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November 18, 2008

*How to make my favorite Star.*



I love star quilts. And of all of the star blocks I've made for quilts over the years, this one remains my favorite. I want to share it with all of you. And you CAN do this new quilters! Just take it slow and cut and sew carefully. I made this block when I was a beginner and I was really intimidated by it. But when taken apart into sections I realized it wasn't as scary as I thought. I would love it if you all made it with me.

So first things first. Choose some fabric. Just grab a little stack that you like and you can edit later.

*\*Edit: This block is nice and big and measures at 14 1/2 inches, forgot to mention that!*

*\*Edit #2!! I've had a few lovely ladies point out that it would be nice to have a picture of the back of the star and some more instruction on pressing, so I'm going to get working on that and explain more about pressing and cutting on my next post. Thanks for asking ladies I'm sure it will help out others too! x*

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MY WISH LIST



\*You'll need some background fabric. I've used two in this block but you could use one, or make each piece different. It's up to you.  
\*Fabric for your nine patch squares.  
\*Fabric for your outside and inside star points.



I like these. My favorite of which is this one.



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It makes me think of old houses and grandmas, homemade pies and kitchen curtains. I wish I had more of it.

\* A quick note about cutting. I can't stress to all of you wonderful new quilters out there how important accuracy is when it comes to cutting. Especially in a block with lots of pieces. You can sew with a perfect 1/4 inch seam allowance but if your pieces aren't cut accurately, they won't fit together the way they're supposed to. And you'll say bad words.

So, first cut 9, 2 1/2 inch squares for your nine patch.



I cut a bunch for future blocks.



Now sew them together, pressing toward the dark squares.



Now we'll cut the rest. First cut four, 2 1/2 by 6 1/2 inch strips from your background fabric. Since I used two background fabrics I'll call this one background #1.





Out of this same background #1 cut four, 4 1/2 inch squares for the corners.



Now grab background #2, (or more of #1 if you are using all of the same background) and cut four, 2 1/2 by 4 1/2 inch strips.



Also cut eight, 2 1/2 by 1 1/2 inch little strips out of background #2.





Now we'll cut the star points. I chose red for the outside points. Cut eight, 2 1/2 inch squares for these. (It looks like I just cut four, but there are eight there, they're just stuck together from cutting and I forgot to separate them for the photo)



And eight, 1 1/2 inch squares out of the same.



Now cut eight, 2 1/2 inch squares for the inside star points.



Here's everything laid out all nice and purty.





Now you'll want to put everything together in sets to sew up the star points.



The 6 1/2 inch background #1 strips go with the red 2 1/2 inch squares, the 4 1/2 inch background #2 strips go with the lighter 2 1/2 inch inside point squares, and the smallest background #2 strips go with the baby 1 1/2 inch squares.

First we'll sew the points to the longest strips. We'll just do the good old stitch and flip method for each side. Lay a red square on one end, draw a line from corner to corner, stitch on the line, and press it back. After pressing the corner back (we'll be pressing all of the star points in this block toward the points) you can flip it back over and trim the excess off with your rotary cutter. I like to press it before cutting it just because it stabilizes it a bit since we're working with bias.

Just be sure to sew from the CORRECT corners!



Now, sometimes when we start sewing on an outside corner, the corner gets sucked down into the machine and causes us to say bad words. Can I hear an amen? This used to drive me crazy until I figured out the SECRET to solving this problem. It's a 'straight stitch' stitch plate. (Heavens parted...angels singing...)

Now this is your normal stitch plate, that can handle all stitching. See it's little horizontal opening? It's smiling at you. It's long so your needle can zig and zag till it's hearts content. But, it's also wide enough to suck your little fabric points down.





Now for the straight stitch plate. Notice she doesn't have a horizontal smile, just a hole. That top hole there is where the needle goes down. And it's so small my fabric corners can't get sucked down into never never land.



But notice the red warning. NO ZIG ZAG stitching! Or your needle will hit the side and snap off! Not that I've ever done that or anything.... just sayin'. Oh who am I kidding? I've done it so many times I should wear safety goggles.

Here they are side by side.



So, check with your manufacturer to see if you can get one of these babies. I love mine.

Now back to our star blocks. Where was I before I so rudely interrupted myself... oh ya. Now we'll sew the points to the inside part of the star. So get your 4 1/2 inch background #2 strips and your lighter 2 1/2 inch corner squares. Go ahead and sew them together using the same stitch and flip. You'll end up with four flying geese.





And now for the tiny 1 1/2 by 2 1/2 inch strips and 1 1/2 inch squares. Aren't they cute? Divide them up into two groups of four sets because you sew half of them in one direction and half of them in the other. Stitch and flip.



See? Nothing is getting sucked down in there! Just feed them through one at a time. For you new quilters this is called chain piecing. It saves time and thread. You just feed them through one after another and snip them apart later.





Four in one direction, four in the other.

Here they are finished.



When you have these pressed and trimmed it's fun to lay out all of the pieces and see how it's going to look.



Now we sew this together in sections. First the inside lighter point pieces and the little red points we just finished.







Now sew these new units to the 6 1/2 inch red star point units.  
Press toward the top unit.



We're almost done! I can't stress how important it is for blocks like this to use a very CONSISTENT 1/4 inch seam allowance. With so many pieces, even 1/16 of an inch off here and there can mess you up. Your seam allowance doesn't have to be a perfect 1/4 inch, but it does have to be consistent, whatever it is. Sew slowly, pay attention to your seam allowance, and you'll get great results. Which in my book are nice points and pieces that fit together.





Now lay it out again. Sew your sections together into three rows. Press the top and bottom row toward the outside corners. Press the middle row toward the nine patch.



And then sew your three rows together, pressing toward the center, and you're done!







Oh how I love this star.





When choosing fabrics, I love a scrappy old fashioned look. So it's nice to choose fabrics with different 'textures'. If you mix lots of different fabric patterns like small florals, larger florals, tiny prints, and some others that read as a solid, your quilt will look



much more interesting than if all of your fabrics are all similar patterns in different colors.




I hope you like this block as much as I do. I'm going to work on some more and then figure out a nice way to put them into a quilt top. I also need to get going on my Christmas Cottages! I finally think I know how I'm going to put them into a quilt too.

Please let me know if you make some of these, I'd love to see them! x

Posted at 04:01 PM in [Quilting, Tutorials](#) | [Permalink](#)

### Comments

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This is fantastic. The design is great and so is the tutorial. Thank you for sharing. You have the best fabrics. I love them. Really I think they are so amazing. So are you!

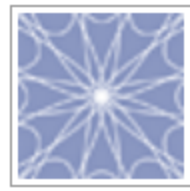


Posted by: [Nanette](#) | [November 18, 2008 at 05:00 PM](#)



what a wonderful block and wonderful tutorial! thank you...i am so making some of these! =)

Posted by: [t](#) | [November 18, 2008 at 05:03 PM](#)



I worked at a quilt shop a million years ago...but I was not a quilter. I taught doll making, home dec, clothing....but I really have the bug to begin learning to quilt and I LOVE your star pattern!!! I played with your coffee cozy idea and love that...though I need major lessons in binding 101!!! LOL  
Thanks for your fun blog and all the great inspiration!!!

Posted by: [Debbie Daily](#) | [November 18, 2008 at 05:06 PM](#)



It is great block! what a great tutorial~! lots of work! I love the coffee cozies!! Gotta make one!

Posted by: [V](#) | [November 18, 2008 at 05:42 PM](#)



Oh my goodness, how beautiful! I can't believe that you are already working on my birthday present! You are the best! Seriously now....I think I am ready to attempt that block Thanks to you! It's only been 6 years since I first loved that one! Take care my friend. MT

Posted by: [MTS](#) | [November 18, 2008 at 06:07 PM](#)



Awesome post. Thanks for the tip about the plate, I'll be near my sewing shop tomorrow and I'll pop in and see if they have one.

Two things I wish you had included in your post, a pic of the back side so we could see "press to the dark". And tips on accurate cutting. Everyone always stresses how important accurate cutting is, but tips on how to be accurate seem to be few & far between. (cutting is my biggest issue...)

Love your blog & how encouraging you are to this noob. lol

Posted by: [Missy Ann](#) | [November 18, 2008 at 06:21 PM](#)



Lovely, lovely. What a great block.

Posted by: [MichelleB](#) | [November 18, 2008 at 07:34 PM](#)



That's a BEAUTIFUL block!!!

Posted by: [Thimbleanna](#) | [November 18, 2008 at 08:56 PM](#)

Sherri

I absolutely love your favorite star block, maybe because I am such a 9-patch lover! Thanks so much for the tutorial--I can't wait to make it!

Posted by: [Sherri](#) | [November 18, 2008 at 08:57 PM](#)



Your blog is always eye-candy for me. This is a cool star- I have never seen it before! Thanks for the lesson. And as always, I love your fabric choices.

Posted by: [another amy](#) | [November 18, 2008 at 09:58 PM](#)



So impressed!!!!

Wow!!!!

You know what I'm going to do this afternoon...hehehe...

Thanks for showing and explaining it to us!

Big hugs,



Sabine A. xx

PS: Bad words? What bad words are you thinking of?  
Hehehe....

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Posted by: [Sabine](#) | [November 18, 2008 at 10:54 PM](#)



You can't imagine how this star made me happy !  
All about it : the berry colors, the light back ground, the beautiful star shape....sigh...can't get enough of it !  
I'm not (yet) a quilter, but this star is something I would like to give a try sometime.  
Thank you so much for the detailed explanations and pictures, and for this beautiful star !

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Posted by: [mycraftyways](#) | [November 18, 2008 at 11:28 PM](#)



I am for sure going to make this block. Thanks so much for sharing it. Not only did you explain it well but it is just so beautiful to look at. I love your fabric choices and how you used them.

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Posted by: [Annette](#) | [November 19, 2008 at 12:42 AM](#)

Stephanie

Beautiful fabric and love the block. But I never knew about the stitch plate. I've often had fabric sucked into the neverland you speak of! I'll be asking at my sewing shop today...off to buy more bobbins.

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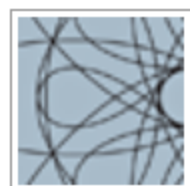
Posted by: [Stephanie](#) | [November 19, 2008 at 04:09 AM](#)



I love stars too. Did you mention what size the block finishes at? I'm too lazy to do the math! Very pretty block.

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Posted by: [marianne](#) | [November 19, 2008 at 04:42 AM](#)



Thank you very much! Great tutorial!

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Posted by: [Barbara](#) | [November 19, 2008 at 05:09 AM](#)



This was a wonderful tutorial. Beautiful star!!

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Posted by: [Eileen](#) | [November 19, 2008 at 05:22 AM](#)



Is this the star that I saw on a quilt in a camper? I'm thinking it was your camper??? If not, it's a coincidence. Anyway, I was trying to figure out HOW jsut by the photo. Thanks so much...This would make a great center for a wallhanging if you don't have time to do a whole quilt...add a few borders and VOILA! GORGEOUS! How about Christmas metallics...?

Thanks again!

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Posted by: [Kathy](#) | [November 19, 2008 at 06:20 AM](#)



What a sweetheart you are to post this for all the new and wanna-be quilters out in blogland. I know this took time to put this together and take the photos. Very kind. Congrats on opening your new Etsy shop. I wish you great success!

Also, I've been meaning to tell you how much I enjoy seeing the fabrics you pick out. In your banner and the stack you picked out for this tutorial...they all seem to speak the same language to me....warm and very cozy, as well as, soothing to the eye and the soul. It's always such a pleasure to visit your blog. Thanks, Sarah!

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Posted by: [cathleen](#) | [November 19, 2008 at 06:43 AM](#)





Beautiful beautiful beautiful! I have to try quilting!

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Posted by: [Alexis](#) | [November 19, 2008 at 07:33 AM](#)

Casey

that's a great block!

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Posted by: [Casey](#) | [November 19, 2008 at 07:56 AM](#)



Such a great star block! I love the curves that are actually straight lines. How big is the completed block?

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Posted by: [Amy @ parkcitygirl](#) | [November 19, 2008 at 08:42 AM](#)



Excellent tutorial! I now have a name for my stingy-itis with the thread- "Chain piecing" must remember that. :-)

It is a beautiful star -worthy of a Bethlehem scene. Thank you so much for sharing.

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Posted by: [Melanie](#) | [November 19, 2008 at 11:39 AM](#)



PRETTY! I can see why it's your favorite. I'll be linking.

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Posted by: [Rachel](#) | [November 19, 2008 at 12:37 PM](#)



Wonderful tutorial for a beautiful star block. Thank you! I will try it.

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Posted by: [Zita](#) | [November 19, 2008 at 12:59 PM](#)

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