

DECEMBER



MAKE YOUR OWN EVERGREEN TREE INSTEAD OF CACTI IF YOU PREFER

Home & Garden Television

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December Quilt Block

By Jan Schmidt

We've come to the last house on the block. Santa is in a sticky situation and the puppy is no help. So once the stockings have been hung, let's dash-away, dash-away to our fabric stash and complete this quilting project.

Look through your fabric 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.

Materials:

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

- tiny dot light blue fabric for sky
- marbled brown with Aztec print fabric for middle background
- white on white print fabric for the foreground (snow)
- red brick fabric for house
- red/orange print fabric for door and chimney
- rust marbled fabric for the dormer and steps

- pink with white print fabric for house windows
- tone-on-tone white fabric for snow caps on dormer and chimney
- light green with white print fabric for cactus
- black/white print fabric for boots
- red print fabric for pant legs and puppy's kerchief
- stocking motif fabric for stockings
- light gray fabric with black/white dots for puppy translucent template plastic

Steam-A-Seam 2 double-sided fusible web
 embroidery floss - black, beige, white
 rotary cutter and mat
 craft scissors

Steps:

Creating templates

You can make templates from various materials, including pieces of heavy card stock, cardboard, freezer paper or template plastic. It's recommended that you use a translucent template plastic for templates 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**). The house, windows, dormer and door are the same templates used in all the past blocks, so there's no need to print or re-cut figure A if you've kept those. The new templates are in figure B. Also in figure B, the puppy and steps are templates originally introduced in February and July. These are clearly marked in figure B, so there's no need to re-cut those if you've saved them from the previous blocks.
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 label each template piece. For future use, store them flat.



[PDF](#)
 Figure A



[PDF](#)
 Figure B

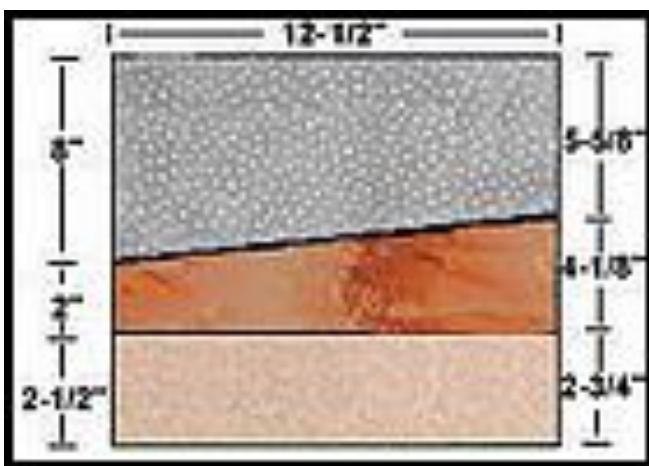


Figure C

Background

The raw background consists of three colors of fabric and will measure 12-1/2 inches square when finished. You can assemble it using a fusible webbing technique or a machine-piecing technique. Decide on your method then follow the directions below. One helpful extra step is to make a template square measuring 12-1/2 inches then mark or cut it into three sections as shown in **figure C** to provide a cutting guide and indicate the look of the finished background piece.

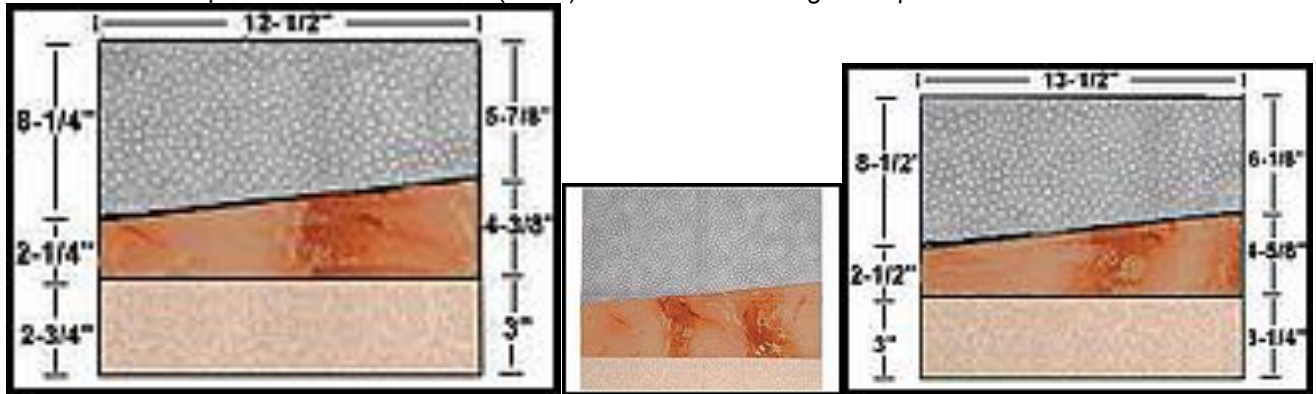
Fusing Method

1. If you wish to use fusible webbing to create the background piece, cut fabric pieces

Figure D

as indicated in **figure D**.

2. With right sides up, place a 12-1/2" x 1/4" strip of fusible webbing (or any desired fusible product) along the bottom portion of the sky section. Next, overlap the middle fabric a 1/4-inch; making sure the fabric covers the fusible webbing. Fuse the fabrics together, using a pressing cloth to protect your iron from any exposed webbing. Follow the same process to fuse the final (snow) section to the background piece.



3. Trim the finished background piece to a 12-1/2-inch square (**figure E**).

Machine-Piecing Method

1. If you wish to use a sewing machine to create the background piece, cut the fabrics as illustrated in **figure F**.
2. Begin by placing the sky and middle fabrics right sides together, matching the raw edges across the bottom. Due to the diagonal cut, the sides will be out of alignment but that's how it should look. With the sky fabric on the bottom, use a 1/4-inch seam to stitch the sky and middle pieces together. Press and trim away the excess fabric.
3. Add the snow fabric by placing it right sides together with the piece sewn in step 2, matching raw edges across the bottom sky/middle section and snow fabric. Use a 1/4-inch seam allowance; stitch the snow fabric to the middle fabric. Again, press and trim away the excess fabric. The background piece will still be lopsided at this point (**figure G**).

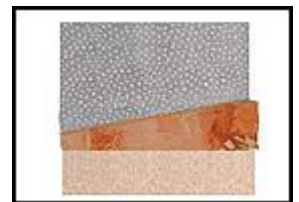


Figure G

4. Trim the finished background piece to a 12-1/2-inch block (**figure H**).

Applique

A quick word about fusible web—follow the manufacturer 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 fusible comes sandwiched between two pieces of paper. Here's how to use it 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.
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.
5. Next, position the pieces onto the background 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:

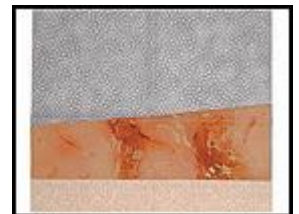


Figure H

- Position the house fabric on the background square. Tuck the chimney fabric (small side down) so it stands out behind the house (**figure I**).
- Our objective is 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, door and dormer at a slight tilt. Refer to the first picture for placement.



Figure I

- Tuck Santa's pant legs slightly under the chimney and the boots slightly on top of the pant legs (**figure J**).



Figure J

- Place Snow Cap "C" on the chimney and Snow Caps "A" and "B" on the dormer. Snow Cap "A" should slightly overlap Snow Cap "B" (**figure K**).
- The cactus overlaps the left side of the house. Center the large doorstep in relation to the door and center the smaller step on top of that.



Figure K

- Position the playful puppy between the steps and cactus, with the nose facing the cactus. Place puppy's kerchief around his neck area (**figure L**). Randomly place the five stockings in front of the puppy (**figure M**).
- Once you're pleased with the design, follow the manufacturer directions to press the pieces into place. Avoid fusing any pieces in the 1/4-inch perimeter edge of the block to allow for the addition of sashing.

Finishing

1. Cover the raw edges of the applique pieces with blanket-stitching (**figure N**). To do this, use two-stands of black embroidery floss outlining the house, chimney, snow caps, windows, dormer, door, cactus, steps, puppy and stockings.
2. Using white embroidery floss, make multiple French knot stitches for the fur at the top of Santa's boots. You could also use a very small amount white faux fur at the top of the boots to obtain the same effect. See first picture for reference.
3. Using six strands of beige embroidery floss, chain stitch a rope for the stockings to hang from. Begin and end the stitching on the front side to show frayed ends. Tie small pieces of beige floss at the top of each stocking to give the look of the stockings being tied from the rope.

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