone Star Meets GQ*. Linens, synthetics, blends, and, of course, quilting cotton are all options.

Background fabric doesn't always have to be light. I have used black sateen cotton as background in several quilt designs. Unlike bright white, black gives the eye a resting place. In a quilt with a lot of pattern and color, even a small amount of black adds enough relief for your eye to balance the chaos of color or pattern. In *The Long and the Skinny*, a few 2½″ squares of black inserted between colorful strips of neckties are all that is needed to give the eye a resting place and make the parts cohesive.

BORDER FABRIC

With my quilting background, I was surprised when I realized that working with neckties liberated me from the quilter's mind-set of using only 100% cotton. Now, when I walk through a fabric store, I go down *all* the aisles, open myself up, and say, "Come to me!" Then I wait for a fabric to jump out at me. Borders for *A Trellis of Ties*, *Big Stars*, and *Dark Diamonds* are from the home-decor department. They are not upholstery-weight fabrics, but something more suitable to drapes. I found the border fabric for both *Swingin' on a Star in Blue* and *Swingin' on a Star in Red* in women's fashion fabrics. If you choose a lightweight border fabric, you may want to consider using fusible interfacing as a stabilizer for the border.

An array of fabrics to be paired with neckties

Planning and Cutting

Some challenges of sewing with neckties are that there is very little fabric per tie (approximately ⅛ yard), and ties are an odd shape. In this chapter, I introduce a technique to use fusible interfacing, not only to stabilize the fabric, but also to plan and cut your design. Please note that throughout my discussion of this technique (in this chapter and in the projects), my reference to interfacing will always mean fusible interfacing, even if I just say "interfacing."

Using Fusible Interfacing

Fusible interfacing is central to the success of all the quilts in this book. The interfacing calms and contains that slippery, bias-cut silk in neckties to make the silk extremely manageable for almost any quilt pattern. Fusible interfacing is a useful tool in planning and cutting neckties. By cutting the fusible interfacing pieces first and arranging them on the tie before fusing, you can predetermine how many pieces can be cut from a single tie.

CHOOSING INTERFACING

The general concern about using interfacing is that it will make the fabric stiff and lose the silk's soft drape. After having fused interfacing to hundreds of ties, I have found that it is not the interfacing so much as the weight and weave of the silk that determines whether the fused fabric will be stiff. So far, none of the fused fabric in my quilts has become unacceptably stiff. It is true that the fabric doesn't have quite the softness and drape of lingerie, but considering that it will be layered with batting and quilted, a little loss of drape is not going to be noticeable.

I have tried many types and weights of fusible interfacing to find products that will give me enough control to manage and manipulate the material but not make it overly stiff. In this chapter, I do not attempt to review all fusible interfacings on the market; I simply discuss the ones that I have found worked for me and are, at the same time, cost-effective. Please note that all of these interfacings are approximately 20″ wide on the bolt.

Pellon 906F Fusible Sheerweight: This is the lightest of the nonwoven fusible interfacings and works well for most projects. However, it doesn't stand up to much manipulation. It is probably not the right choice for a project with Y-seams, in which the fabric is pulled around and folded back when turning the corner. But even with all that manipulation, the Sheerweight did stay attached to the fabric. Sheerweight would be perfect for a project with simple, straight-line sewing.

Pellon 880F Sof-Shape: This nonwoven fusible interfacing is recommended for a range of fabric weights. It has proved to be a little tougher than Sheerweight without making the fabrics tough. It is a little more expensive than Sheerweight and sometimes not as available.

Pellon P44F: This product has no catchy name; the bolt end simply says “Apparel Interfacing —Basics,” and it is exactly that, a basic interfacing. It’s comparable to Sof-Shape in weight, possibly a hair thicker, and it is at least half the cost. It’s elusive, though I have found it on the Internet.

Although I use P44F most often, I would recommend Sof-Shape as being suitable for all of the projects in this book. If I planned to make a large quilt entirely of neckties, such as a larger version of *Yikes! Stripes!* or *Dark Diamonds*, I would use Sheerweight. Because the interfacing adds weight to the quilt, the lighter-weight interfacing is a good choice when all of the blocks are backed by interfacing and require only simple piecing.

PROPER USE OF THE IRON IN FUSING

Each brand of interfacing will have its own recommen-dations for successful fusing. Read and carefully follow the manufacturer’s instructions that come with each product.

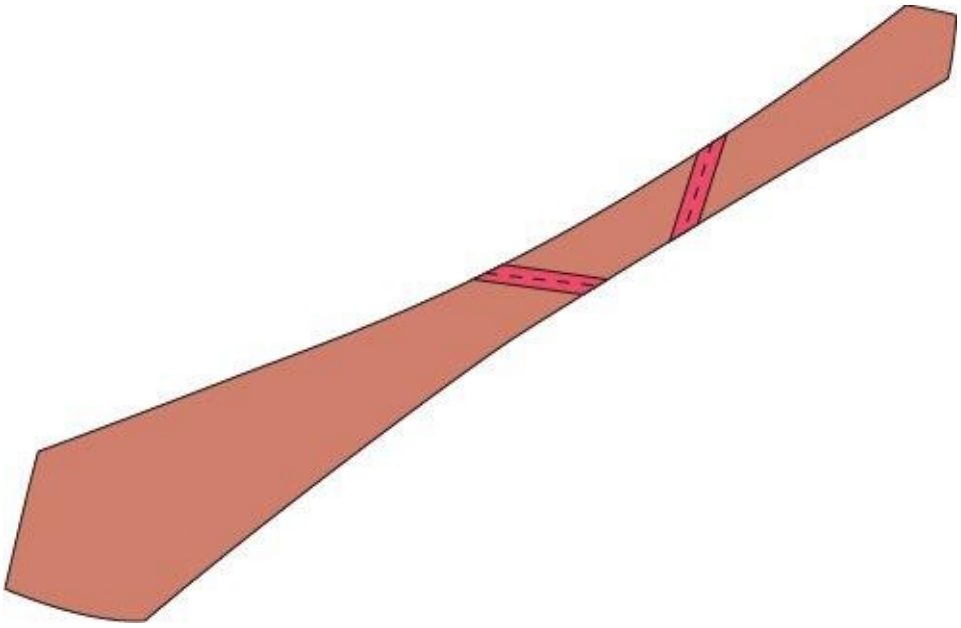
However, the most important step in the process is getting to know your iron. Begin with the setting at the lower end of the range for the fabric type, and iron on some small test pieces of the interfacing. Let each test piece cool completely, and then try peeling off the interfacing. If the product peels off easily, increase the heat and try again with a new piece of interfacing and test fabric. Note the temperature that works best for that fabric type.

If you have mostly silk ties, try out several different weaves. For example, a lightweight, smoothly woven silk may require a slightly different heat setting than a woven twill. Also, it would be wise to keep synthetic ties separate from the silk, since the silk setting may melt the synthetic.

I have found that a modification of product recommen-dations works best for my projects.

- My iron is set at the higher end of the silk setting. That’s what works for the iron I am currently using; another iron may be different.
- I use parchment paper as a pressing cloth because I can see through the parchment to make sure that all pieces are properly in place and nothing has shifted before I press.
- I iron with the parchment paper until the interfacing is secure. Then I remove the parchment paper and press the iron directly on the fused interfacing with a light misting spray of water or a good shot of steam. I press by lowering the iron flat on the fabric, picking the iron up, and moving to another section.
- To finish, I turn the piece over and press the front with steam or misting.

Anatomy of a Necktie



A necktie ironed open, with interfacings and linings removed

When you have taken out the stitching and ironed the tie flat, note the tie's width at the widest part. Two factors contribute to the tie's unfolded width—the width of the tie when folded and the number of folds that are used to shape it. A very elite, expensive tie can have as many as seven folds. Also, note that the taper from the widest part to the narrowest part is rarely straight; the sides of some ties bow out and then taper sharply, allowing much more working space.

Notice also the two seams near the center of the tie. These seams frame what is sometimes called the collar or the yoke. These seams are an ingenious addition to the necktie; they protect the fabric from being distorted by the pulling and twisting of a tie being knotted. In most ties, these seam allowances are ½″ or more, and there are times when that extra inch is handy. However, don't take these seams apart until it's absolutely necessary.

Although ties differ from one another in length, width, and line of taper, one constant between ties occurs at the skinny end. From the collar down, the sides are straight almost all of the way, with some ties flaring slightly at the end. In many ties, the width of the skinny end is 3½″, which is just right for 3″ finished blocks, while you can be assured of a 3″ width for nearly every tie.

Fitting Interfacing on Ties

Planning the marking and cutting of the fusible interfacing may take some geometric thinking! Once you mark and cut the fusible interfacing pieces for your project, place the tie right side down on the ironing board and move the interfacing pieces around to find the best way to fit the pieces needed into the "yardage" of a tie. The fusible side of the interfacing has bumps that you can feel, and the top side is smooth. Remember, the interfacing will be fused to the back side of the tie fabric, so the "fusible" side of the interfacing will face against the back of the tie.

OVERVIEW OF THE STRIP-CUTTING METHOD FOR INTERFACING AND TIES

Most quilters are familiar with rotary cutting. It revolutionized the world of quilting. In fact, if quilters still had to cut each individual fabric piece using a pair of scissors, quilting would not be such a popular pastime. Rotary cutters must be used with special gridded cutting mats and see-through acrylic rulers that are made specifically for rotary cutting. By using the rotary cutter, the basic method is to cut a strip of fabric in a specific width and then cut the strip into specifically sized sections. (When cutting multiple strips, stop occasionally and check that your cuts are perpendicular to the selvage edge.)

The method for working with necktie fabric applies the efficiency of rotary cutting to the small, irregular shape of the neckties. The way I use this technology is very simple: I cut a strip of the interfacing first and then mark the interfacing where it would be cut to make the square or diamond (but I do not cut them yet!). I fuse the interfacing strip to the tie and, using a ruler and rotary cutter, cut the strip from the tie. Then I finish by subcutting the individual shapes with a ruler and rotary cutter. Marking the interfacing strip for the individual pieces before fusing the interfacing to the tie is important because it may be necessary to cut the strip into two or more pieces to arrange the fit on the tie, and the markings indicate where to make the cuts.

I cut my interfacing strips just a "hair" larger than needed. For me, a hair larger is a soft (No. 2) pencil line's width, or close to $^{1}/_{16}$″. I designate this hair's width with a plus sign in the measurement, as in *3½+*″. This "plus" width of fusible interfacing makes it possible to cut the fused pieces just inside the edge of the fusible interfacing. In this way, the edges are sealed by the interfacing and are less likely to become frayed (see Precise Trimming of Fused Tie Fabric). When marking and cutting the interfacing, you'll have to eyeball this hair's width.

Examples for Fitting Diamonds, Squares, and Rectangles on Ties

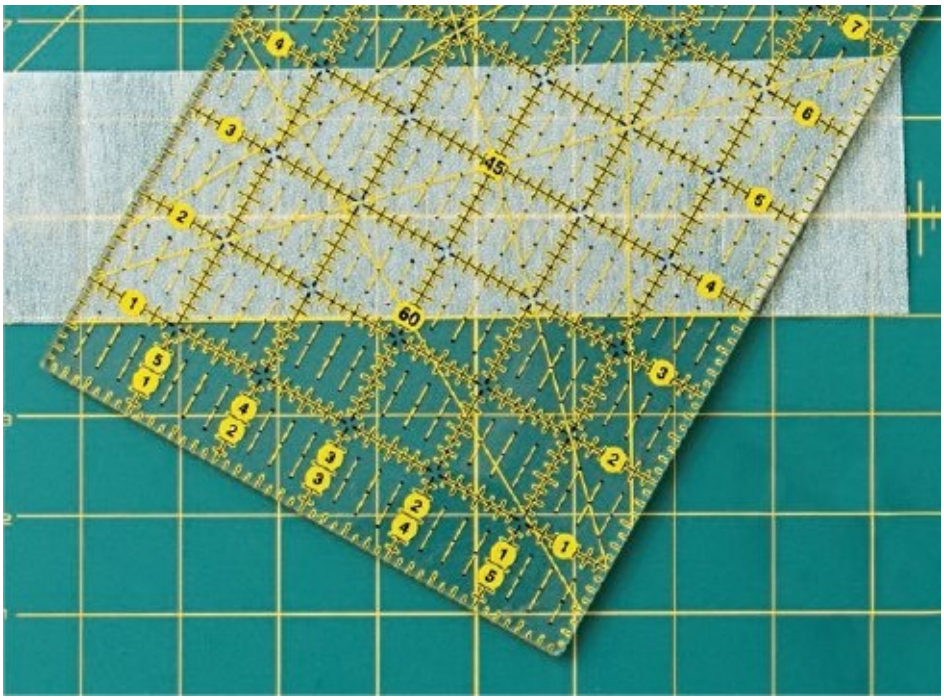
The following examples show a variety of cutting solutions for fitting the interfacing shapes onto ties of different sizes. Be aware that fusible interfacing comes in 20″ widths, so that is the width of fabric in the cutting instructions.

CUTTING DIAMONDS

This example requires equilateral 45° diamonds cut at a 2¼″ width from a 2¼″ strip. Each diamond measures 2¼″ between the parallel sides (not point to point). The aim is to get 24 diamonds total from one tie. Remember to cut the interfacing strips just a hair wider than the final cut of the fused tie pieces needed in a project (this is designated with a "plus" sign in the measurement, as in *2¼+*″). This extra width of fusible interfacing makes it possible to cut the fused tie pieces just inside the edge of the fusible interfacing so that the edges will be sealed by the interfacing and won't become frayed.

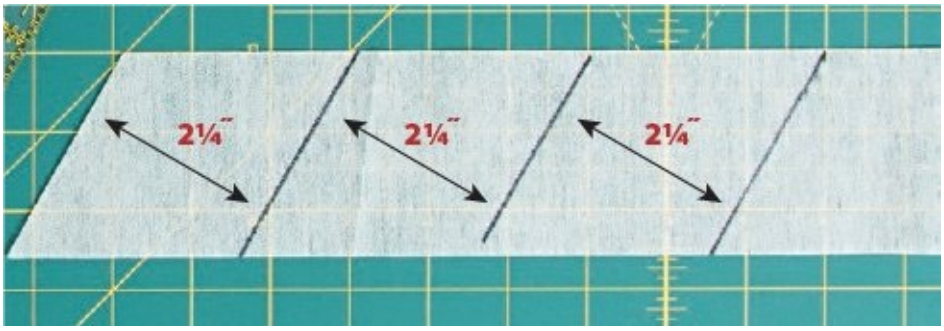
1. *Cutting the interfacing:* Cut 5 strips 2¼+″ × width of interfacing. The width of the interfacing is approximately 20″, which allows 5 diamonds per strip. To make 24 diamonds, it will take 4 strips of 5 diamonds plus 1 strip of 4 diamonds.

2. Place each interfacing strip fusible side down on the cutting mat. Align your ruler's 45º (or 60º) line on the strip edge. Cut 1 end of each strip at the appropriate angle for your project.



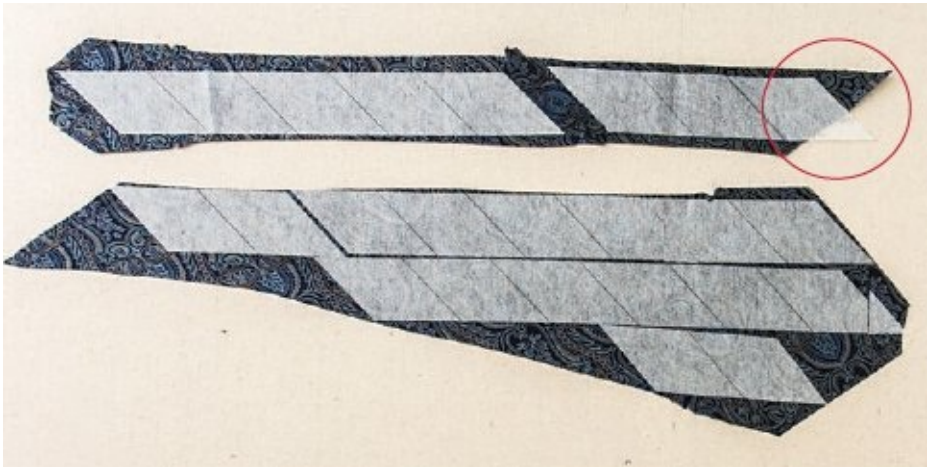
This example shows a 60º angle for trimming.

3. Rotate the strip 180º and mark lines at 2¼+˝ intervals *parallel to the angled ends* of the strips to form the diamonds. Make the marks just a hair wider than the exact measurement but no more than a hair's width. Cut away the ends of the interfacing after the last diamond. To economize on interfacing, refer to Frugal Use of Fusible Interfacing.



This shows 2¼˝ intervals parallel to the cut end of the strip.

4. Place the tie right side down on the ironing surface and begin arranging the interfacing. You may need to divide strips to achieve the optimal arrangement. Cut on the marked lines.

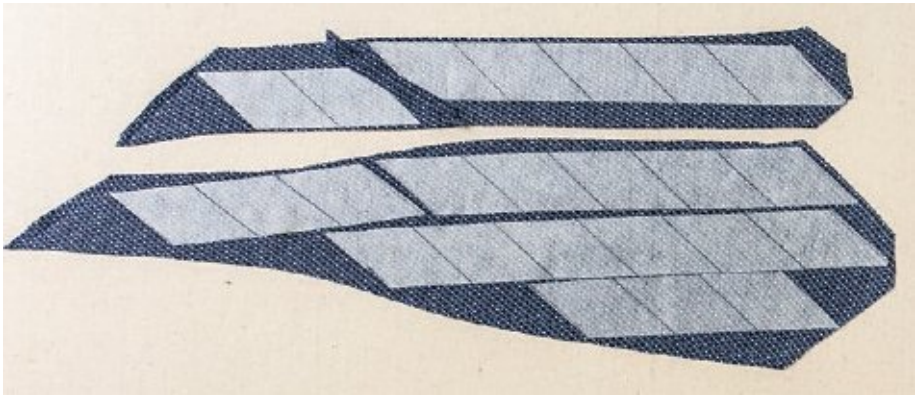


The puzzle of making the pieces fit: only 23 diamonds fit on this tie.

DESIGN OPTIONS

If you are fortunate, all 24 diamonds will fit on 1 tie. However, in this example, only 23 diamonds fit entirely on the tie. There are 4 options in this situation:

- Make the last diamond by piecing together tie scraps.
- Find another tie of similar color, value, and scale of pattern and use a diamond from it with the 23 diamonds from this tie.
- Start over with another wider tie so all 24 of the diamonds will fit.



An alternative ending uses a wider tie that fits every piece.

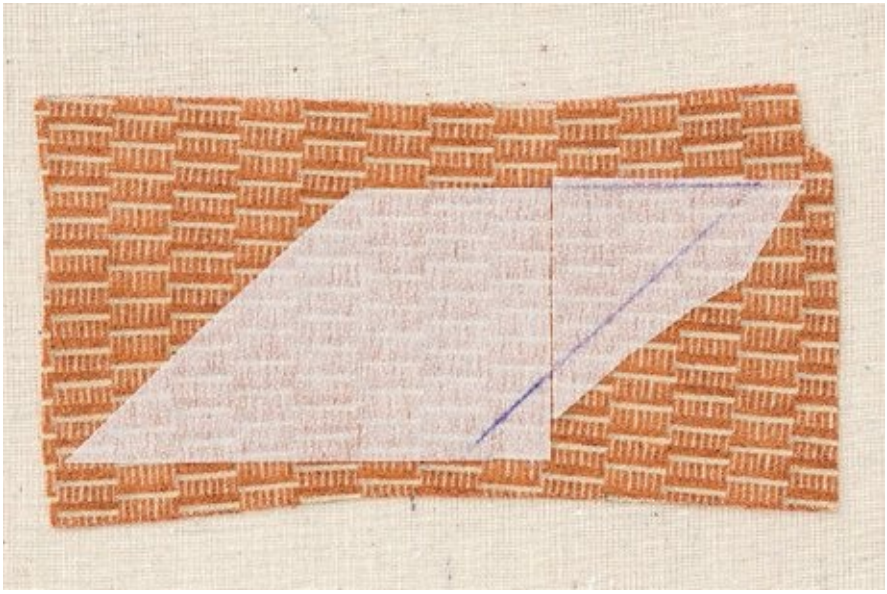
- Add a design variation to your project. Here's an idea: If these diamonds were supposed to be the third round of diamonds in a Lone Star, I could change the design by introducing another color and repeating the pattern in the other arms of the star. In this alternative, I used a tie of a darker color for the center diamond in the center row of each pieced-diamond star point.

Original design plan

Every third diamond is replaced by a diamond from a different tie, creating an alternative pattern. (It wasn't what I had planned, but I think I like it better!)

TIP FRUGAL USE OF FUSIBLE INTERFACING

In the example for strip cutting diamonds, several inches of interfacing were left at the end of the strip—enough for about ¾ of a diamond. To put this to use, leave it on the strip and draw whatever portion of the diamond that fits. When the strip is transferred to the tie for fusing, use an interfacing scrap triangle to finish the diamond. Place this triangle at the end of the strip to complete the last diamond. Don't worry about cutting it to fit; just make sure the tip of the diamond will fall within it.



Piecing the interfacing

CUTTING SQUARES AND RECTANGLES

In this example, eight squares 3″ × 3″ are needed from each of two ties. Tie A is 4″ wide in its folded state and 9¼″ wide at its widest point when unfolded. Tie B is 3⅜″ wide folded and 8″ wide unfolded. Remember to cut the interfacing strips just a "hair" wider than the final cut of the fused tie pieces needed in a project (this is designated with a plus sign in the measurement, as in *6+*″). This extra width of fusible interfacing makes it possible to cut the fused tie pieces just inside the edge of the fusible interfacing so that the edges will be sealed by the interfacing and won't become frayed.

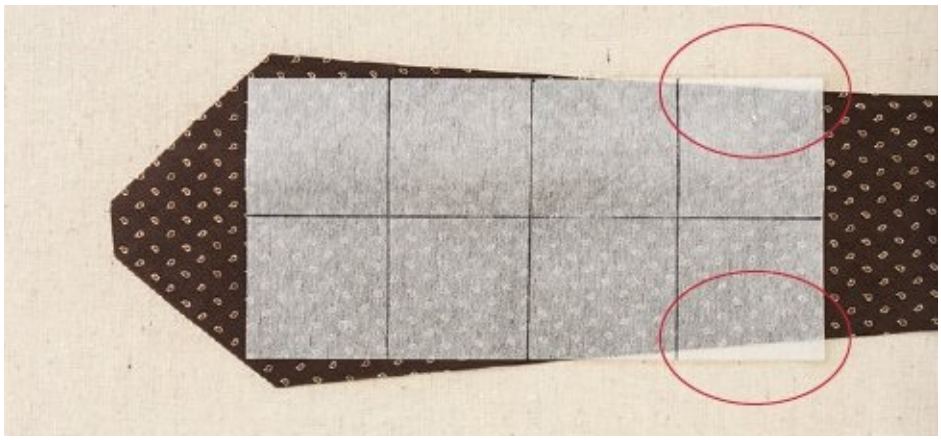
The overall objective is to economize on the amount of interfacing needed and to minimize the number of cuts. Cut the largest piece of interfacing that will both fit on the tie and contain multiples of the desired shape. Each quilt pattern and each tie may have a different solution to the puzzle.

1. *Cutting the interfacing:* Cut a strip of interfacing 12+″ × width of fabric; subcut into 3 rectangles 6+″ × 12+″, leaving a 2″ × 12″ scrap strip. (I set aside the third 6+″ × 12+″ rectangle for another tie.)

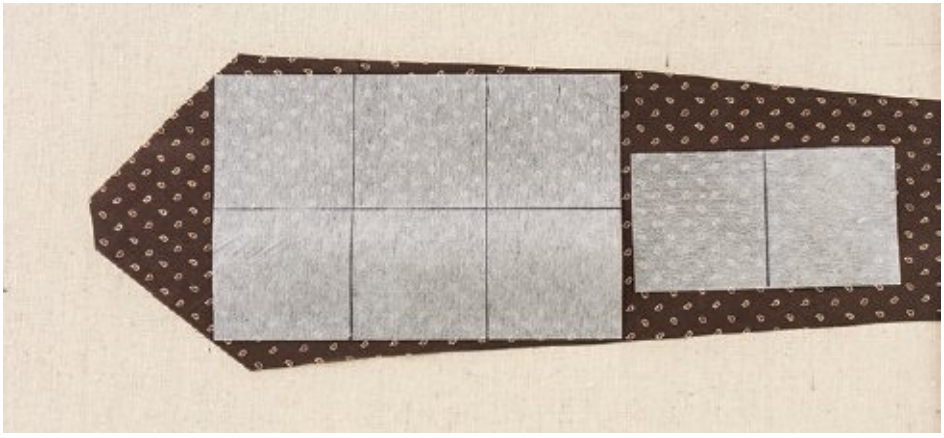
2. *Marking the interfacing:* Mark a 3+″ grid on each 6+″ × 12+″ rectangle of interfacing. The grid has 8 squares 3+″ × 3+″. Again, make the marks a hair wider than the exact measurement.

3. Place the ties right side down on the ironing surface and begin arranging the interfacing. Refer to the photos for examples of how to arrange the pieces on tie A and tie B.

Tie A: The 6+″ × 12+″ interfacing rectangle fits perfectly.



Tie B tapered too quickly to fit the 6+″ × 12+″ rectangle, so this won’t work.



Tie B: I cut the interfacing into two units and oriented the smaller piece differently.

Precise Trimming of Fused Tie Fabric

1. After fusing the interfacing to the wrong side of the tie, first cut the longest straight line on the piece of interfacing. Use this straightedge as a guideline for the rest of the trimming. Cut a parallel line to make a strip at the exact measurement of the required strip. These cuts will not

correspond exactly with your marks because you are eliminating the “+” measurement.

2. If you are cutting squares or rectangles, cut 1 end of the fused strip perpendicular to the long sides of the strip to create a 90° angle. Measure from this baseline to precisely cut the squares or rectangles.

3. If you are cutting diamonds, start by repeating Step 1. In Step 2, cut 1 end of the fused strip at a 45° or 60° angle, following the cut of the interfacing. Finish cutting the individual diamonds by making parallel cuts at precise intervals the width of the diamond. Before each cut, double-check the angle using your ruler.

Piecing Techniques

This chapter offers a brief overview of some of the more important sewing and cutting techniques that contribute to piecing a successful quilt. To include as many projects as possible, I have not provided basic information about how to use rotary-cutting equipment, layering and basting a quilt, machine quilting or hand quilting, or binding a quilt. If you are new to quilting, you can learn these techniques online or by taking a class at your local quilt shop. Refer to Resources for some book ideas and a link to C&T Publishing's Quiltmaking Basics.

For most projects, quilt success depends on attention to details. Accuracy in cutting and piecing are key. Important tools in the process are good rotary-cutting tools, a sewing machine that sews a straight line, and the iron. For most quilt patterns, the greater the accuracy in cutting and stitching, the easier it is to assemble the quilt.

Keys to Accurate Piecing

One Saturday I got a call from my sister. She was at a garage sale and very excited because she had found a box full of quilt blocks for only $2. She asked, if she sent them to me, would I make them into a quilt for her? Of course. When the box arrived, I understood why the price was so low: of the 60 Log Cabin blocks, only six came close to being the same size! Fortunately, my sister is not a quilter and not a stickler for detail. I was able to trim and fudge 36 blocks together to make something she and the dog could curl up in on a rainy day.

If your goal is a quilt with blocks of a uniform size and pieces fitting together in an attractive manner, consistency and accuracy are important. Three steps critical to achieving this end are accuracy in cutting, good pressing, and accuracy in sewing. Cutting was covered in the previous chapter.

PRESSING

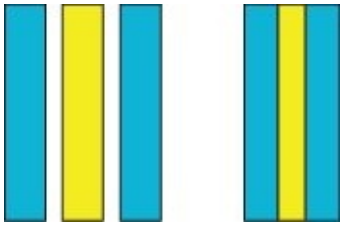
Pressing and ironing are actually two different techniques. Ironing is a back-and-forth motion, while pressing is simply placing the iron on the fabric, holding it there, and then removing it. When quilting, you should press seams, because the motion of ironing can distort the fibers.

To press a seam, place the seamed unit on the ironing surface. Before you open the two pieced shapes, place the iron on top of the seam stitching and hold it for a second. This sets the seam, smoothing out any waviness in the seamline and embedding the stitching thread into the fabric fibers. It also relaxes the fibers, making it easier to move and fold the fabric. Some quilters recommend a dry iron, some a dry iron with bursts of steam to finish, and others steam all the way. I'm a steamer.

TESTING YOUR SEAM ALLOWANCE

Even if your machine has a ¼″ mark on the foot or plate, it is a good idea to test its accuracy and find the best mark to help you achieve a consistent and accurate ¼″ seam.

1. Carefully cut 3 strips of fabric, each 1½″ × 8″.



Cut 3 strips, sew, and press.

2. Sew the 3 strips together along the longest sides, using your ¼″ guide. Press the seam allowances open.

3. Measure the width of the center strip. It should be exactly 1″ wide. Congratulations! Your ¼″ seams are accurate.

- If it is less than 1″, the seam allowances are too big. The needle needs to stitch closer to the fabric's outside edge.
- If the strip is greater than 1″, the seam allowances are too small. The stitching needs to be farther from the fabric's outside edge.

Often you can correct either problem with a very small move in one direction or another—perhaps the width of a sewing needle. Remember that the adjustment will happen in four places—to both fabrics in each seam.

Experiment with different needle positions and different points on the throat plate (other than what is marked as ¼″). The right line-up for a perfect ¼″ seam may be a combination of a different needle position with a point on your presser foot or throat plate.

When you have found the right combination for a perfect ¼″ seam, save the test piece; you can use it to make a diamond placement guide.

DIAMOND PLACEMENT GUIDE

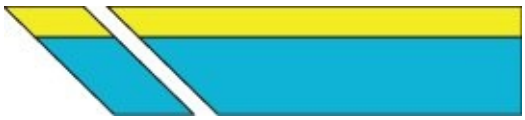
This tool is the key to sewing diamonds with perfect points and matching seamlines. I learned this handy method from *Diamond Quilts and Beyond* by Jan Krentz (see Resources). This section describes how to make a 45° diamond placement guide; you can make a 60° placement guide the same way by cutting a 60° angle in Step 2. Once you make this tool, you will want to tape it in a convenient place. Use clear packing tape to cover the whole unit, attaching it to a flat surface. I tape mine to a small portable cutting mat. If you use a cutting mat, tape the tool with the seamline aligned with a line on the mat.

An accurate ¼″ seam is integral to the tool's effectiveness, so I highly recommend going through the exercise of testing your ¼″ seam and making any adjustments necessary (see Testing Your Seam Allowance, at left).

1. Cut your most recent accurate seam-allowance test piece in half vertically through the center, or sew a 1½″ × 8″ strip to a ¾″ × 8″ strip. Press the seam open.

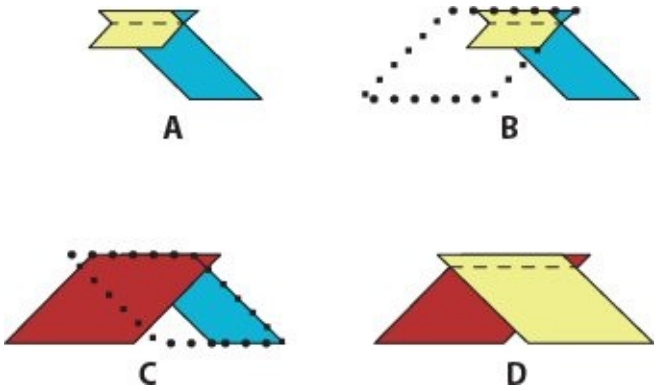
2. Using an acrylic ruler with a 45° line, cut 1 end of the half test piece at a 45° angle as shown.

3. Measure 1″ from the angled end and cut. This 1″ strip is the test strip.



4. Fold down the smaller strip so that you can see the stitching line and fold the seam allowance of the larger piece up; press in this position. This is the diamond placement tool.

5. To use this tool, refer to the illustration. Attach the diamond placement tool to a flat surface (A). Position a diamond right side up on top of the tool, with the upper edges and right point of the diamond aligned with the upper right point of the tool (B). Position the second diamond right side down on top of the first diamond, aligning the top and right edges with the diamond tool edges (C). Lift the 2 diamonds off the tool, pinning them together. Stitch the diamonds as shown, using a ¼″ seam allowance (D).



Inset Y-Seams

Geometric Gems was a joy to make even though it had 192 inset seams, also called Y-seams. Y-seams are usually used to join two diamonds plus a third patch, such as another diamond, a triangle, or a square, but Y-seams may also be used to join sections of a quilt top together. The resulting seams form a Y shape.

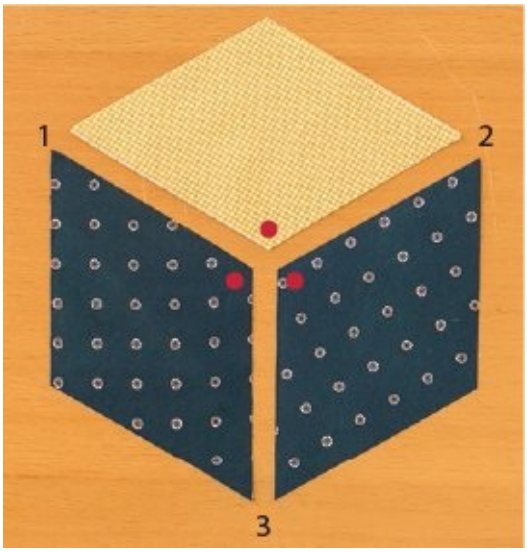
At the time I made *Geometric Gems*, I was experimenting with a method for Y-seams of my own devising. It gave me very nice Y-seams, but even the smallest amount of stretching would pop my intersections wide open. In the end, I had to go back and hand sew a few stitches in every single seam!

On the next project with Y-seams, *Lone Star Meets GQ*, I used the traditional method of marking and matching dots. However, I recently learned a new method for sewing Y-seams from a Kaye Wood video. It is so easy that I call it the "why-seam" method, since it has me wondering, "WHY did I do it any other way?" This method doesn't sound like it would work, but it does!

I'll explain the traditional Y-seam construction, and then I'll share the revolutionary method from Kaye Wood. Experiment with each method and discover the best method for you.

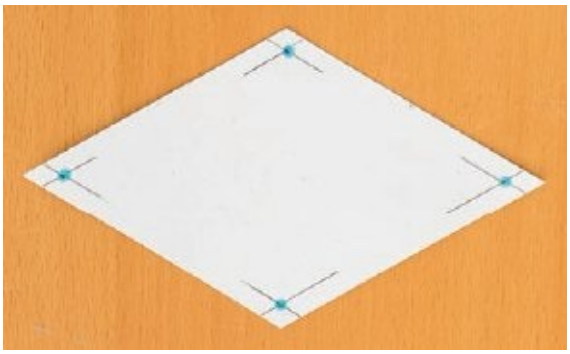
TRADITIONAL Y-SEAM CONSTRUCTION

This description shows two dark base diamonds sewn to a yellow joining diamond, but the third shape could be a triangle or square.



Assembly for a basic Y-seam—The dark diamonds are base diamonds, and the yellow diamond is the joining diamond. Intersection dots are marked and the numbers indicate the order of the seams.

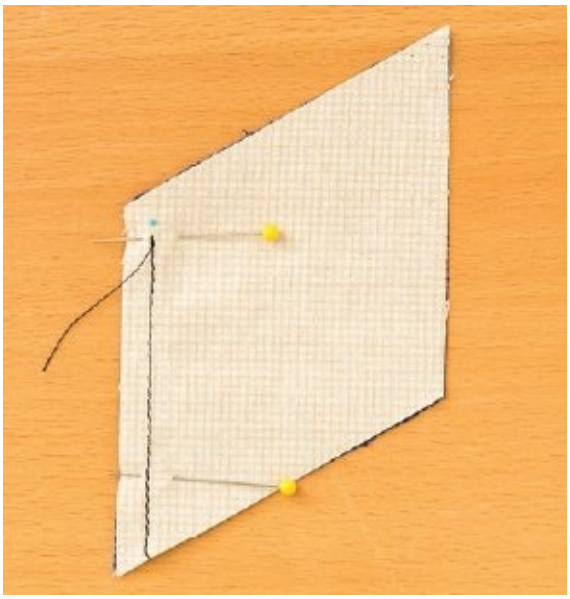
1. Make a dot at the intersection of the ¼″ seams on each diamond as shown in the assembly diagram (at right). You can do this by measuring and marking the ¼″ seamline at each corner and marking the intersection or by making a template with holes that a pen can get through for marking the dot. You can pierce the holes with a large darning needle. (Some very experienced quilters don't need to mark these intersections, but marking for me was key.) Depending on your project, your marking template could be a 45° diamond or a 60° diamond.



Pierce the blue dots to make the marking template.

2. For seam 1, flip over the yellow diamond onto the left dark diamond. Matching the dots, pin the yellow joining diamond to the dark base diamond.

3. To stitch seam 1, begin at the inside corner, put the needle not in the dot, but just a stitch length away from the dot. Secure with a tiny, 1-stitch backstitch and sew to the outer edge.



This is how the stitching looks from the yellow side of the seam.

4. For seam 2, fold the first dark base diamond out of the way to pin the second dark diamond to the other side of the yellow joining diamond, matching the dots. Use the method from Step 3 to sew the seam.

Ready to match the dot to the second dark diamond for seam 2

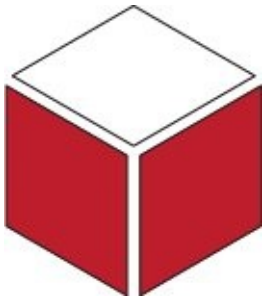
5. For seam 3, fold the yellow joining diamond up and out of the way, matching the dots on the legs of the 2 dark base diamonds. Sew this remaining seam as you did the other seams.

Sew the 2 base diamonds together, beginning at the dot.

6. Press open the seam between the dark base diamonds and press the other seams away from the yellow joining diamond.

KAYE WOOD'S WHY-SEAM CONSTRUCTION

This example shows two red base diamonds and a white joining diamond.

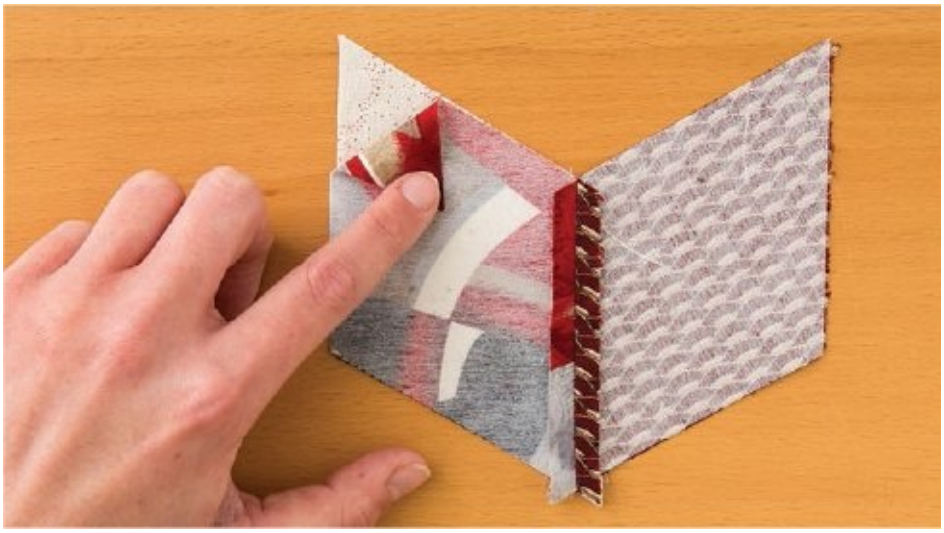


Assembly for a basic Y-seam—The red diamonds are base diamonds, and the white diamond is the joining diamond.

1. Sew 2 red base diamonds together with the seam going from edge to edge (no dots). Press the seam open.

Sew 2 diamonds together and press the seam open.

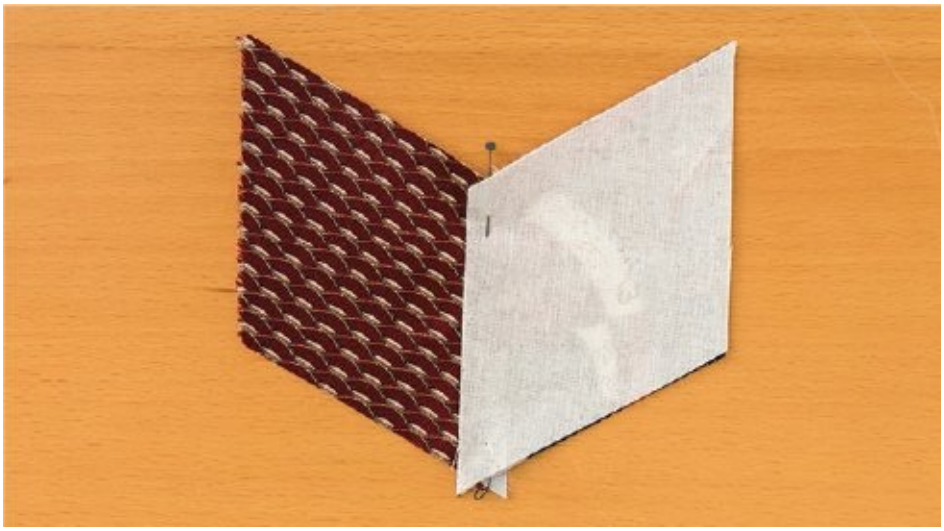
2. With the white joining diamond face up on the table, place the 2 seamed base diamonds on top, face down, aligning the edges of the bottom diamond with the diamond on the left of the pair as shown. The underneath white diamond will line up with the top diamond on 3 sides. The fourth side should line up with the folded-back seam allowance of the diamond on the right.



Position the white diamond under the base diamonds, matching edges on the left.

3. Place a pin in the center of the open seam. Check from the back to make sure that the edge of the white diamond extends exactly ¼″ beyond the pin.

Place a pin in the center of the front open seam.



View of pin from back

4. With the diamonds lined up and the pin in place, position the diamonds at the sewing machine with the white joining diamond on the bottom and the red diamonds on top. Start sewing at the outer edge, stitching toward the pin. Remove the pin just before reaching it. Stop with the needle down in the center of the seam. Setting your machine for a smaller stitch length will help you hit the exact center of the seam.

Stop with the needle in the seam's center.

5. Keeping the needle in the fabric, lift the presser foot and fold the upper diamonds back to swing the remaining seam in place. Check that there are no tucks near the needle, and then continue stitching the seam to the outer edge. Press the seam away from the white joining diamond.

Sew to the pin. With the needle down, swing the top fabric around to bring the diamond sides together. Complete the seam.

Perfect Triangles from Squares

In *Swingin' on a Star in Blue* and *A Gaggle of Geese*, two small squares are used to add triangles to a base square or rectangle. To sew these triangles precisely, follow these steps:

1. On the wrong side of the small squares, use a ruler and pencil to draw a diagonal line from corner to corner, making sure the line passes directly through each corner. Rather than lining up the ruler on the corner points, put your pencil on the corner first and bring the ruler to it. Hold that end in place and do the same on the opposite corner.

2. With right sides together, place a square on 1 corner of the base square or rectangle. Using the diagonal line as a guide, sew a needle's width to the side of the line closest to the outer corner—the widest part of the needle should just brush the line. Stitch slowly until you know you have good control over where the needle meets the cloth.

For best results, stitch a needle's width on the side of the line closest to the outer corner.

3. Before you fold back the corner, press the stitching line to set the seam. Press the triangle toward the corner of the block.

4. Check and correct: Ideally, after pressing, check to be sure both triangle corners line up with the corner of the base square or rectangle.

If you turn over the unit and see the triangle fabric extending beyond the base fabric, you've stitched too far from the line. To correct it, press the fold open and restitch slightly closer toward the center of the block.

On the left corner, stitching was too far toward the corner. On the right, crooked sewing resulted in crooked corners. You can correct both problems.

If the corner is too short, you may have to sacrifice the block. To correct it, you would have to rip out stitches and resew the seam, leaving visible holes from the previous stitching (typical with most silks).

If your stitching is too far toward the center, your folded corners will not meet.

5. Finally, 1 or more layers of fabric in the corners needs to be trimmed. This step depends on your personal preference and the thicknesses of the fabrics. Typically, the 2 bottom layers of fabric are trimmed, leaving a ¼″ seam allowance. However, some quilters advocate keeping the base fabric and just trimming the middle layer (small square) to the ¼″ seam allowance. This is an option when the top corner doesn't quite line up squarely with the base corner; the base fabric is used as a guide when stitching. For *Swingin' on a Star in Blue*, I chose to cut the base fabric and leave 2 layers of the accent fabric; in this case, the silk was too lightweight, and the extra layer added substance to match the weight of the silk tie fabrics used in the quilt.

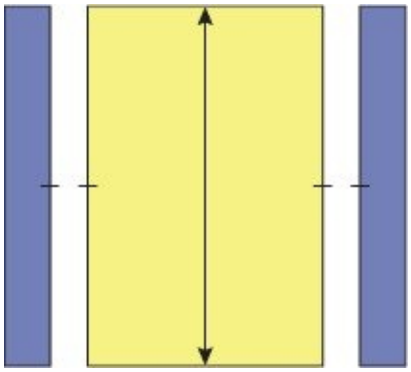
Adding Borders

Because of the differences in machines and sewists, your pieced quilt top may not finish at the exact size as a project in this book. Project instructions direct you to cut border strips the length of the fabric, and then cut the strips to fit your quilt top, following these steps. I prefer to cut my

borders from the length of the fabric because the lengthwise grain of the fabric has the least stretch and provides a border without a ripple effect. Add side borders first and then the top and bottom.

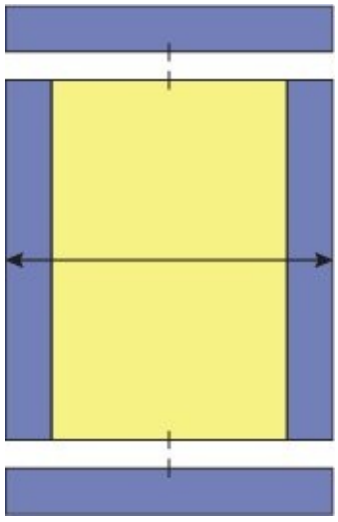
1. Measure the length of the quilt top through the center. Cut 2 border strips to this measurement, piecing if necessary.

2. Mark the center of the quilt sides and the centers of the border strips. Pin the border strips to the sides of the quilt, matching the center marks and ends and easing, as necessary. Sew the border strips in place. Press the seam allowances toward the border.



Measure the quilt's center, top to bottom. Mark the centers.

3. Measure the width of the quilt top through the center, including the side border strips just added. Cut the border strips to this measurement, piecing as necessary. Mark the centers, pin, and sew the border strips to the top and bottom of the quilt. Press the seam allowances toward the border.



Measure the quilt's center, side to side, including the borders. Mark the centers.

NECKTIE INNER BORDERS AND BINDING

I like to use neckties as inner borders. And since neckties are conveniently cut on the bias, they are easy to use as bindings. You can cut borders and binding in the same way. You can use fused 1½″ necktie strips for binding, though this will be an unusual size to quilters who are used to

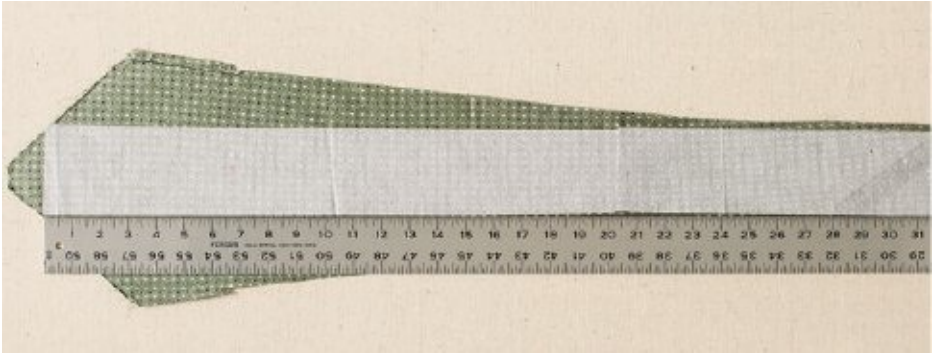
double-fold binding. The tie fabric with the interfacing is much too thick for a double-fold binding—one layer is sturdy enough.

1. For each tie, cut 3 strips of interfacing 3+″ × width of interfacing. Remember that the plus sign means to cut the interfacing strips just a hair wider than 3″, so that the edges are contained by the interfacing and won't become frayed.

2. Prepare and press a tie. Since the tie is longer than most ironing boards, add interfacing strips in stages. Use a yardstick or other long straightedge to ensure a straight transition from 1 strip to the next. Starting at the narrow end of the tie, place 2 strips of interfacing down the center, abutting the ends.

3. Follow the manufacturer's instructions to carefully fuse interfacing to the tie.

4. Slide the tie so that the wider end is in position on the ironing board. Place the third strip of interfacing, using the straightedge to keep it straight. Cut off the excess length of the interfacing. Don't worry if the interfacing doesn't end up exactly in the apex of the tie; ties are often asymmetrical in construction. Fuse the interfacing in place.



Use a straightedge to lay the interfacing straight.

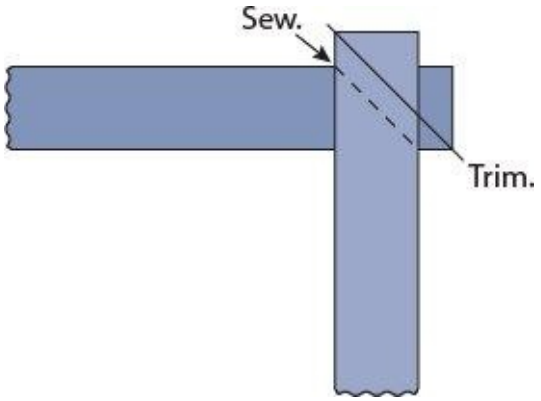
5. Cut the fused strip exactly 3″ × length of fused tie. For most ties, the strip will be 54″ long or more.

6. **For inner borders:** Most of my necktie inner borders are 1″ wide finished, so I cut the fused 3″ × length of tie strip into 2 long strips 1½″ × length of tie (but check your project instructions first for the required width). Use diagonal seams to join the strips, as needed, for the border lengths required for your project. Refer to the Diagonal Seams tip.

7. **For bindings:** If you are using the strips as binding, cut the fused 3″ × length of tie strip into 2 strips 1½″ × length of tie. Use diagonal seams to join the strips, as needed, for the binding length required for your project. Refer to the Diagonal Seams tip. Apply the binding using a ¼″ seam allowance. Fold the outer edge of the binding under ¼″ and stitch to the back of the quilt.

TIP DIAGONAL SEAMS

You can join strips of neckties with diagonal seams. Place the end of one strip face up and horizontal on the cutting mat. Place the end of another strip face down and perpendicular, overlapping so that each piece extends about ¼″ beyond the other. Carefully draw a diagonal line from inside corner to inside corner. Then pin and sew. Trim the seam allowance ¼″ from the stitching. Press the seam open.



Splicing ends together

SKILL LEVEL: BEGINNER

Memory Quilt

BLOCK SIZE: 10″ × 10″ finished • **NUMBER OF BLOCKS:** 16

Memory Quilt, 40½″ × 40½″, made and quilted by Christine Copenhaver, 2013

his design would be a wonderful commemorative quilt for anyone who wants to use

Ta collection of ties from a retiree or deceased relative. Although this quilt features posies in the center squares, you could display signatures or written messages in the center squares, or transfer photographs, verse, or other text to them. Or you could select a special fabric to fill the centers! You can change the number of blocks in this simple straight setting to match your tie collection.

Materials

Yardages, other than neckties, are based on 20″-wide fusible interfacing and 42″-wide cottons.

- **For blocks:** 16 neckties in a variety of patterns
- **For binding:** 2 neckties
- **Fusible interfacing:** 3¾ yards
- **For center squares:** ½ yard neutral cotton print*
- **For backing:** 2¾ yards cotton
- **Batting:** 48″ × 48″

** More fabric is needed if you fussy cut the center squares or if you are making a signature collection (at right) quilt.*

Cutting and Fusing Instructions

FUSIBLE INTERFACING

Refer to Planning and Cutting for cutting methods for the fusible interfacing. The + sign indicates that you should add a "hair" to the cut size of the interfacing.

- Cut 7 strips 10½+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 3½+″ intervals to draw a total of 32 rectangles 3½+″ × 10½+″.
- Cut 8 strips 3½+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 4½+″ intervals to draw a total of 32 rectangles 3½+″ × 4½+″.
- Cut 6 strips 3+″ × WOF*.

NECKTIES

For the blocks: *Refer to Fitting Interfacing on Ties and Precise Trimming of Fused Tie Fabric. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for the fusible interfacing. I used 1 necktie for each of my 16 blocks.*

- Place 2 interfacing 3½+″ × 4½+″ rectangles and 2 interfacing 3½+″ × 10½+″ rectangles on each tie, subcutting the strips as needed. Fuse the interfacing and cut 2 rectangles 3½″ × 4½″ and 2 rectangles 3½″ × 10½″ from each tie. (If you want more than 1 block from each tie, make sure that you are cutting 2 small rectangles and 2 large rectangles for each block.)

For the binding: *Refer to Necktie Inner Borders and Binding.*

- Fuse 3 interfacing 3+″ × WOF* strips on each of 2 ties. Cut a strip 3″ × length of each fused tie. Subcut each strip into 2 strips 1½″ × length of tie for at least 185″ of 1½″ strips for binding.

FABRIC

If you are making an autograph quilt, refer to the Signature Collection sidebar (at right) before cutting these squares.

- **From the block center fabric:** Cut 2 strips 4½″ × WOF*; subcut 16 squares 4½″ × 4½″.

** WOF = width of fabric*

Signature Collection

If you are making an autograph quilt, try to collect signatures before you assemble the quilt. You can make the blocks before you get the signatures or simply start with the center square. Either way, the fabric needs to be stabilized with freezer paper first so that the fabric won't move under the pen. Freezer paper can be found near aluminum foil in the grocery store. If you have already sewn the block, cut 4″ × 4″ squares of freezer paper and iron the shiny side to the back of each center square. Use a permanent ink fabric pen for the signing.

If you are gathering the signatures before the block is sewn, you will need:

- A permanent ink fabric pen
- Freezer paper
- Blue painter's tape (1″ wide)

1. Cut fabric squares 2″ larger than the finished size of the center square. For this quilt, cut 6″ squares, since the center square finishes 4″ square.

2. Cut freezer paper into squares 1″ larger than the finished square (5″) and iron it, shiny side down, centered on the back of each 6″ square. Let it cool.

3. Use the 1″ blue tape to make a border on the front of the square.

4. Collect signatures, using a pen made specifically for fabric. Ask contributors to contain their signatures and messages to the space within the blue tape. Remove the tape after the square has been signed.

5. Check the instructions for the pen. If necessary, iron the ink to set it.

6. Keeping the message centered, trim the squares to 4½″.

Signature block being prepared for signing

TIP PHOTO TRANSFERS

Anything that can be photocopied can be phototransferred onto fabric.

You can buy fabric prepared for photo transfer from your local craft or quilting shop or online. It is cut to 8½″ × 11″ and mounted on a backing that can pass through the photocopier or inkjet printer (*not* a laser jet printer). It is available in white and off-white in packages of three or more sheets.

Lesley Riley's TAP Transfer Artist Paper (see Resources), by C&T Publishing, can be used to transfer images to any size fabric. Photocopy the image onto the TAP and use an iron to transfer it to fabric.

You can prepare most cotton fabrics for printing by ironing freezer paper, shiny side down, to the back of the fabric and trimming it to 8½″ × 11″. Your trimming must be very precise, with no loose threads along the edges.

Making the Blocks

Seam allowances are ¼″.

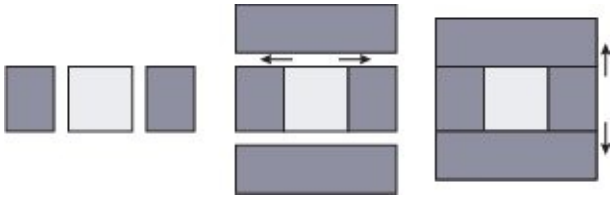
Framed Square block—Make 16.

The centers of my blocks did not require special orientation. However, if you are doing a signature or photo project, you will need to plan the orientation of the center square in each block because the long seams of the blocks rotate in the rows. Refer to the quilt assembly diagram for your planning.

1. Sew matching 3½″ × 4½″ rectangles to opposite sides of a center 4½″ square; press the seams toward the necktie.

2. Sew matching 3½″ × 10½″ rectangles to opposite sides as shown in the block assembly diagram; press the seams toward the necktie.

3. Repeat Steps 1 and 2 to make 16 blocks.



Block assembly

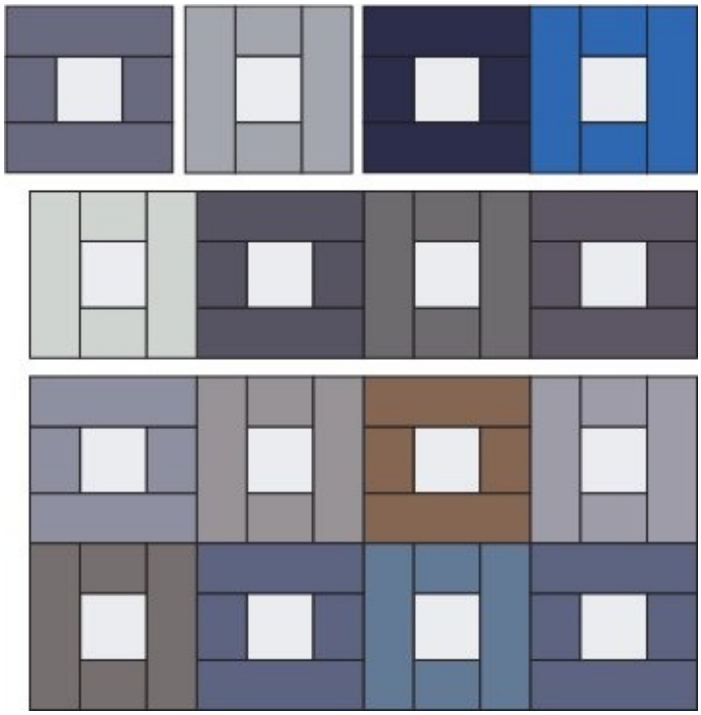
Quilt Assembly

1. Refer to the quilt assembly diagram to arrange the blocks in a 4 block × 4 block formation on a design wall. Note that the blocks rotate in each row, alternating the direction of the long seams.

2. Sew together 4 blocks to form a row. Repeat this step to make 4 rows. Press the seams in alternate directions from row to row.

3. Sew the 4 rows together to complete the quilt top.

4. After layering and quilting, use the fused tie 1½″ strips for binding.



Quilt assembly

SKILL LEVEL: BEGINNER

Swingin’ on a Star in Blue

BLOCK SIZE: 5″ × 5″ finished • **NUMBER OF BLOCKS:** 72

Swingin' on a Star in Blue, 55½″ × 60½″, made and quilted by Christine Copenhaver, 2013

This is an easy block, similar to a traditional Snowball block but with only two accent triangles. I made star points with an easy sew-and-flip method of construction. This *Swingin' on a Star in Blue* quilt looks elegant with a light-colored silk for the star points. The border is a wool blend I found in ladies' suiting material.

You can use a variety of tie patterns in this quilt.

Materials

Yardages, other than neckties, are based on 20″-wide fusible interfacing, 42″-wide cotton, 54″-wide wool, and 54″-wide silk.

- **For star blocks:** 25–27 neckties—I was able to make 3 stars from most ties. I added a few stars made with leftovers from other projects, which seemed to produce just the right amount of patchiness for a quilt this size.
- **For inner border:** 2 striped neckties
- **For binding:** 3 neckties (option 1) *OR* ⅔ yard cotton (option 2)
- **Fusible interfacing:** 5¼ yards for blocks, inner border, *and* necktie binding (option 1) *OR* 4½ yards for blocks and inner border (option 2)
- **For star points:** ⅞ yard light tan silk *OR* 1⅛ yards cotton
- **For outer border:** 1¾ yards wool *OR* 1¾ yards cotton
- **For backing:** 3⅝ yards cotton
- **Batting:** 63″ × 68″ rectangle

Cutting and Fusing Instructions

FUSIBLE INTERFACING

Refer to Planning and Cutting for cutting methods for the fusible interfacing. The + sign indicates that you should add a "hair" to the cut size of the interfacing.

- Cut 24 strips 5½+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 5½+″ intervals to draw a total of 72 squares; subcut the strips to 5½+″ × 16½+″ (3 squares on a strip).
- Cut 6 strips 3+″ × WOF*.
- **Tie binding (option 1):** Cut 9 strips 3+″ × WOF*.

FABRIC

- **From the star point fabric:** Cut strips 3″ × WOF*; subcut 144 squares 3″ × 3″.
- **From the outer border fabric:** Cut 4 strips 7″ × *length of fabric (parallel to selvage).*
- **From the binding fabric (option 2):** Cut 7 strips 2¼″ × WOF*.

** WOF = width of fabric*

NECKTIES

For the blocks: *Refer to Fitting Interfacing on Ties and Precise Trimming of Fused Tie Fabric. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for the fusible interfacing.*

- Arrange the marked interfacing on the neckties. The 5½+″ × 16½+″ strip of interfacing should fit within the wider portion of most neckties. Fuse the interfacing and cut 72 squares 5½″ × 5½″.

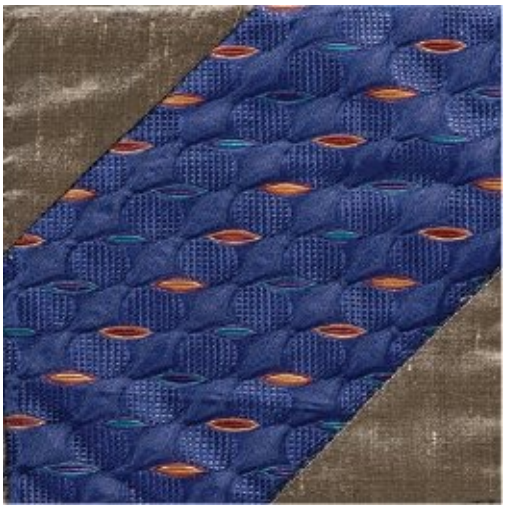
For the inner border and binding: *Refer to Necktie Inner Borders and Binding.*

- **Inner border:** Fuse 3 interfacing 3+″ × WOF* strips on each of 2 ties. Cut a strip 3″ × length of each fused tie. Subcut each strip into 2 strips 1½″ × length of fused tie for a total of 4 strips.
- **Tie binding (option 1):** Fuse 3 interfacing 3+″ × WOF* strips on each of 3 ties. Cut a strip 3″ × length of each fused tie. Subcut each strip into 2 strips 1½″ × length of fused tie for at least 254″ of 1½″ binding.

Making the Blocks

Seam allowances are ¼″.

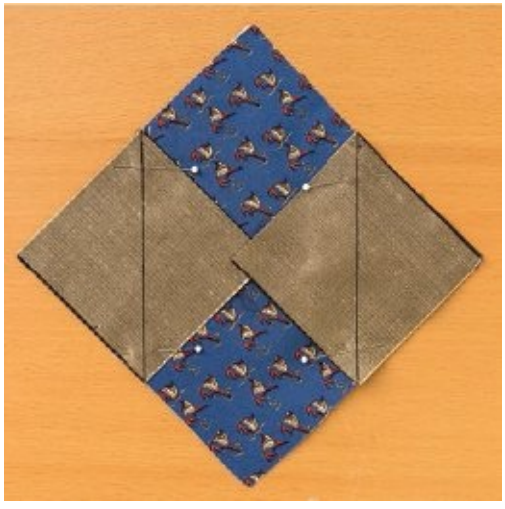
When sewn precisely, the points on adjacent stars meet at the seams without gap or overlap. Before you sew, refer to Perfect Triangles from Squares.



Slanted Star block—You will not see the star until you assemble the quilt body! Make 72.

1. Using a ruler and pencil, draw a diagonal line from corner to corner on the back of each star point 3″ square.

2. Place a star point 3″ square on a corner of the necktie 5½″ square, right sides together. Pin another 3″ square of the star point fabric on the opposite corner as shown.



Slanted Star block ready to sew

3. Sew the small squares to the large square, using the drawn lines as guides.

4. Press each triangle toward the corner of the block. Check for squareness and adjust accordingly.

5. If using a lightweight silk for the star points as I did, lift both silk layers of the corner triangles from the right side of the block, and trim off only the tie fabric, leaving a ¼″ seam allowance. Save the cut corners for a little rainy-day project. I used leftover corners like this in *Bits 'n' Pieces*. For heavier-weight corner fabrics, lift the top fabric out of the way and trim the 2 bottom fabrics, leaving a ¼″ seam allowance.

Quilt Assembly

1. Refer to the quilt assembly diagram to arrange blocks in an 8 block × 9 block formation on a design wall. Keep the position of the triangles the same in each block. You can slant the stars to the right or left, but not both in the same quilt! My stars all slant to the right.

2. Sew together 8 blocks to form a row. Repeat this step to make 9 rows. Press the seams in alternate directions from row to row.

3. Sew the 9 rows together to complete the pieced quilt center.

4. To add the inner border, refer to Adding Borders to measure and cut the border lengths, using the inner border fused tie 1½″ strips. Add the side borders first. Then add the top and bottom borders.

5. To add the outer border, refer to Adding Borders to measure and cut the border lengths, using the 7″ strips. Add the side borders first. Then add the top and bottom borders.

6. After layering and quilting, use either the fused tie 1½″ strips (option 1) or the cotton 2¼″ strips (option 2) for binding.

Quilt assembly

SKILL LEVEL: BEGINNER

Bonus Project Swingin' on a Star in Red

BLOCK SIZE: 5″ × 5″ finished • **NUMBER OF BLOCKS:** 108

Swingin' on a Star in Red, 60½″ × 75½″, made by Christine Copenhaver, quilted by Valerie Curtis, 2013

Swingin' on a Star in Red has even more star points made of stunning black cotton sateen, which sets the red off nicely. The stars in this quilt slant to the left, but the planning, cutting, and construction are similar to *Swingin' on a Star in Blue*. I used the trimmed corners from these blocks in *Bits 'n' Pieces*.

Materials

Yardages, other than neckties, are based on 20″-wide fusible interfacing and 42″-wide cotton.

- **For blocks:** 35–45 neckties in red-reds (Refer to Value Is Relative.)
- **Fusible interfacing:** 5¾ yards
- **For star points:** 1⅝ yards black cotton sateen
- **For outer border:** 1⅞ yards red cotton print
- **For inner border:** ⅓ yard black cotton
- **For backing:** 4 yards cotton
- **For binding:** ¾ yard cotton
- **Batting:** 68″ × 83″ rectangle

Cutting Instructions

Refer to instructions for *Swingin' on a Star in Blue* with the following changes:

- **From the interfacing:** Cut 36 strips 5½+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 5½+″ intervals to draw a total of 108 squares 5½+″ × 5½+″.
- **From the star point fabric:** Cut 16 strips 3″ × WOF*; subcut 216 squares 3″ × 3″.
- **From the inner border fabric:** Cut 6 strips 1½″ × WOF*.
- **From the outer border fabric:** Cut 4 strips 7″ × *length of fabric (parallel to the selvage).*
- **From the binding fabric:** Cut 9 strips 2¼″ × WOF*.

** WOF = width of fabric*

Quilt Assembly

1. Assemble as in *Swingin' on a Star in Blue*, except sew 12 rows of 9 squares each.

2. To add the inner border, refer to Adding Borders to measure and cut the border lengths, using the inner border 1½″ strips. Add the side borders first. Then add the top and bottom borders.

3. To add the outer border, refer to Adding Borders to measure and cut the border lengths, using the 7″ strips. Add the side borders first. Then add the top and bottom borders.

4. After layering and quilting, use the cotton 2¼″ strips for binding.

SKILL LEVEL: BEGINNER

Barn Raising

BLOCK SIZE: 3½″ × 3½″ finished • **NUMBER OF BLOCKS:** 64

Barn Raising, 43½″ × 43½″, made by Christine Copenhaver, quilted by Barb O'Melia, 2012

ecause of the light and dark triangles used in these simple half-square triangles,

they can be arranged in several design settings (refer to *Classic Log Cabin*, Quilt Assembly). *Barn Raising*'s traditional pattern of concentric rings of darks and lights represents the ring of walls being lifted into place, followed by the rafters and roof.

Materials

Yardages, other than neckties, are based on 20″-wide fusible interfacing and 42″-wide cottons.

- **For blocks:** 8–10 neckties in blues and greens
- **For binding:** 2 striped neckties (option 1) *OR* ½ yard striped cotton (option 2)
- **Fusible interfacing:** 1⅞ yards for blocks *and* binding (option 1) *OR* 1¼ yards for blocks (option 2)
- **For block background:** 3–4 fat quarters cotton shirting in grays and blues *OR* 3–4 men's cotton shirts
- **For inner border:** ¼ yard checked cotton
- **For outer border:** 1¼ yards cotton print
- **For backing:** 3 yards cotton
- **Batting:** 51″ × 51″

Cutting and Fusing Instructions

FUSIBLE INTERFACING

Refer to Planning and Cutting for cutting methods for the fusible interfacing. The + sign indicates that you should add a "hair" to the cut size of the interfacing.

- Cut 8 strips 4½+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 4½+″ intervals to draw a total of 32 squares.
- **Tie binding (option 1):** Cut 6 strips 3+″ × WOF*.

NECKTIES

For the blocks: *Refer to Fitting Interfacing on Ties and Precise Trimming of Fused Tie Fabric. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for the fusible interfacing.*

- Arrange the marked interfacing on the neckties. Fuse the interfacing and cut a total of 32 squares 4½″ × 4½″.

For the necktie binding (option 1): *Refer to Necktie Inner Borders and Binding.*

- Fuse 3 interfacing 3+″ × WOF* strips on each of 2 striped ties. Cut a strip 3″ × length of each fused tie. Subcut each strip into 2 strips 1½″ × length of tie for at least 192″ of 1½″ strips.

FABRIC

- **From the block background fabric:** Cut 32 squares 4½″ × 4½″.
- **From the inner border fabric:** Cut 4 strips 1½″ × WOF*.
- **From the outer border fabric:** Cut 4 strips 7″ × *length of fabric (parallel to selvage).*
- **From the binding fabric (option 2):** Cut 5 strips 2¼″ × WOF*.

** WOF = width of fabric*

Making the Blocks

Seam allowances are ¼″.

Half-Square Triangle block—Make 64.

1. Using a ruler and pencil, draw a diagonal line from corner to corner on the interfacing side of a necktie 4½″ square.

2. Place the necktie square right sides together with a background 4½″ square.

3. Using the pencil line as a guide, accurately sew ¼″ from the line on both sides.

4. Lift a free corner of the necktie fabric and press the seam. Repeat on the opposite corner, making sure the iron doesn't unpress the first seam. Pressing before separating the 2 halves protects against stretching the diagonal.

5. Cut on the drawn line to yield 2 half-square triangle blocks. Press the seams again.

6. Square up each block to 4″ × 4″ by using a ruler with a 45° angle line and a rotary cutter. Place the 45° line on the diagonal of the half-square triangle. Make sure each corner is square and the diagonal exactly passes through the corners and trim as needed.

7. Repeat Steps 1–6 to make 64 Half-Square Triangle blocks.

Quilt Assembly

1. Refer to the quilt assembly diagram to arrange the blocks in an 8 block × 8 block formation on a design wall, noting the orientation of each block.

2. Sew together 8 blocks to form a row. Repeat this step to make 8 rows. Press the seams in alternate directions from row to row.

3. Sew the 8 rows together to complete the pieced quilt center.

4. To add the inner border, refer to Adding Borders to measure and cut the border lengths, using the inner border 1½″ strips. Add the side borders first. Then add the top and bottom borders.

5. To add the outer border, refer to Adding Borders to measure and cut the border lengths, using the 7″ strips. Add the side borders first. Then add the top and bottom borders.

6. After layering and quilting, use either the fused tie 1½″ strips (option 1) or the cotton 2¼″ strips (option 2) for binding.

Quilt assembly

SKILL LEVEL: BEGINNER

Red and Black Runner

BLOCK SIZE: 4″ × 4″ finished **NUMBER OF BLOCKS:** 20

Red and Black Runner, 14½″ × 46½″, made and quilted by Christine Copenhaver, 2013

This simple little quilt makes a very striking wallhanging or table runner in "power red" and black. To make my little quilt really scrappy, I used nine black ties and twelve red ties. You may want to make another color combination.

Materials

Yardages, other than neckties, are based on 20″-wide fusible interfacing and 42″-wide cotton.

- **For blocks:**

  6–10 red neckties

  6–10 black neckties

- **Fusible interfacing:** 1¼ yards
- **For border:** ½ yard black cotton print
- **For binding:** ⅜ yard
- **For backing:** 1½ yards cotton
- **Batting:** 22″ × 54″

Cutting and Fusing Instructions

INTERFACING

Refer to Planning and Cutting for cutting methods for the fusible interfacing. The + sign indicates that you should add a "hair" to the cut size of the interfacing.

- Cut 7 strips 5+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 5+″ intervals to draw a total of 20 squares. Subcut the strips into 5+″ × 5+″ squares. Save the leftovers for another project.

NECKTIES

For the blocks: *Refer to Fitting Interfacing on Ties and Precise Trimming of Fused Tie Fabric. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for the fusible interfacing.*

- Arrange the interfacing on the neckties: 10 squares on red ties and 10 squares on black ties. Fuse the interfacing and cut a total of 20 squares 5″ × 5″.

FABRIC

- **From the border fabric:** Cut 3 strips 3½″ × WOF*.
- **From the binding fabric:** Cut 4 strips 2¼″ × WOF*.

** WOF = width of fabric*

Making the Blocks

Seam allowances are ¼″.

Half-Square Triangle block

To make the Half-Square Triangle blocks, refer to *Barn Raising*, Making the Blocks. Use the 10 red tie 5″ squares and the 10 black tie 5″ squares to make 20 Half-Square Triangle blocks. Square up the blocks to measure 4½″ × 4½″.

Quilt Assembly

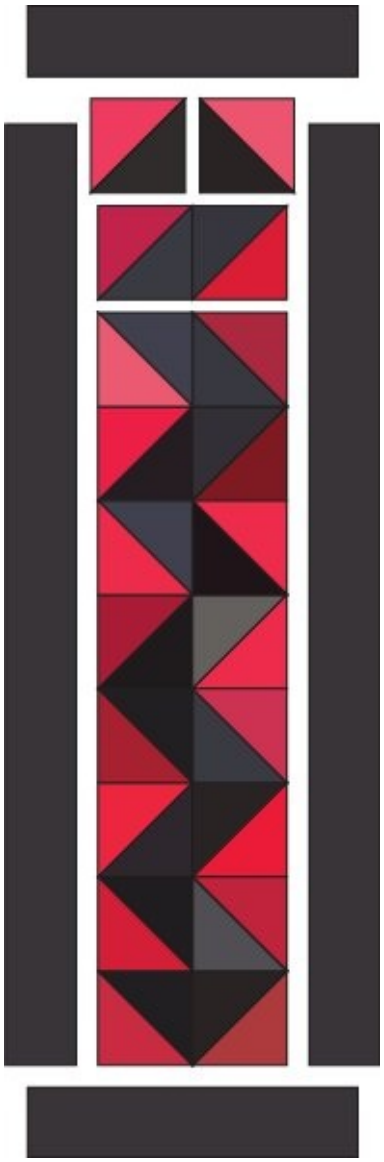
1. Refer to the quilt assembly diagram to arrange the blocks in a 2 block × 10 block formation on a design wall, noting the orientation of each block.

2. Sew together 2 blocks to form a row. Repeat this step to make 10 rows. Press the seams in alternate directions from row to row.

3. Sew the 10 rows together to complete the pieced quilt center.

4. To add the border, refer to Adding Borders to measure and cut the border lengths, using the black 3½″ strips. Add the long side borders first. Then add the short end borders.

5. After layering and quilting, use the cotton 2¼″ strips for binding.



Quilt assembly

SKILL LEVEL: BEGINNER

A Gaggle of Geese

BLOCK SIZE: 6″ × 6″ finished • **NUMBER OF BLOCKS**: 16

A Gaggle of Geese, 24½″ × 24½″, made and quilted by Christine Copenhaver, 2012

saw this unusual setting of Flying Geese blocks on a quilt in the Shelburne

Museum in Vermont. The quilt was from the late 1800s, maker unknown. The Flying Geese blocks in that quilt fin-ished at a tiny 1½″ × 3″. I drafted them at an easier-to-sew finished 2″ × 4″. With 1″ sashing, the three-geese block finishes at 6″ × 6″. I wanted a scrappy look for this project, so I actually used 24 ties in this pint-sized quilt.

My friend Mary got very excited when she saw this quilt. She had inherited her grandfather's ties and thought this little quilt was the perfect size and level of effort to make necktie quilts for herself, her three sisters, and sixteen cousins! (Yes, that's twenty! Go, Mary!)

Some ties that would work in this quilt

Materials

Yardages, other than neckties, are based on 20″-wide fusible interfacing and 42″-wide cotton.

- For blocks: 16–24 neckties
- For binding: 2 neckties (option 1) *OR* ⅜ yard cotton (option 2)
- Fusible interfacing: 2 yards for blocks *and* binding (option 1) *OR* 1¾ yards for blocks (option 2)
- For background: ½ yard dark blue cotton shirting
- For backing: 1 yard cotton
- Batting: 32″ × 32″

Cutting and Fusing Instructions

FUSIBLE INTERFACING

Refer to Planning and Cutting for cutting methods for the fusible interfacing. The + sign indicates that you should add a "hair" to the cut size of the interfacing.

- Cut 8 strips 4½+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip with 6 intervals of 2½+″. Subcut 2 units of 4½+″ × 7½+″ (each with 3 drawn 2½+″ sections) from each strip for a total of 16 units. Save the extra interfacing pieces for another project.
- Cut 6 strips 3+″ × WOF*. Draw a line down the center length of each strip, dividing it into 1½″ sections, but do not cut. Mark each strip at 6½+″ intervals. Subcut a total of 16 units 3+″ × 6½+″ (each with 2 drawn 1½″ sections).
- **For necktie binding (option 1):** Cut 3 strips 3+″ × WOF*.

NECKTIES

For the blocks: *Refer to Fitting Interfacing on Ties and Precise Trimming of Fused Tie Fabric. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for the fusible interfacing.*

- Arrange the interfacing 4½+″ × 7½+″ units on the neckties. Fuse the interfacing and cut 3 rectangles 2½″ × 4½″ from each unit for a total of 24 fused rectangles.
- Arrange the interfacing 3+″ × 6½+″ units on the neckties, placing the pairs of strips among neckties as desired for variety. Fuse the interfacing and cut 48 fused rectangles 1½″ × 6½″.

For necktie binding (option 1): *Refer to Necktie Inner Borders and Binding.*

- Fuse 3 interfacing 3+″ × WOF* strips on 2 ties. Cut a strip 3″ × length of each fused tie. Subcut each strip into 2 strips 1½″ × length of fused tie for at least 115″ of 1½″ strips.

FABRIC

- **From the background fabric:** Cut 6 strips 2½″ × WOF*; subcut 96 squares 2½″ × 2½″.
- **From the binding fabric (option 2):** Cut 3 strips 2¼″ × WOF*.

** WOF = width of fabric*

Making the Blocks

Seam allowances are ¼″.

The Gaggle of Geese block is made up of three Flying Geese blocks with two spacer strips on either side. Refer to Perfect Triangles from Squares for tips on stitching and pressing.

Gaggle of Geese block—Make 16.

MAKING THE FLYING GEESE

1. Using a ruler and a pencil, draw a diagonal line on the back of each background 2½″ square.

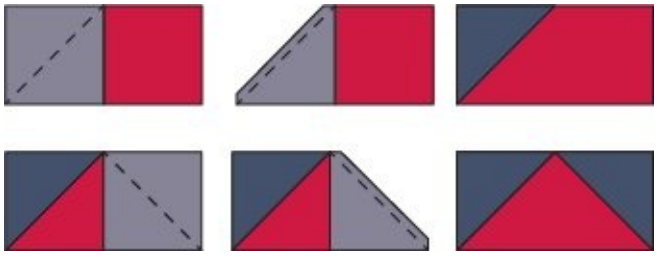
2. Place a background square on 1 end of a necktie 2½″ × 4½″ rectangle, right sides together. The diagonal line should angle from the center top to the lower corner. Pin.

3. Using the drawn line as a guide, sew just a needle's width away from the line toward the outside corner.

4. Press the seam flat to set it. Fold back the corner and press again. Check for squareness.

5. Cut the bottom 2 layers of corner fabric, leaving a ¼″ seam allowance. Save the cut corners for a little rainy-day project. I used leftover corners like this in *Bits 'n' Pieces*.

6. Repeat Steps 1–5 on the adjacent corner.



Sew each square on the diagonal line, trim extra fabric, and press.

7. Make 48 Flying Geese, in 16 groups of 3 matching units, for each block.

MAKING THE GAGGLE OF GEESE BLOCK

1. Refer to the block assembly diagram to sew together 3 matching Flying Geese units.

2. Add pairs of matching 1½″ × 6½″ strips to the sides of the unit from Step 1. Press the seams to the outside.

3. Repeat Steps 1 and 2 to make 16 blocks.

Block assembly

Quilt Assembly

1. Refer to the quilt assembly diagram to arrange the blocks in a 4 block × 4 block formation on a design wall. Alternate the direction of the Flying Geese as shown.

2. Sew 4 blocks together to form a row. Repeat this step to make 4 rows. Press the seams in alternate directions from row to row.

3. Sew the 4 rows together to complete the quilt top.

4. After layering and quilting, use either the fused tie 1½″ strips (option 1) or the cotton 2¼″ strips (option 2) for binding.

Quilt assembly

SKILL LEVEL: SKILLED BEGINNER

Yikes! Stripes!

BLOCK SIZE: 7″ × 7″ finished • **NUMBER OF BLOCKS:** 30

Yikes! Stripes! 52½″ × 59½″, made and quilted by Christine Copenhaver, 2013

This is not a subtle quilt, but it's very striking in its own way. With all the stripes, the block is hard to see. It consists of four triangles, with right angles meeting in the center and stripes parallel to the outer edges. It took me a while to warm up to this quilt. At first it was a struggle to work on. No combination of stripes was

“harmonious” (at least, in my view). At one point, I was going to name it “Love Me! Hate Me! But, Don’t Leave Me Hanging!” Finally, I turned to Kaffe Fassett (the Master of Stripes) and followed his simple advice from *Passionate Patchwork* (refer to Resources). He said to do a few blocks using all the same stripe, a few with all different stripes, and the rest a mix in between. Once I focused on composing the block, the composition of the quilt came together.

Materials

Yardages, other than neckties, are based on 20″-wide fusible interfacing and 42″-wide cotton.

- **For blocks and striped border:** 25–40 striped neckties (I’ve tried many times to count the number of neckties I used in this quilt and can get only as far as 32 before I get confused; many striped ties look very similar.)
- **For inner border:** 2 red ties
- **For binding:** 3 striped ties
- **Fusible interfacing:** $5^{5}/_{4}$ yards
- **For outer border:** 1½ yards red cotton print
- **For backing:** 3⅓ yards cotton
- **Batting:** 60″ × 67″

Cutting and Fusing Instructions

FUSIBLE INTERFACING

Refer to Planning and Cutting for cutting methods using fusible interfacing. The + sign indicates that you should add a “hair” to the cut size of the interfacing.

- Cut 20 strips 6+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 6+″ intervals to draw 60 squares 6+″ × 6+″.
- Cut 25 strips 3+″ × WOF*.

NECKTIES

For the blocks: *Refer to Fitting Interfacing on Ties and Precise Trimming of Fused Tie Fabric. Always follow the manufacturer’s instructions for the fusible interfacing. The layout and cutting of the ties for these blocks are true puzzles!*

- At the widest end of a tie, arrange interfacing 6+″ strips so the diagonals of the squares align with the stripes. To get each block aligned, you may have to subcut the interfacing strips into 6+″ squares. And to fit all 60 of the 6+″ interfacing squares on the ties, you may have to cut several interfacing squares in half once through the diagonal to fit them on the tie. Place the interfacing triangles on the ties with the long diagonal side of the interfacing parallel to the stripes as shown. The layout may be different for each tie. It is up to you how many neckties you want to use to get the variety you want. Save the skinny ends of the ties to be used for the striped border.

The triangle's diagonal edge of the interfacing should align with the stripes.

Fuse the interfacing and cut the 6″ × 6″ squares and triangles. Subcut the squares in half once on the diagonal that aligns with the stripes for a total of 120 triangles. Make sure all triangles are 6″ on both shorter sides and that they have accurate right angles and 45° angles.

For the inner border and binding: *Refer to Necktie Inner Borders and Binding.*

- **Red inner border:** Fuse 3 interfacing 3+″ × WOF* strips on each of 2 neckties. Cut a strip 3″ × length of each fused tie. Subcut each strip into 2 strips 1½″ × length of fused tie for a total of 4 strips.
- **Striped inner border:** Fuse 10 interfacing 3+″ × WOF* strips on the leftover skinny ends of the ties used for the blocks, trimming the length of the interfacing strips to fit on the ties as needed. Cut the fused ties into strips 3″ × length of fused tie. Do not join the strips together yet; you need enough strips for at least 185″ of 3″ strips. Set these aside.
- **Binding:** Fuse 3 interfacing 3+″ × WOF* strips on each of 3 ties. Cut a strip 3″ × length of each fused tie. Subcut each strip into 2 strips 1½″ × length of fused tie for at least 245″ of 1½″ strips.

FABRIC

- **From the border fabric:** Cut 4 strips 5½″ × *length of fabric (parallel to the selvage).*

** WOF = width of fabric*

Making the Blocks

Seam allowances are ¼″.

Yikes! Stripes! block—Make 30.

Each block consists of four triangles, with right angles meeting in the center and stripes parallel to the outer edges. Because the interfacing stabilizes the fabric, you don't have to worry about bias edges on the outer edges of the block.

TIP STRIPE BLOCKS

I made some of the blocks with four different stripes, some with three different stripes, some with two different stripes, and one with just one stripe.

1. Refer to the block diagram. Sew 2 triangles together along the short edges. Start stitching the seam at the right angle of the triangles. Repeat with another pair of triangles. Press the seams open.

2. Sew the units from Step 1 together to complete a block. Press the seam open.

3. Repeat Steps 1 and 2 to make 30 blocks.

4. Square up each block to 7½″ × 7½″ by using a ruler with a 45° angle line and a rotary cutter. Place the 45° line on the diagonal of the block. Make sure each corner is square and the diagonal seamline exactly passes through the corners, keeping the 4-seam intersection at the center of the block. Trim as needed.

Block assembly

Quilt Assembly

TIP BLOCK ARRANGEMENT

Try not to think too much when arranging the blocks in a scrappy quilt top. Let it be random. Step back and see where the pieces take your eyes. Look at it through a reducing glass. In my original arrangement of this quilt, the reducing glass showed me that all of the whites were clumped together. The eye was drawn there and stopped. By separating and redistributing the whites, the design is less static, and the eye continues to move

and explore the quilt.

1. Refer to the quilt assembly diagram to arrange the blocks in a 5 block × 6 block formation on a design wall.

2. Sew together 5 blocks to form a row. Repeat this step to make 6 rows. Press the seams in alternate directions from row to row.

3. Sew the 6 rows together to complete the pieced quilt center.

4. To add the red inner border, refer to Adding Borders to measure and cut the border lengths, using the red tie 1½″ strips. Add the side borders first. Then add the top and bottom borders.

5. To add the striped inner border, refer to Adding Borders to measure the border lengths. Join enough fused tie 3″ sections together for the needed length of the 2 side border strips. (I joined these sections with a right-angle seam rather than a diagonal seam.) Sew these to the quilt sides. Repeat this step for the top and bottom border strips.

6. To add the outer border, refer to Adding Borders to measure and cut the border lengths, using the 5½″ strips. Add the side borders first. Then add the top and bottom borders.

7. After layering and quilting, use the fused tie 1½″ strips for binding.

Quilt assembly

SKILL LEVEL: BEGINNER

Wacky Windmills

BLOCK SIZE: 7″ × 7″ finished • **NUMBER OF BLOCKS:** 72

Wacky Windmills, 73½″ × 80½″, made by Christine Copenhaver, quilted by Beverly Butler, 2013

This is a fun and easy block to make. Using off-white and neutral tone-on-tone prints to contrast with the dark neckties makes a handsome quilt. The project following this one, *Wild-and-Crazy-Guys Ties*, uses a version of the same block but does it with loud and colorful ties, really putting the “wack” in wacky!

Materials

Yardages, other than neckties, are based on 20″-wide fusible interfacing and 42″-wide cottons.

- **For blocks:** 36 or more neckties
- **For binding:** 4 striped neckties (option 1) *OR* ⅝ yard cotton (option 2)
- **Fusible interfacing:** 6¼ yards for blocks *and* binding (option 1) *OR* 5¼ yards fusible interfacing for blocks (option 2)
- **For background:** 2⅞ yards neutral cotton *OR* 12–14 fat quarters
- **For inner border:** ⅝ yard red cotton
- **For outer border:** 2⅛ yards floral
- **For backing:** 5 yards cotton
- **Batting:** 82″ × 89″

Cutting and Fusing Instructions

FUSIBLE INTERFACING

Refer to Planning and Cutting for cutting methods for the fusible interfacing. The + sign indicates that you should add a "hair" to the cut size of the interfacing.

- Cut 36 strips 5″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 5″ intervals to draw 144 squares 5″ × 5″. *Please note that these squares are drawn without the "+" measurement. Because of the 2 steps of trimming for this block, any frayed edges will be taken care of, if they occur.*
- **Tie binding (option 1):** Cut 12 strips 3+″ × WOF*.

NECKTIES

For the blocks: *Refer to Fitting Interfacing on Ties and Precise Trimming of Fused Tie Fabric. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for the fusible interfacing.*

- Arrange interfacing 5″ strips on the neckties, making sure that there is an even number of squares per tie and cutting the interfacing on the marked lines as needed to fit. Usually there will be enough room for 2 pairs of squares per tie. Fuse the interfacing and cut 72 pairs of squares 5″ × 5″ for a total of 144 squares.

For the necktie binding (option 1**):** *Refer to Necktie Inner Borders and Binding.*

- **Tie binding (**option 1**):** Fuse 3 interfacing 3+″ × WOF* strips on each of 4 ties. Cut 4 strips 3″ × length of fused tie. Subcut each strip into 2 strips 1½″ × length of tie for at least 338″ of 1½″ strips.

FABRIC

- **From the background fabric:** Cut 144 squares 5″ × 5″.
- **From the inner border fabric:** Cut 7 strips 2½″ × WOF*.
- **From the outer border fabric:** Cut 4 strips 7″ × *length of fabric (parallel to the selvage).*
- **From the binding fabric (option 2):** Cut 8 strips 2¼″ × WOF*.

** WOF = width of fabric*

Making the Blocks

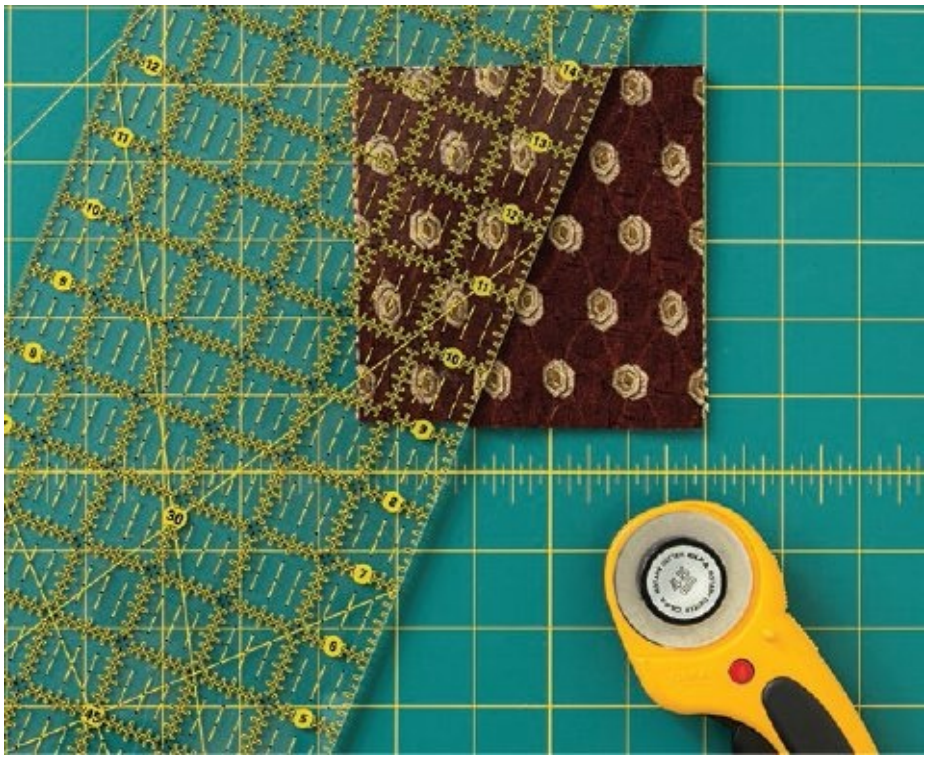
Seam allowances are ¼″.

Windmill block—Make 72.

Make one complete block at a time before starting the next block.

1. Stack 2 matching necktie 5″ squares and 2 matching background 5″ squares, all right sides up.

2. Using a ruler and rotary cutter, cut from lower left to upper right through all 4 layers at an angle of your choosing, but do not begin or end less than ¾″ from the corners.



Use a rotary cutter to make an angled cut through the stack of 4 squares.

3. Starting with the top piece from the cut stack on the left, find the corresponding piece in the right stack that is the opposite color and complementary in shape so that the 2 placed together make a square. Continue matching the pieces to form 4 squares on the mat. (It’s like a puzzle!)

Sort and pair pieces.

4. Pin the pieces right sides together so the diagonal edges are slightly offset, as shown.

Align the pieces to sew the seam.

5. Stitch together along the diagonal seams. Press seams toward the dark fabric.

6. Trim each unit to 4¼″ square. Start by choosing any side as a reference and trim a straight line. Trim the opposite side parallel to the first edge at 4¼″. Trim an adjacent side at right angles to the first 2 sides. Trim the last side 4¼″ from its opposite side.

7. Arrange 4 units in a windmill pattern.

8. Sew units together in pairs. Press seams toward the dark fabric.

9. Sew pairs together to complete the block.

Arrange units in a windmill pattern.

10. Trim the block to 7½″ × 7½″ square, keeping the 4-seam junction in the center of the block.

11. Repeat Steps 1–10 to make a total of 72 blocks.

TIP TRIMMING UP BLOCKS

To trim and square the block, use the center seamline as a reference point. Since half of 7½″ is 3¾″, line up the 3¾″ line of the ruler with the block's center seam. Trim excess fabric even with the ruler. Rotate the block a quarter turn and repeat until you have trimmed all four sides.

Quilt Assembly

1. Refer to the quilt assembly diagram to arrange the blocks in an 8 block × 9 block formation on a design wall. Rearrange the blocks so the composition is balanced with tie colors.

2. Sew together 8 blocks to form a row. Repeat this step to make 9 rows. Press the seams in alternate directions from row to row.

3. Sew the 9 rows together to complete the pieced quilt center.

4. To add the inner border, refer to Adding Borders to measure and cut the border lengths, using the inner border 2½″ strips. Add the side borders first. Then add the top and bottom borders.

5. To add the outer border, refer to Adding Borders to measure and cut the border lengths, using the 7″ strips. Add the side borders first. Then add the top and bottom borders.

6. After layering and quilting, use either the fused tie 1½″ strips (option 1) or the cotton 2¼″ strips (option 2) for binding.

Quilt assembly

SKILL LEVEL: BEGINNER

Wild-and-Crazy-Guys Ties

BLOCK SIZE: 9″ × 9″ finished • **NUMBER OF BLOCKS:** 20

Wild-and-Crazy-Guys Ties, 36½″ × 45½″, made by Christine Copenhaver, quilted by Sandra Adkinson, 2012.

This quilt was a riot to make. It came about quite spontaneously. I was testing my pattern and didn't want to waste "good" ties, so I grabbed two "ugly" ones. The block turned out to be … interesting. That led me to unearth more "uglies" until I had a quilt! I'm sure Steve Martin would have been proud to wear every one of these ties in an old *Saturday Night Live* skit, Wild and Crazy Guys.

I used the block from *Wacky Windmills* here, only larger to accommodate the larger scale of the tie patterns.

Materials

Yardages, other than neckties, are based on 20″-wide fusible interfacing and 42″-wide cottons.

- **For blocks:**

  20 dark and wild ties

  20 light and crazy ties

- **Fusible interfacing:** 4¾ yards
- **For backing:** 1½ yards cotton
- **For binding:** ½ yard red print
- **Batting:** 42″ × 51″

Cutting and Fusing Instructions

FUSIBLE INTERFACING

Refer to Planning and Cutting for cutting methods for the fusible interfacing. The + sign indicates that you should add a "hair" to the cut size of the interfacing.

- Cut 27 strips 6+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 6+″ intervals to draw a total of 80 squares 6+″ × 6+″.

NECKTIES

For the blocks: *Refer to Fitting Interfacing on Ties and Precise Trimming of Fused Tie Fabric. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for the fusible interfacing.*

- Arrange a pair of interfacing 6+″ × 6+″ squares on each tie, subcutting the interfacing as needed to fit. Fuse the interfacing and cut a total of 80 squares 6″ × 6″ (40 pairs).

FABRIC

- **From the binding fabric:** Cut 5 strips 2¼″ × WOF*.

** WOF = width of fabric*

Making the Blocks

Seam allowances are ¼″.

Follow the instructions in *Wacky Windmills*, Making the Blocks, except for these changes:

- In Step 1, stack 2 matching light necktie 6″ squares and 2 matching dark necktie 6″ squares.
- In Step 6, trim the squares to 5¼″ × 5¼″.
- In Step 10, trim the blocks to 9½″ × 9½″.
- In Step 11, make 20 blocks.

Windmill block—Make 20.

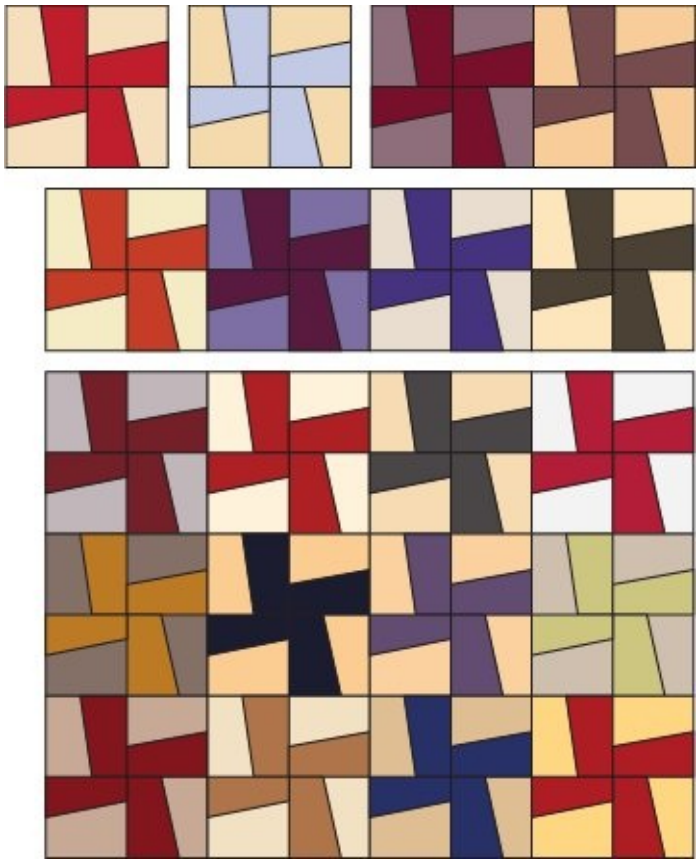
Quilt Assembly

1. Refer to the quilt assembly diagram to arrange the blocks in a 4 block × 5 block formation on a design wall.

2. Sew together 4 blocks to form a row. Repeat this step to make 5 rows. Press the seams in alternate directions from row to row.

3. Sew the 5 rows together to complete the pieced quilt center.

4. After layering and quilting, use the cotton 2¼″ strips for binding.



Quilt assembly

SKILL LEVEL: SKILLED BEGINNER

Classic Log Cabin

BLOCK SIZE: 6¾″ × 6¾″ finished • **NUMBER OF BLOCKS:** 36

Classic Log Cabin, 55″ × 55″, made and quilted by Christine Copenhaver, 2013

This quilt shows an unusual setting for a classic quilt. The blocks can be made in a completely scrappy manner, with darks and lights selected at random, or it can be as I have done it, with a matching pair of logs for each round as you build. A yellow square, representing the welcoming light in the window, is common to many Log Cabin quilts. I used a bright gold dupioni silk for this piece, but other fabrics can be just as effective.

Materials

Yardages, other than neckties, are based on 20″-wide fusible interfacing, 42″-wide cottons, and 54″-wide silk.

- **For blocks:**

  20–30 red neckties

  15–20 tan and beige neckties

- **For binding:** 3 neckties (option 1) *OR* ½ yard cotton (option 2)
- **For inner border:** 2 dark blue neckties
- **Fusible interfacing:** 6¾ yards for blocks, inner border, *and* binding (option 1) *OR* 6 yards for blocks and inner border (option 2)
- **For block centers:** ⅛ yard gold dupioni silk
- **For outer border:** 1⅞ yards red cotton print
- **For backing:** 3½ yards cotton
- **Batting:** 63″ × 63″

Cutting and Fusing Instructions

FUSIBLE INTERFACING

Refer to Planning and Cutting for cutting methods for the fusible interfacing. The + sign indicates that you should add a "hair" to the cut size of the interfacing.

- Cut 3 strips 7¼+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 1¼+″ intervals to draw 36 logs 1¼+″ × 7¼+″. Label each log *Dk Q*.
- Cut 5 strips 6½+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 1¼+″ intervals to draw 72 logs 1¼+″ × 6½+″. Label 36 *Lt O* and 36 *Dk P*.
- Cut 5 strips 5¾+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 1¼+″ intervals to draw 72 logs 1¼+″ × 5¾+″. Label 36 *Dk M* and 36 *Lt N*.
- Cut 5 strips 5+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 1¼+″ intervals to draw 72 logs 1¼+″ × 5+″. Label 36 *Lt K* and 36 *Dk L*.
- Cut 5 strips 4¼+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 1¼+″ intervals to draw 72 logs 1¼+″ × 4¼+″. Label 36 *Dk I* and 36 *Lt J*.
- Cut 5 strips 3½+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 1¼+″ intervals to draw 72 logs 1¼+″ × 3½+″. Label 36 *Lt G* and 36 *Dk H*.
- Cut 5 strips 2¾+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 1¼+″ intervals to draw 72 logs 1¼+″ × 2¾+″. Label 36 *Dk E* and *36 Lt F*.
- Cut 5 strips 2+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 1¼+″ intervals to draw 72 logs 1¼+″ × 2+″. Label 36 *Lt C* and 36 *Dk D*.
- Cut 3 strips 1¼+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 1¼+″ intervals to draw 36 squares 1¼+″ × 1¼+″. Label each square *Lt B*.

- Cut 6 strips 3+″ × WOF*.
- **Tie binding (option 1):** Cut 9 strips 3+″ × WOF*.

NECKTIES

For the blocks: *Refer to Fitting Interfacing on Ties and Precise Trimming of Fused Tie Fabric. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for the fusible interfacing.*

Pairings Note: The "scrappiness" of your quilt will depend on the number of ties you use and the fitting and cutting process you choose. If scrappy is the look you want, then just fuse all the interfacing logs marked *Lt* to light ties and all the interfacing logs marked *Dk* to dark ties.

However, if you want the blocks to have matching logs, as in the project photo and the Log Cabin block diagram, then you have to pair up logs to be fused to the same light or dark tie. These matching logs will form a light L or dark L in the block shown.

Pairings for the light logs are:

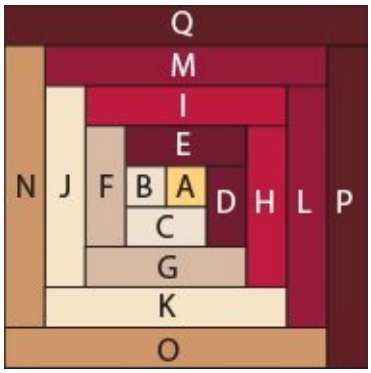
Lt B/Lt C *Lt J/Lt K*

Lt F/Lt G *Lt N/Lt O*

Pairings for the dark logs are:

Dk D/Dk E *Dk L/Dk M*

Dk H/Dk I *Dk P/Dk Q*



Log Cabin block

Each pairing needs to be fused to the same tie—that is, for every Dk P log, you need to fuse a Dk Q log to the same dark tie. This can be done in multiples; for example, fuse an uncut interfacing section of 4 Dk P logs and fuse an uncut interfacing section of 4 Dk Q logs to the same tie; then subcut the individual logs. Here is a suggested layout for maximizing the number of logs fused to a single tie with logs for matching rounds.

This dark tie will yield 10 pairs of Dk P and Dk Q logs.

- Arrange interfacing logs on appropriate light or dark neckties. If you are pairing logs, make sure you fuse both logs

of the pairing to the same tie. Fuse the interfacing and cut each log.

For the inner border and binding: *Refer to Necktie Inner Borders and Binding.*

- **Inner border:** Fuse 3 interfacing 3+″ × WOF* strips on each of 2 ties. Cut a strip 3″ × length of each fused tie. Subcut each strip into 2 strips 1½″ × length of tie for a total of 4 strips.
- **Tie binding (option 1):** Fuse 3 interfacing 3+″ × WOF* strips on each of 3 ties. Cut a strip 3″ × length of each fused tie. Subcut each strip into 2 strips 1½″ × length of fused tie for at least 240″ of 1½″ strips.

FABRIC

- **From the gold silk fabric:** Cut 1 strip 1¼″ × WOF*; subcut 36 squares 1¼″ × 1¼″. These are A squares.
- **From the outer border fabric:** Cut 4 strips 6½″ × *length of fabric (parallel to the selvage).*
- **From the binding fabric (option 2):** Cut 6 strips 2¼″ × WOF*.

** WOF = width of fabric*

Making the Blocks

Seam allowances are ¼″.

Log Cabin block—Make 36.

TIP PRECISION SEAMS

This block has eight seams from one side to the other. If you make a $^{1}/_{16}$″ error in each seam, you will have a ½″ error in the finished block size. If you are consistent in your error, however, the blocks may all end up the same size. Consistency is the key!

I suggest that you make a trial block. Try the exercise in Testing Your Seam Allowance.

Refer to the Log Cabin block assembly diagram to arrange the block. If you are pairing your logs, have sets of light B/C, F/G, J/K, and N/O logs and sets of dark D/E, H/I, L/M, and P/Q

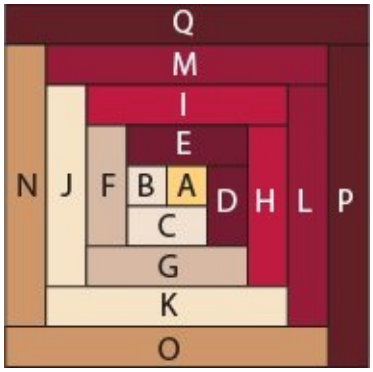
logs ready for each block.

1. Sew gold A and B together. (All the blocks begin with a gold A piece.) Press the seam toward B.

2. Place the A/B unit in front of you with the B on the left. Sew C to the bottom of the A/B unit. (If you are matching logs, then B and C should match.) Press the seam toward C.

3. Following the block diagram, continue to add logs in alphabetical order and a counterclockwise direction, ending with Q. Press each seam toward the log just added.

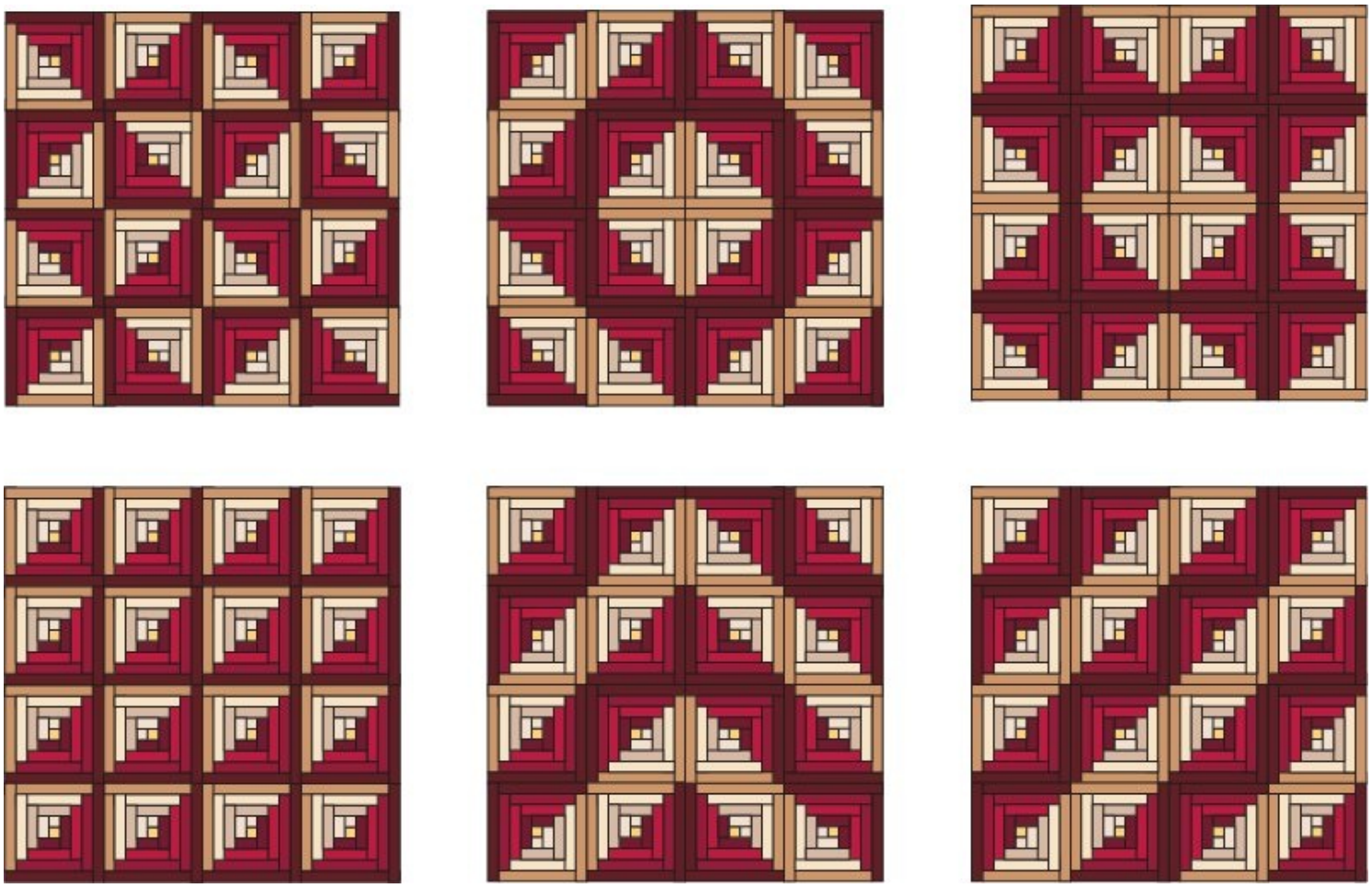
4. Repeat Steps 1–3 to make 36 blocks.



Log Cabin block assembly

Quilt Assembly

There are numerous ways to arrange Log Cabin blocks. Study these variations and play with your blocks on a design wall to discover your favorite.



Various ways to set Log Cabin blocks

1. To make my setting for the blocks, refer to the quilt assembly diagram to arrange the blocks in a 6 block × 6 block formation on a design wall.

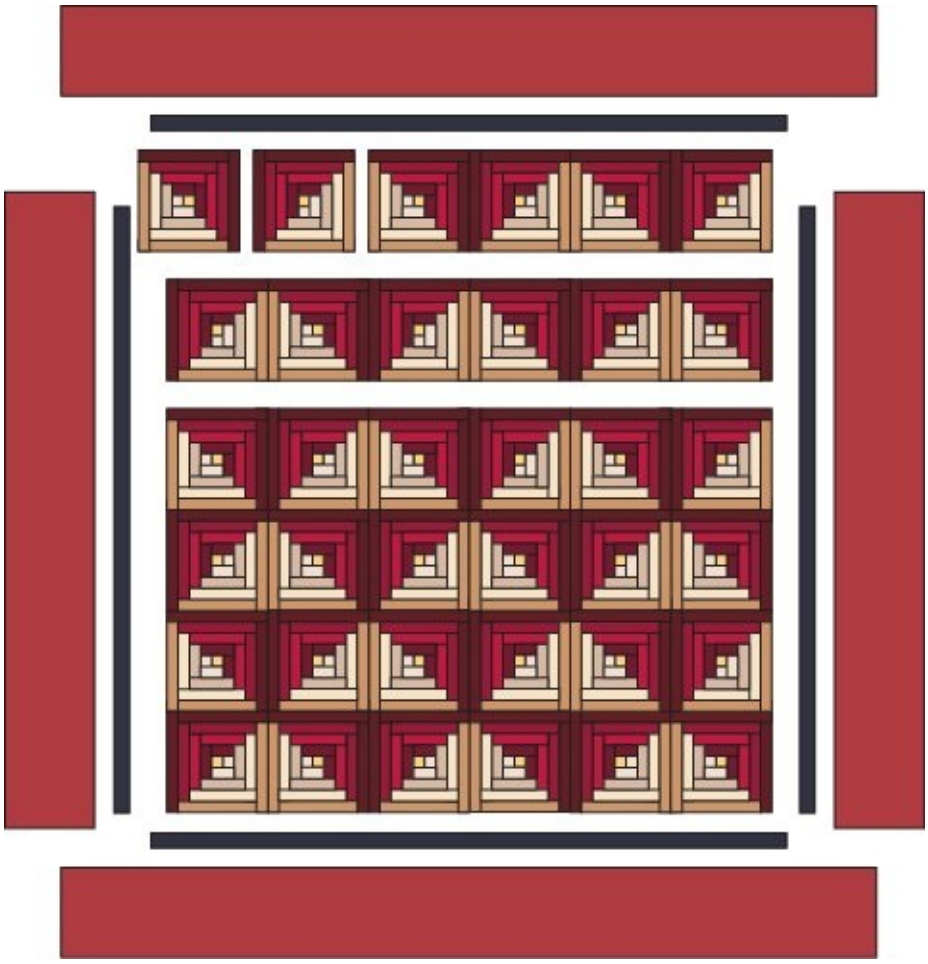
2. Sew together 6 blocks to form a row. Repeat this step to make 6 rows. Press the seams in alternate directions from row to row.

3. Sew the 6 rows together to complete the pieced quilt center.

4. To add the inner border, refer to Adding Borders to measure and cut the border lengths, using the inner border fused tie 1½″ strips. Add the side borders first. Then add the top and bottom borders.

5. To add the outer border, refer to Adding Borders to measure and cut the border lengths, using the 6½″ strips. Add the side borders first. Then add the top and bottom borders.

6. After layering and quilting, use either the fused tie 1½″ strips (option 1) or the cotton 2¼″ strips (option 2) for binding.

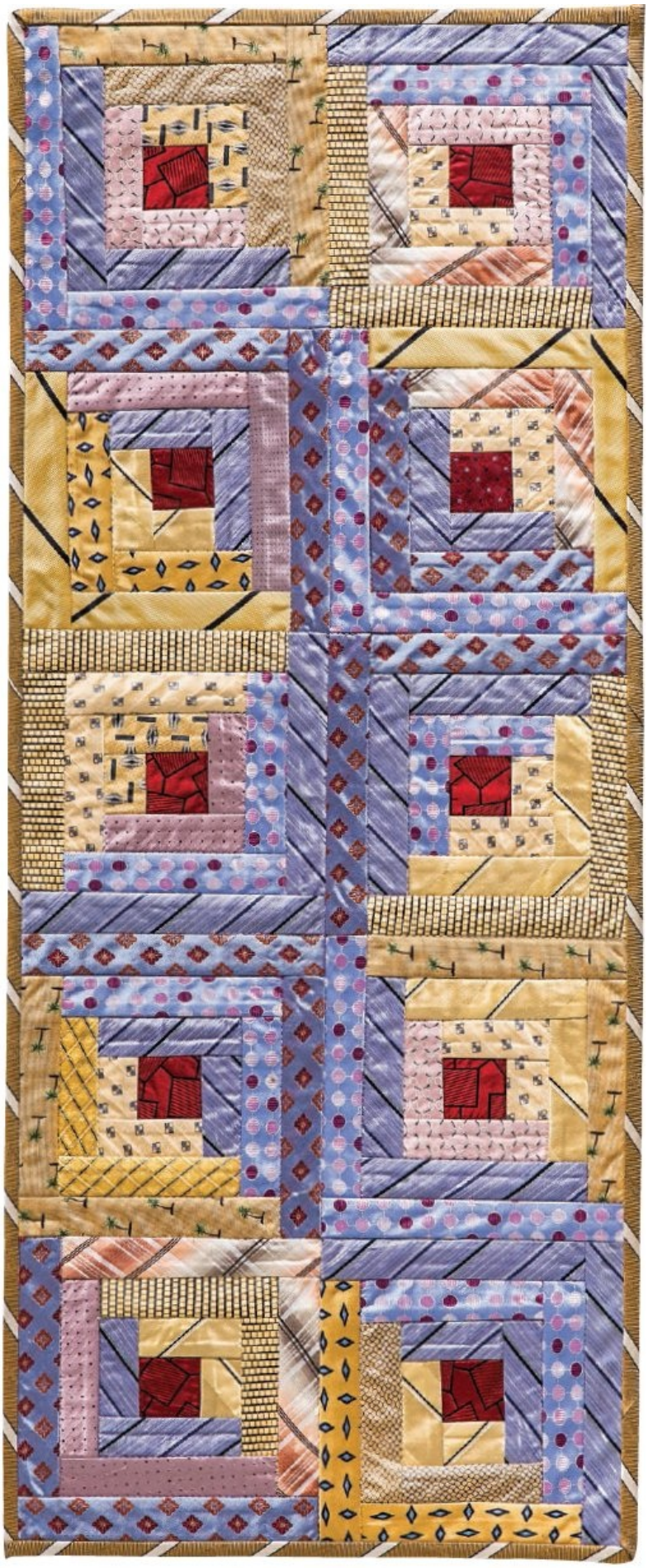


Quilt assembly

SKILL LEVEL: SKILLED BEGINNER

Pretty in Pink

BLOCK SIZE: 7½″ × 7½″ finished • **NUMBER OF BLOCKS:** 10



Pretty in Pink, 15½″ × 38″, made and quilted by Christine Copenhaver, 2012

This simple block can be striking in a variety of colors. Purple and pink are unusual colors for ties, but I have a friend who kept finding them and bringing them to me. I finally decided to use them in this project. Even if you don't have purple and pink ties, any light and dark color combination would work to make this gorgeous table runner. Block construction is similar to *Classic Log Cabin*. However, this block starts with a larger square in the center and has fewer and wider logs, which makes it easier to construct.

Materials

Yardages, other than neckties, are based on 20″-wide fusible interfacing and 42″-wide cottons.

- **For blocks:**

  7–8 light neckties

  7–8 dark neckties

  1 red necktie

- **For binding:** 1 striped necktie
- **Fusible interfacing:** 2½ yards
- **For backing:** 1⅜ yards cotton
- **Batting:** 23″ × 46″

Cutting and Fusing Instructions

FUSIBLE INTERFACING

Refer to Planning and Cutting for cutting methods for the fusible interfacing. The + sign indicates that you should add a "hair" to the cut size of the interfacing.

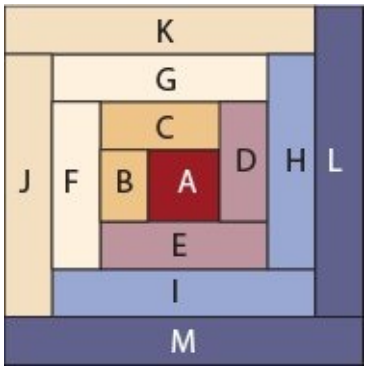
- Cut 1 strip 8+″ × WOF*. Mark the strip at 1½+″ intervals to draw 10 logs 1½+″ × 8+″. Label these *Dk M*.
- Cut 2 strips 7+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 1½+″ intervals to draw 20 logs 1½+″ × 7+″. Label 10 *Lt K* and 10 *Dk L*.
- Cut 2 strips 6+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 1½+″ intervals to draw 20 logs 1½+″ × 6+″. Label 10 *Dk I* and 10 *Lt J*.
- Cut 2 strips 5+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 1½+″ intervals to draw 20 logs 1½+″ × 5+″. Label 10 *Lt G* and 10 *Dk H*.
- Cut 2 strips 4+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 1½+″ intervals to draw 20 logs 1½+″ × 4+″. Label 10 *Dk E* and 10 *Lt F*.
- Cut 2 strips 3+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 1½+″ intervals to draw 20 logs 1½+″ × 3+″. Label 10 *Lt C* and 10 *Dk D*.
- Cut 1 strip 2+″ × WOF*. Mark the strip at 1½+″ intervals to draw 10 logs 1½+″ × 2+″. Label each square *Lt B*.
- Cut 1 strip 2+″ × WOF*. Mark the strip at 2+″ intervals to draw 10 squares 2+″ × 2+″. Label each square *RED A*.
- Cut 6 strips 3+″ × WOF*.

NECKTIES

For the blocks: *Refer to Fitting Interfacing on Ties and Precise Trimming of Fused Tie Fabric. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for the fusible interfacing.*

Note: The "scrappiness" of your quilt will depend on the number of ties you use and the fitting and cutting process you choose. If scrappy is the look you want, then just fuse all the interfacing logs marked *Lt* to light ties and all the interfacing logs marked *Dk* to dark ties. If you want to have some matching logs in your blocks, consider these

pairings: lights—*B/C*, *F/G*, and *J/K*; darks—*D/E*, *H/I*, and *L/M*. Refer to the Pairings note for more details.



- Arrange interfacing strips on appropriate red, light, or dark neckties. If you are pairing logs, make sure you fuse both logs of the pairing to the same tie. Fuse the interfacing and cut each square or log.

For the binding: *Refer to Necktie Inner Borders and Binding.*

- Fuse 3 interfacing 3+″ × WOF* strips on the striped tie. Cut a strip 3″ × length of the fused tie. Subcut the strip into 2 strips 1½″ × length of fused tie for at least 110″ of 1½″ strips.

** WOF = width of fabric*

Making the Log Cabin Block

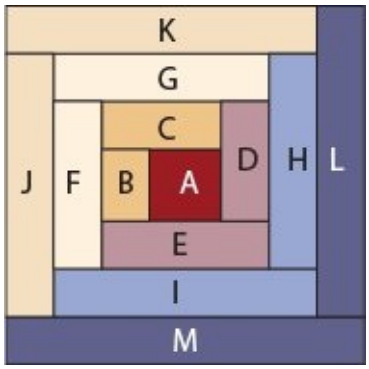
Refer to the Log Cabin block assembly diagram to arrange the block.

1. Sew A and B together. Press the seam toward B.

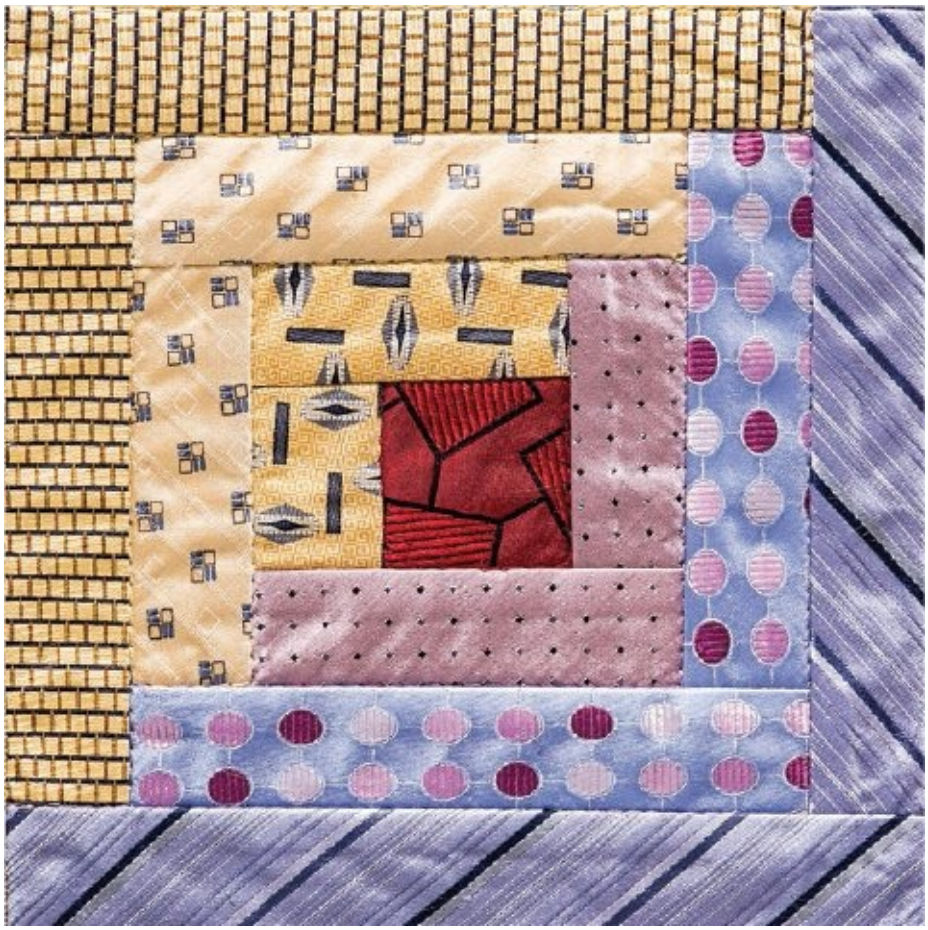
2. Place the A/B unit in front of you with the B on the left. Sew C to the top of A/B as shown. (If you are matching logs, then B and C should match.) Press the seam toward C.

3. Following the block diagram, continue to add logs in alphabetical order and a clockwise direction, ending with M. Press each seam toward the log just added.

4. Repeat Steps 1–3 to make 10 blocks.



Log Cabin block assembly



Log Cabin block—Make 10.

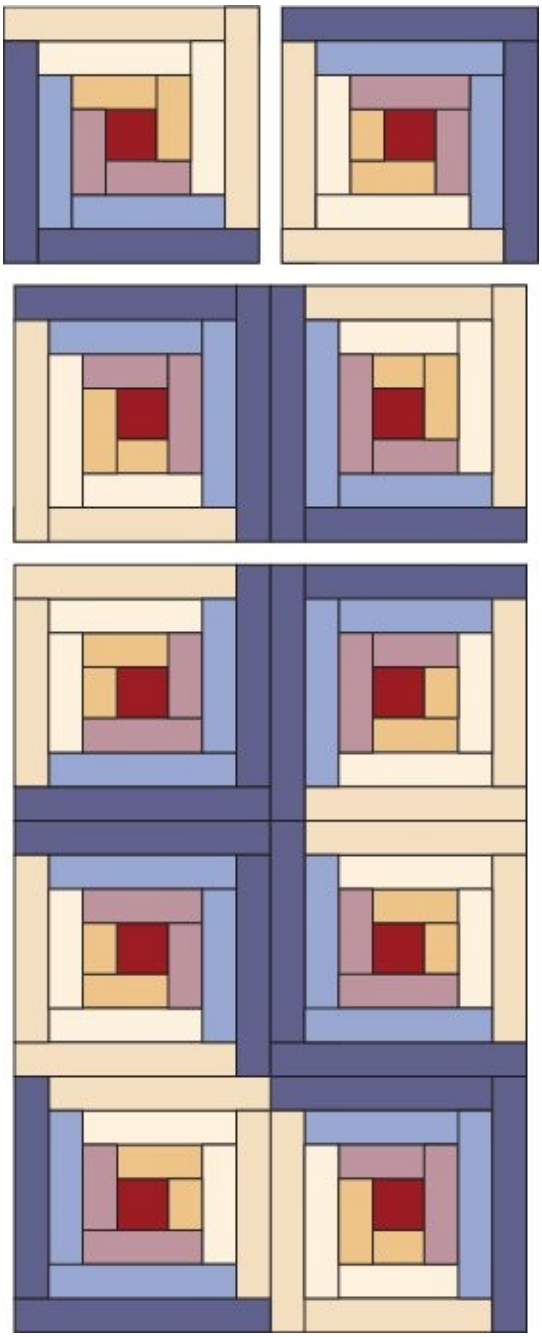
Quilt Assembly

1. Refer to the quilt assembly diagram to arrange the blocks in a 2 block × 5 block formation on a design wall. This classic setting is called Streak of Lightning, but you might want to experiment with another arrangement.

2. Sew together 2 blocks to form a row. Repeat this step to make 5 rows. Press the seams in alternate directions from row to row.

3. Sew the rows together to complete the top.

4. After layering and quilting, use the fused tie 1½″ strips for binding.



Quilt assembly

SKILL LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE

A Trellis of Ties

BLOCK SIZE: 3½″ finished • **NUMBER OF BLOCKS:** 59

A Trellis of Ties, 40½″ × 47½″, made by Christine Copenhaver, quilted by Barb O'Melia, 2012

This was my first necktie quilt, and I used 60° diamonds. Neckties with small or medium patterns work well with diamond shapes. In this quilt, the light diamonds are cut from neckties. If you can't find enough ties in light colors, you

can try other fabrics, such as silk, shirting-weight cotton, or synthetic blends. Whatever you choose, the color should be light enough to make a sharp contrast with the dark ties. I like to think of this as a trellis with the light shining in from behind.

These ties would work well in this quilt.

Materials

Yardages, other than neckties, are based on 20″-wide fusible interfacing, 42″-wide cottons, and 54″-wide silk.

- **For dark diamonds:** 12 dark neckties
- **For light diamonds:** 3 light neckties (option 1) *OR* ⅓ yard light yellow cotton (option 2)
- **Fusible interfacing:** 2¾ yards for dark *and* light ties (option 1) *OR* 2 yards for dark ties in blocks (option 2)
- **For setting triangles:** ½ yard light green silk
- **For border:** 1½ yards cotton fabric
- **For binding:** ⅜ yard cotton
- **For backing:** 2⅔ yards cotton
- **Batting:** 48″ × 55″

Cutting and Fusing Instructions

Refer to Cutting Diamonds and the Diamond Details tip. Copy the A Trellis of Ties *patterns A, B/Br, and C at 100%. Use the patterns to make templates for cutting the pieces indicated.*

FUSIBLE INTERFACING

Refer to Planning and Cutting for cutting methods for the fusible interfacing. The + sign indicates that you should add a "hair" to the cut size of the interfacing.

TIP

DIAMOND DETAILS

An equilateral diamond has four equal sides. When the instructions say to "cut diamonds," then the diamonds are equilateral. The width of the diamond always equals the width of the strip from which it is cut. The diamonds may be cut at a 45° or 60° angle.

Elongated or long diamonds can be right facing or left facing. Create unique long right and long left diamonds by cutting the diamond angle to the upper right or to the upper left at 45° or 60°. Carefully follow the project instructions to cut at the correct angle, direction, and length for long diamonds.

Long left diamond and long right diamond

- Cut 10 strips 2¼+″ × WOF*. Trim 1 end of each strip at a 60° angle. Mark lines parallel to this angled end at 2¼+″ intervals to draw a total of 59 diamonds.
- Cut 20 strips 2¼+″ × WOF*. Because you are cutting long diamonds, make sure the fusible side of the interfacing is facing down as you mark the angles. Trim 1 end of each strip at a 60° angle going to the upper left. Mark lines parallel to this angled end at 4+″ intervals to draw a total of 59 long left diamonds.

Long left 4″ diamonds

- **Light diamonds (option 1):** Cut 10 strips 2¼+″ × WOF*. Trim 1 end of each strip at a 60° angle. Mark lines parallel to this angled end at 2¼+″ intervals to draw a total of 59 diamonds.

NECKTIES

For the blocks: *Refer to Fitting Interfacing on Ties and Precise Trimming of Fused Tie Fabric. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for the fusible interfacing.*

- **Dark diamonds:** Each block requires a small diamond and a long diamond. If you are using 12 dark ties, arrange interfacing with 5 small diamonds and 5 long diamonds on each of 11 of the ties, cutting the interfacing strips as needed to fit. Arrange interfacing with 4 small and 4 long diamonds on the last tie. (If you want a scrappier quilt, you could use more ties and cut only 1 or 2 diamond pairs out of each.) Fuse the interfacing and subcut a total of 59 small dark diamonds and a total of 59 long dark diamonds with precise 60° angles and parallel sides.

Light diamonds (option 1): Arrange interfacing on 3 light ties to get 20 small diamonds on each of 2 ties and 19 small diamonds on the last tie. Fuse the interfacing and cut a total of 59 small light diamonds with precision.

FABRIC

- **From the light green silk fabric:** Cut 1 strip 4¾″ × WOF*; subcut 12 pieces using template A.

  Cut 1 strip 3½″ × WOF*; subcut 2 pieces using template B and 2 pieces using template Br.

  Cut 2 strips 2¾″ × WOF*; subcut 8 pieces using template C.

- **From the yellow fabric (option 2):** Cut 4 strips 2¼″ × WOF*. Trim 1 end of each strip at a 60° angle; subcut a total of 59 small yellow diamonds 2¼″.
- **From the border fabric:** Cut 4 strips 6½″ × *length of fabric (parallel to the selvage).*
- **From the binding fabric:** Cut 5 strips 2¼″ × WOF*.

** WOF = width of fabric*

Making the Block

Seam allowances are ¼″.

Make a diamond placement guide for 60° diamonds and use it to align pairs of diamonds to

assist you in the sewing process.

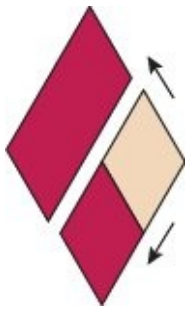
1. Refer to the block assembly diagram to arrange a dark long diamond, a dark diamond, and a light diamond together correctly. It is easy to sew the wrong sides of the 2 small diamonds together, so be careful! Arrange all the blocks as shown in the diagram.

2. Sew the small light diamond to the small dark diamond. Use the diamond placement guide to align the seam. Press the seam toward the dark diamond.

Diamond block

3. Sew the long diamond to the left side of the unit from Step 2 as shown. Note the position of the light diamond in the block. Use the diamond placement guide to align the seam. Press the seam toward the long diamond.

4. Repeat Steps 1–3 to make 59 diamond blocks.



Block assembly

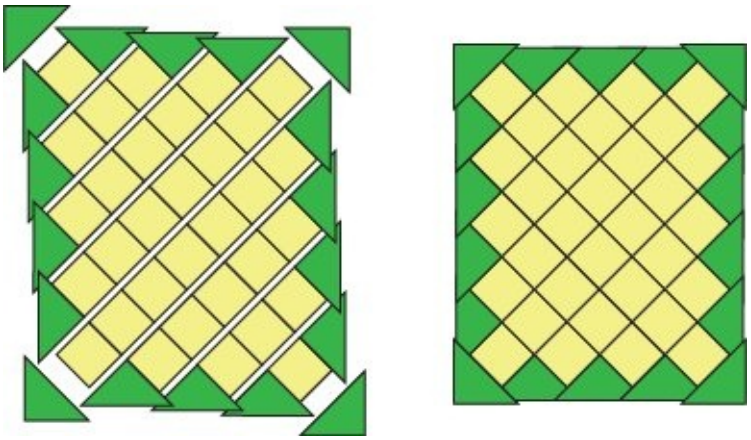
Quilt Assembly

1. Refer to the quilt assembly diagram to arrange the diamond blocks, the side setting C triangles, and the top and bottom setting A triangles in diagonal rows on a design wall. Add the B and Br corners to the design wall.

2. Sew only the diamond blocks together in diagonal rows first. Use the diamond placement guide to align the diamonds. After sewing all the block rows, add the setting triangles to each row. The setting triangles are oversized, so the extra fabric will extend beyond the outside points of the diamonds and will be trimmed later. Press the seams in alternate directions from row to row. Refer to the Oversized Setting Triangles tip to see how to position the setting triangles.

TIP OVERSIZED SETTING TRIANGLES

Note how the setting triangles are positioned at the end of each diagonal row. The concept is the same whether the blocks are squares or diamonds.



3. Pin the rows together. Refer to *Lone Star Meets GQ*, Making the Star Points, Step 3, for pinning. Carefully align each diamond block intersection by inserting the point of a pin into the seam exactly where the ¼″ seamline will cross it. Find the same point on the other strip of diamonds and stick in the pin, keeping it vertical so the seams are perfectly aligned. While keeping the pin straight, secure the layers of fabric by pinning on both sides of the vertical pin, being careful not to shift the fabric. Remove the vertical pin. Sew the rows together.

4. Add the B and Br corner triangles to the quilt center.

5. Refer to the Squaring Up tip to trim the excess setting triangle fabric from the quilt edge; square up the top.

6. To add the outer border, refer to Adding Borders to measure and cut the border lengths, using the 6½″ strips. Add the side borders first. Then add the top and bottom borders.

7. After layering and quilting, use the cotton 2¼″ strips for binding.

Quilt assembly

SQUARING UP

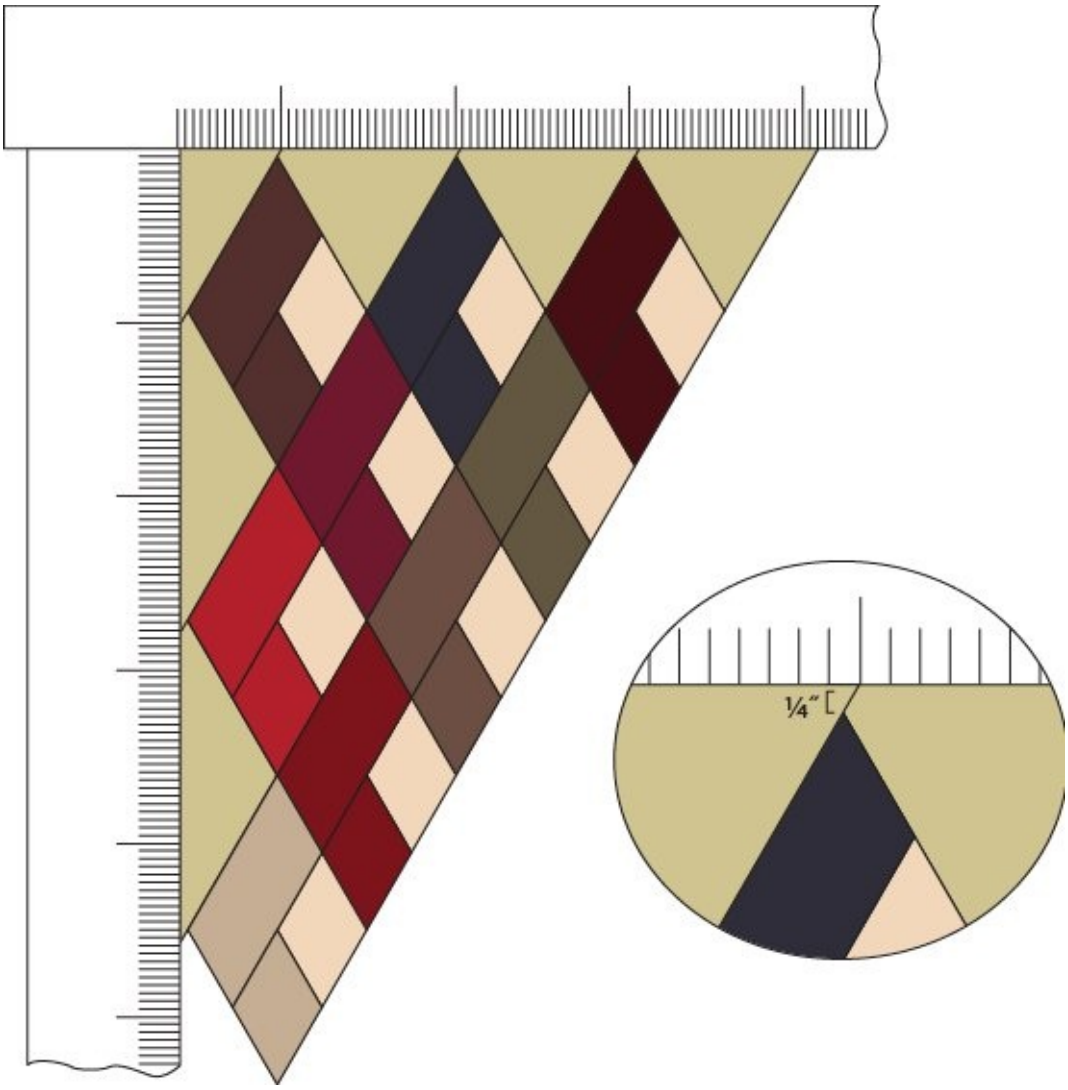
Square up your quilt center before adding the borders. You want to make sure that all corners are square at

90° angles, that opposite sides are the same lengths, and that the sides are straight. This is especially important when dealing with diamonds or blocks set on-point. Ideally, every seam allowance will allow the block point to just meet the border around the quilt. But if this is not the case with your quilt, compromise is the answer!

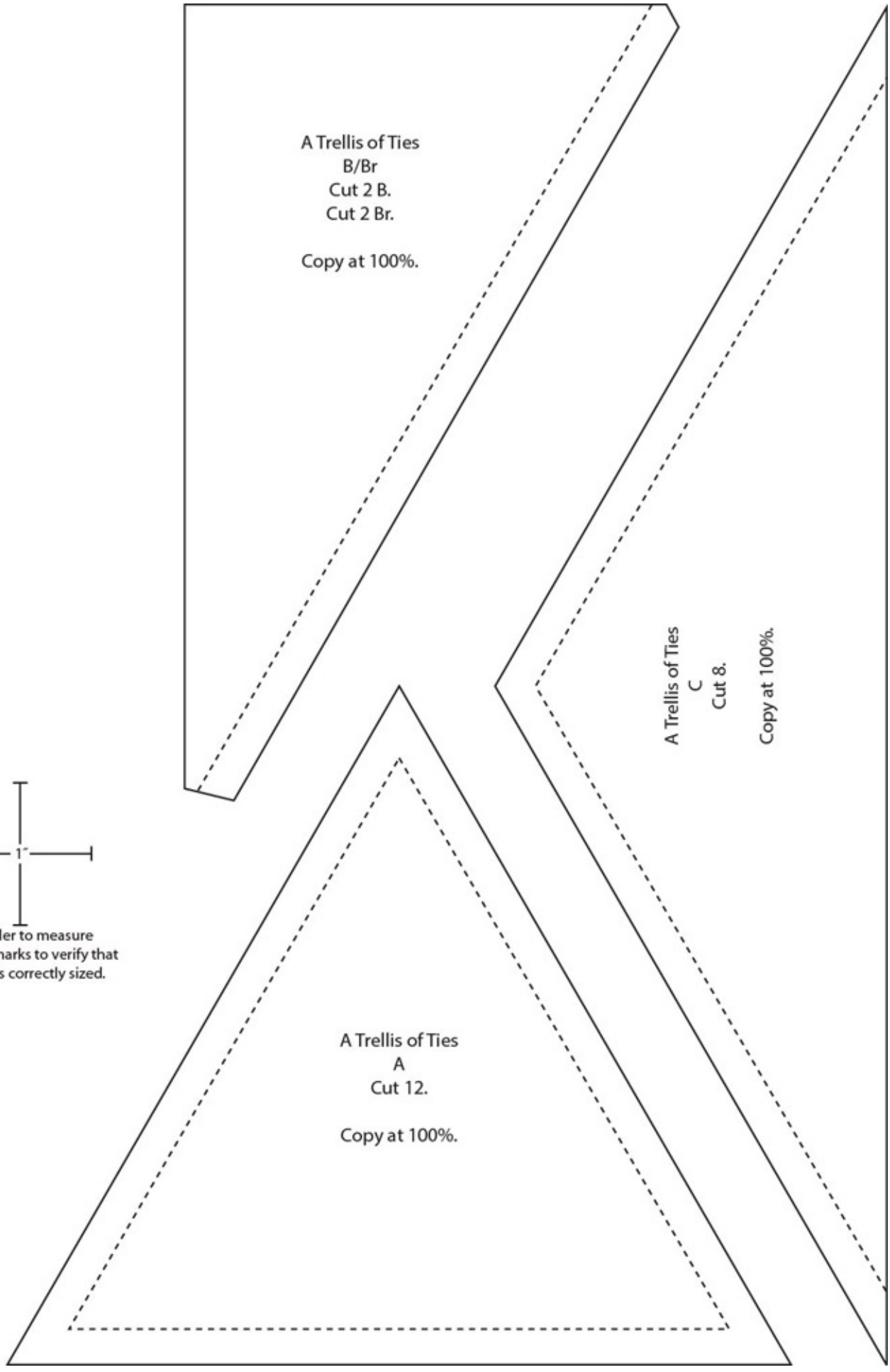
1. Use a removable marker to make a light mark ¼″ beyond the outer point of each diamond block on the top and bottom of the quilt and ¼″ from the outside points on either side.

2. Use a yardstick or other long straightedge to make sure your marked points line up in a straight line.

3. Using a large square ruler in the corner and 2 long rulers extending from it, find and draw the lines that are the best fit between going straight through your block points and maintaining a right angle at the corner. As you look for the best place to trim, let the seams go wide of the block points if necessary to avoid cutting off points. Trim each edge along the drawn lines.



Marking and squaring top


A Trellis of Ties
B/Br
Cut 2 B.
Cut 2 Br.
Copy at 100%.
A Trellis of Ties
C
Cut 8.
Copy at 100%.
1"
Use a ruler to measure these inch marks to verify that printout is correctly sized.
A Trellis of Ties
A
Cut 12.
Copy at 100%.

For all printable patterns or digital content: http://tinyurl.com/11075-patterns-download

SKILL LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE

Lone Star Meets GQ

BLOCK SIZE: 34″ × 34″ finished • **NUMBER OF BLOCKS:** 1

Lone Star Meets GQ, 43½″ × 43½″, made and quilted by Christine Copenhaver, 2012

The lone star has been the symbol of Texas from long before it became a state. To complement the traditional Texan bolo tie, I thought it fun to introduce neckties that you might find in *Gentleman's Quarterly* (GQ) magazine or on an East Coast city slicker! This classic quilt can showcase some very special neckties.

As you select ties for this quilt, think about contrasting colors and values for the rounds of 45° diamonds that radiate from the star center. Refer to the Lone Star chart and study the quilt photo (above) to help you plan the tie arrangement for the contrasting rounds. Or go online and look at other Lone Star quilts to get ideas for color variations and arrangements that may work well with your tie collection!

Some ties that would look great in this quilt.

Lone Star

NUMBER OF TIES NEEDED	POSITION	NUMBER OF 2¼″ DIAMONDS
1	Round 1 at center	8
1	Round 2	16
2 of similar value*	Round 3	24
2 of similar value*	Round 4	32
2 of similar value*	Round 5	24
1	Round 6	16
1	Round 7 star tips	8

** The second tie is for backup in case you can't get enough diamonds from your first tie choice.*

Refer to Design Options when adding another tie.

TIP EVALUATING COLOR CHOICES

Use your design wall as you cut. Place diamonds in order as you cut them. Preview and adjust your choices. Be sure to put some of your background fabric up to help you evaluate color choices. Your star fabrics need to contrast with the background fabric to make the rays of the star stand out.

Materials

Yardages, other than neckties, are based on 20″-wide fusible interfacing, 42″-wide cottons, and 54″-wide wool.

- **For star and accent border:** 10 neckties
- **Fusible interfacing:** 2¼ yards
- **For background:** 4 men's white shirts (background option 1) *OR* 1 yard shirting (background option 2)
- **For outside border:** 1 pair wool slacks, at least 34″ inseam (border option 1) *OR* ¾ yard wool (border option 2)
- **For backing:** 2⅞ yards cotton
- **For binding:** ½ yard cotton
- **Batting:** 51″ × 51″

Cutting and Fusing Instructions

Refer to Cutting Diamonds.

FUSIBLE INTERFACING

Refer to Planning and Cutting for cutting methods for the fusible interfacing. The + sign indicates that you should add a "hair" to the cut size of the interfacing.

- Cut 31 strips 2¼+″ × WOF*. Trim 1 end of each strip at a 45° angle. Mark lines parallel to this angled end at 2¼+″ intervals to draw a total of 155 diamonds.

NECKTIES

Refer to Fitting Interfacing on Ties and Precise Trimming of Fused Tie Fabric. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for the fusible interfacing.

For the star: Refer to the Lone Star chart to select specific ties for each round of the star; label each tie with a round number. The chart indicates how many diamonds you need for each round.

- Arrange the interfacing on the numbered neckties with the appropriate number of diamonds. Fuse the interfacing and cut the diamonds precisely with 45° angles and parallel sides. Start with the center round and, as you cut them, arrange the pieces on your design wall. The design wall will be especially useful when using 2 different ties for rounds 3, 4, or 5, if needed. Once you are satisfied with the arrangement, label each diamond with the round number.
- **For the accent border:** Fuse the remaining 27 interfacing diamonds to necktie scraps and cut each diamond precisely. (These do not need to be labeled.)

FABRIC

- **From the men's shirts (background option 1):** Secure the front sections of the shirt together by stitching on each side of the buttons before cutting the squares. Cut 4 squares 10½″ × 10½″, with the diagonal centered on the buttons.

  Cut 1 square 15½″ × 15½″; subcut diagonally twice for 4 setting triangles.
- **From the background fabric (background option 2):** Cut 1 strip 15½″ × WOF*; subcut 1 square 15½″ × 15½″ and 1 square 10½″ × 10½″.

  Cut 1 strip 10½″ × WOF*; subcut 3 squares 10½″ × 10½″.
- **From the men's pants (border option 1):** Cut 4 strips 5″ × 45″.
- **From the wool (border option 2):** Cut 4 strips 5″ × WOF*.
- **From the binding fabric:** Cut 5 strips 2¼″ × WOF*.

** WOF = width of fabric*

Making the Star Points

Seam allowances are ¼″.

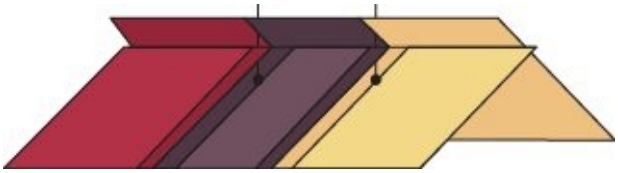
Large pieced diamonds are star points in the Lone Star block. Make 8.

The Lone Star is made of eight star points—large pieced diamonds. With so many seams in the large diamonds, sewing a true ¼″ seam can make the difference between serenity and misery. Refer to Testing Your Seam Allowance for an exercise that will help you ensure the accuracy of your seams. Then make a diamond placement guide for 45° diamonds. Once you have taken these steps, every diamond will find its place!

1. Refer to the pieced diamond assembly diagram and to the Lone Star chart to arrange the labeled diamonds with 4 diamonds across in each of 4 rows. Note the placement of the labeled diamonds in each position. Arrange only 1 pieced diamond at a time.

2. Use the diamond placement guide to align the diamonds and pin before sewing each of the 4 rows across. Press the seams open.

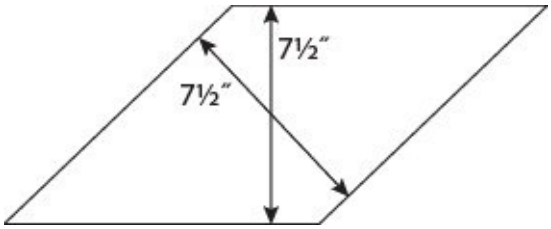
3. Pin the rows together. Carefully align each diamond seam intersection by inserting the point of a pin into the seam exactly where the ¼″ seamline will cross it. Find the same point on the other strip of diamonds and stick in the pin, keeping the pin vertical so the seams are perfectly aligned. While keeping the pin straight, secure the layers of fabric by pinning on both sides of the vertical pin, being careful not to shift the fabric. Remove the vertical pin. Sew the 2 rows together. Press the seams open. Repeat to sew the 4 rows together, forming the large pieced diamond.



Pin through seams before sewing.

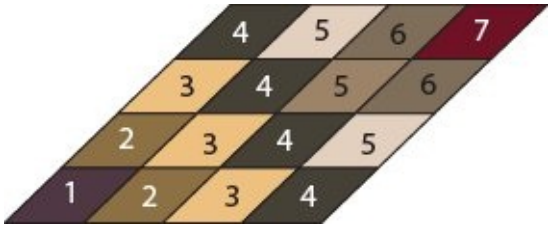
4. To check the accuracy of your large diamond, draw a 45° diamond 7½″ × 7½″ on the nonshiny side of a piece of freezer paper as shown. Iron the shiny side of the freezer paper to

your ironing board cover. Pin the edges of your completed diamond to this template and press the diamond. If the diamond is not the same size, check the seams to see that they are all a uniform ¼″; make any needed adjustments.



Draw a 45° diamond 7½″ × 7½″—with a 7½″ width and a 7½″ height.

5. Repeat Steps 1–4 to make 8 pieced diamonds.

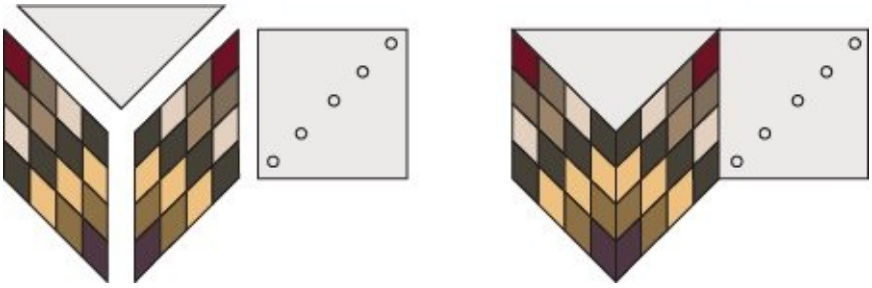


Pieced diamond assembly

Quilt Assembly

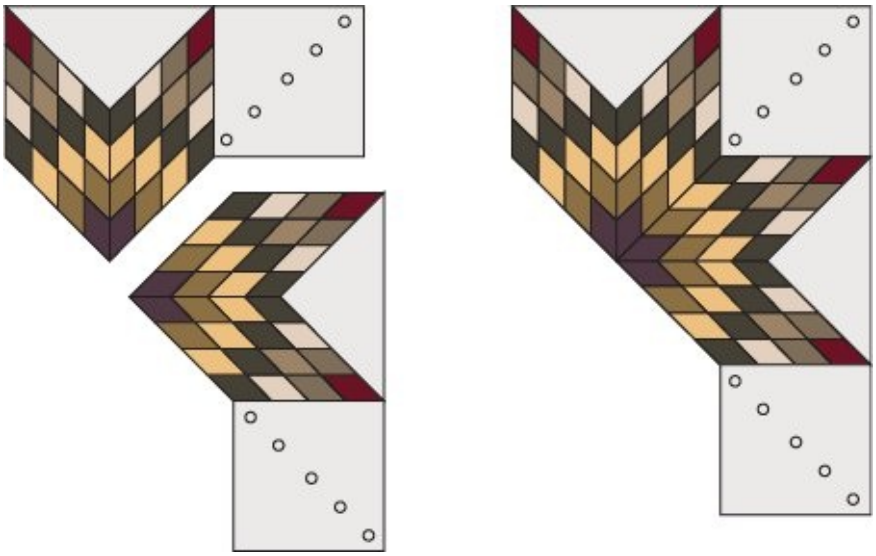
1. Refer to the quilt assembly diagram to arrange the Lone Star block center using the 8 star points, setting triangles, and corner squares on a design wall.

2. Refer to Inset Y-Seams to choose a method for Y-seams to use throughout this project. Using your chosen method, sew 2 star points and a white setting triangle together. Then add a corner square as shown. Slant the diagonal row of buttons to the upper right, if you are using the men's shirt fronts for the squares.



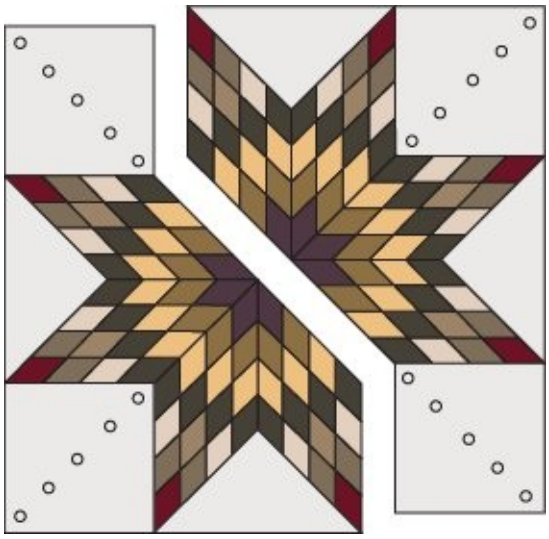
Make 4 units.

3. Sew 2 units from Step 2 together as shown, using your preferred Y-seam method. Repeat this step to make 2 half–Lone Stars.



Make 2 half-blocks.

4. Sew the 2 half-squares from Step 3 together as shown. If you are using the traditional Y-seam method, proceed to Steps 5–7. If you are using Kaye Wood's Why-seam method, sew this seam as 1 seam, pinning carefully to match the star point seams, and then proceed to Step 8.



Lone Star center

5. To join the 2 halves, sew the seam in 3 segments. First sew the seams between the corner squares and the diamonds, leaving the seam across the center of the star open.

6. Pin the center seam together. Start by matching and pinning the center points of each star half together. Add several pins close to the center to anchor it, matching the seams of the star points. Ease and pin the remainder of the seam to make it as smooth as possible.

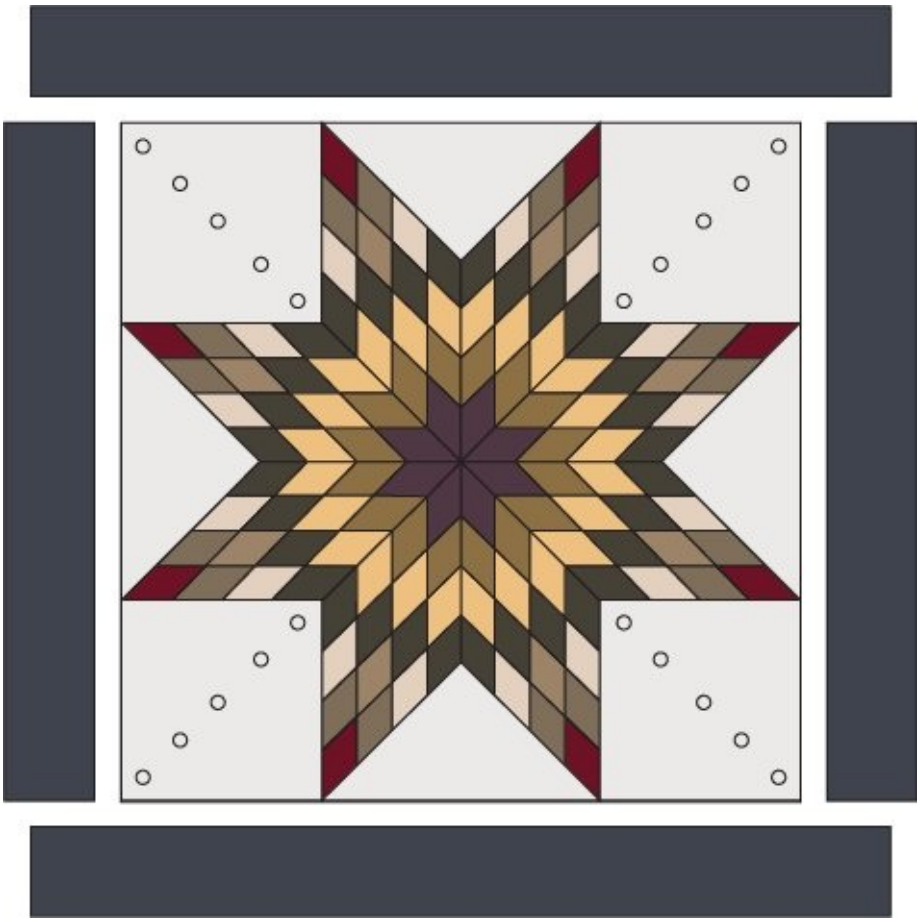
7. Sew the center seam to complete the block.

8. Use a rotary cutter and ruler to square up the block. The block should measure 34½″ × 34½″.

9. To add the outer border, refer to Adding Borders to measure and cut the border lengths, using the wool 5″ strips. Add the side borders first. Then add the top and bottom borders.

10. Refer to Stripe Border Detail to add the detail to the outside borders.

11. After layering and quilting, use the cotton 2¼″ strips for binding.



Quilt assembly

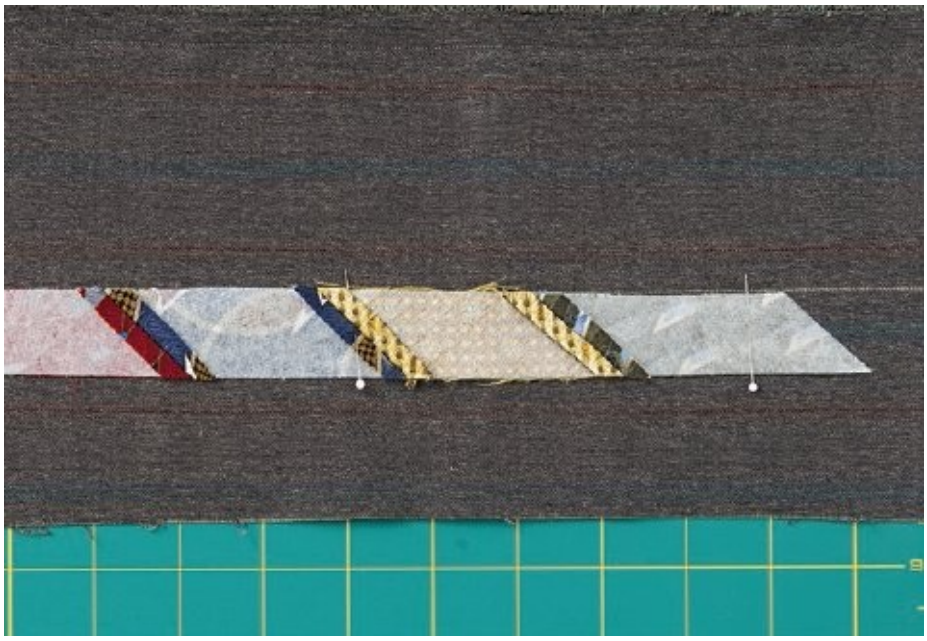
STRIPE BORDER DETAIL

1. Using the diamond placement guide, align the remaining 27 diamonds to sew a strip of 15 diamonds and a strip of 12 diamonds. Choose lightweight, closely woven ties for the end diamonds for both strips because the ends will be folded to points in a later step.

2. Cut each strip in half lengthwise to make 2 strips 1⅛″ wide with 15 diamonds, and 2 strips 1⅛″ wide with 12 diamonds. Mark the center point of each strip.

3. With removable marker, draw a straight line 2½″ in from the raw edge of each border and parallel with the seamline. Mark the midpoint of this line on each border.

4. The 15-diamond strips will go on the top and bottom borders and the 12-diamond strips will go on the side borders. With right sides together, match the center points of each strip with the border strip centers and align 1 long edge of each diamond strip with the drawn line on each border. The ends of the strips should be about 1¼″ from each border end. Starting and stopping ¼″ from each end of the diamond strip, sew a ¼″ seam along the edge aligned with the drawn line.



Placement of accent strips

5. Press each diamond strip over to cover the seam. Fold under ¼″ at each end of the diamond strip to form points and fold under ¼″ along the long unstitched edge of the strip. Pin the folded edge onto the border. This will require lots of pinning! Stitch down by hand.

Fold the raw edges under and hand stitch.

SKILL LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE (OR SKILLED BEGINNER)

Dainty Diamond Star Topper

BLOCK SIZE: 26½″ × 23½″ finished • **NUMBER OF BLOCKS:** 1

Dainty Diamond Star Topper, 26½″ × 23½″ in diameter (point to point), made and quilted by Christine Copenhaver, 2013

This little table-topper with its red star and white background could fit in with holiday decor. Or you could find some color combinations that better suit your style. It's a pared-down version of the hexagon star that could be a good practice project to see if you like sewing inset seams. The 60° diamonds lend themselves to

this hexagon shape of the topper.

Materials

Yardages, other than neckties, are based on 20″-wide fusible interfacing and 42″-wide cottons.

- **For star:** 2 red neckties (I used 4 ties for a scrappier look.)
- **For binding:** 1 necktie
- **Fusible interfacing:** ¾ yard
- **For background:** ¾ yard neutral cotton
- **For backing:** 1 yard cotton
- **Batting:** 34″ × 31″

Cutting and Fusing Instructions

Refer to Cutting Diamonds. Copy the Dainty Diamond Star Topper *pattern A at 200%. Use the pattern to make a template for cutting the pieces indicated.*

FUSIBLE INTERFACING

Refer to Planning and Cutting for cutting methods for the fusible interfacing. The + sign indicates that you should add a "hair" to the cut size of the interfacing.

- Cut 3 strips 3½+″ × WOF*. Trim 1 end of each strip at a 60° angle. Mark lines parallel to the angled end at 3½+″ intervals to draw 12 diamonds.
- Cut 3 strips 3+″ × WOF*.

NECKTIES

For the blocks: *Refer to Fitting Interfacing on Ties and Precise Trimming of Fused Tie Fabric. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for the fusible interfacing.*

- Arrange the interfacing with 6 diamonds on each necktie, cutting the interfacing as needed to fit. Fuse the interfacing and cut a total of 12 diamonds precisely with 60° angles and parallel sides.

For the binding: *Refer to Necktie Inner Borders and Binding.*

- Fuse 3 interfacing 3+″ × WOF* strips on the binding tie. Cut 1 strip 3″ × length of fused tie. Subcut the strip into 2 strips 1½″ × length of tie for at least 90″ of 1½″ strips.

FABRIC

- **From the background fabric:** Cut 2 strips 3½″ × WOF*. Trim 1 end of each strip at a 60° angle; subcut 12 diamonds 3½″.

  Cut 2 strips 5½″ × WOF*; subcut 6 triangles using template A.

3 triangles per strip

** WOF = width of fabric*

Making the Star Points

Seam allowances are ¼″.

Sewing a precise ¼″ seam is essential to success. If you want a quilt that lies flat and doesn't poke up in the center like a D-cup bra, then I highly recommend that you do the exercise for accurate seams. Refer to Testing Your Seam Allowance to test your ¼″ accuracy. I also recommend making a diamond placement guide for 60° diamonds.

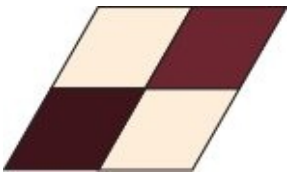
Star point—Make 6.

1. Refer to the quilt photo and the quilt assembly diagram to arrange the star points with the red and background diamonds on a design wall. You will need to know the placement for each of the diamonds before you sew the blocks.

2. Review how to use the diamond placement guide to align a background and a tie diamond. Sew the diamonds together. Make 2 units. Press the seams open.

Make 2 pairs.

3. Refer to *Lone Star Meets GQ,* Making the Star Points, Step 3, to align and pin the seams. Sew the units from Step 1 together as shown. Press the seam open.



Completed star point

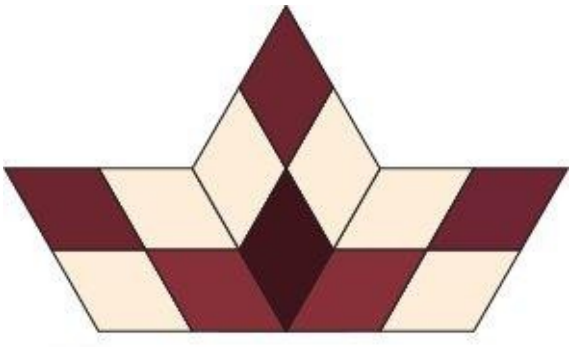
4. Repeat Steps 1 and 2 to make 6 star points.

Quilt Assembly

This quilt is really a hexagon star block, and it can be assembled in many ways, but I'm showing you what I think is the easiest.

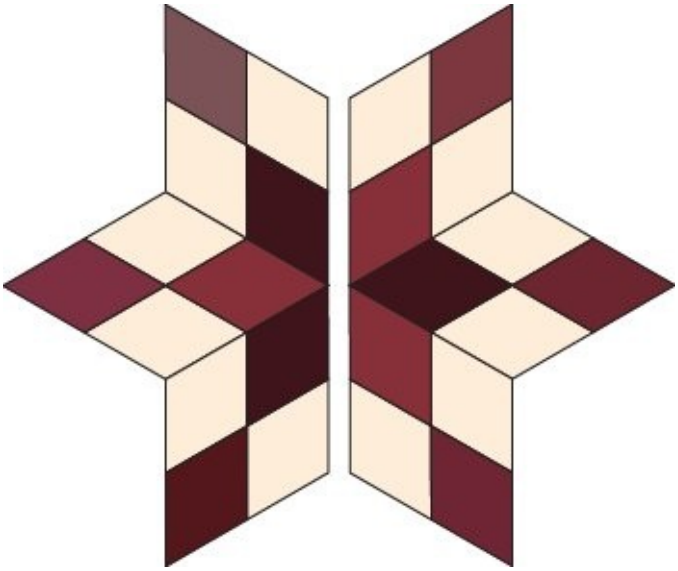
1. Refer to the quilt assembly diagram to arrange the star points and the setting triangles on a design wall. Sew 3 star points together as shown. To align and pin the diamond seamlines, refer

to *Lone Star Meets GQ*, Making the Star Points, Step 3. Press the seams open. Make 2 star halves.



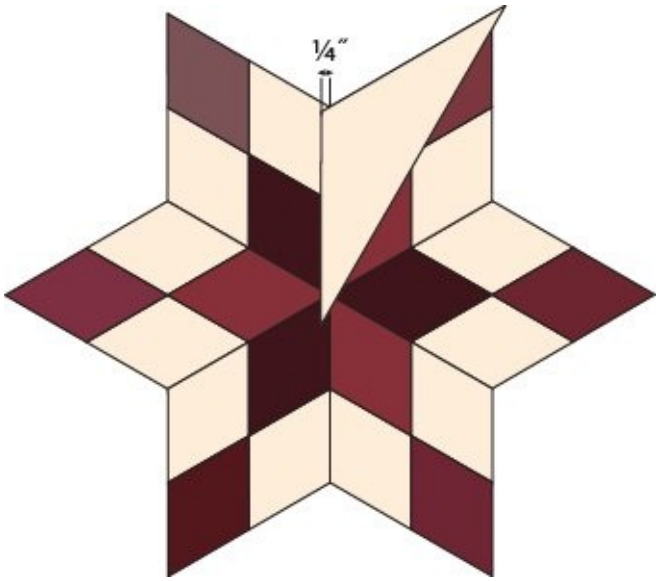
Make 2.

2. Sew the 2 halves from Step 1 together, matching the diamond seams. Press the seam open.



Sew the halves together.

3. To add the background A triangles, I used a variation of Kaye Wood's Why-seam Construction: Refer to the illustration to place a background triangle with right sides together on top of the star, lining up the left edge of the triangle ¼″ past the seamline and the top edge even with the right star point. Measure that left edge to be sure it is ¼″ past the seamline. The tip of the background triangle will extend beyond the star point as shown.



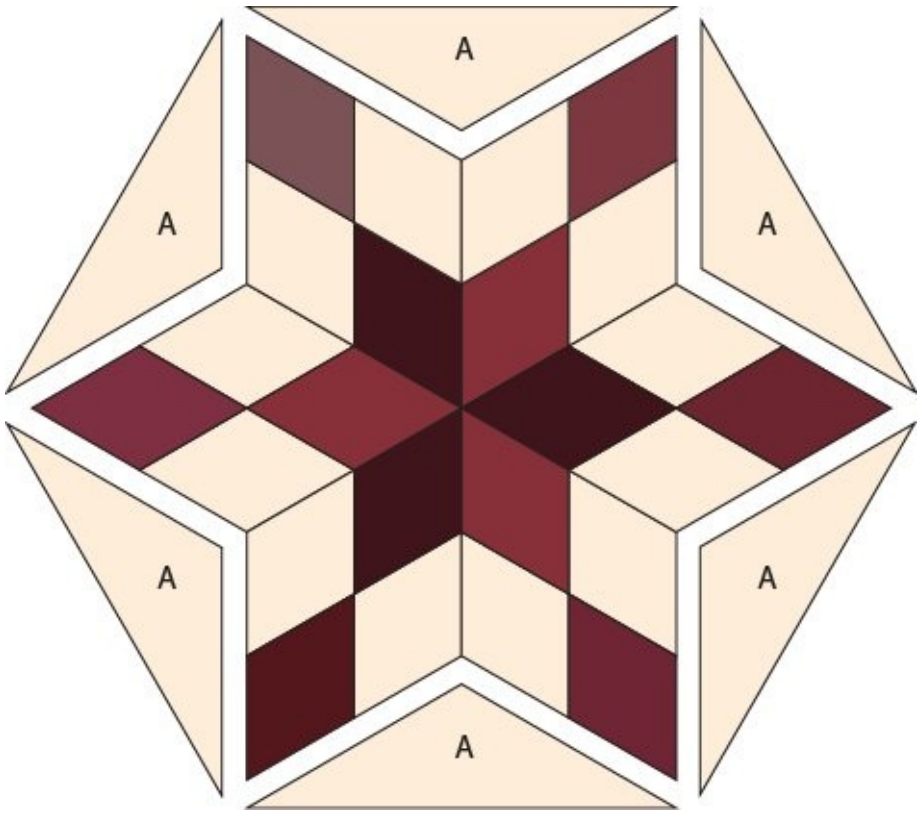
The triangle's left edge is ¼″ left of the star point seamline underneath.

4. Carefully turn over the star and triangle, keeping the pieces aligned. Follow Kaye Wood's Why-seam Construction, Steps 3–5, to pin and sew the background triangle in place.

5. As you sew the remaining background triangles in place, always stitch the tips of the outside triangles together.

6. Once all the triangles are in place, trim the quilt top edges so the background extends about 1″ beyond the red star tips.

7. After layering and quilting, use the fused tie 1½″ strips for binding.



Quilt assembly

SKILL LEVEL: INTERMEDIATE– ADVANCED

Geometric Gems

BLOCK SIZE: 14″ × 12″ finished **NUMBER OF BLOCKS:** 23 hexagon blocks, 4 half-hexagon blocks

Geometric Gems, 69½″ × 73½″, made by Christine Copenhaver, quilted by Jill Zollinger, 2013

These are not your ordinary neckties! Neckties with large repeating geometric patterns are candidates for this quilt. To give these stars a kaleidoscope effect, I fussy cut the 60° diamonds, making sure a recognizable part of the necktie pattern was in the same place on each diamond. In choosing ties, scale is everything! Plenty of ties have regular repeating patterns, but the scale is often too small to get

the dramatic impact seen in this quilt. Look for ties with bold geometric patterns and regular repeats that are spaced at least 2½″ apart, preferably 3½″ to 5½″; however, going larger than 6″ will make it difficult to get six diamonds per tie.

Examples of ties that can make interesting kaleidoscope patterns.

I positioned the diamond on the tie pattern so that a bold ring forms around the star center. For some stars I used two neckties of similar color but with different designs. Either of the ties alone did not produce a very interesting star, but, when paired, the result was very effective.

This quilt could be stunning without the kaleidoscope effect if you use bold ties with irregular, abstract designs, such as those used in *Big Stars*.

Materials

Yardages, other than neckties, are based on 20″-wide fusible interfacing, 42″-wide cottons, and 54″-wide wool.

- **For blocks:** 25–30 neckties with geometric patterns for blocks with fussy cuts (option 1) *OR* 25 neckties with geometric patterns for blocks without fussy cuts (option 2)
- **For inner border:** 2 striped ties
- **For binding:** 3 neckties
- **Fusible interfacing:** 5¼ yards
- **For background:** 2¼ yards white cotton
- **For outer border:** 2 yards dark gray wool
- **For backing:** 4½ yards cotton
- **Batting:** 77″ × 81″

Cutting and Fusing Instructions

Refer to Cutting Diamonds. Copy Geometric Gems patterns A and B/Br at 200%. Use the patterns to make templates for cutting the pieces indicated.

FUSIBLE INTERFACING

Refer to Planning and Cutting for cutting methods for the fusible interfacing. The + sign indicates that you should add a "hair" to the cut size of the interfacing.

- Cut 38 strips 3½ +″ × WOF*. Trim 1 end of each strip at a 60° angle. Mark lines parallel to this angled end at 3½+″ intervals to draw 150 diamonds. If you plan to fussy cut the diamonds, subcut the 150 diamonds at the pencil lines. If you are not fussy cutting the diamonds, do not subcut the diamonds.
- Cut 15 strips 3+″ × WOF*.

NECKTIES

For the blocks: *Refer to Fitting Interfacing on Ties and Precise Trimming of Fused Tie Fabric.*

- Arrange 6 diamonds on each tie. **For option 1:** To fussy cut each diamond, line up the widest part of each diamond across a stripe or other design so that all the diamonds contain the same repeat of the pattern. Fuse the interfacing, being careful that it doesn't shift. Cut diamonds precisely with 60° angles and parallel sides.

Placement of diamond interfacing for fussy cutting (option 1)

- **For option 2:** If you are not fussy cutting the diamonds, arrange the interfacing strips for 6 diamonds on each tie, subcutting the strips as needed to fit. Fuse the interfacing and then cut the diamonds precisely with 60° angles and parallel sides.

For the inner border and binding: *Refer to Necktie Inner Borders and Binding.*

- **Inner border:** Fuse 3 interfacing 3+″ × WOF* strips on each of 2 striped ties. Cut a strip 3″ × length of each fused tie. Subcut each strip into 2 strips 1½″ × length of fused tie for a total of 4 strips.
- **Tie binding:** Fuse 3 interfacing 3+″ × WOF* strips on each of 3 ties. Cut a strip 3″ × length of each fused tie. Subcut each strip into 2 strips 1½″ × length of fused tie for at least 300″ of 1½″ strips.

FABRIC

- **From the background fabric:** Cut 16 strips 3½″ × WOF*. Trim 1 end of each strip at a 60° angle; subcut a total of 154 diamonds 3½″.

  Cut 3 strips 5½″ × WOF*; subcut 8 pieces using template A, 2 pieces using template B, and 2 pieces using template Br.

Use templates to mark setting triangles on the 5½″ strip.

- **From the outer border fabric:** Cut 4 strips 6″ × *length of fabric (parallel to the selvage)*.

** WOF = width of fabric*

Making the Star Blocks

Seam allowances are ¼″.

Hexagon Star block—Make 23.

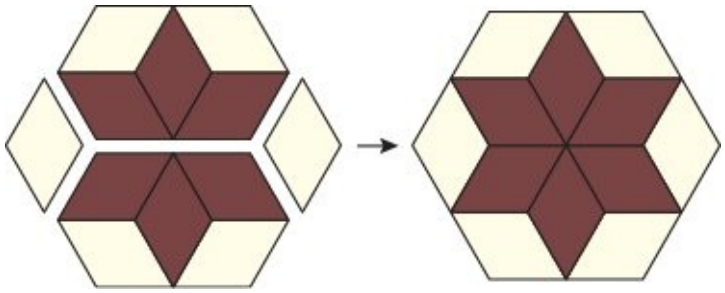
Hexagon Star half-block—Make 4.

Before you sew the blocks together, refer to Inset Y-Seams (pages 23–25) to choose a method to make your blocks.

1. Using your preferred Y-seam construction method, sew together 2 star diamonds and a background diamond. Then add a background diamond and a star diamond as shown. Make 2 units.

Make 2.

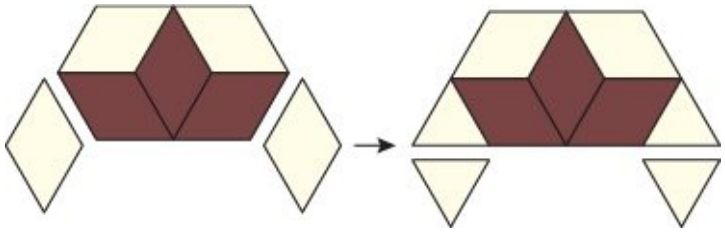
2. Sew the units from Step 1 together, matching and pinning the center seams. Press the seam open. Add 2 background diamonds between the remaining points as shown, using Kaye Wood's Why-seam Construction method.



Sew the block halves together. Add 2 background diamonds.

3. Repeat Steps 1 and 2 to make 23 hexagon blocks.

4. To make a half-block, repeat Step 1. Add a background diamond to each side of the unit and trim the diamonds even with the long edge of the block. Make 4.



Make 4 half-blocks.

Quilt Assembly

1. Refer to the quilt assembly diagram to arrange the blocks and the setting A triangles on a design wall. Rather than rows in this quilt, arrange the blocks in vertical columns. Columns 1, 3, and 5 each have 5 complete hexagons. Columns 2 and 4 each have 2 half-hexagons and 4 complete hexagons. Step back to see if you have balanced the colors and the light and dark stars throughout your arrangement.

2. Sew blocks together in vertical columns. Press the seams open.

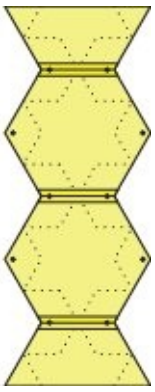
3. Sew the individual setting A triangles to columns 1 and 5, using the same method as in *Dainty Diamond Star Topper*, Quilt Assembly, Steps 3–5. Add the B and Br corners. Note that the setting triangles and corners are oversized; you will trim them after you have assembled all the blocks.

4. To sew the columns together, I recommend that you use a variation of Kaye Wood's Why-seam Construction because you can sew complete columns together without removing the quilt from the machine. You will have to make some adaptations, though—refer to the Joining Hexagon Columns tip.

TIP JOINING HEXAGON COLUMNS

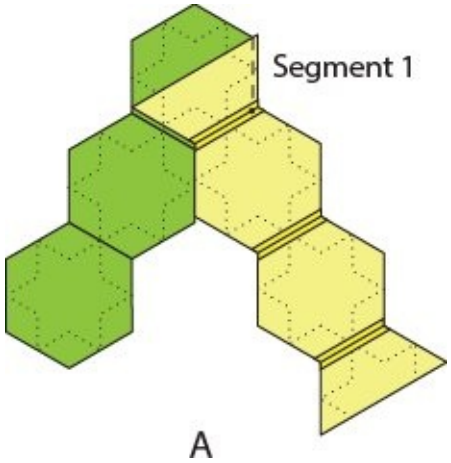
Join the hexagon columns by stitching one segment of the seam at a time. At the end of the segment, stop with the needle down, and realign the edges of the hexagons, pivoting to sew the next segment of the seam. Reducing the stitch length will make it easier to stop right on the dot.

1. With the hexagons sewn into columns, mark dots on the inside and outside corners of the hexagons on the wrong side of the fabric. These will be your pivot points when stitching the seam. To mark dots, refer to Traditional Y-Seam Construction, Step 1, for a marking method. (In *Geometric Gems*, the star points should match midway down the seam.)



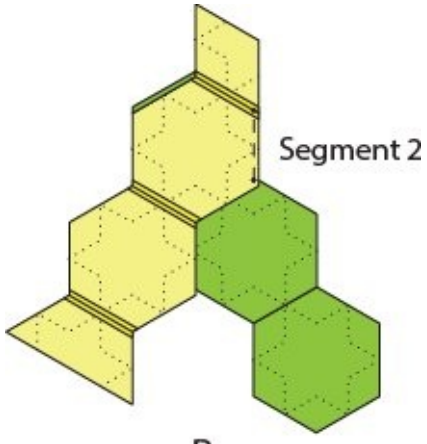
Mark dots at inside and outside hexagon points.

2. Place right sides together with column 2 on top of column 1. Use a pin to match dots. Align the raw edges as shown, and stitch segment 1 from the top edge toward the dot. Remove the pin as you come to the dot and stop with the needle down in the dot. Lift the presser foot to pivot the fabric (A).



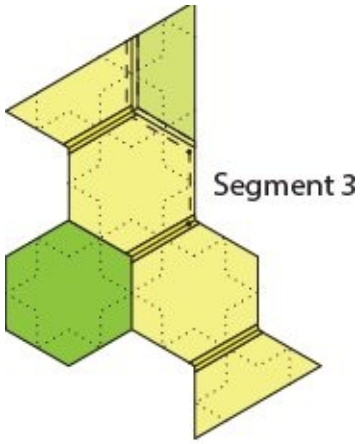
A

3. As you pivot at the dot, shift column 2 (on top) to the left, while pulling column 1 (underneath) to the right. Smooth out both columns in their new positions and align the fabric edges for segment 2. Pin the next dots together, lower the presser foot, and stitch segment 2 (B).



B

4. When you pivot at the next dot, shift column 2 (on top) to the right, while pulling column 1 (underneath) to the left. Pin the next dots together, lower the presser foot, and stitch segment 3. Continue this process to finish the seam. Press the seam open (C).



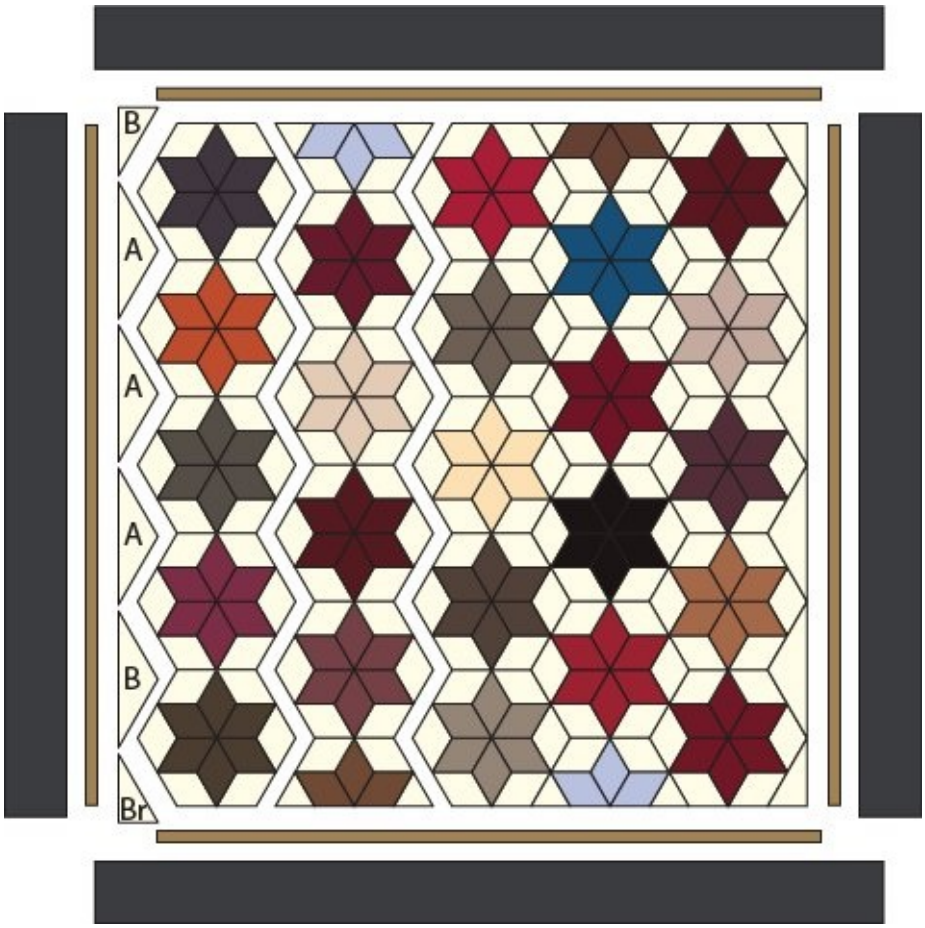
C

5. Refer to the Squaring Up tip to trim the quilt center.

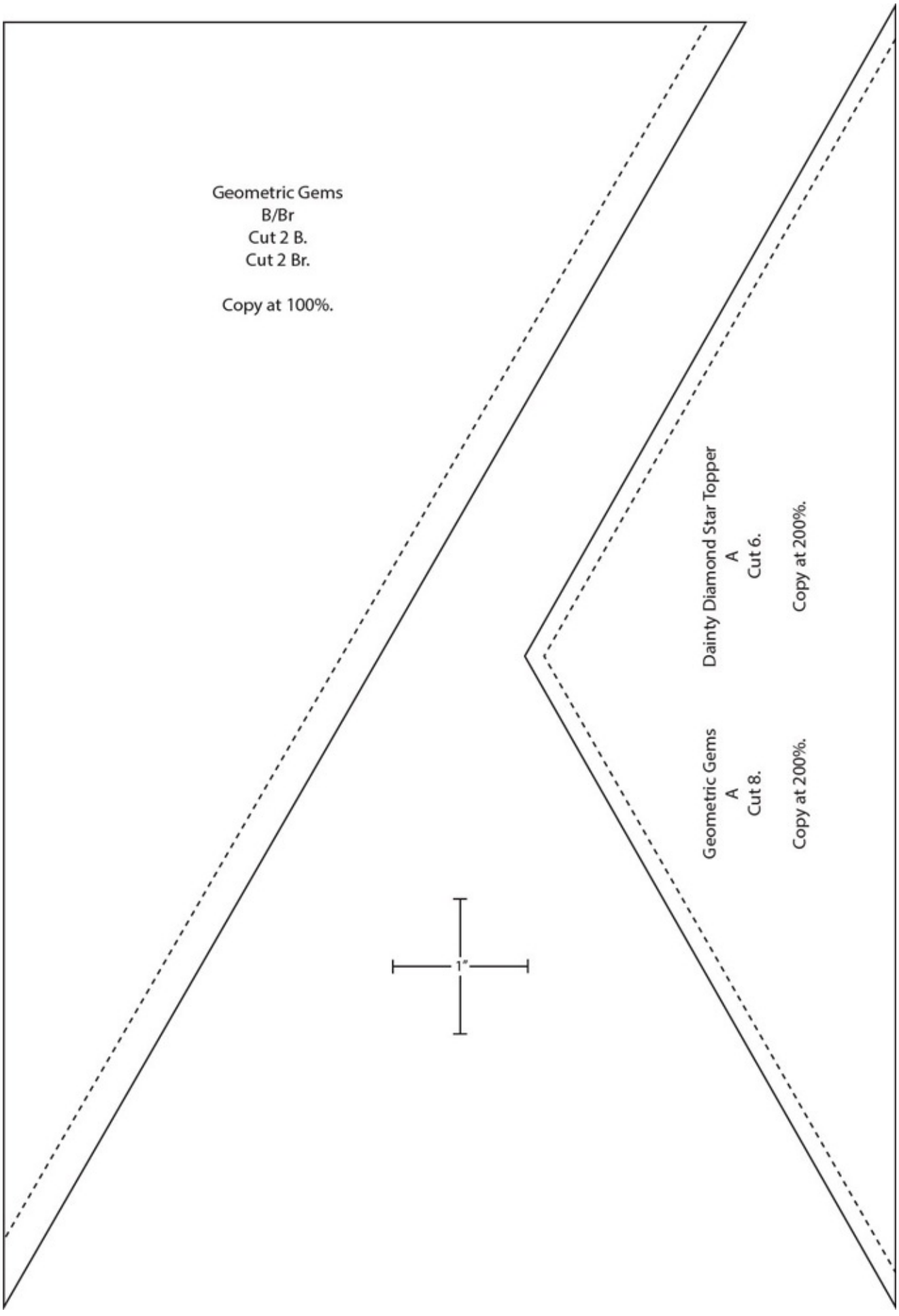
6. To add the striped inner border, refer to Adding Borders to measure and cut the border lengths, using the striped tie 1½″ strips. Add the side borders first. Then add the top and bottom borders.

7. To add the outer border, refer to Adding Borders to measure and cut the border lengths, using the 6″ strips. Add the side borders first. Then add the top and bottom borders.

8. After layering and quilting, use the fused tie 1½″ strips for binding.



Quilt assembly


Geometric Gems
B/Br
Cut 2 B.
Cut 2 Br.
Copy at 100%.
Dainty Diamond Star Topper
A
Cut 6.
Copy at 200%.
Geometric Gems
A
Cut 8.
Copy at 200%.
1"

For all printable patterns or digital content: http://tinyurl.com/11075-patterns-download

SKILL LEVEL: BEGINNER

Tabasco Ties

BLOCK SIZE: 13½″ × 13½″ finished • **PILLOW SIZE:** 20″ × 20″

Tabasco Ties, 20″ × 20″, made and quilted by Christine Copenhaver, 2013

his single block features theme ties in a quilt block. I set my theme tie blocks in

throw pillows like this, but you could set them in a quilt on-point with sashing between the blocks. Because the image on the front of the tie is usually quite long, the focus tie is set on the block diagonal. The border of men's suiting fabric sets off the pieced necktie center block.

Materials

Yardages, other than neckties, are based on 20″-wide fusible interfacing, 42″-wide cottons, and 54″-wide wool.

- **For block:**

  1 theme tie

  6 coordinating ties *OR* tie scraps

- **Fusible interfacing:** 1 yard
- **For borders and pillow back:** 1 yard dark wool
- **For foundations:** 1 yard muslin
- **Snag-free 1″-wide hook-and-loop tape:** 16″
- **Low-loft batting:** 24″ × 24″
- **Pillow form:** 20″ × 20″

Cutting and Fusing Instructions

FUSIBLE INTERFACING

Refer to Planning and Cutting for cutting methods for the fusible interfacing. The + sign indicates that you should add a "hair" to the cut size of the interfacing.

- Cut 1 strip 10+″ × WOF*.
- Cut 6 strips 3½+″ × WOF*.

NECKTIES

Refer to Fitting Interfacing on Ties and Precise Trimming of Fused Tie Fabric. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for the fusible interfacing.

- Arrange the 10+″ interfacing strip on the theme tie, cutting as needed to fit the featured area. Fuse the interfacing and cut the tie wedge wide enough for the featured area and narrowing to no less than 3″.
- Have the 3½+″ interfacing strips ready to go on the complementary ties, but do not fuse them yet.

Cut interfacing to match the width of the featured area.

FABRIC

- **From the muslin:** Cut 1 square 24″ × 24″ and 1 square 15″ × 15″.

- **From the wool:** Cut 1 strip 20½″ × WOF*; subcut 2 rectangles 14½″ × 20½″.

  Cut 2 strips 3¾″ × WOF*; subcut 2 strips 3¾″ × 20½″ and 2 strips 3¾″ × 14″.
- **From the snag-free hook-and-loop tape:** Cut 4 strips, each 4″ long.

** WOF = width of fabric*

Making the Block and Borders

Seam allowances are ¼″.

1. On the muslin 15″ square, mark a 14″ square, leaving a ½″ margin around the outside of the muslin square. This marks the foundation area to be covered with ties for the block.

2. Center the theme tie on the diagonal of the foundation square and pin in place. (The tie edges should go just beyond the marked line, as the block will be trimmed later.)

3. Select the 2 complementary ties that will best set off the theme tie by a contrast in color or value and arrange them on either side of the theme tie, leaving the featured tie about 2″ wide at the upper corner and wide enough in the lower corner to show the featured design. You may find that folding the complementary tie at an angle (not parallel to the edge) will give the length you need. Make sure the complementary tie piece, once sewn and flipped, will cover the muslin beyond the marked 14″ square. Lightly mark the lines where the complementary ties fall on the theme tie.

Select complementary ties.

4. Fuse 3½″ interfacing strips to the complementary ties for the areas to be used. Cut a straight line on the edge that will be sewn to the theme tie.

5. Place the complementary tie on the theme tie, right sides together, so that the ¼″ seamline will fall at the marked diagonal lines. Sew, fold back, and trim any excess tie fabric (not the foundation) under the complementary tie to a ¼″ seam allowance.

6. Continue adding complementary ties to both sides of the theme tie until you have covered the foundation.

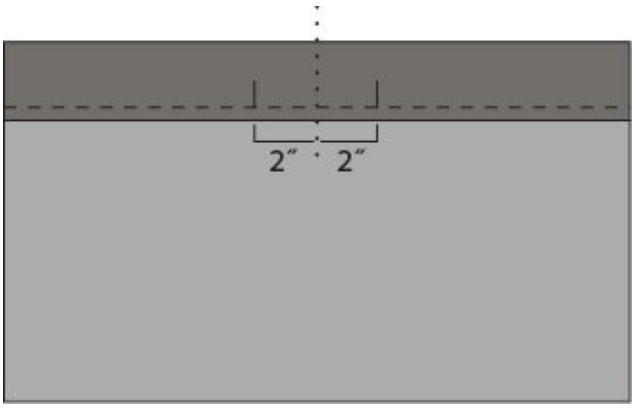
7. Trim the block to 14″ × 14″.

8. Add the wool 3¾″ × 14″ strips to the sides of the block and the wool 3¾″ × 20½″ strips to the top and bottom.

Pillow Assembly

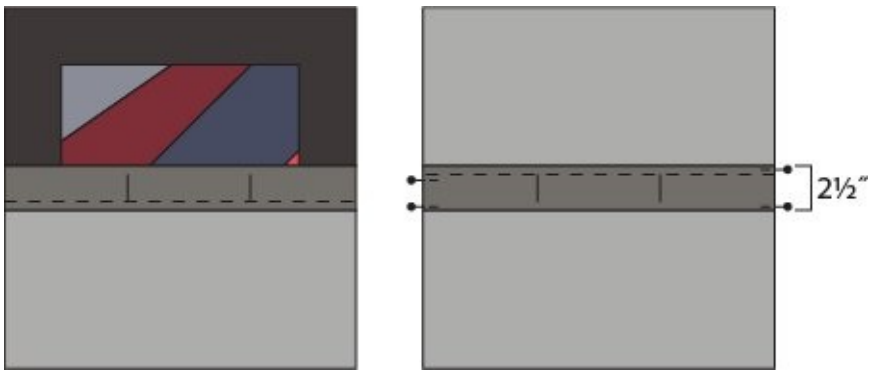
1. Layer the muslin 24″ square, batting, and pillow top. Quilt as desired. Often stitch-in-the-ditch or straight-line quilting will be enough to enhance your block. Too much quilting on the feature tie may distract from the design. Trim the pillow top to 20½″ × 20½″.

2. Fold under ½″ on a long edge of each wool 14½″ × 20½″ piece and press. On the same edge, fold under 2½″ and stitch in place. On the folded edge, find the center of each rectangle as shown and mark 2″ from the center in both directions.



Fold ½″. Fold again 2½″ and stitch.

3. Right sides together, place the rectangles on the pillow front as shown, aligning the raw edges of the rectangles with the outer edges of the pillow top. The folded edges of the rectangles will overlap about 2½″. Pin the outside edges of the rectangles together where they overlap. Do not stitch the backing rectangles to the pillow front yet.



Pin the outside edges of the overlap.

4. Remove the pillow top from under the backing rectangles, but keep the rectangles pinned together at the sides. Between the rectangles, pin the hook-and-loop tape strips at the 2″ marks toward the outside edges. The tape strips will line up to be the closures for the backing. Unpin the 2 rectangles and stitch the tapes in place.

5. With the hook-and-loop tape attaching the 2 rectangles, place the joined rectangles right sides together on the pillow top again. Pin the outside edges of the square and stitch the edges together. Trim the corners at an angle to reduce bulk. Turn right side out. Press the edges.

6. Try the cover on the pillow form. If it’s not a snug fit, adjust the fit by adding topstitching around the outer edge. Determine the placement of the stitching by pinching opposite sides of the pillow and noting the width of the pinch that creates the best fit on the pillow form.

7. Take out the pillow form and stitch around the periphery of the pillow top at the desired width. This is a nice finishing touch—it looks similar to piping, but without the headache!

SKILL LEVEL: SKILLED BEGINNER

Black-Eyed Dresden Sue

BLOCK SIZE: 19″ × 19″ finished • **NUMBER OF BLOCKS:** 4

Black-Eyed Dresden Sue, 44″ × 44″, made and quilted by Christine Copenhaver, 2013

he traditional Dresden Plate pattern, with its joined ring of blades, is a favorite

Tamong quilters working with neckties, perhaps because the blade shape is similar to a necktie. In this fresh take on a favorite, I have separated the blades. With no need to match the sides of the blades, this is a much simpler block to construct. The combination of the black centers and the petal-like blades reminded me of a black-eyed Susan daisy; hence, the name, *Black-Eyed Dresden Sue*. A Nine-Patch of these blocks with a deep border could fit on a queen-sized bed. All that yellow would certainly liven up any room!

Materials

Yardages, other than neckties, are based on 20″-wide fusible interfacing, 42″-wide cottons, and 42″-wide lining.

- **For blocks:** 12 or more neckties
- **Fusible interfacing:** 2¼ yards
- **For background and binding:** 2¼ yards yellow cotton
- **For flower centers:**

  ¼ yard black cotton *OR* 1 fat quarter

  ¼ yard lining *OR* 1 fat quarter
- **For backing:** 3 yards cotton
- **Batting:** 52″ × 52″

Cutting and Fusing Instructions

Copy the Black-Eyed Dresden Sue patterns A and B at 100%. Use the patterns to make templates for cutting the pieces indicated.

FUSIBLE INTERFACING

Refer to Planning and Cutting for cutting methods for the fusible interfacing. The + sign indicates that you should add a "hair" to the cut size of the interfacing.

- Cut 7 strips 7″ × WOF*. Use template A to mark 48 blades on the interfacing strips. (The blades can be drawn with the sides adjacent, turning the template end for end. You can draw 7 blades per strip.) *Please note these strips do not require the + measurement and the blades are drawn without the + measurement.*
- Cut 5 strips 4½+″ × WOF*. Mark each strip at 2¾+″ intervals to draw 28 rectangles 2¾+″ × 4½+″.

NECKTIES

For the blocks and pieced sashing: *Refer to Fitting Interfacing on Ties and Precise Trimming of Fused Tie Fabric. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for the fusible interfacing.*

Depending on the amount of scrappiness you desire, you can cut single blades or several blades from each tie. For example, the same 12 ties can be repeated in each block. In this case, you would cut 4 blades from each of 12 ties. On the other extreme, you could feature a different tie in each of the 48 blades. Separate the interfacing blades into groups to match your quilt plan.

- Arrange individual interfacing blades on neckties. Fuse the interfacing and cut 48 blades on the drawn lines.
- Arrange the 4½+″ strips on the remaining tie scraps, cutting the strips as needed. Fuse the interfacing and cut 28 rectangles 2¾″ × 4½″.

FABRIC

- **From the yellow background fabric:** Cut 2 strips 18½″ × WOF*; subcut 4 squares 18½″ × 18½″.

  Cut 5 strips 3¾″ × WOF*.

  Cut 12 strips 1½″ × WOF*; subcut 8 strips 1½″ × 19½″ and 8 strips 1½″ × 17½″, leaving 4 strips 1½″ × WOF*.
- **From the black fabric:** Cut 4 squares 4½″ × 4½″.
- **From the lining fabric:** Cut 4 squares 4½″ × 4½″.

** WOF = width of fabric*

Making the Block

Seam allowances are ¼″.

This block looks more complex than it actually is. Each block has twelve blades and a circle. The blades and circles are made individually and machine stitched or hand appliquéd onto the yellow background.

Black-Eyed Dresden Sue block—Make 4.

BLADE CONSTRUCTION

1. At the wide end of a tie blade, bring the corners right sides together and stitch across the end, beginning at the outer edges and stitching to the fold.

2. With the blade still folded for the seam, mark the interfacing on the fold about 2″ down from the seam. Trim the corner of the seam at an angle to reduce the bulk.

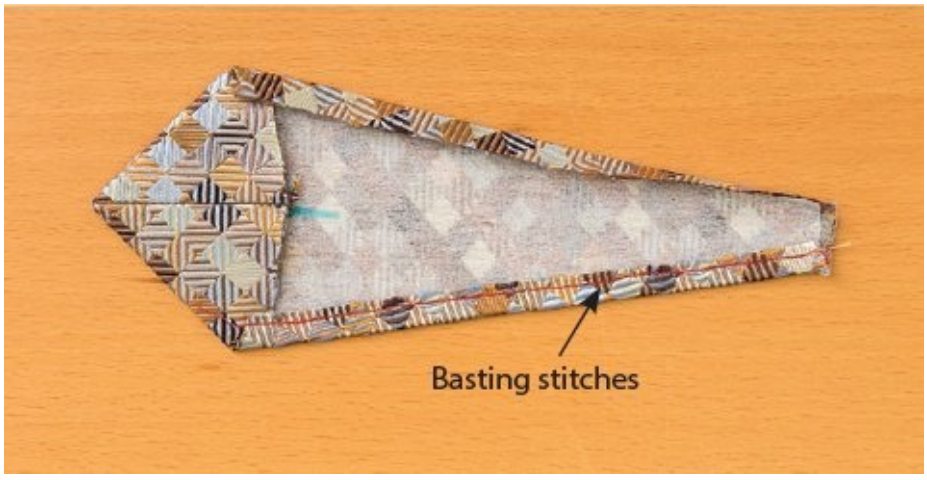
Mark fold 2″ from the seam.

3. Finger-press the seam open or press with the tip of the iron, taking care to avoid the folded edges.

Press the seam open without pressing creases elsewhere.

4. Turn the point right side out. With the seam aligned with the center mark from Step 2 on the interfacing, press the blade point.

5. Fold in ¼″ on each side of the blade. Press. If necessary, baste the folded edges to keep them flat.

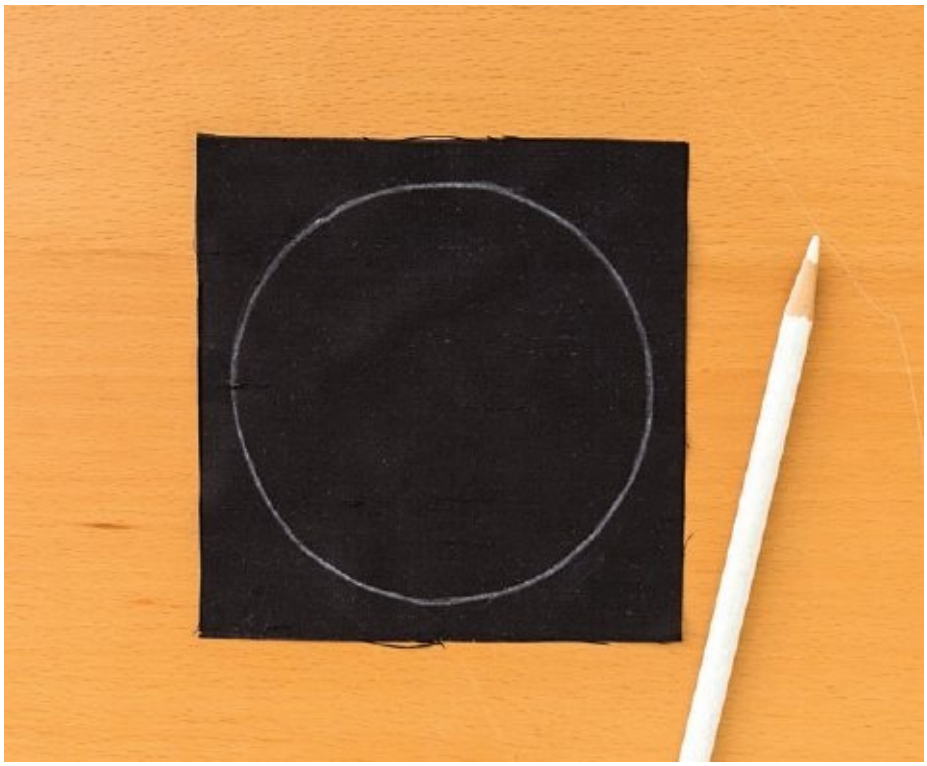


Baste the folded edges, if needed.

6. Repeat Steps 1–5 to make 48 blades.

MAKING THE CIRCLE

1. Trace template B on each black 4½″ square. A white chalk pencil works well on dark fabric.



Trace the circle.

2. Pair each black 4½″ square with a lining 4½″ square, right sides together. Pin and stitch on the drawn line. Shorten the stitch length to make a smoother circle. Trim the seam allowance to a scant ¼″.

3. Cut a slit in the center of the lining and turn the circle right side out through the opening. Press.

Pull out the lining fabric (light fabric used here for contrast) to snip a slit in it for turning.

4. *Optional:* Insert a circle of batting between the front and lining of the black circle. Quilt a rosette pattern. This is a nice touch to add.

PREPARING THE BACKGROUND FABRIC

1. Fold each yellow 18½″ square in quarters and lightly press. Open, fold along the diagonals, and lightly press again. Open again; you will have 8 folds radiating out from the center of the square.

2. Use a removable marker to mark a dot on each fold 7½″ from the center. Repeat for each of the 4 squares.

BLOCK ASSEMBLY

1. Center a blade on each of the vertical and horizontal fold lines, aligning the point of each tie on the 7½″ mark and the narrow end toward the middle of the square. Pin.

2. To machine appliqué the blades to the background, topstitch by machine just inside the edge of the blade. If you wish, you can hand appliqué the blades or use a decorative machine stitch that travels between blade and background.

Topstitched blades

3. Center 2 blades in each of the spaces between the attached blades. To position them correctly, think of a clock face, with the attached blades at 12, 3, 6, and 9. Place the remaining blades at 1 and 2; 4 and 5; 7 and 8; and 10 and 11. Position the blade points 7½″ from the center of the block.

4. The space between the shoulders of the blades should be approximately the same. To be sure that the blades are centered, use a ruler in positioning the blades and pin the blades in place.

Center blades like a clock, aligning points with the 7½″ mark.

5. Sew the remaining blades in place using your preferred appliqué method.

6. Place the black circle on the center of the square and appliqué in place.

SQUARING THE BLOCK

1. At each of the cardinal points (12, 3, 6, and 9), mark 1¼″ from the blade points.

2. Using a 9″ or larger square ruler, find the 8¾″ mark on 2 adjacent sides of the ruler and place them on the 12 and 3 marks that you made in Step 1.

3. Lightly mark the corner between these points.

4. Rotate the square ¼ turn and repeat Steps 2 and 3 in the next quadrant. Repeat this step to mark all 4 corners.

5. Check that the distance between corners is the same on each side. Check that the distance between opposite corners is the same.

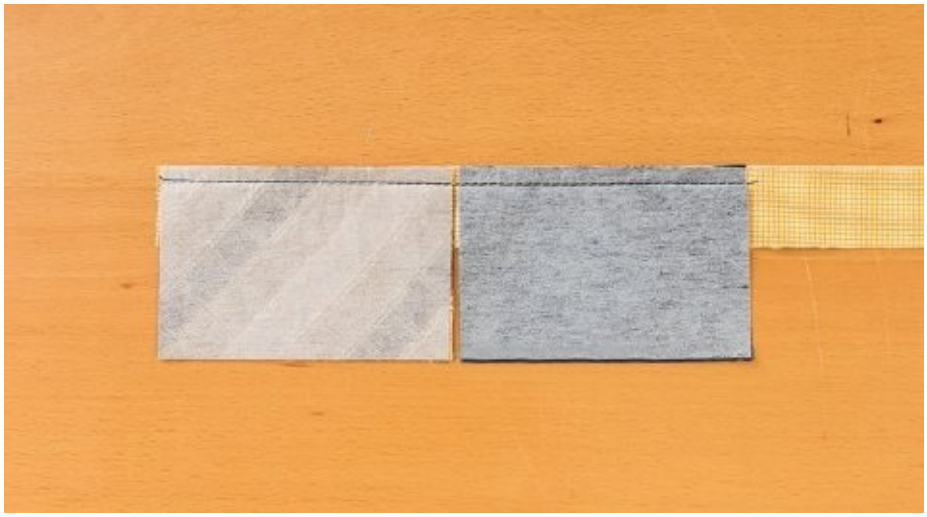
6. Trim on the marked lines to cut the square 17½″ × 17½″.

7. Sew yellow 1½″ × 17½″ strips to opposite sides of each square. Press the seams to the outside.

8. Sew yellow 1½″ × 19½″ strips to the top and bottom of each square. Press the seams to the outside.

Making the Pieced Sashing

1. Align a 4½″ edge of a necktie rectangle with the long edge of a yellow 1½″ × WOF strip, right sides together, and stitch. Without lifting the needle, add another 4½″ edge of a necktie rectangle to the strip and stitch. Continue chaining the rectangles to the yellow strips in assembly-line fashion.



Rectangles stitched to yellow strip

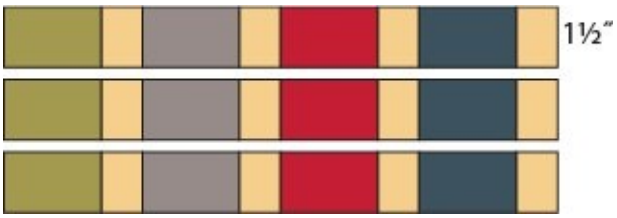
2. Press the seams toward the necktie rectangles. Separate the units by cutting the yellow strip even with the rectangles on each side.

Cut rectangles apart.

3. Sew together 4 units from Step 2, joining a tie 4½″ edge to a yellow 4½″ edge to make a strip set. Make 7 strip sets.

Make 7.

4. Cut the strip sets from Step 3 into 1½″ sections, cutting 3 sections per strip set for a total of 21 sections 1½″ × 13½″.



Cut 3 sections 1½″ from each strip set.

5. To make the inside and outside sashing, sew the 1½″ × 13½″ sections together end to end. Make the following sashing strip lengths:

- 2 sashing strips 1½″ × 20″
- 5 sashing strips 1½″ × 43″

Quilt Assembly

1. Refer to the quilt assembly diagram to arrange the blocks in a 2 block × 2 block formation. Sew the pieced sashing 1½″ × 20″ strips between the blocks in columns 1 and 2, trimming the sashing strips to fit the length of the blocks. Press the seams toward the blocks.

2. Sew a 1½″ × 43″ sashing strip between columns 1 and 2, trimming the sashing strip to fit the columns.

3. To add the outside pieced sashing strips, refer to Adding Borders to measure and cut the pieced sashing lengths, using the 1½″ × 43″ sashing strips. Add the side sashings first. Then add the top and bottom sashings.

Quilt assembly

BORDER BINDING VARIATION

What looks like an outer border is actually a very wide binding. You'll be adding an outside border and binding combination to finish this quilt after it is quilted.

1. Layer the quilt top, batting, and backing. The batting and backing will be several inches beyond each side. Quilt as desired. Refer to the quilt photo to see how I quilted mine.

2. Trim the batting and backing fabric 1¼″ from the outside edges of the quilt top, checking for squareness at the corners.

3. Use the 5 yellow 3¾″ × WOF strips to make 4 strips 3¾″ × 48″, piecing as needed.

4. Mark the center of each side of the quilt and mark the center of each 3¾″ × 48″ strip from Step 3.

5. On 1 side of the quilt, align the edge of a yellow 3¾″ × 48″ strip and the outside edge of the pieced sashing, right sides together and matching the center points. Sew a ¼″ seam; press the seam to the outside. The ends of the strip will extend beyond the batting.

6. Fold the strip over the long edge of the batting to the back of the quilt, making sure that the batting completely fills the fold. Press.

7. On the back of the quilt, fold under the long raw edge of the strip so that the folded edge just covers the line of stitching. Pin and press in place. Trim the ends of the strip even with batting. Hand stitch the folded edge in place.

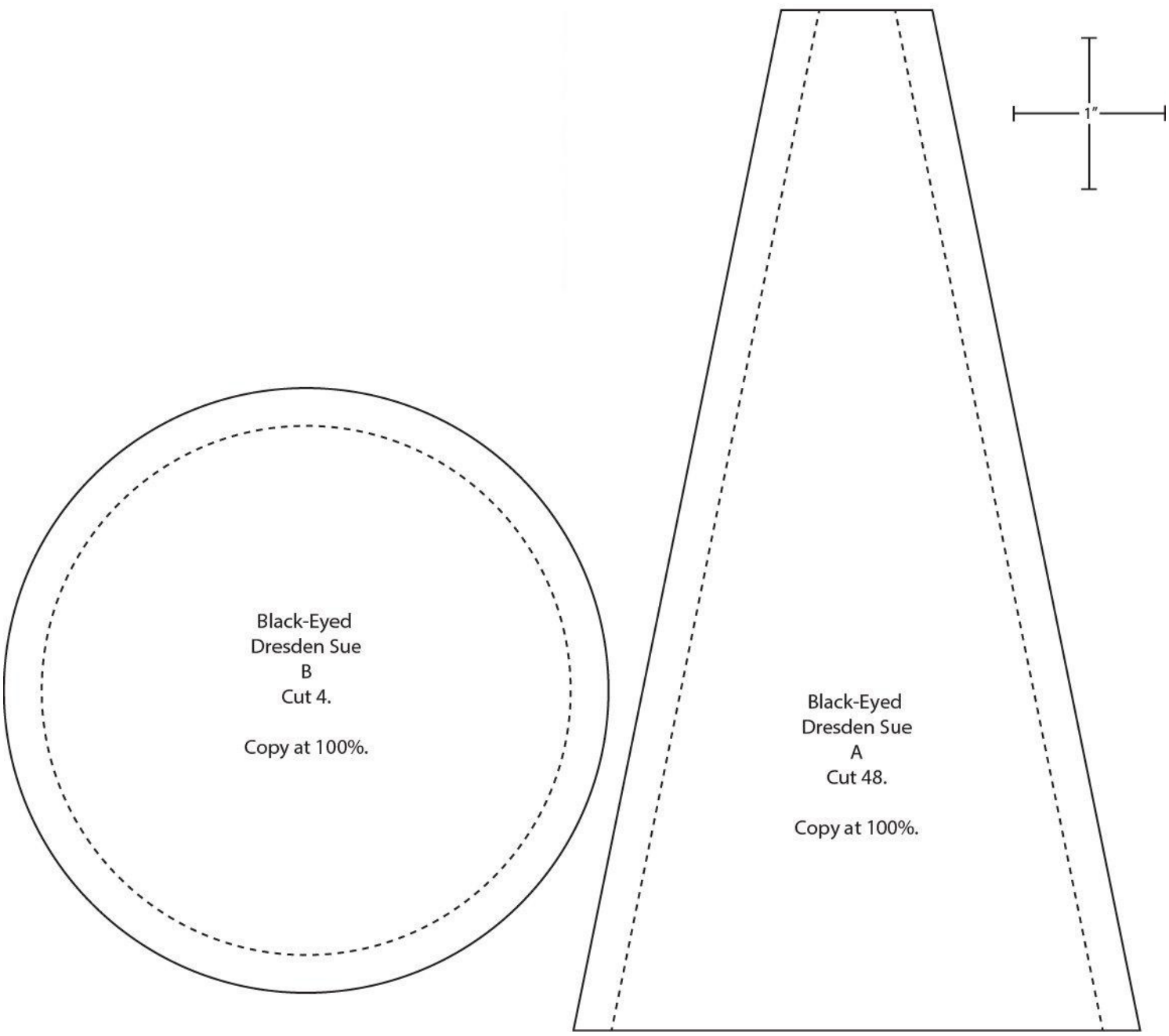
8. Repeat Steps 5–7 on the opposite side of the quilt.

9. For the top and bottom of the quilt, repeat Steps 5 and 6. Trim the ends of the strips 1″ beyond the quilt corners. At each corner, fold the ends of the strips around the batting and pin, tucking in the ends, and fold the long raw edges of the strips to cover the line of stitching. Hand stitch all the folded edges in place.

Extend the end of the yellow strip 1″ beyond the quilt's edge and fold to finish the corner.

The finished corner—folded, tucked, and ready to be stitched

10. From the front of the quilt, stitch in-the-ditch between the sashing and the outside border strip on all 4 sides.



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Gallery

The Long and the Skinny, 40″ × 48″, made and quilted by Christine Copenhaver, 2013

This quilt was put together following the method used in a jelly roll race. Long strips and remnants of ties were cut 2½″ wide and joined with black spacers to make a strip 1,050″ long (about twenty ties). Sew as in a jelly roll race (You can find a video of this method online.) until the piece is eight ties wide. Cut into thirds and sew the thirds together. This would be a good

bereavement project, as there is almost no math and the sewing is all straight lines.

Half Log Cabin, 32″ × 32″, made and quilted by Christine Copenhaver, 2012

When light ties are limited, consider a Half Log Cabin. This quilt was an exercise in making the blocks nearly identical, rather than scrappy. The green and gold multicolored necktie fabric ran out at 16 blocks. The setting is one commonly used with the Kansas Trouble block.

Dresden Mini Ties, 21″ × 21″, made and quilted by Christine Copenhaver, 2012

Here is a Dresden Plate design on a black background. It may look like the skinny ends of ties were clipped off and arranged on the quilt, but that is not the case. The skinny ends of most ties flare out only a tiny bit, if at all. I made these using the method for the blades in *Black-Eyed Dresden Sue*.

Dark Diamonds, 58″ × 69″, made by Christine Copenhaver and quilted by Jill Zollinger, 2013

Here is another example of how handsome neckties look in a diamond quilt pattern. This is a very masculine-looking quilt with its black setting triangles and border, but it could be brightened up with lighter fabrics for the setting and border.

Big Stars, 51″ × 54″, made and quilted by Christine Copenhaver, 2013

The diamonds making up these stars are 3″ finished, a great size for showing off ties with large, abstract patterns.

Bits 'n' Pieces, 30″ × 30″, made and quilted by Christine Copenhaver, 2013

In making *Swingin' on a Star in Red*, I cut excess red and black fabric from the corners and saved them for a project like this. Each half-square triangle block is 1⅞″ square. Labels were used as inner borders, and tabs that say "100% silk" were used around the periphery like prairie points!

Ohio Superstar, 23″ × 48″, made and quilted by Christine Copenhaver, 2013

This variation of the Ohio Star pattern shows a little muscle-flexing in each corner. I was not able to find a common name for the block. Altering the placement of light and dark changes the look of the star dramatically.

About the Author

Photo by Christine Copenhaver

Christine currently resides in Franklin, Tennessee (a suburb of Nashville), but has lived in nearly every region of the United States. Christine has sewn creatively since seventh grade, when she was put on a clothing allowance and found that she could make more clothes than she could buy ready-made. Her high school graduation present was a Singer Featherweight, as her parents naively thought that she could always support herself sewing! Instead, she became a biologist, studying hummingbirds in graduate school. That was followed by a career in environmental consulting. After a tough day being analytical (left brain), she found that doing something creative, like quilting, got her into her right mind (both literally and figuratively). With an empty nest, there was more time for quilting and exploring quilting beyond cotton (for example, silk ties, silk, and even using knitting in quilts). Christine's quilts have been shown at the National Quilt Museum in Paducah, American Quilter's Society shows, art galleries, and quilt guild shows. Her parents still marvel at reports that the same Featherweight model (still a treasured and well-used possession) bought new for $99 more than four

decades ago is now sold at quilt shows for $500! You can visit Christine's website at necktiequilting.com.

RESOURCES

The first place to go for information and products is your local quilt shop. If that is not possible or they cannot help you, then try the Internet for information.

C&T Publishing
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Reference books:

QuiltEssential by Erin Burke Harris

Start Quilting with Alex Anderson

Diamond Quilts and Beyond, Lone Star Quilts and Beyond, Quick Diamond Quilts and Beyond, Quick Star Quilts and Beyond, and *Hunter Star Quilts and Beyond,* all by Jan Krentz

DVDs:

Jan Krentz Teaches You to Make Lone Star Quilts

Quiltmaking Basics:

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At the bottom of the page, look for Quiltmaking Basics under Consumer Resources. You can download this section to your own computer, or look up a specific topic by clicking on one of the Quilting tips, just above Quiltmaking Basics.

Products:

Lesley Riley's TAP Transfer Artist Paper

Other Books and Videos

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Passionate Patchwork by Kaffe Fassett

Kaye Wood
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Notions

Pellon

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Pellon fusible interfacing

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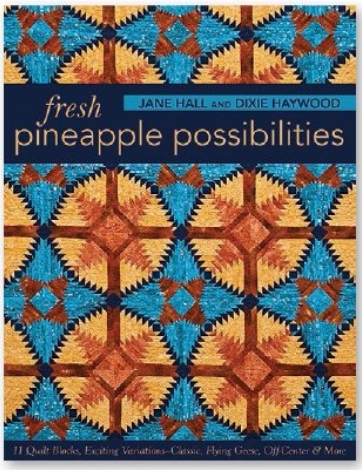

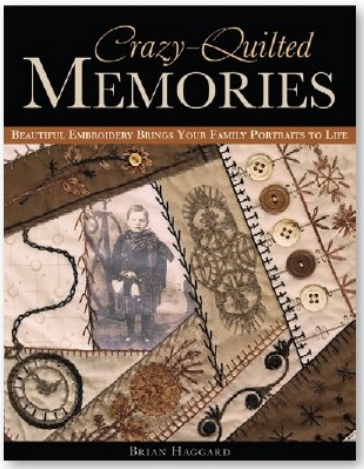

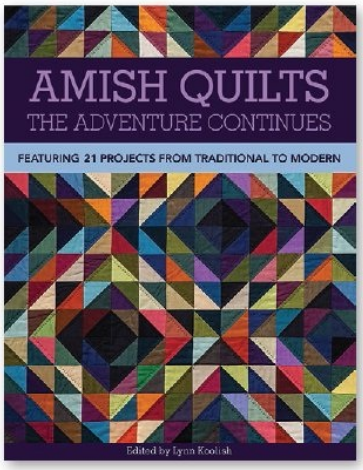

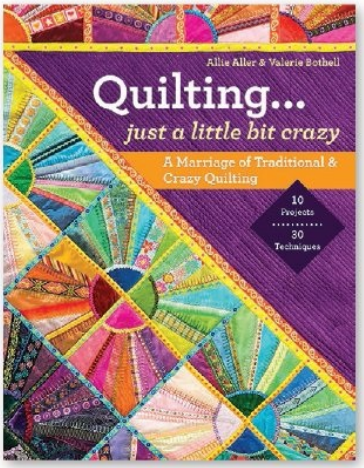

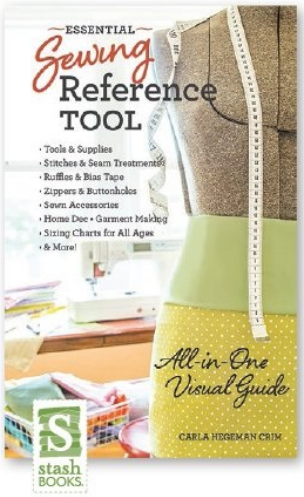

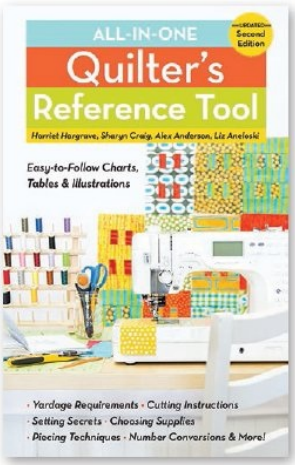

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