

MODERN ART QUILTERS

Block of the Month



Month 7: STARGAZY Foundation Paper Pieced five-point stars



HH kept her colour choices limited but varied the star's position within the block. She also included areas of negative space for added interest



Between the change of scale and the emphasis on darks and lights HB manages to get a kind of colour fade from warm to cool colours

On the following pages, in addition to details instructions for Foundation Paper Piecing (FPP), we have provided you with the FPP templates for stars in three sizes finishing to 2-, 4- and 6-inches square. These can be arranged, with the addition of unpieced fabric squares cut to similar sizes should you prefer.

Please read through all the instructions before starting. Press all fabrics before cutting.

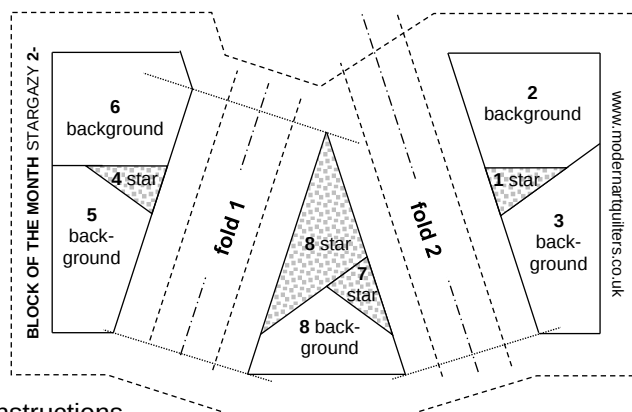
Why Foundation Paper Piecing? FPP is a great way of reproducing blocks accurately as well as making blocks which might be very difficult or impossible by other methods. All FPP designs start with a line drawing of the block on a foundation; either hand-drawn or printed onto fabric or paper. These line drawings always appear the mirror image of the finished design, you'll see why later in this pattern.

At the end of this pattern you will find the FPP templates for three different sized blocks. Print each of the templates as many times as you want onto cheap photocopier paper – the cheaper the better since it is easy to see through and tears away cleanly. Cut the blocks out on the dotted line round each one – yes they are a funny shape for an ultimately square block, but trust me!

The templates show numbered sections as shown on the example right. The fabric is added to the foundation in numerical order, and each number will be accompanied by an indication of what fabric to use. – in this case **star** or **background** is fairly self-explanatory

Experienced at FPP? If you prefer to use your own foundation piecing method, please continue to do so, and having made up your blocks, **go to Step 17 on Page 3**

New to FPP: Please continue reading for step-by-step instructions



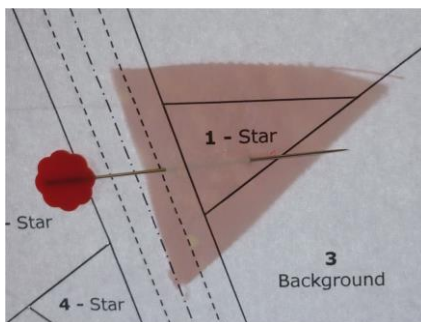
However experienced you are at foundation paper piecing, remember these basic rules:

- The printed image is the reverse of the stitched one ie. it appears back-to-front
- Fabric goes on **BLANK** side of the foundation paper
- Only the first piece of fabric is placed face up
- All other pieces of fabric are placed face down ie. Right Sides Together (RST)
- Set your stitch length very short (at least half the normal size) when sewing
- Always work in numerical order – noting which fabric is to be used in each section
- Stitch directly **ON** the line with a short stitch adding a few stitches to each end of the marked line
- Trim excess fabric and thread ends as you work
- Avoid steam pressing FPP blocks – it will make the paper soggy and unworkable!

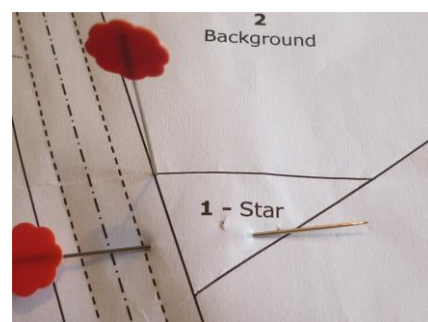
Foundation Paper Piecing



1. Work on one block at a time. Use the fabric cutting templates on **page 7** to cut the pieces for your first block, Or use strips if you are making the 2-inch version



2. Check which fabric is needed for section 1 and place it face outwards on the **BLANK** side of the paper – hold it up to the light to check all the section is covered. Pin from the printed side



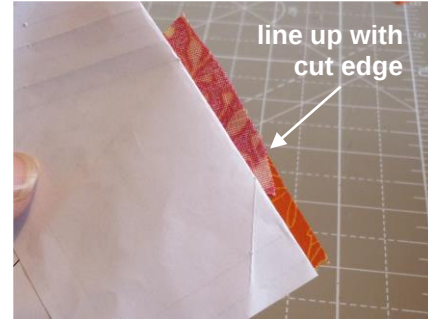
3. Mark each end of the line between section 1 and section 2 with a pin hole – this will be the stitching line



4. Fold the paper back along the marked line between sections 1 and 2. Trim the fabric ¼ inch away from the folded edge, if needed

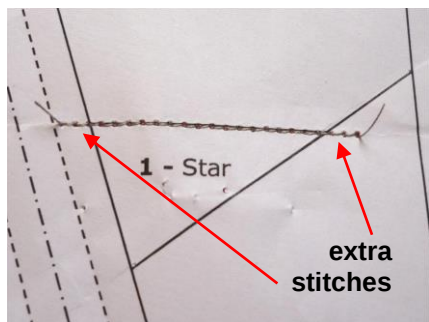


5. Position the fabric piece for section 2 to check it will cover the whole section (you can see it through the paper)



6. Move piece 2 so it is Right Sides Together (RST) with the first fabric piece.

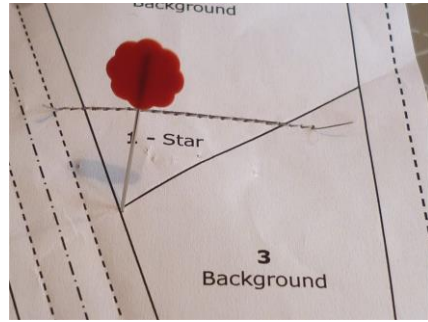
Keep a good grip on all parts, carefully unfold the paper & pin the second patch in place from the printed side. Always pin on the printed side so you can see/remove the pins as you sew.



7. Set your sewing machine to a **very short stitch length** and stitch directly **ON** the line between section 1 & section 2. Add a few stitches at either end using the fold as a guide.



8. Unpin the fabric & finger press in place taking care to get a crisp fold against the seam – this is key to get the design to work, especially when you come to add the smaller pieces



9. With a pin, mark each end of the stitching line between sections 1 & 3 and look at the next step before trying to fold the paper



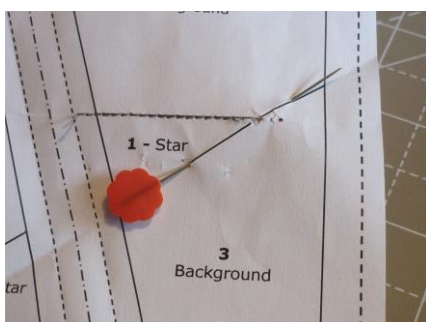
10. When the stitching already in place crosses a line you want to fold, ease the stitches out of the paper (do not unpick) then fold the paper on the marked line



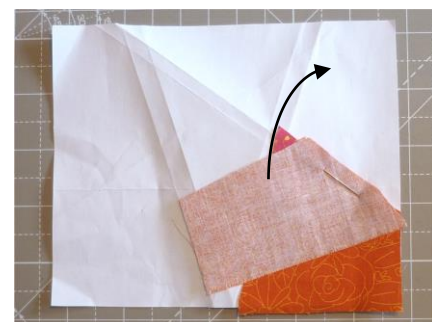
11. Trim the fabric from the first pieces $\frac{1}{4}$ inch away from the folded edge of the paper and add the next piece of fabric as before



12. Check and position the next patch RST with the previous patches in the usual way



13. Carefully unfold the paper and, keeping hold of all the pieces, pin through all layers directly **ON** the stitching line

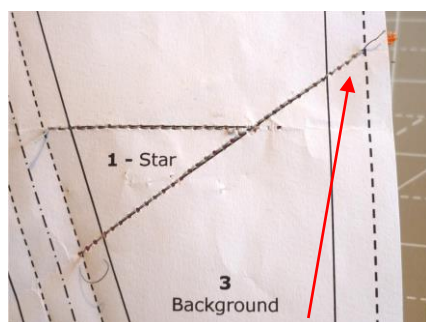


14. Viewed from the blank side of the paper you can see the pin lines up with the fold you made in the paper



15. Finger press the second piece of fabric in place, folding it carefully over the pin

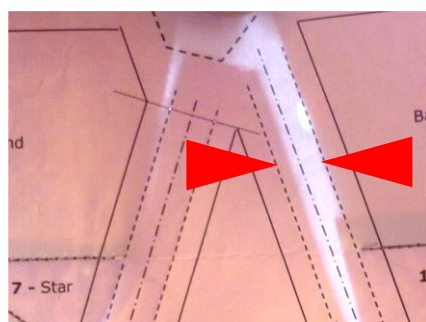
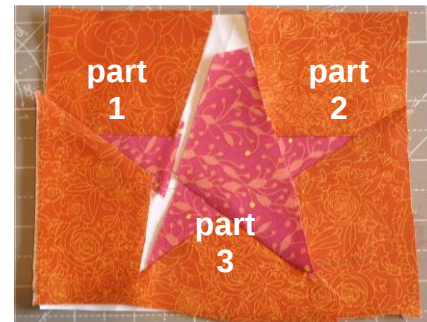
You can double check the position of the patch by holding the template up to the light and viewing it from the printed side to make sure the patch covers the next section with at least $\frac{1}{4}$ inch overhang (seam allowance) all round. Reposition if required. Once you are happy with the position, unfold the fabric and move the pin away from the seamline. Re-pin to hold the fabric in place and stitch on the seam line. **Use this method to check the position of any patch you are unsure of.**



16. When you are stitching a seam that touches the outer edge of the block, continue sewing up to the dotted line



17. Move to the next part of the block and start the process again. And again with the third part. Remember the routine **• mark • fold • trim • position • check** (re-position, check) **• pin • sew •**. Don't miss out any of these steps or you will find it hard to line up the next piece of fabric.



18. Press the three sections. **DO NOT** use steam as this makes the paper soggy and unworkable

19. Viewed from the printed side you can see the two lines marked **fold**.

You need to trim back the fabric to expose these two lines.

Trim the fabric back to the dotted lines either side of the **fold** line



19. Fold the paper carefully on the line marked **fold 1** with the fabric RST, check the fabric doesn't get caught up in the fold

20. Stitch on the solid line $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the fold

21. Trim on the line $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the fold

22. Tear out the $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of paper from the seam allowance

23. Press this first seam towards the centre part.

24. Repeat this process with **fold 2** and press this second seam away from the centre part (so both seams are heading in the same direction).

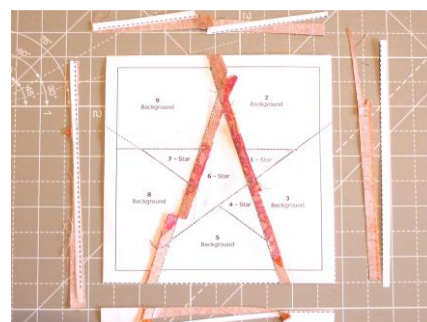


25. Repeat the process to make all the stars, of various sizes, that you need for your chosen layout

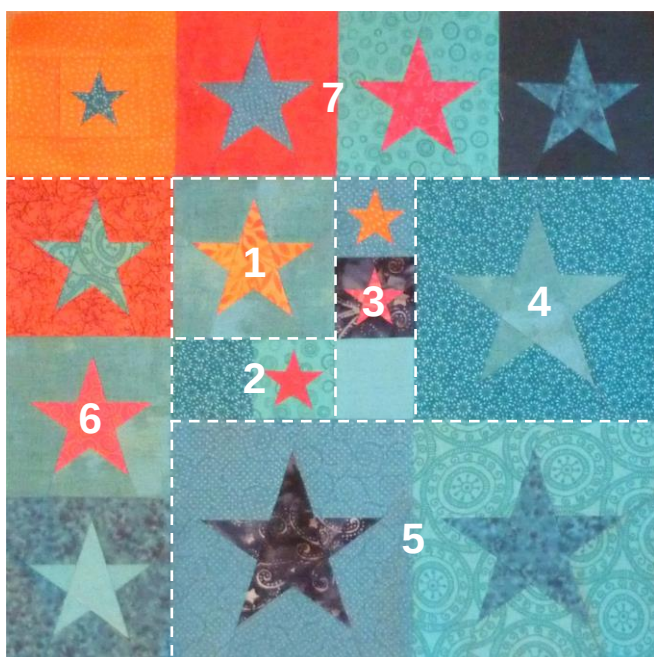
26. Press all the finished blocks carefully just before you trim them

27. Trim the blocks to size. In a perfect world you would be able to trim $\frac{1}{4}$ inch outside the solid line at the edge of a block and have a

square block, but life isn't perfect and a lot depends on the accuracy of your folding and seeing. So rely on your rotary cutter and ruler to ensure that the blocks are trimmed square to the appropriate size (2-inch block = $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches trimmed, 4-inch block = $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches trimmed, 6-inch block = $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches trimmed). If these are not square you will have difficulty sewing them together.



28. Do not take the papers out yet. Arrange the blocks in your finished layout and sew them together with a $\frac{1}{4}$ inch seam. After completing each seam, tear the $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of paper out from both seam allowances, as you did at the folds, and press the seam which ever way it wants to fall.



Left is an example of how to put together different sized blocks in sections which can then be sewn together. With a bit of planning you can avoid the need for partial seams. You may find you need to re-press seams as you work through the layout to get them to nest together

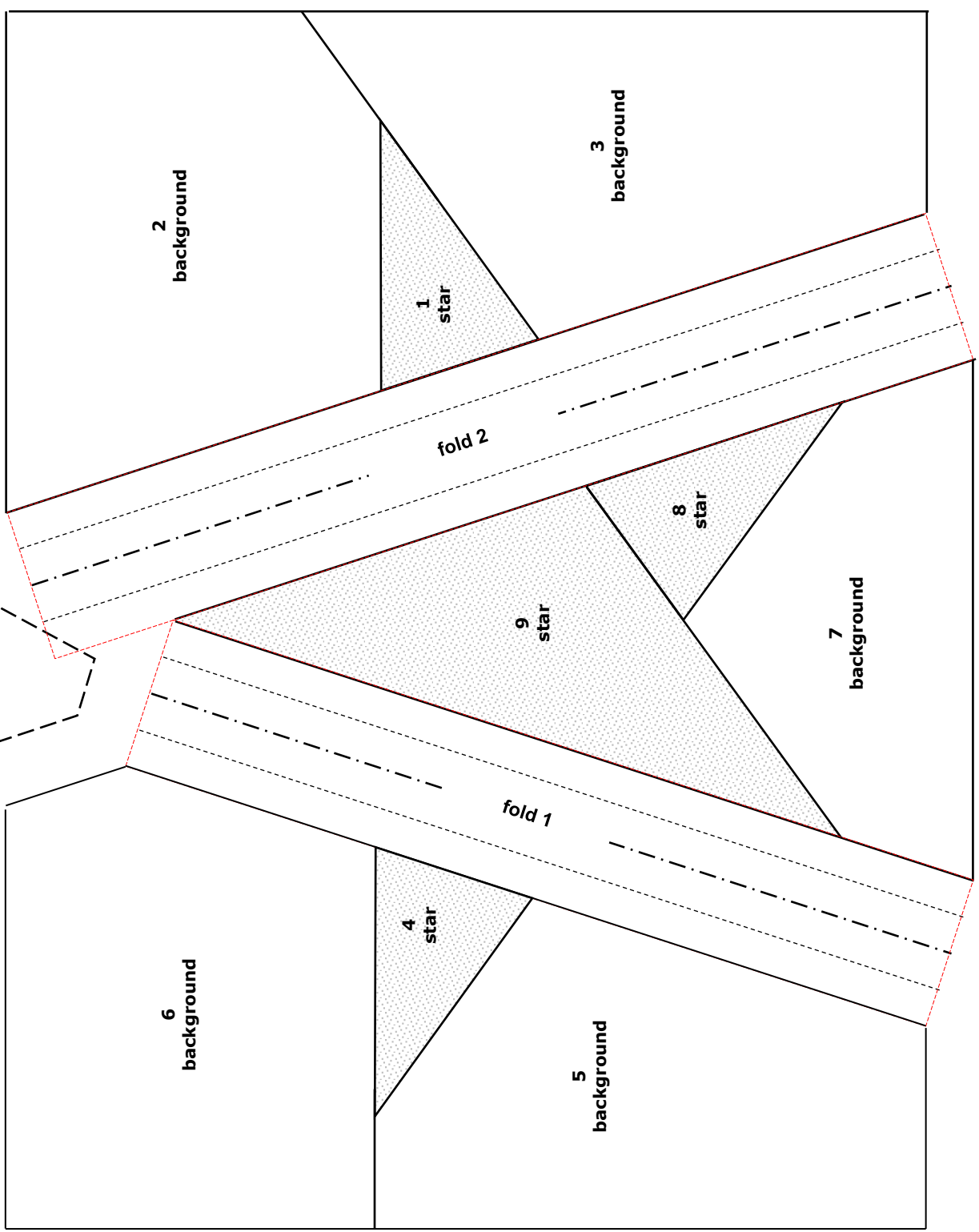
Right shows a seam correctly positioned $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the trimmed edge of the paper. As you can see it doesn't follow the solid line that nominally indicates the stitching line at the edge of the block, since my folding or sewing was a little bit out. Getting the joining seams at $\frac{1}{4}$ inch is the important bit

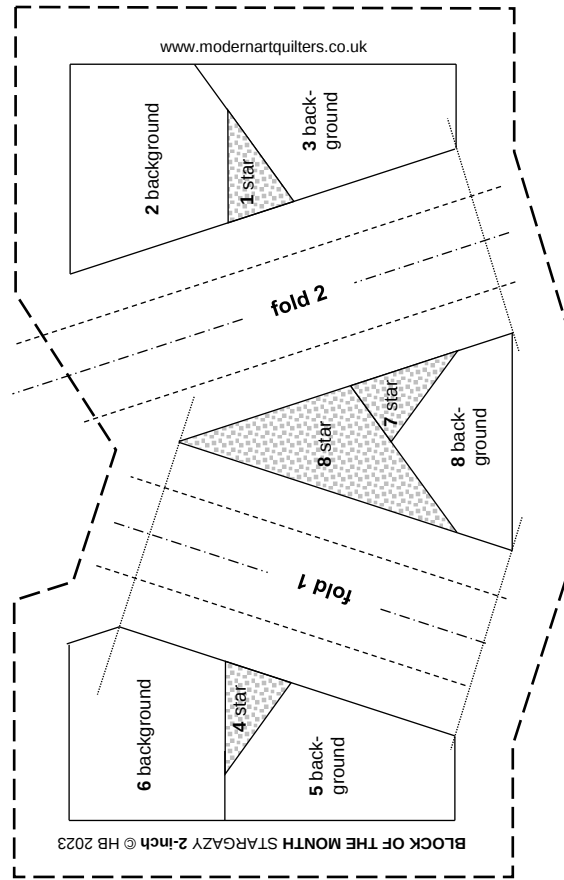
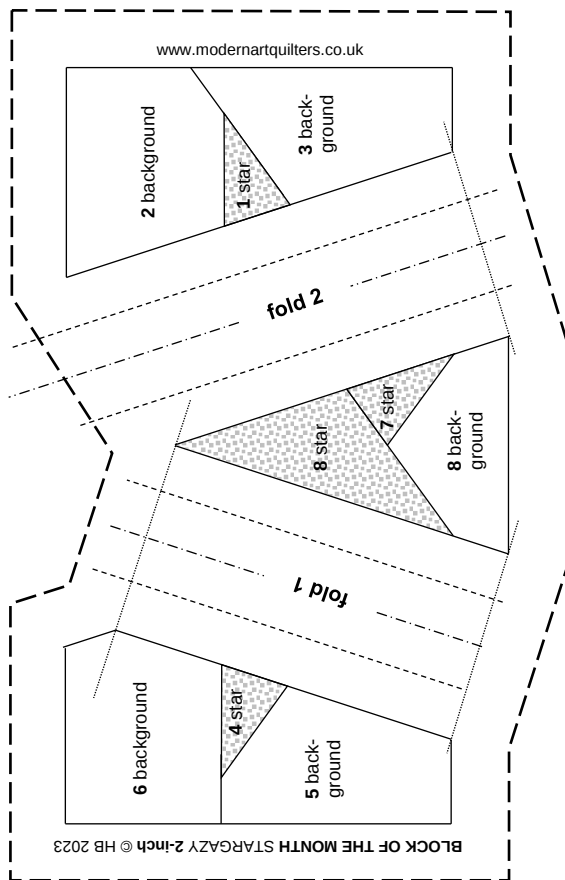
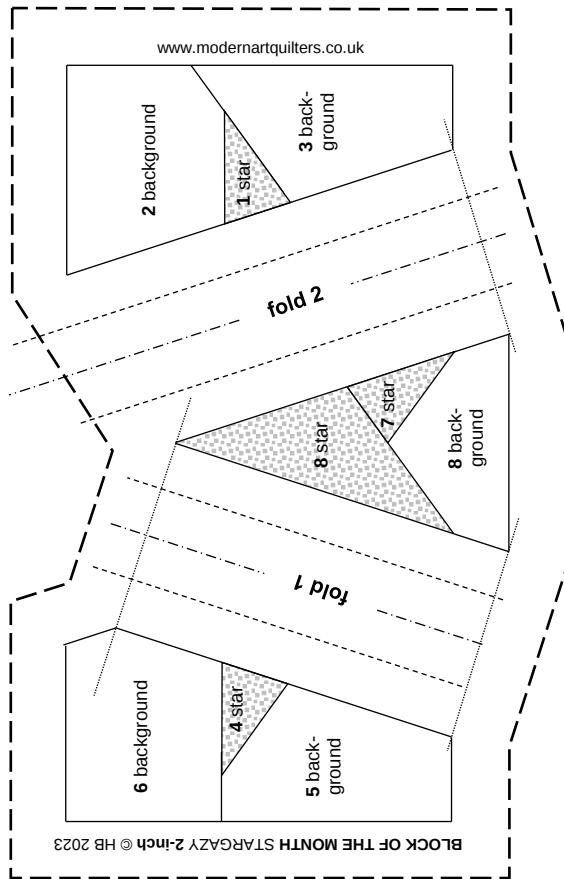
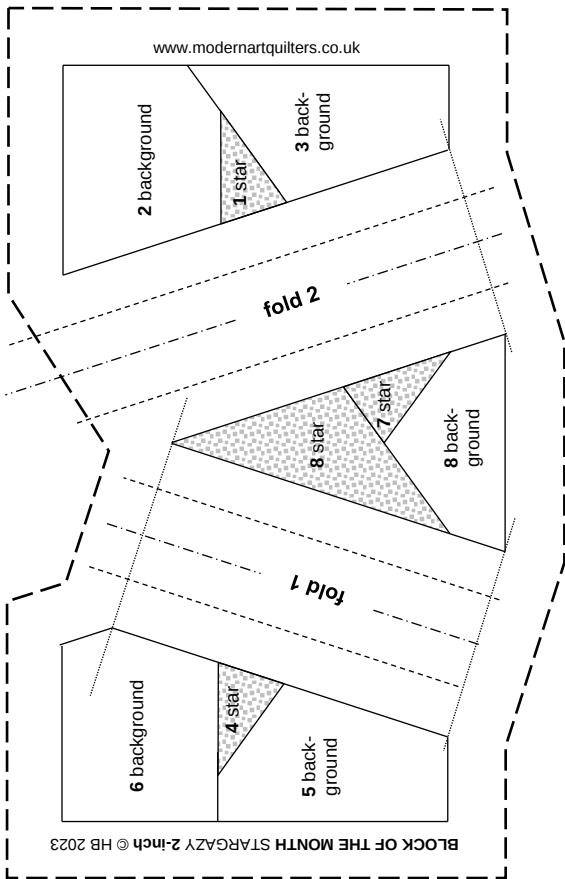


I like to leave the papers in until this giant block is sewn into its final place in the quilt.

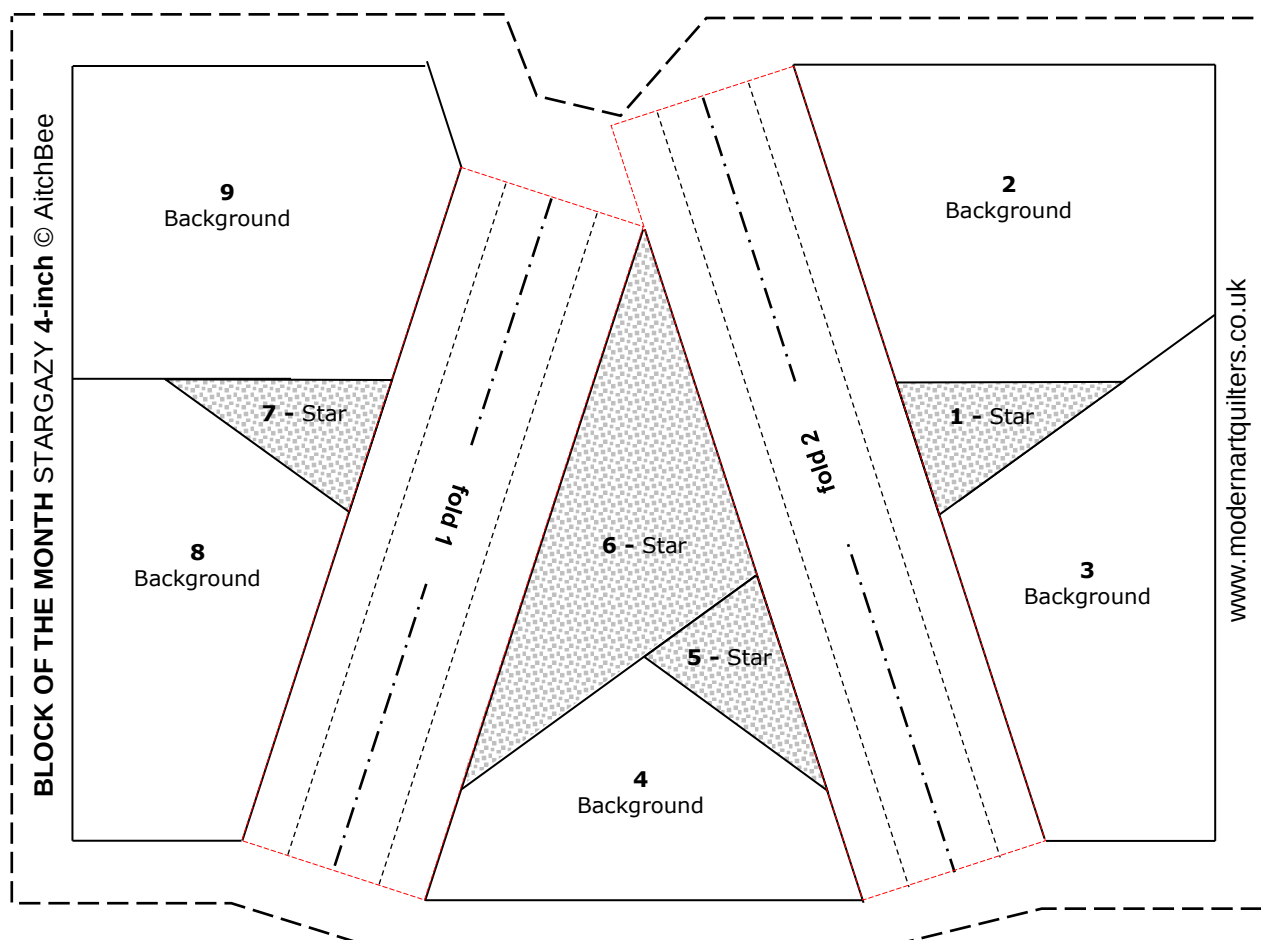
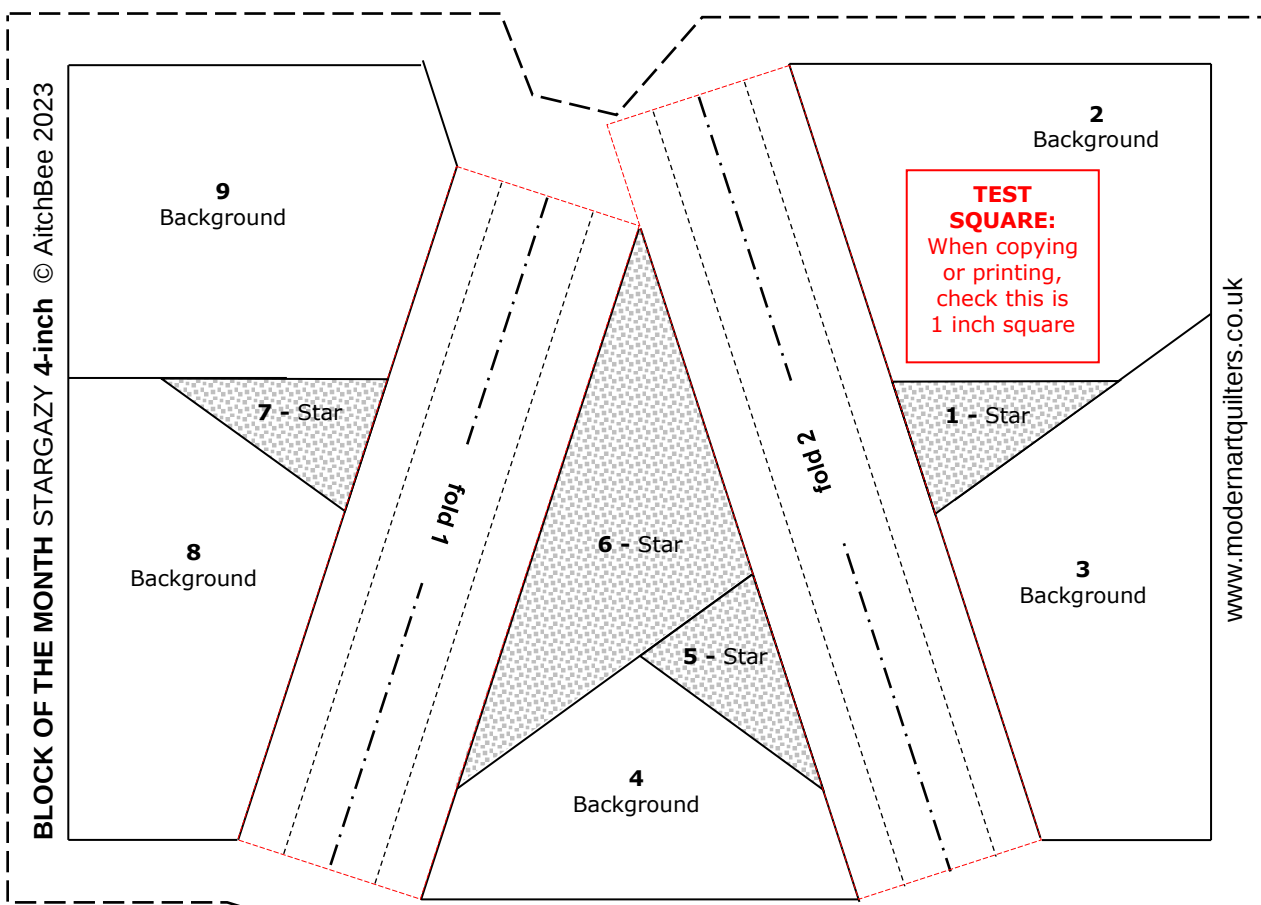
**TEST
SQUARE:**
When copying
or printing,
check this is
1 inch square

BLOCK OF THE MONTH STARGAZY 6-inch © AitchBee 2023





TEST SQUARE:
When copying or printing, check this is 1 inch square



Stick this sheet to thin card (cereal packets are ideal for this) & cut on the solid line. Each one includes a seam allowance

BLOCK OF THE MONTH
STARGAZY 4-inch
Background Fabric
Template 1
Cut ONE with template face up and ONE with template face down

www.modernartquilters.co.uk

BLOCK OF THE MONTH
STARGAZY 4-inch
Background Fabric
Template 2
Cut ONE with template face up and ONE with template face down

www.modernartquilters.co.uk

BLOCK OF THE MONTH
STARGAZY 4-inch
Star Fabric
Template 3 Cut ONE

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BLOCK OF THE MONTH
STARGAZY 4-inch
Background Fabric
Template 3
Cut ONE

www.modernartquilters.co.uk

BLOCK OF THE MONTH
STARGAZY 6-inch
Star Fabric
Template 3
Cut ONE

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BLOCK OF THE MONTH
STARGAZY 6-inch
Background Fabric
Template
Cut ONE

www.modernartquilters.co.uk

BLOCK OF THE MONTH
STARGAZY 6-inch
Star Fabric
Template 4
Cut THREE

www.modernartquilters.co.uk

TEST SQUARE:
When copying or printing, check this is 1 inch square

BLOCK OF THE MONTH
STARGAZY 6-inch
Background Fabric
Template 2
Cut ONE with template face up and ONE with template face down

www.modernartquilters.co.uk

BLOCK OF THE MONTH
STARGAZY 4-inch
Star Fabric
Template 3
Cut THREE

www.modernartquilters.co.uk

BLOCK OF THE MONTH
STARGAZY 6-inch
Background Fabric
Template 1
Cut ONE with template face up and ONE with template face down

www.modernartquilters.co.uk