

## MARCH 2009 BLOCK OF THE MONTH

### *Compass Star Variation*

Turn in at April 2009 meeting

**Techniques:** Paperpiecing combined with traditional piecing

**Block size:** 6-1/2 inch unfinished

**Colors:** Red, white and blue

**A confession:** Sometimes the original plan just doesn't work right. This was to have this be a classic Compass Star, with the star on a round white circle. It didn't work easily and would have been too hard to explain. Instead, we've designed a simpler variation that sets the star spokes in an octagon.

**Instructions:** For paperpiecing instructions, go to the [www.gardenstatequilters.com](http://www.gardenstatequilters.com), click on Meetings, Block of the Month, and click on Compass Star Variation. Paperpiecing instructions are on page 3

**BEFORE YOU START, with a pencil extend the "C1" line all the way to the edge of the block (not including the seam allowance). Do this on all 4 of the block sections. If you don't, you'll end up with open flaps in your block!**

Make 4 block sections, all identical, or see "The Scrappy Approach" below. Trim on the 1/4-inch seam allowance line. Remove the paper. Sew together in rows, and join rows into the finished block. Press the seams OPEN, please, to reduce bulk.

It's easiest if you chain piece the four sections. Do all the sections A1; then all the sections A2, etc.

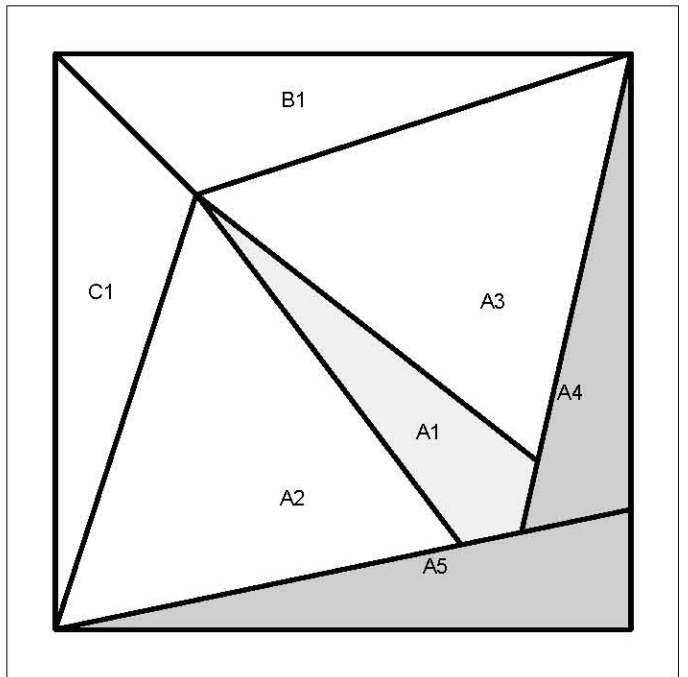
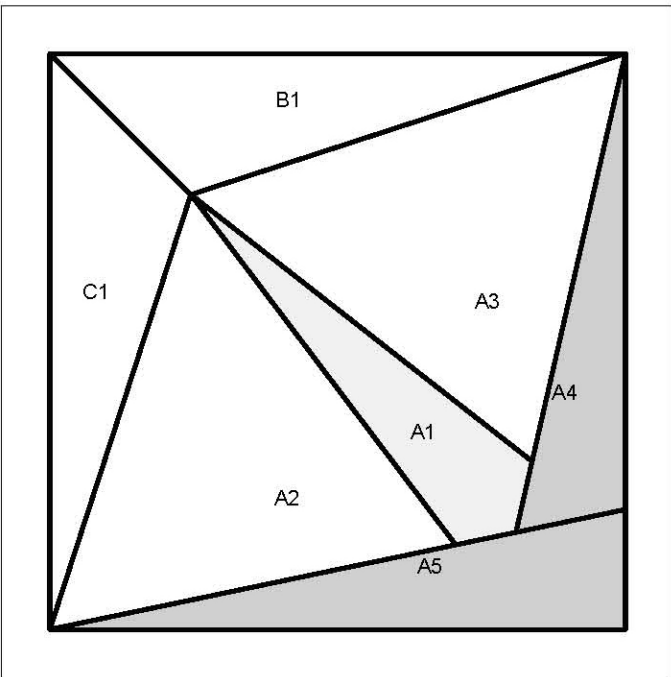
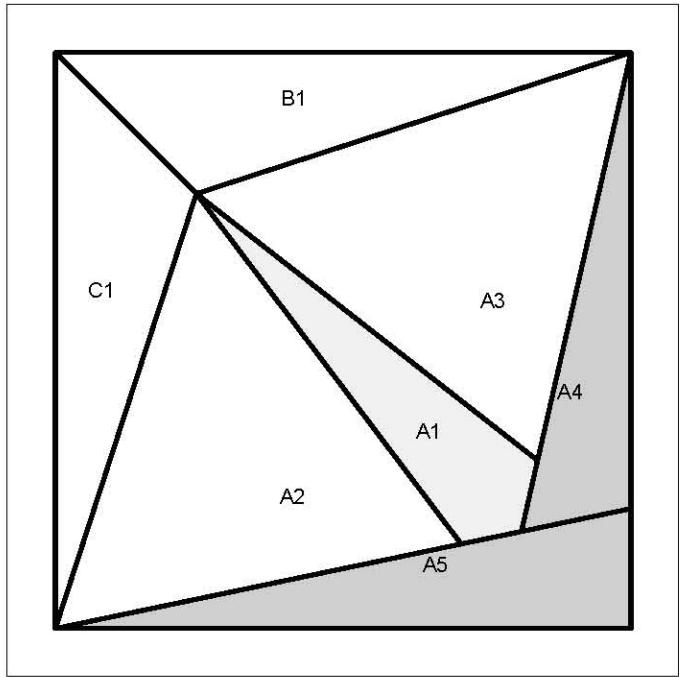
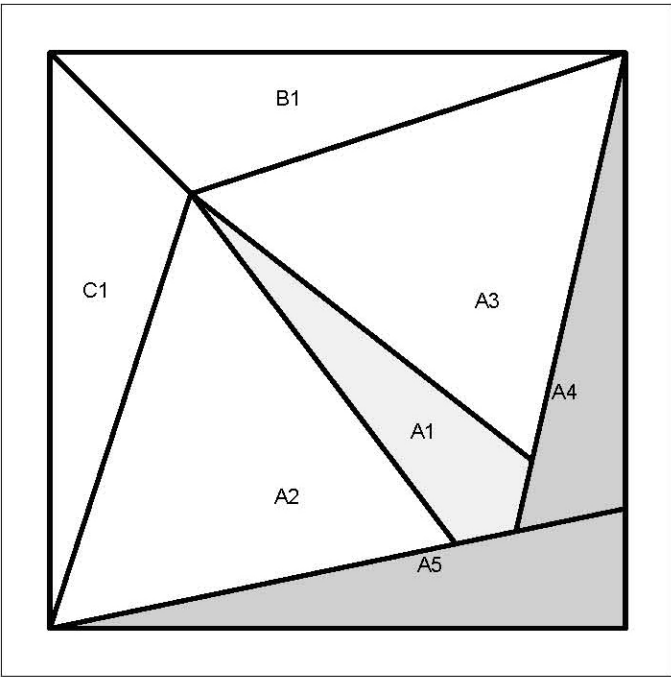
**Cutting:** Use scraps. Each scrap should be approximately 1/2 inch larger than the patch being covered.

#### **Colors and Placement:**

- Piece A1 – lightest value of the color chosen
- Pieces A2 and A3 – white or white-on-white (I used 2 different whites on the sample)
- Piece A4 – darker value than the A1 piece
- Piece A5 – This is the "dominant star" it should be brighter than either the A1 or A4 pieces. Remember: red is a more dominant color than blue. When you have red and blue of the same value, the red will generally stand out more than the blue.
- Pieces B1 and C1 – a sky blue (think aqua or turquoise, rather than "true" blue). Value can be anything from light to medium-dark

#### **The "Scrappy" Approach**

Yes, you can make the star points "scrappy", that is, mix different fabrics for the points, but if you do, keep the VALUE the same for all fabrics used for the same star point sections.



## ***How to Paperpiece:***

1. **Use a shorter-than usual machine stitch** (such as 1.8 or 2.0) to make it easier to remove the paper when block is done.
2. In paper piecing, you sew on the printed side of the pattern, where you can see the machine needle going through the lines. Your fabric is **underneath** the paper as you sew.
3. Cut a piece of fabric large enough to cover patch number "A1" on the printed pattern. Hold up to a light to make sure your piece of fabric covers patch A1 plus at least ¼-inch seam allowance in all directions. Place the fabric **right-side** up on the back, unprinted side of the pattern. Turn over and pin the fabric in place.
4. On the printed side of the pattern, fold the pattern on the sewing line between patch A1 and patch A2. With scissors or rotary cutter, trim the fabric to approximately ¼ inch along the folded seam. Fold the pattern open again.
5. Cut a piece of fabric large enough to cover patch A2 on the pattern, including a least ¼ inch seam extra around all sides. (Hold up to light to check.) Align patch A2 fabric right sides together with trimmed edge of patch A1 fabric. Pin in place. (To make sure you have covered all the area required, fold patch A2 fabric back along what will be the sewn line, and check to make sure it covers ALL of patch A2 including any seam allowances. If not, adjust until all of patch A2 and seam allowances will be covered. Fold paper open again.)
6. Carefully turn paper over, holding fabric in place. Make sure that none of the fabric gets twisted out of alignment, or folded over.
7. Sew on the seam line between patches A1 and A2. Sew only from solid line to solid line; do not sew out to the seam allowance line at the edge of the block. Turn pattern over to printed side. Fold pattern back on seam you just sewed. Trim the exposed fabrics to approximately ¼ inch seam.
8. Turn over to the fabric side again. Fold patch A2 fabric back on sewn seam and press (finger pressing is usually all that is required).
9. Repeat for each new patch, in the order of the printed numbers on the pattern.
10. Once all patches have been added, turn over the block to the paper side and **trim on the OUTER SEAM LINE**. Block should measure 6-1/2 inches.
11. Remove the paper pattern. A pair of tweezers helps. Start at the outside edge and lift and tear the paper away from a corner seam. Repeat for all four corners. Move inward to the next piece. The edge abutting the corner you tore away should lift easily. Tear out the paper. Repeat until all paper is removed.
12. You should have four sections. Press with an iron before sewing the sections together in two rows. Press the seam between sections OPEN.
13. Sew the two rows together to complete your block. Press the seam between rows OPEN.