

## August 2023 BOM - Dolly Madison's Star

Dolly (Dolley) Madison's Star is a variation of the Ohio Star, first recognized in the 1862 *Godey's Lady's Book*. Over the years, there have been many variations. The block named for Dolley was first published in 1929 in Finley's *Old Patchwork Quilts*. In 1934 The Quilt Club Editor at the Detroit News featured Dolley Madison's Star, the pattern being available to the reader by sending a SASE to the newspaper.



Fun Facts about Dolley (Payne) Todd Madison:

- \*Had a sassy personality, a passion for snuff, and love of feathered turbans, seemingly at odds with her Quaker upbringing.

- \*First presidential wife to be called "The First Lady", she held the first Inaugural Ball when husband James became president.

- \* Started tradition of the First Lady becoming associated with a public charity project, for her a girls' orphanage in D.C.

- \*The only First Lady given an honorary seat on the floor of Congress, and the first American to respond to a telegraph message.

- \* During War of 1812, she remained at the White House until important documents, silver, and art, including the large portrait of George Washington, were safely removed. See the note to her sister below:

*"Our kind friend, Mr. Carroll, has come to hasten my departure, and is in a very bad humor with me because I insist on waiting until the large picture of Gen. Washington is secured, and it requires to be unscrewed from the wall. This process was found to be too tedious for these perilous moments; I have ordered the frame to be broken, and the canvass taken out. It is done, and the precious portrait placed in the hands of two gentlemen of New York for safe keeping."*

-DOLLEY MADISON TO 'MY SISTER', 23 AUGUST 1814

## **Cutting Directions**

There are 3 parts to this block; the corner squares, the center 9-patch, and the fancy star legs with many small triangles. All of the small triangles within the star are on point, making the measurements very difficult for a 12" finished block. Paper piecing is a better option. I've include a paper-piecing template at the end of the directions. Print 3 copies. Foundation paper, kids' tracing paper, and printer paper all work fine. I've included links to some basic video tutorials.

**If you are new to paper piecing, please contact me & I'll help you get started. If needed, the star leg units can be made as hourglass units instead as shown in example above.**

For the 4 corners:

Cut four white 4.5" squares

For center 9-patch:

Cut five blue 2 " squares and four white 2 " squares

For center paper-pieced star legs:

Cut one white 5.5" - 6" square. Cut it on both diagonals to make 4 large white triangles. Will trim down later. Set aside. ☒

For the small triangles, you will need a total of 28 red triangles and 20 white triangles. How you cut them out depends on your fabric. Use any combination of the following to get the needed # of triangles. Both ways will give the right size for the paper piecing.

a 4" square cut on **both** diagonals yields 4 small triangles. ☒

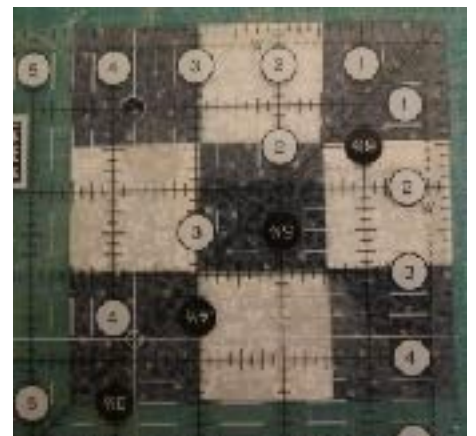
a 3" square cut on **one** diagonal yields 2 small triangles ☒

## **Sewing**

### **Part 1 - Nine-Patch**

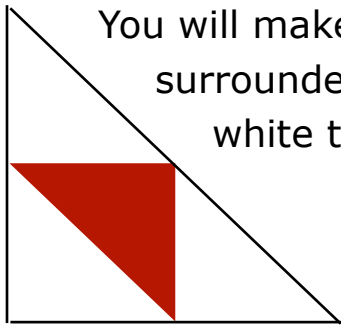


Lay out the nine 2 " squares as shown. Sew into rows then sew rows together. Press towards blue when possible or press seams open. Trim to 4.5 ".  
BE ADVISED: The outside squares will finish a tiny bit smaller than center square. It's fine. No one will notice.

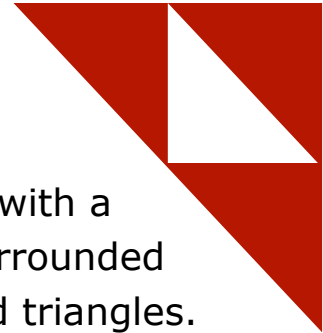


## **Part 2 - Paper-Piece Star Legs**

Print 3 copies of the template page. Each page makes 4 paper-pieced units. Carefully cut each apart. You will be using the same template for all 12 units. I find it helpful to scribble a bit of the color for a section on the paper template. Keeps me from getting confused :) You are welcome to pre-fold along all the sew lines if desired but it is not mandatory.



You will make 4 units with a red triangle surrounded by three white triangles.



You will make 8 units with a white triangle surrounded by three red triangles.

### Step 1

Time to follow the numbers ! First thing, shorten the stitch length on your machine. Makes it easier to tear paper off later. Place the WRONG side of a small red triangle on the center back (unprinted) side of the paper, behind section 1.



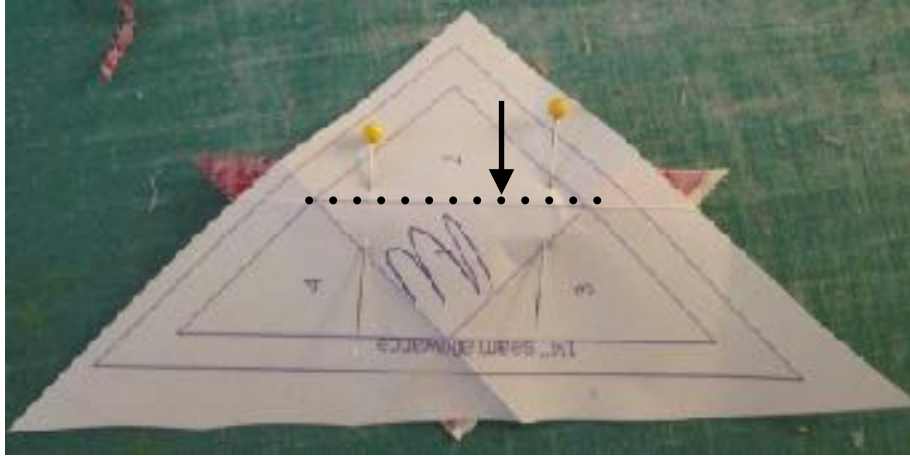
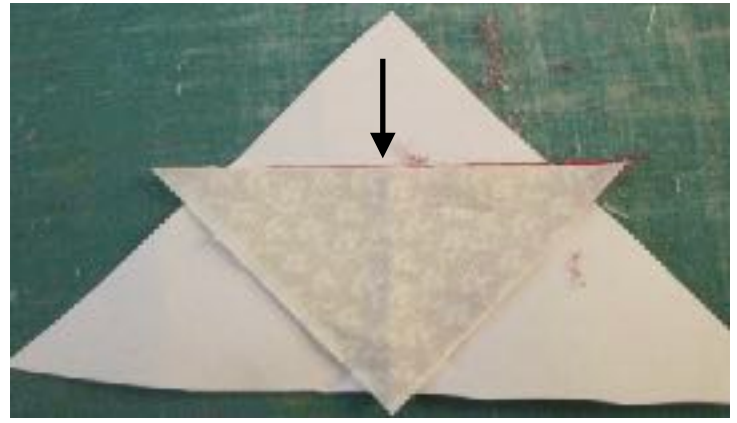
Hold up to a light/window/light box. Edge of fabric should extend AT LEAST 1/4 inch beyond the print line of section 1, all the way around. Once in place, secure it with a pin or a dab of glue stick.

Fold paper back along the section 1 & 2 seam line. Trim fabric 1/4 inch away from fold. When you sew on the other side, this will be your seam allowance.



With RS (right side) of red fabric facing you, place a small white triangle RST over red triangle, matching the long edges of the triangles.

Flip it all over (keep fabrics aligned) and secure with a pin or 2. You will sew **on the line** between sections 1 and 2.



It is fine to start / stop a stitch or 2 beyond the end of the sew line. With shorter stitch length, you won't need to back stitch.

Flip back to fabric side. Finger press to crease or press flat with a **dry** iron.



## Step 2

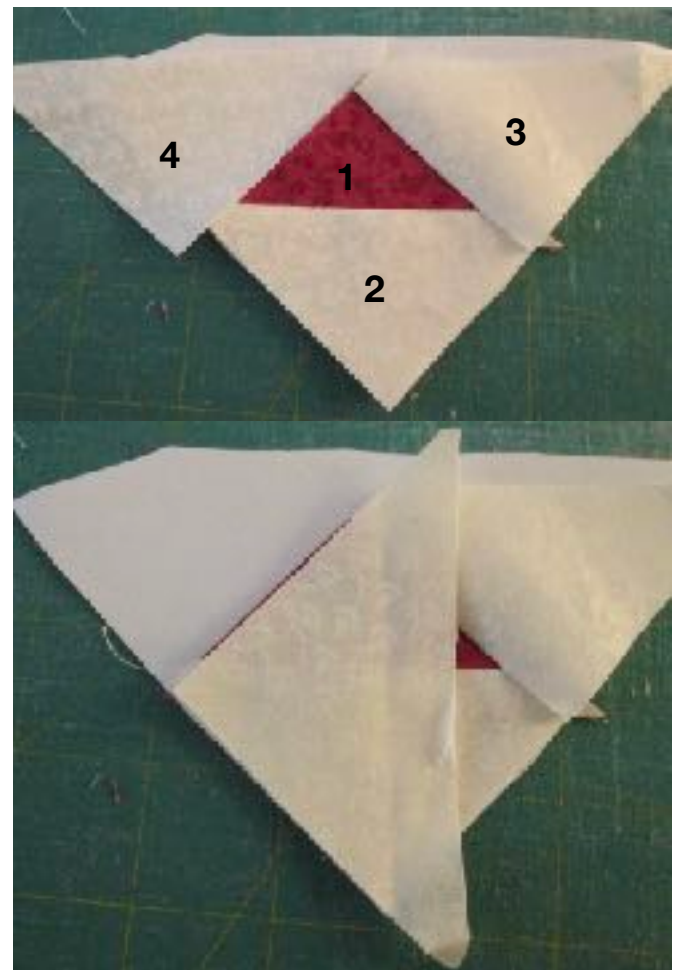
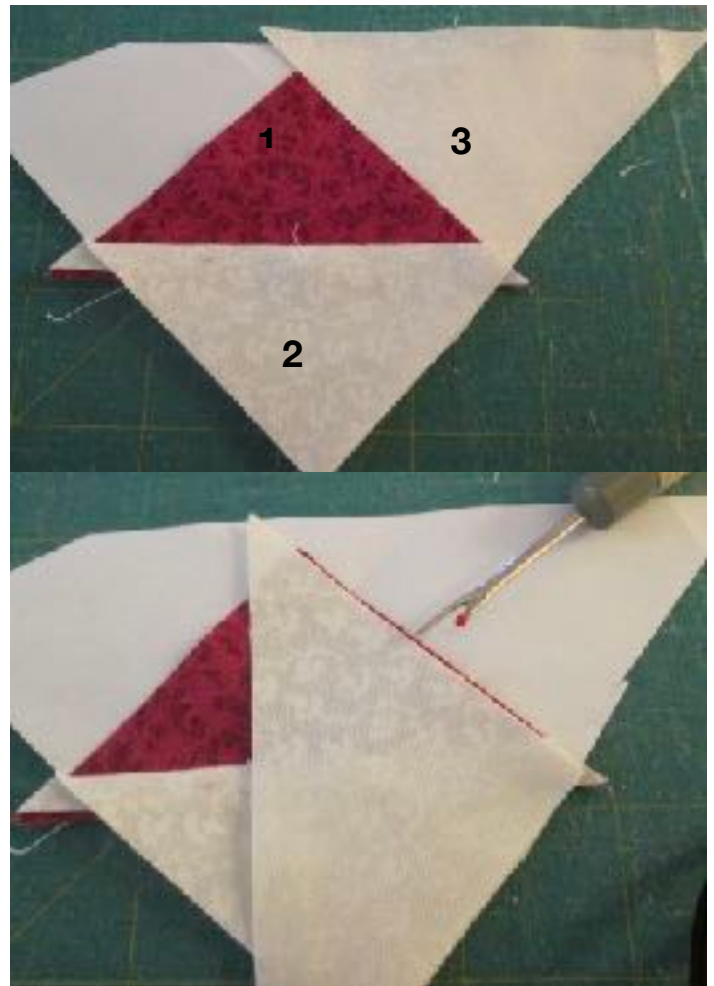
Fold paper back along the section 1 & 3 seam line. Trim fabric 1/4 inch away from fold. It's okay if the paper tears a little.

With RS of fabric facing you, set a white triangle, RS up, where it would be, covering section 3 on the paper, next to the red triangle. Carefully turn the white triangle over the red one, RST.

The seam ripper is pointing to the edge you will sew. Hold in place and flip to printed sewing side. Again, secure with a pin or 2 and sew on the line between sections 1 and 3. Press flat as before.

### Step 3

Almost done ! Fold paper back along the section 1 & 4 seam line. Trim fabric 1/4 inch away from fold.

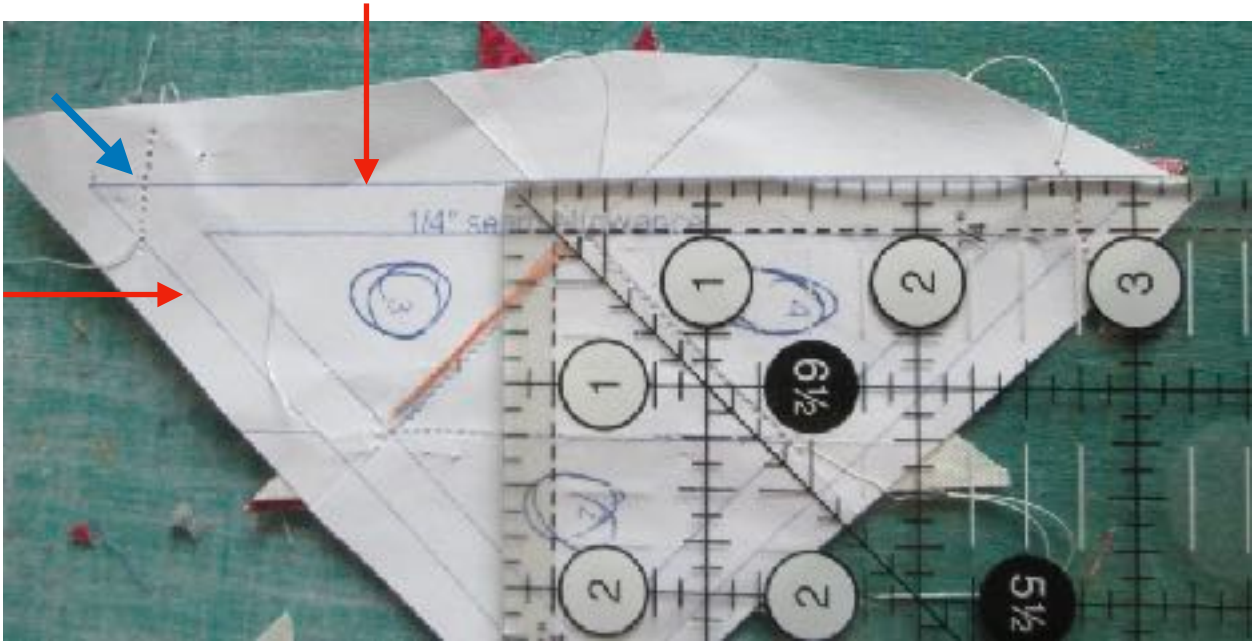


With RS of fabric facing you, set a white triangle, RS up, over section 4, next to the red triangle. As before, turn the white triangle over the red one, RST. Hold in place and flip to sewing side. Secure with a pin or 2 and sew on the line between sections 1 and 4. Fold fabric back and press flat with dry iron.

## Step 4

\*\*\* Optional sewing tip. I find putting a couple of stitches over the outside corners in the seam allowance keeps fabric from shifting later. See example in photo below. This is an optional personal preference. \*\*\*

The Final Trim! With paper side of unit facing up, trim around the unit, **making sure to leave the 1/4" seam allowance all the way around.** Check twice (or 3 times) and cut once. Leave the paper on for now.



## Step 5

Repeat this process to make a total of 4 units with a red center and 8 units with a white center. This is where a scribble of color in each section can help. It's easy to get confused.

## Step 6

The hardest part is over ! Take 1 large white triangle, 1 red-center paper unit, and 2 white-center paper units. Lay out as shown. Sew these together, just like a 4-patch. Use the lines & points on the paper to match things up. Press seams open.



You may need to trim along large white triangle edge and any dog ears. Unit will measure 4.5 ''.

Carefully tear the paper off the wrong side of block. You can use a stiletto or seam ripper in some of the corners if needed. Don't stress if every tiny piece of paper does not come loose.



### Step 7

Time to assemble all the parts. Lay out as shown and sew together as a 9-patch. Sew into 3 rows, then sew rows together. FYI, there is going to be a lot of bulk around corners of center section. Go slowly, pin where needed.



## Step 8

Give it a final press. Beautiful! You rock !!!



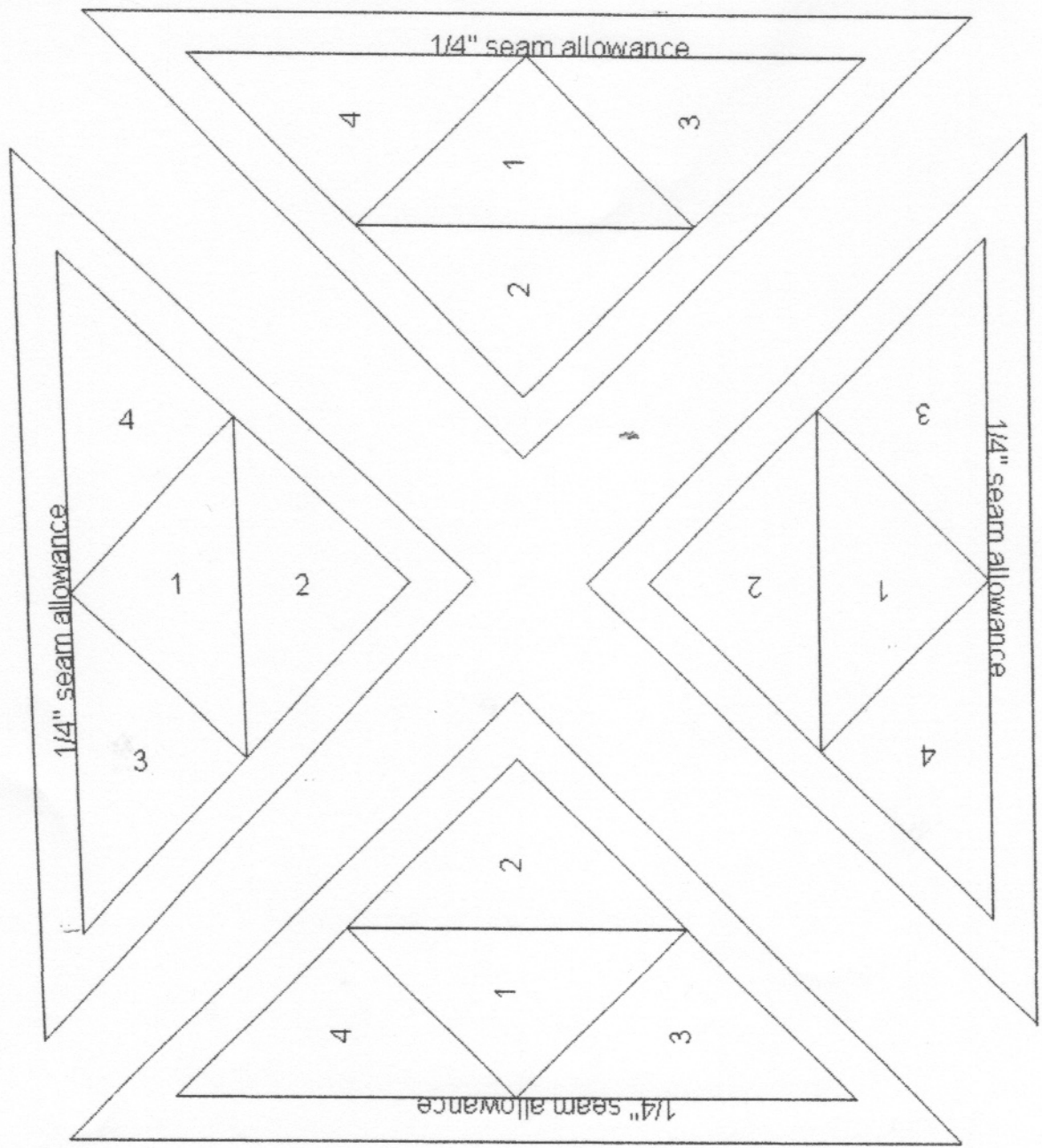
Paper-Piecing tutorials

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eHcQ4m8rX08>

Pre-folding is nice but not mandatory. You will be folding paper as you sew.

<https://www.quilterscache.com/StartQuiltingPages/startquiltingthree.html>





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