

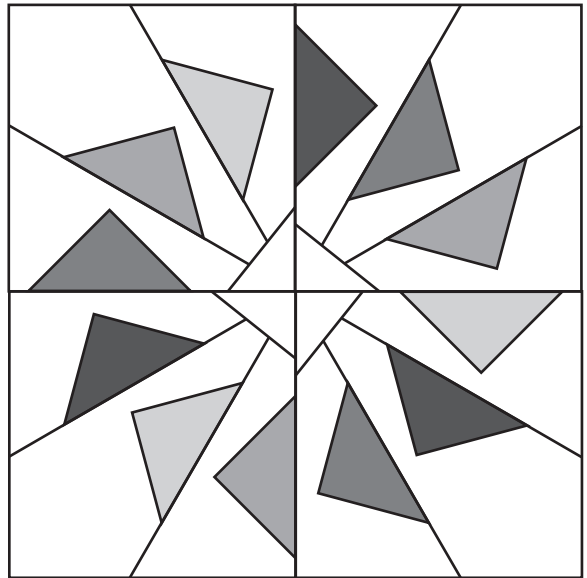
Prairie Circle Pillow

The flying geese in this block are made using simple, three-dimensional prairie points made of folded fabric and inserted into a seam - no tricky points to make or match.

The pattern includes simple paper-piecing techniques, and easy pre-cutting instructions for minimum fabric waste.

This pattern includes instructions for a 17" x 17" pillow (from a 15" x 15" block). You can also use the block for other things, like table runners.

Please post a picture of your finished projects on the Hunter's Design Studio Facebook Page, and/or tag it @huntersds and in Instagram.
Cheers!



FABRIC and NOTIONS

- Background: 1 yard.
- Prairie Point Geese: 1 square 4 3/4" x 4 3/4" each of 12 assorted fabrics, or charm squares
- Fusible fleece or batting: 18" x 18" square.
- Pillow form: 18" x 18" (a pillow form that's slight larger than the case makes the pillow plump up prettily).
- Neutral or matching thread for piecing.
- Optional contrast thread for topstitching.

PAPER-PIECING

There are many different ways to paper-piece, and most people end up developing their own hybrid style from learning different techniques. I'm guessing that you, like me, probably learn best from a live demonstration, so I'd like to refer you to some YouTube tutorials that I think do a great job of showing how it can be done. Each one tackles paper-piecing a little differently, and demonstrates some techniques and tools that may be useful. So grab a cup of tea and take an hour to watch a few videos to come up with your own style.

Here are some recommendations (in no particular order, and with no affiliation):

- Paper-Piecing Made Easy Tutorial, by TheCraftyGemini <http://youtu.be/8uaW26igyvE>
- Paper-Piecing by Leah Day of Day Style Designs <http://youtu.be/9Bc1mU0LMF8>
- Foundation Paper-Piecing - how to, by Karen Johnson of Connecting Threads <http://youtu.be/Xv2gKMx9CCM>

PAPER PIECING PAPER

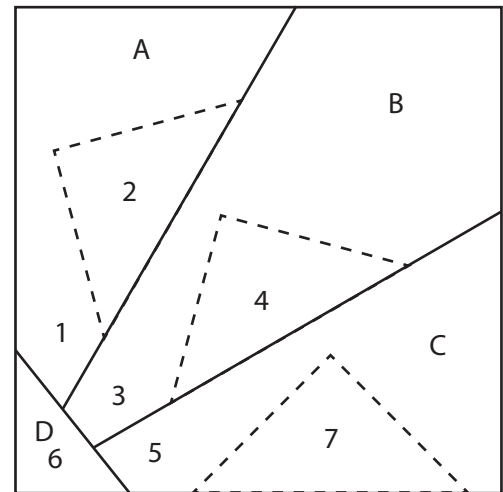
While generic printer/copier paper works just fine for paper-piecing, I highly recommend using newsprint or vellum. Newsprint is lightweight, semi-transparent, and tears off like a dream. Vellum is very transparent, and quite sturdy. Both are available in packages for quilting at your local or online quilt store. My favorite is the Newsprint Foundation Paper by Carol Doak, the fairy godmother of paper piecing (C&T Publishing). I used it one time just for grins and now I'm a convert!

1. OVERVIEW

Each full circle of geese is made of four block quadrants of identical construction. The geese/prairie points are sewn between the seams of background wedges in paper-pieced fashion.

The number 7 Prairie Point is added to the block when it's joined to the adjacent quadrant.

All the pre-cut measurements below give you a generous 1/2" of allowance around each piece.



2. COPY THE PATTERNS

- Make FOUR copies from the pattern on page 3.
- Make sure your copier isn't shrinking the patterns by checking the measurement of the Printer Check Square.
- If you're printing this from a PDF, make sure your printer settings are set to Actual Size (not Fit to Page) in the printer dialog box.
- If you can't make copies at the exact size, don't fret! As long as all four quadrants are the same size the block will go together properly.

Printer check!
These lines
should be
1" long

3. CUT THE FABRICS

The block is 15" x 15" finished (15 1/2" x 15 1/2") and has borders to increase the size to look good on a pillow. Skip the borders if you're using the block for something other than a pillow.

Background:

Cut 1 strips 10" x WOF

- Subcut into 4 squares 10" x 10" - these will be cut into background pieces in the next step

Background for Borders:

Cut 2 strips 1 1/2" x WOF

- Subcut into 2 rectangles 1 1/2" x 15 1/2" for Border
- Subcut into 2 rectangles 1 1/2" x 17 1/2" for Border

Prairie points:

Cut 12 squares 4 3/4" x 4 3/4" from various fabrics or charm squares.

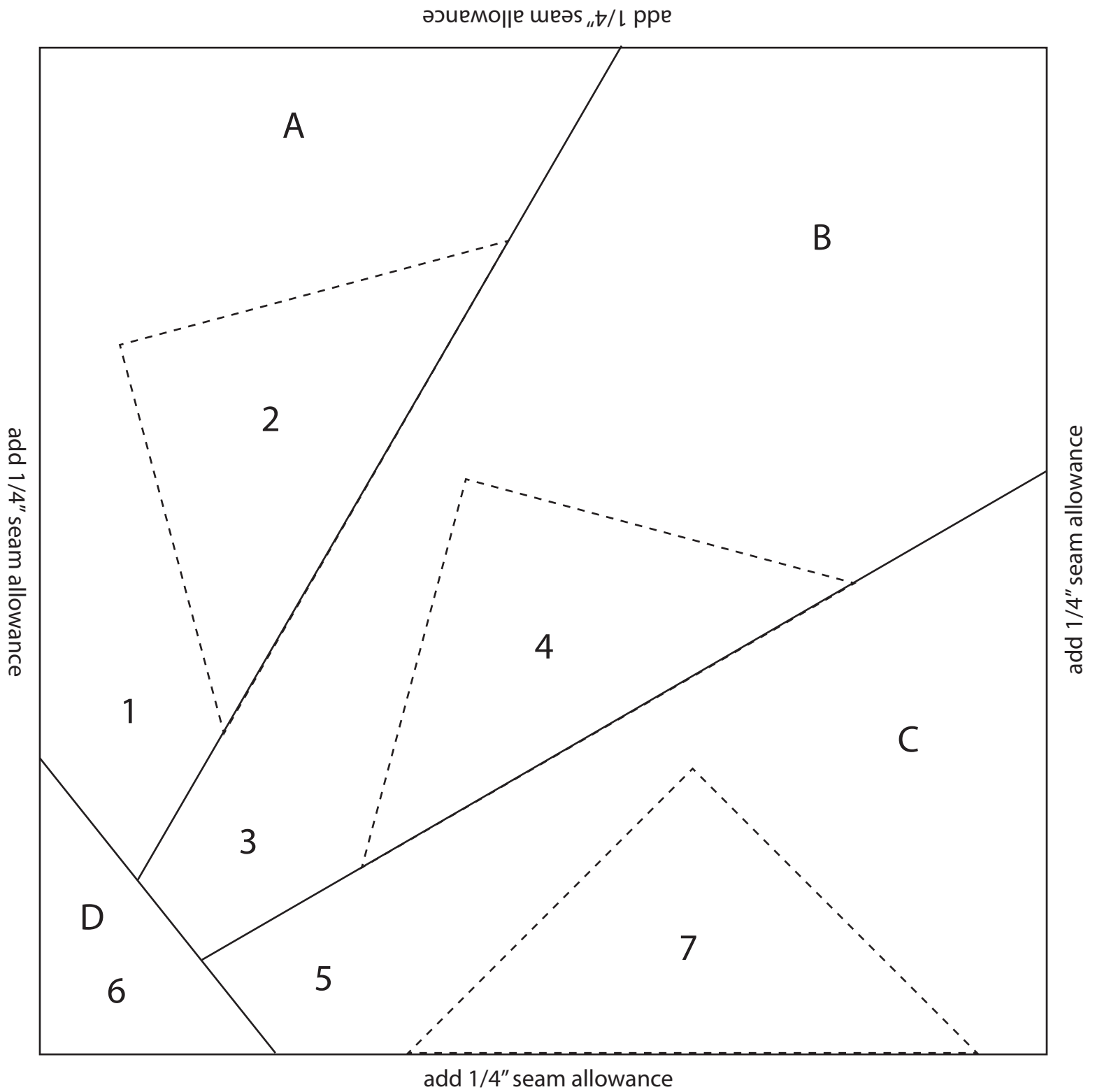
Pillow Back:

Cut 1 strip 17 1/2" x WOF

- Cut in half along the fold to make 2 rectangles of 17 1/2" x approx 21" (don't trim, just use the length that it is)

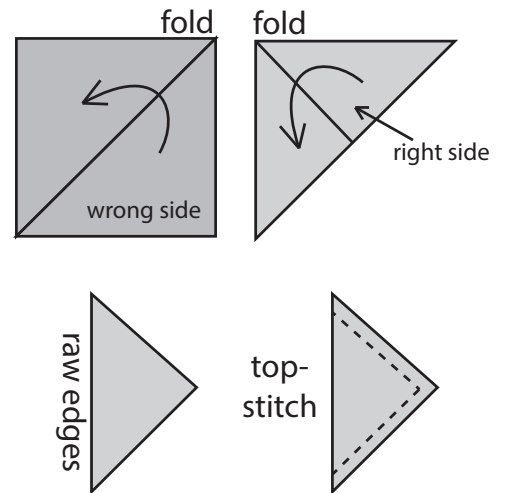
Batting or Fusible Fleece:

Cut 1 square 17 1/2" x 17 1/2"



4. MAKE THE PRAIRIE POINTS

- With WRONG sides together, press the Prairie Point square in half along the diagonal
- Fold in half again, and press. Steam will help make them flat and crisp, but mind you don't burn your fingers, especially on the small ones!
- OPTIONAL: Topstitch the folded edges of the Prairie Point. There will be no raw edges once the point is sewn into the block, but the open edge of a point without topstitching might be a hiding place for bits of Legos and crumbs!



5. CONSTRUCT A QUADRANT

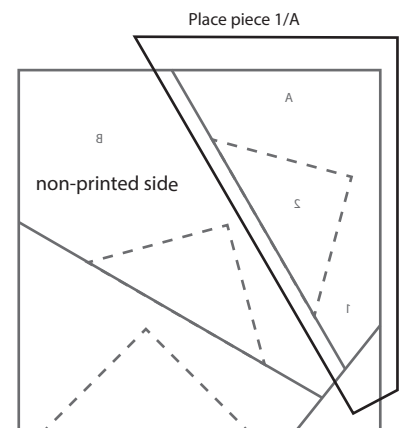
- Lay out your Prairie Points in a circle to get them in the right order. If you have a camera or smartphone handy, take a snap of the layout for reference, in case you lose your way.
- Divide the 12 points into four groups of 3, one group for each quadrant.
- Lay out the background pieces in the order they'll be used, with the points in between.
- NOTE that Prairie Point 7 will be added to the quadrant when it's sewn to its neighbor.

A few paper-piecing hints:

- Go to the TUTORIALS page at <http://huntersdesignstudio.com/tutorials/> to follow a photo tutorial of how I construct a version of this block. It will make more sense than the drawings, I promise!
- Set your sewing machine for a short stitch length so that the paper tears off easily - but not too short. Make your stitches just large enough to wiggle a seam ripper into, should the need arise. On Janome machines I recommend stitch length 1.8.
- I recommend using the Janome AcuFeed Flex Dual Feed Foot or a walking foot while constructing this block and pillow. The added stability of a walking foot helps hold the additional layers of the prairie points in place.
- If you have to rip out a seam and the paper rips too, just tape it back together with clear tape.
- Start and end your seams outside the line of the block.
- Toss the machine needle when you're done paper-piecing - it's dead once it plays with paper.
- A fabric glue stick can be very useful to hold pieces in place. Be sure to only glue within the seam allowances.
- When in doubt, pin generously - it beats ripping seams!

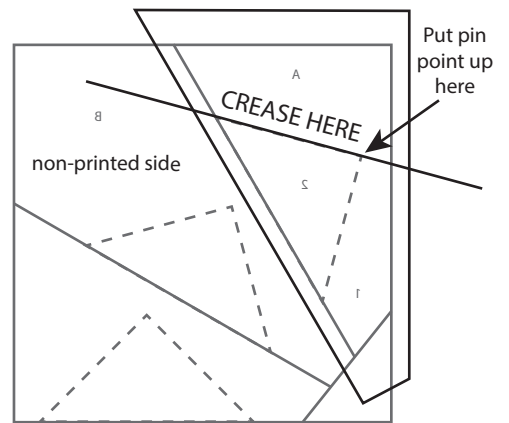
5A. BEGIN PAPER-PIECING

- Place piece 1/A on the back of the printed side of the paper (right side facing out), and align it such that it overlaps the line between 1 and 3 by 1/4".
- You can glue this piece in place in the outer seam allowance.

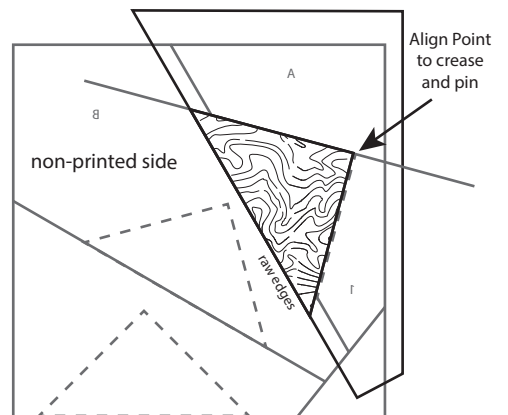


5B. CONTINUE PAPER-PIECING

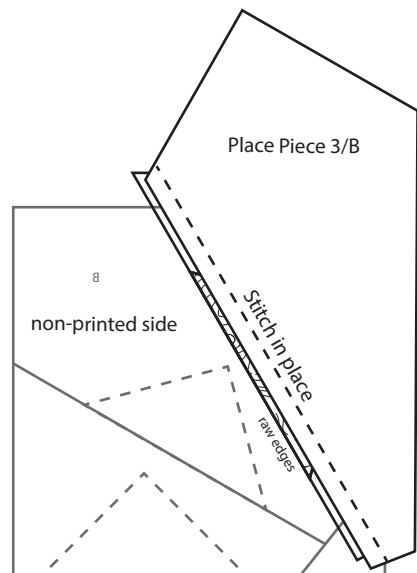
- Crease piece 1/A along the top edge of the triangle by folding the paper and fabric together, from the paper side (effectively folding the fabric on itself).
- Put a pin through from the paper side at the point of Prairie Point 2 - you'll only do this on the first point of the quadrant, the rest will be easy to align without it.



- Align the Prairie Point 2 triangle using the pin point and the crease, making sure the raw edges are in the seam allowance, and parallel to the seam allowance.
- Use glue in the seam allowance as needed to hold Prairie Point 2 in place.

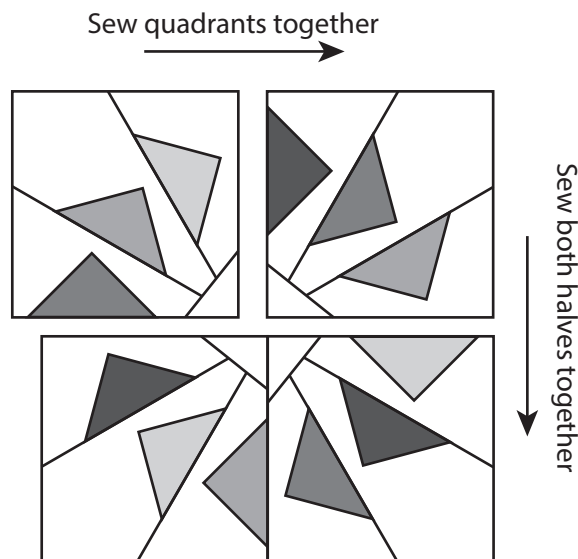


- Place piece 3/B on top (wrong side facing out), aligning it along the line between 1 and 3 with adequate seam allowance, covering Prairie Point 2.
- Sew in place.
- Check for accuracy, then with the paper folded out of the way, trim the excess seam allowance to 1/4".
- Press piece 3/B open with the seam away from the point, so the point lays flat.
- Repeat the above steps for the rest of the Prairie Points and background sections, but not Prairie Point 7.
- Don't forget to add piece D/6!
- Trim the entire block seam allowance to 1/4". Leave the paper on.
- **NOTE:** Glue baste, sew baste, or pin Prairie Point 7 in place within the seam allowance - it will be sewn in when the 4 quadrants are assembled.
- Repeat the above steps for the remaining 3 quadrants



6. CONSTRUCT THE BLOCK

- Sew each pair of quadrants into a half-block, making sure that Prairie Point 7 is aligned correctly, and pressing away from Prairie Point 6 to make it lay flat.
- Sew the 2 half-blocks together into a block, again making sure that the remaining Prairie Point 6s are aligned and pressed correctly.
- HINT: I find that sometimes it's more accurate to sew from the center of the block to the edge, then turn the block over, and sew the remaining half from the center to the edge again.
- Unpick the stitches of the seam allowance at the center of the block, and press each seam away from Prairie Point 7 ("spin" the center seam allowance). This will allow the seams to lay flat with minimal bulk in the center.
- Alternately, press the four seams of the block open, pressing the allowance of Prairie Point 7 away from its point.
- Remove the paper, and press.



7. FINISH THE PILLOW

- Sew the short Border strips to two opposite sides of the Pillow Block and press.
- Sew the remaining Border strips to the remaining sides of the Pillow Block and press.
- Iron the Fusible Fleece to the back of the block, or layer it with batting.
- Quilt as desired!
- Fold one Pillow Back, WRONG sides together, aligning the 17 1/2" edges.
- Repeat with the second Pillow Back to make two pieces.
- Topstitch along the fold of each piece.
- Lay one Back onto the the right side of the block, topstitched edge to the center, aligning the 3 raw edges to the edges of the block.
- Lay the second Back on top of the first, facing the opposite direction, with the topstitched edged overlapping.
- Stitch around the entire edge with a generous 1/4" seam (a walking foot might be helpful here)
- Clip the bulk from the corners, and turn the pillow case to the right side.
- Press well, pushing out the corners.
- Stuff with an 18" pillow form.
- And you're FINISHED!

