



The approximate size of the finished quilt will be 56" x 69".

January



January Quilt Block

Welcome to hgtv.com's quilt block of the month for January 2002!

by Jan Schmidt, hgtv.com

It's the time of year for making resolutions, so why not include HGTV's *Strolling the Block* applique quilt on your list? Each month, from January through December 2002, we'll offer a new and whimsical quilt block with easy-to-follow, step-by-step instructions. Then we'll show you how to put all the blocks together into one great quilt. Whether you've never made a quilt before or you're an old hand at the art, you're sure to love this design and we'll walk you through from start to finish!

Use fabrics from your stash or take this opportunity to do a little fabric shopping. And if you're short on time . . . no problem . . . it's possible to assemble one of these blocks in a weekend. Still in a time crunch? Opt for a sewing machine applique technique versus the hand blanket-stitching.

Materials:

fabric selection - Use any desired fabrics. We selected 100-percent cottons in these prints:

- printed light on dark blue for sky background
- printed white on white for snow foreground
- beige with red stripe for house
- small red and beige checkered pattern for door and chimney
- printed medium gray for snowman
- printed black on dark red for dormer
- printed red on beige for windows
- a light green print, a medium green and beige checkered and a dark green print for the tree pieces
- light green "crackle" print for tree trunk

translucent template plastic

Steam-A-Seam 2 double-sided fusible web

embroidery floss - black, ecru, orange

rotary cutter and mat

craft scissors

black and wooden buttons

Steps:

Creating Templates

You can make templates from various materials, including pieces of heavy card stock, cardboard, freezer paper or template plastics. Because some of the patterns in this first block will be reused in blocks to come, it's recommended that you use a translucent template plastic due to the durability factor. Keep in mind the finished fabric shape will be the mirror image of the template pattern.

1. Print out the patterns (**figures A and B**).



[PDF](#)

[Figure A - Click the image for a full-size pattern.](#)



[PDF](#)

[Figure B - Click the image for a for full size pattern.](#)

2. Place a piece of template plastic over the printed patterns and trace the outline of each using a permanent marking pen (ultra fine Sharpie works great).

3. Cut out and clearly label each template piece. The six templates representing the house will be reused in other blocks so plan to store them flat for future use. Note that the tree trunk (F) and chimney (G) use the same template piece--it's

just flipped in the opposite direction.

Background and foreground

1. Cut one piece of "sky" background fabric measuring 12-1/2 inches square (**figure C**) and one piece of "snow" foreground fabric measuring 6-1/4" x 12-1/2".



Figure C - Editor's note: The image of the finished block looks rectangular due to the close-up nature of the photograph, but the finished block is actually square.

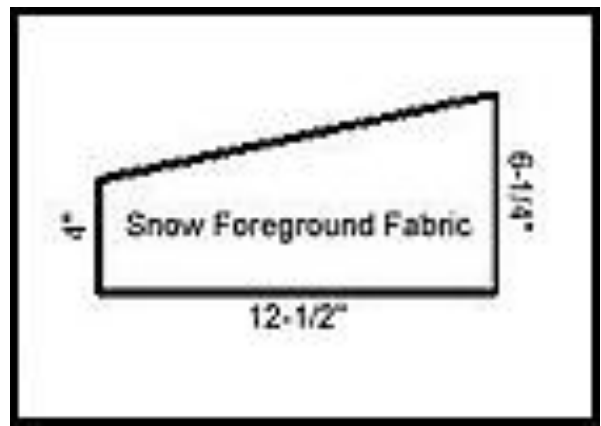


Figure D

2. Use a ruler and pen to measure and mark one side of the snow fabric at four inches and the other side at 6-1/4 inches. Angle the ruler to draw a diagonal line from these two points, then cut along the diagonal line (**figure D**).

3. Layer the snow on top of the sky fabric, lining up the lower corners of each piece (**figure E**).

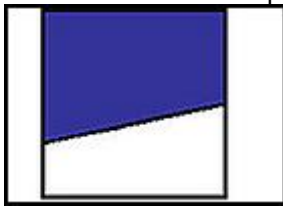


Figure E



Figure F

Applique

A quick word about fusible web--follow the manufacturer's instructions for whichever type you decide to use. For this project, we use a double-sided type because it allows us to reposition the pieces if desired. Double-sided fusibles come sandwiched between two pieces of paper. Here's how to use them with this pattern.

1. Cut the fusible into smaller, manageable pieces that will accommodate each template size, keeping the protective paper of the fusible intact.

2. Using a pencil, trace around each template onto one of the paper-covered sides of the fusible (**figure F**).

3. Peel away the opposite paper side of the fusible (the one without the tracing) and adhere it to the wrong side of the desired fabric.

4. Cutting along the traced lines, cut out both the fusible web and fabric for each pattern piece (**figure G**).



Figure G



Figure H

5. Next, position the pieces onto the sky and snow square. There's a lot of room to customize the block with this step. Plus, you don't have to fuse anything until you're sure you like the design. Here's how we did it:

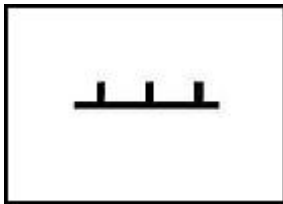
- Position the house (A) fabric on the snow/sky square. We placed the bottom corner of ours approximately 2-3/4

inches up from the bottom of the block and 1/4 inch in from the edge. Tuck the chimney fabric (small side down) so it stands out behind the house (**figure H**).

- Our objective was to place everything slightly off kilter in order to give the block a bit of a folk art feel. To accomplish this, position the windows (C and D) and dormer (E) at a slight tilt (refer to the first picture for placement).
- Next, "build" the tree. Position the trunk (F) fabric piece with the wide end down. Layer the biggest tree triangle (H) on top of the trunk, then the medium triangle (I) onto the first one and the smaller triangle (J) at the top, overlapping each tree triangle onto the house. Tilt the triangles so they're off center, too.
- Build the snowman in the same manner as the tree, starting with the largest piece (M) first, then adding the medium-sized piece (L) and the head (K). The middle piece of our snowman overlaps the house with the head overlapping an 1/8 inch or so of one window (C).
- Once you're pleased with the design, follow the manufacturer's directions to press the pieces into place. Avoid fusing any pieces in the 1/4-inch perimeter of the block to allow for the addition of sashing.

Finishing

- Cover the raw edges of the applique pieces with blanket-stitching (**figure I**). To do this, use two-strands of black embroidery floss outlining the tree, house and snowman (**figure J**).



 **Media**

[Figure I \(VIDEO\)](#) - Click the image for a blanket stitch video demonstration from *Simply Quilts*, episode 664, featuring guest Margaret Peters and host Alex Anderson.



Figure J

- Add a small wooden button as a door handle to the house.
- Use a simple backstitch to create the snowflake and the snowman's arms.
- To finish the snowman, form a carrot nose using two strands of orange embroidery floss and two 1/2-inch long stitches (**figure K**) and a mouth using two strands of black embroidery floss and five, 1/4-inch stitches (**figure L**). Add two knots for eyes and stitch on two small black buttons in the middle snowman section.



Figure K

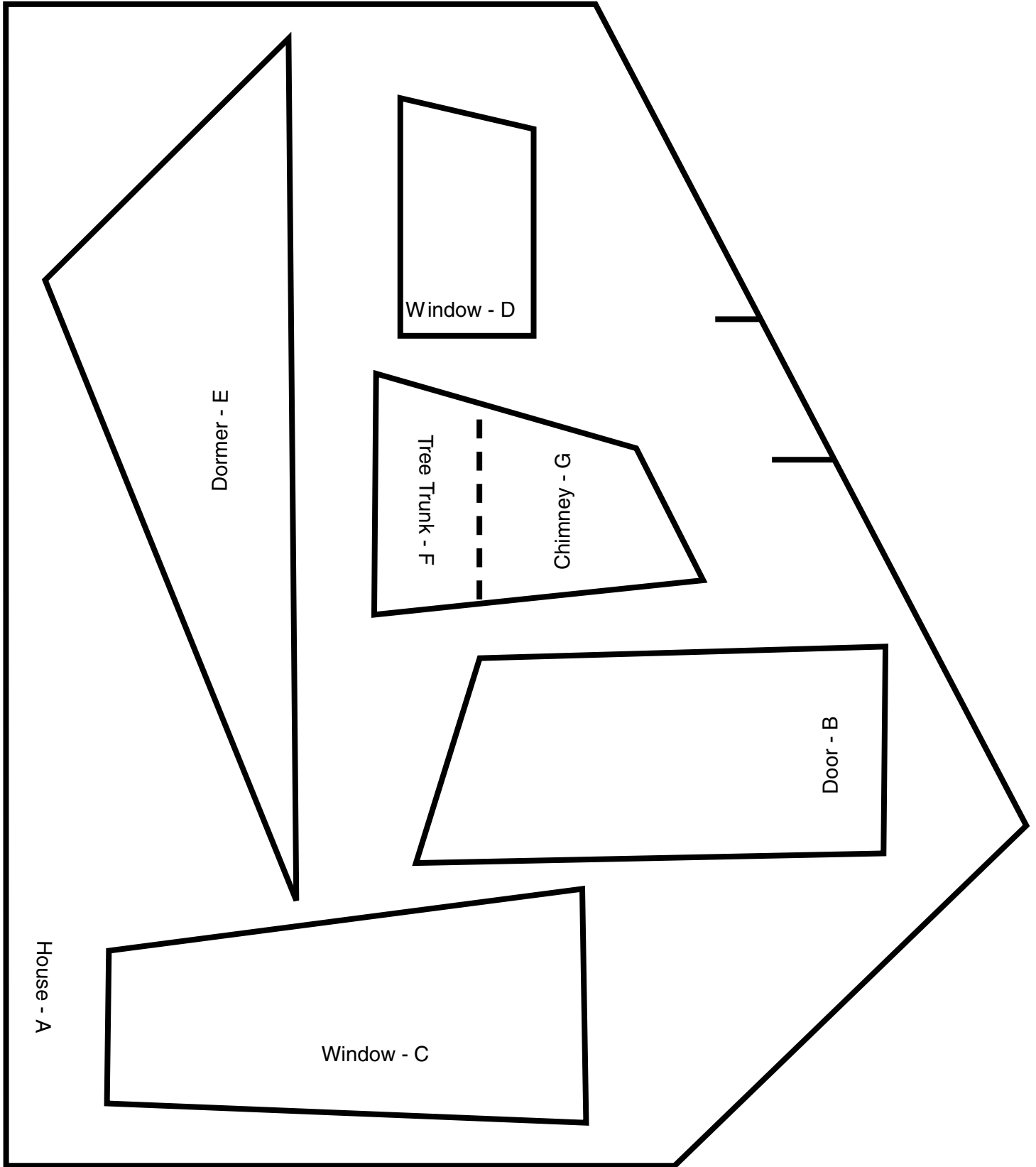


Figure L

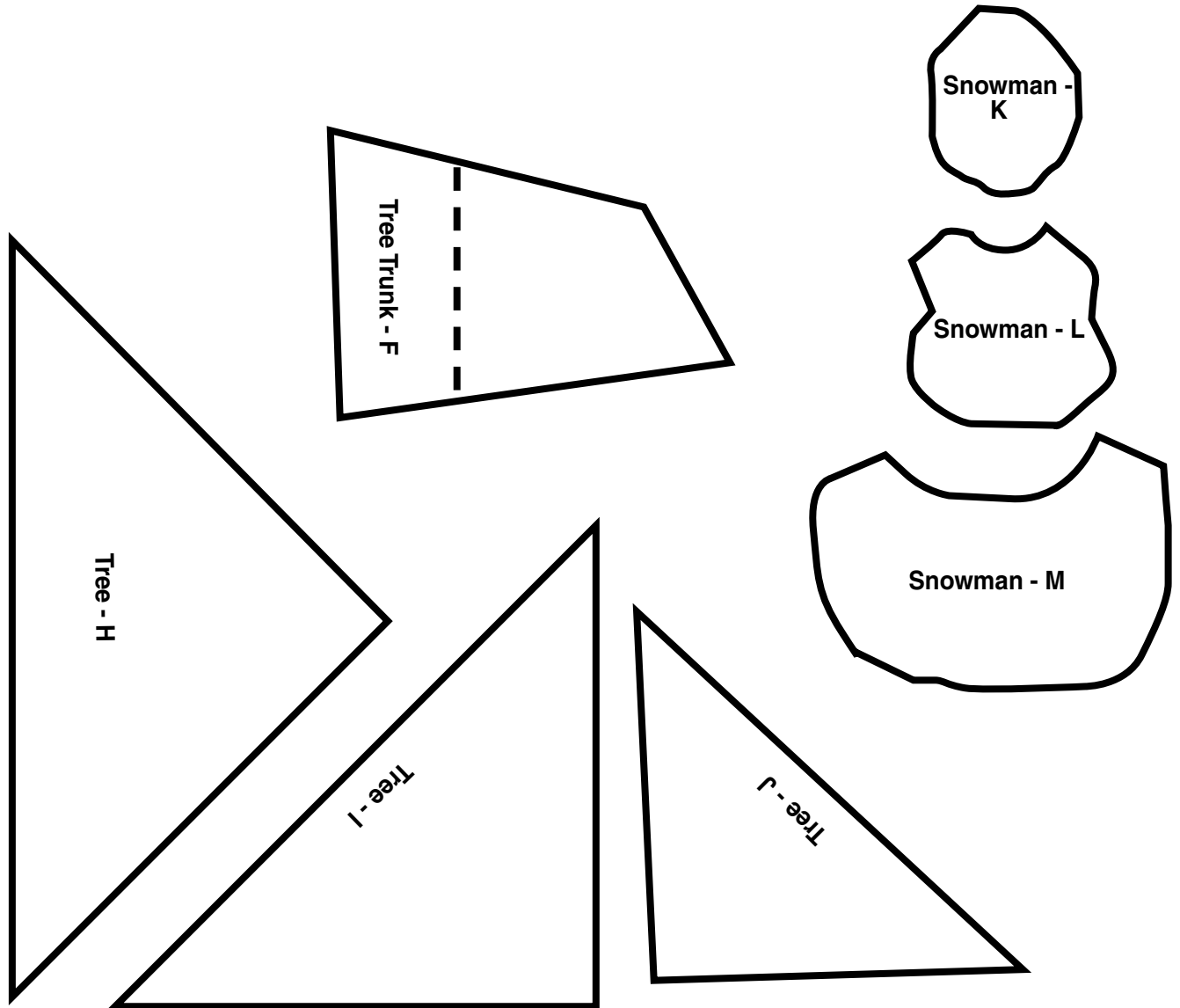
Optional Challenges

Depending on your skill level, here are additional ideas for finishing the block:

- Want a real challenge? Add a 1/4-inch to the template patterns and use a needle-turn method of applique.
- Instead of using black floss for the blanket-stitching, consider color coordinating the floss to the fabric color. For example the tree would be stitched in green, the house in red, etc.
- If time is not on your side this month, don't despair. This block could easily be finished on a sewing machine. Depending on your machine's capabilities, employ a zigzag, satin, buttonhole or blanket stitch to finish the raw edges of the applique.
- For more advanced quilters, try the flip and stitch method for creating the sky and snow background square.
- Be creative and don't be afraid to use your imagination to make the block your own. We look forward to creating another block with you next month.



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Design by Jan Schmidt. Illustration by William Nichols.