

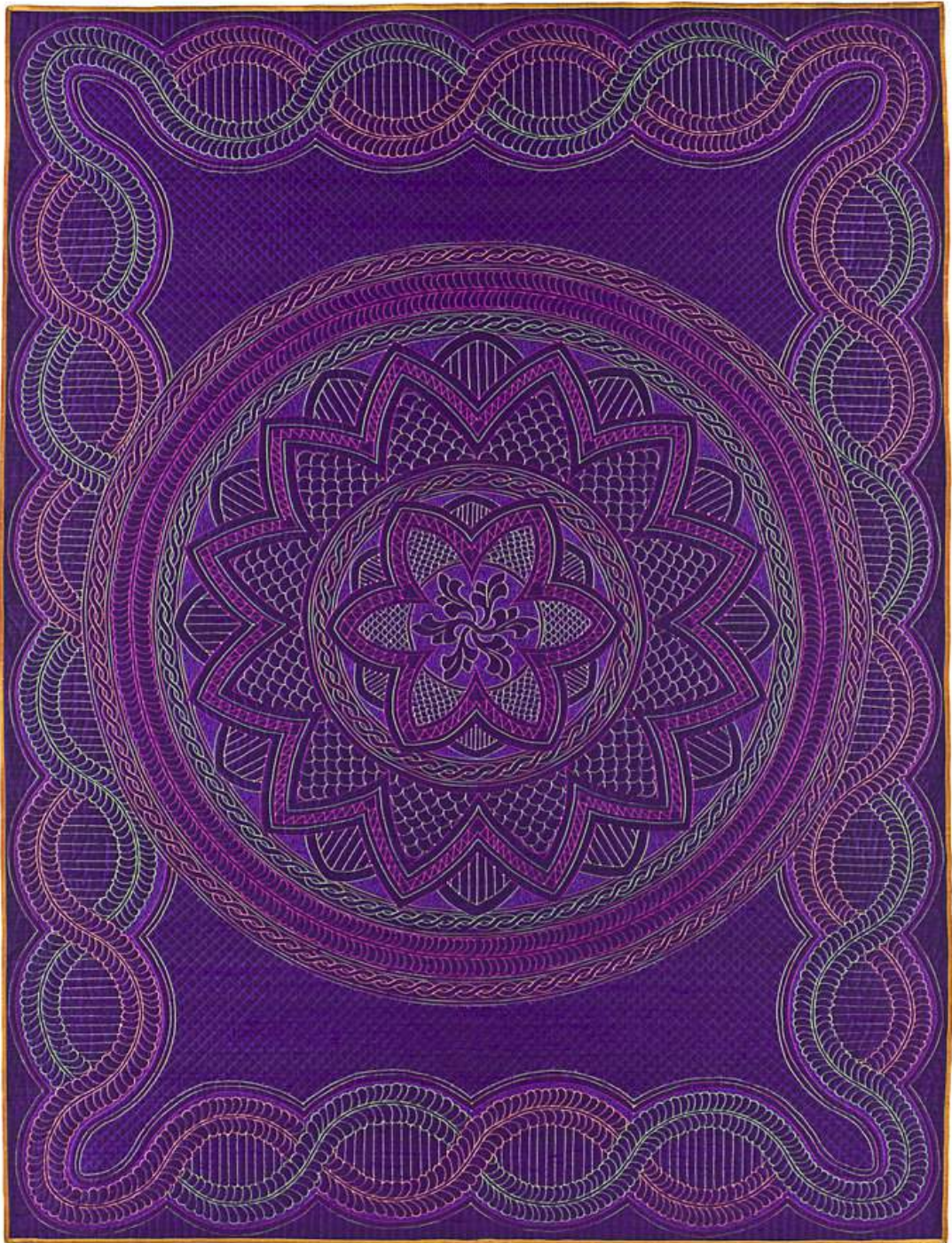
Learning to Design~Wholecloth & Pieced Quilts

by~

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Superior Silk #1 done on purple Dupioni silk and full thickness wool batting. Superior Threads' Highlight Brights were used for the quilting.

Revised 2017

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2017: For those of you receiving this as an update, please consider this a brand new book. Lots of things have been moved around, rewritten, new artwork, etc. More focus has been placed on using The Ultimate Stencils and The Ultimate Shape for design work.

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I hereby grant permission for this handbook to be copied. This book is provided to my students and contains all of their class information. They have purchased this information.

If you have further questions, you may contact me via email:

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A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cindy Needham".

Cindy Needham
January 1, 2017

Introduction

When I started my journey in free motion quilting it was on traditionally pieced tops. I was fairly content picking out simple stencil designs, placing them on blocks and then quilting them but I knew there had to be something more...

One day while at my local quilt store I discovered a book called *Quilts of Provence* (written by Kathryn Berenson, Archetype Press, Inc.) This fabulous book was beautifully illustrated with over 200 pages of antique French wholecloth quilts. I melted...I was inspired...my quilting style was changed forever.

Wholecloth quilting defines you as a quilter. It is all about your designs, the threads, your stitches and your style. Creating wholecloth quilts taught me how to design...how to make quilts my own...how to work thru design problems and challenges...and truly celebrate quilting.

When you create a wholecloth quilt you are working with one uncut piece of yardage. I have found that many of the designs that I would choose for a wholecloth quilt would also be gorgeous in a pieced quilt top. Many of the same guidelines apply with regard to creating designs.

It is for this reason I've decided to combine my "Learning to Design" handbook with the "Basic Wholecloth Quilts" handbook. It made more sense to me to have all the information available in ONE handbook instead of two.

In this book I will be teaching you designing basics, how to create overall designs using a simple shape, how to create overall designs by repeating a simple shape. I will also be teaching you how to create designs using my Ultimate Stencils and Ultimate Shape.

As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to email me at any time!

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Marking Pens



Mark-B-Gone or Wonder Marker Pens.

This is a blue water soluble quilt marking pen that you can mark on light-colored fabrics. It does wash out with water but is heat intolerant. Do NOT expose any marked top to heat such as an iron, heat register or hot car or it will set the blue marking as a permanent brown stain. In order to completely remove the marker, you must immerse the top in clear cold water with NO SOAP and let it soak for about 10-15

minutes (soap will also set this as a permanent brown

stain). I fold my quilt and put it in the washing machine after the binding has been put on, let it soak, and then spin to remove the excess water. There is never any agitation or twisting. I usually always block my quilt after soaking. I have become frustrated with this pen over the past few years due to the fact that the markings are not lasting as long...they seem to fade completely away after just a month or so and many of my students have had the same experience. It is also taking more pens to mark a quilt with. That is one of the reasons I haven't been using them as much.

Pilot FriXion Pens.

This is a commercial pen found in ordinary office supply stores and they come in a variety of colors. Quilters have found they are wonderful for marking quilts and the color is removed with a steam iron. Be careful with this one though! Even though the color is removed with a steam iron, a light white residue may remain on your quilt that may/may not come out with a good washing or steaming. If the white residue is not completely removed, and if the quilt top is exposed to extreme cold, the marked line will come back in full color. I recommend NOT using the pink/orange/red colors as many of us have had trouble with the color coming completely out. I use the black or blue only.



You will notice that my pens have bright dots on them...this is a safety thing. I have had a couple of my students grab a regular ink pen, mark their quilts, and much to their horror the marked line didn't come out...it was REAL ink. Every single one of my quilt marking pens has a colored dot taped to it. Before I mark anything I always check for the dot!

Threads

(Please refer to the Needles & Threads handbook for detailed information on thread and needle usage)

A pieced quilt top has its design created by the different fabric selections. The pattern is defined by the contrast and designs of the fabrics. Wholecloth quilts depend solely upon the threads and the quilting designs to define the pattern. Your thread choices are critical. I will list a few of my favorite choices and why I use them.

The first important choice to make is to always choose a good quality thread. I can't stress this enough. Choosing a bargain brand, poor quality thread will lead to nothing but frustration. Spend a few extra dollars on a premium thread and you will be happier, your machine will love you for it and your quilt will thank you as well!

I use and recommend Superior Threads. I absolutely love their threads and consider them one of the top threads on the market.

When you choose threads for your quilting designs, I recommend using a heavier thread for your primary quilting designs such as your feathers, flowers, cables, etc. The designs that you really want to stand out need a heavier thread to show. These are my favorite heavy threads:

Trilobal Polyester

40/3 high sheen polyester. I use this thread a LOT for my primary quilting designs. It provides an elegant sheen. Look for the trilobals in Magnifico, Nature & Living Colors and Art Studio Colors

Use a Topstitch 80/12 or 90/14 needle. I recommend Bottom Line or So Fine #50 or in the bobbin.



Magnifico

40/3 high sheen polyester. This thread provides even more sheen and a slightly heavier stitch than the trilobal polyester. Wonderful to quilt with!

Use a Topstitch 80/12 or 90/14. I recommend Bottom Line or So Fine #50 in the bobbin.





Rainbows/Fantastico

40/3 trilobal polyester with a 1" color change. I love using this for primary quilting designs.

Use a Topstitch 80/12 or 90/14 needle. I recommend Bottom Line or So Fine #50 in the bobbin.

Tire Silk

I LOVE the 50 wt. and 30 wt. silks. They provide a sheen like no other thread!

I've been using a Topstitch 80/12 needle with Bottom Line in the bobbin.



Razzle Dazzle

8 wt. polyester thread for bobbin work, couching, reverse quilting and serger. Will not work in your needle!

I have used this quite a bit for very heavy lines. Gorgeous thread.



I like to do a lot of heavy background work. In order for your primary quilting designs to pop or stand out, you need detailed background work to provide the shadow. I recommend a thin thread for the background quilting. These are my favorite thin threads:



Masterpiece by Alex Anderson.

50/3 extra-long staple Egyptian grown cotton for piecing, detail quilting, bobbin and appliqué.

Very smooth with virtually no lint. This used to be a 2-ply thread but was changed in 2011 to a 3-ply thread. The diameter is virtually the same but the new formula is much stronger.

Use a Topstitch 80/12 needle. I recommend either Masterpiece or Bottom Line in the bobbin.

Bottom Line

60/2 wt. polyester. I use it in my bobbin 100% of the time. Use for stitching-in-the-ditch, binding, appliqué and fine quilting details. This thread blends and barely shows.

Use a Topstitch 80/12 or 70/10 needle.



Kimono Silk

#100 filament silk. I LOVE this thread and use a ton of it for my fine detail quilting. Great for appliqué too.

I use a Topstitch 70/10 or Microtex Sharp 60/8. I recommend Bottom Line in the bobbin.



Batting

Batting is the “never seen and always felt” part of your quilt. Some quilters will buy whatever is on sale or use whatever is on hand. They forget that the batting provides the drape, feel and cuddle factor to your quilt. I will share some tips to keep in mind when making your selection.

- If you have a quilt with lots of light or white fabric, use a bleached white batting. The white batt will make your white fabrics much sharper. A beige or natural colored batting will dull your white fabrics. (*If you use a half-thickness wool batt, as explained below, I still recommend a white batting*). If you have a quilt with black fabrics, try using a black batt. This will help avoid the appearance of bearding (batting popping through the needle holes).
- Avoid an organic batting that still has the cotton seed parts in it (*these look little brown specks in your batting*). If your needle pierces one of the little seeds, a light brown oil may be emitted into your fabric and will **not** come out. Use this batting on darker quilts only.
- Always check your batting bag for their quilting density specs and any special laundering instructions.

In a nutshell, my favorite batting of all is Hobbs Tuscan Wool. I love the memory of wool and the puff that it provides my quilted designs. Even when I quilt it to death it still provides a beautiful drape to my quilts. My second favorites are Hobbs bleached cotton, silk and cotton/wool blend. I’ve attached a copy of a great handout by Hobbs explaining their different battings.

Warm and Natural is a very common batting and available nearly everywhere. This will not provide a soft drape to your quilts as it is firm. This is a good choice for art quilts...pieces that need to lay flat against a wall and because it is a more dense batting, will provide stability to heavily quilted pieces.

HOBBS BONDED FIBERS

PREMIUM BATTINGS MADE TO QUILTERS SPECIFICATIONS

Listed in order as samples are collated

Heirloom Natural with scrim: Heirloom Natural is a high grade cotton combined with a thin scrim binder to add strength. This batting can be hand or machine quilted up to 10" apart and will shrink 3-5%.

Heirloom & Tuscany Bleached Cotton: Both of these products utilize a fine bleached cotton that is needle punched for strength. These battings can be hand or machine quilted up to 4" apart and will shrink 3-5%.

Heirloom Natural and Tuscany Unbleached Cotton: These battings are made with a high grade of American grown cotton. They can be hand or machine quilted up to 4" apart and will shrink 3-5%.

Heirloom Premium-Cotton Blend: Heirloom Premium 80/20 was the first blended batting on the market. Made with 80% cotton and 20% fine denier polyester, this batting is needle punched and resin bonded for added strength over traditional cotton batting. Can be hand or machine quilted up to 4" apart and will shrink 2-3%..

Heirloom 80/20 Black Cotton: Made for dark quilts, our Heirloom 80/20 Black is made the same as our Heirloom 80/20 Premium only with black cotton and black polyester. Can be hand or machine quilted up to 4" apart and will shrink 2-3%.

Heirloom 80/20 Bleached Cotton: Made for white or light colored quilts, Heirloom 80/20 Bleached is made the same as our Heirloom 80/20 Premium only with bleached cotton in place of natural cotton. Can be hand or machine quilted up to 4" apart and will shrink 2-3%.

Heirloom 80/20 Fusible Cotton: Heirloom 80/20 Fusible is an iron on batting that is fusible on both sides. It is made the same as our Heirloom 80/20 Premium only we add a fusible resin. You can iron both top and bottom at the same time and peel it loose and iron again if needed. Can be hand or machine quilted up to 4" apart and will shrink 2-3%.

Heirloom & Tuscany Wool: These wool battings are manufactured using the finest washable wool available. The wool is lightly resin bonded to help prevent fiber migration. Can be hand or machine quilted up to 4" apart and will shrink 0-3%.

Tuscany Silk: Tuscany Silk is arguable the finest batting we manufacture. It's made with 90% Tussah silk and 10% fine denier polyester. Tuscany Silk is lightweight and washable. Can be hand or machine quilted and will shrink 3-5%.

Thermore: Thermore is a very thin, drapeable, migration free batting developed for clothing, miniatures, and any other project were a thin, drapeable batting is needed. Can be hand or machine quilted up to 8" apart and will not shrink.

Polydown: Polydown is made with a very fine denier polyester that makes it soft and drapeable. It's resin bonded to help prevent bearding and migration. Can be hand or machine quilted up to 6" apart and will not shrink.

Tuscany Polyester: Along with Polydown, Tuscany Polyester is in a class of its own. It also uses a small denier, siliconized polyester and is very easy to work with. Can be hand or machine quilted up to 6" apart and will not shrink.

Tuscany Cotton Wool: Blend batting is made with fine USA cotton blended with the very best superwash wool which eliminates most of the shrinkage. The blend is 80% cotton with 20% superwash wool. Can be Quilted 4" a-part with shrinkage of approximately 3%. Excellent for both hand and machine quilting. Wash finished project on gentle and flat dry. Pre-washing the batt is not recommended.

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HOBBS BONDED FIBERS

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HOBBS QUILT BATTING
QUALITY BATTING SINCE 1978

*** Pre Washing of Batting is NOT Recommended ***

PRODUCTS	PRODUCT TYPE	APPROXIMATE LOFT	SHRINKAGE	MAXIMUM DISTANCE BETWEEN STITCHES	FOR HAND QUILTING	FOR MACHINE QUILTING	FOR DARK FABRICS	FOR LIGHT FABRICS
POLYESTER								
Tuscany®	Resin Bonded Siliconized Poly	1/4"	None	6"	Excellent	Excellent	Fair Pre-Test	Excellent
Cloudloft®	Resin Bonded Poly	1/2 - 5/8"	None	6"	Fair	Excellent	Fair Pre-Test	Excellent
Polydown®	Resin Bonded Poly Siliconized Fibers	1/4"	None	4"	Excellent	Excellent	Fair Pre-Test	Excellent
Thermore®	Resin Bonded Poly Patented Fibers	1/16"	None	9"	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
COTTON								
Heirloom® Premium	80% Cotton, 20% Poly-Resin Bonded & needlepunched	1/8 +"	3%	4"	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Heirloom® 80/20 Black	80% Cotton, 20% Poly-Resin Bonded & needlepunched	1/8"	3%	4"	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Not Recommended
Heirloom® 80/20 Bleached	80% Cotton, 20% Poly-Resin Bonded & needlepunched	1/8"	3%	4"	Excellent	Excellent	Fair Pre-Test	Excellent
Heirloom® 80/20 Fusible	80% Cotton, 20% Poly-Resin Bonded & needlepunched	1/8"	3%	4"	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Heirloom® & Tuscany® Unbleached	Needlepunched	1/8"	3-5%	4"	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Caution! Pre-Test
Heirloom® Natural with scrim binder	Needlepunched with scrim binder	1/8"	3-5%	8-10"	Caution! Pre-Test	Excellent	Excellent	Caution! Pre-Test
Heirloom® & Tuscany® Bleached	Needlepunched	1/8"	3-5%	4"	Excellent	Excellent	Fair Pre-Test	Excellent
WOOL								
Heirloom® & Tuscany® Wool	Washable Wool Resin Bonded	1/4-3/8"	None	4"	Excellent	Excellent	Caution! Pre-Test	Excellent
SILK								
Tuscany® Silk	90% Silk, 10% Poly-Resin Bonded & needlepunched	1/8 +"	5%	4"	Excellent	Excellent	Caution! Pre-Test	Excellent
Tuscany Cotton / Wool	80% Cotton, 20% Super Wash Wool Resin Bonded	1/4"	3%	4"	Excellent	Excellent	Caution! Pre-Test	Excellent

Fabric Choices~Wholecloth Quilts

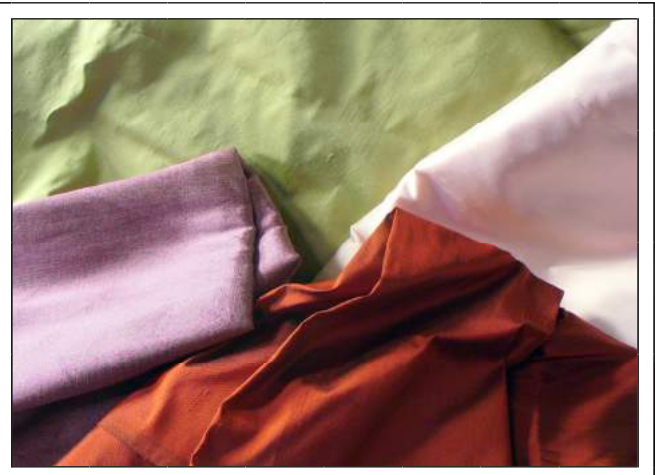
Your fabric choices are critical in wholecloth quilting. Pieced tops combine several different colors together. With a wholecloth quilt you are limited to ONE fabric choice. Beautiful wholecloth quilts may be created from simple cotton muslin to dazzling silks.

My recommendation, as it is with anything you put into a quilt, is to buy good quality fabric. Use a solid or a blended solid so that your quilting designs show up. My favorite choices include Cherrywood hand-dyed cottons, Dupioni Silk, Kaufman's Radiance fabric, cotton sateen and of course antique linens. You don't have to be fancy...just have good quality fabrics!



This is a photo of one of my favorite fabrics, Cherrywood. This is a wonderful hand-dyed, suede-like cotton that is fabulous to quilt on. It comes in a large variety of colors and they offer beautiful collections. You can find them on-line at www.cherrywoodfabrics.com.

Another favorite fabric is Dupioni silk. You can find this at many fabric and quilt stores as well as on-line. It comes textured or smooth...my favorite is the smooth as it shows off the quilting more. I have never had to add a stabilizer as it has enough body to hold up pretty well. The raw edges do have a tendency to ravel easily so once a piece is cut I recommend sealing that raw edge with Fray Block.





This is a photo of Radiance which is produced by Kaufman. This comes in some amazing colors. There is a shiny side and a dull side and you can use either.

I get a lot of complaints from students about how wiggly this fabric is. I recommended using a stabilizer and recommended Bosal or Pellon Form Flex. This is a cotton woven fusible stabilizer and I love it. Each of these works very well without taking away the drape.

I've made my name in the quilting world by turning vintage linens into wholecloth quilts. I love the fact that each one is different...there are no two alike and I never get tired of how they "feel". We will be lightly addressing using linens for wholecloth quilts but if you REALLY want to learn how to make these quilts, please check out my handbook, Wholecloth Linen Quilts for all the instruction.



The sky is the limit on what fabric you choose to use to create your special quilt...you are the boss and may use anything you wish! Like I said before, please make sure you are using quality fabric, batting and threads.

If you have a favorite product or a great tip, please share with me! This is why I update my handbooks each year is I learn SO much from my students and readers.

Basic Elements of Design

The Basic Elements of Design applies to both pieced quilt tops as well as wholecloth quilts.

There are four basic elements of design...

1. Focal Point
2. Movement
3. Dimension
4. Repetition

These elements are evident everywhere whether it is a beautiful photograph, a painting or a beautifully done quilt!

Each person sees art in their own way. It's also important to remember that all four elements of design are not always present in art or your quilts. These are just guidelines to think of during your designing process.

Let's start with three prints that I use in my classroom lecture to help identify these elements in the "art world".



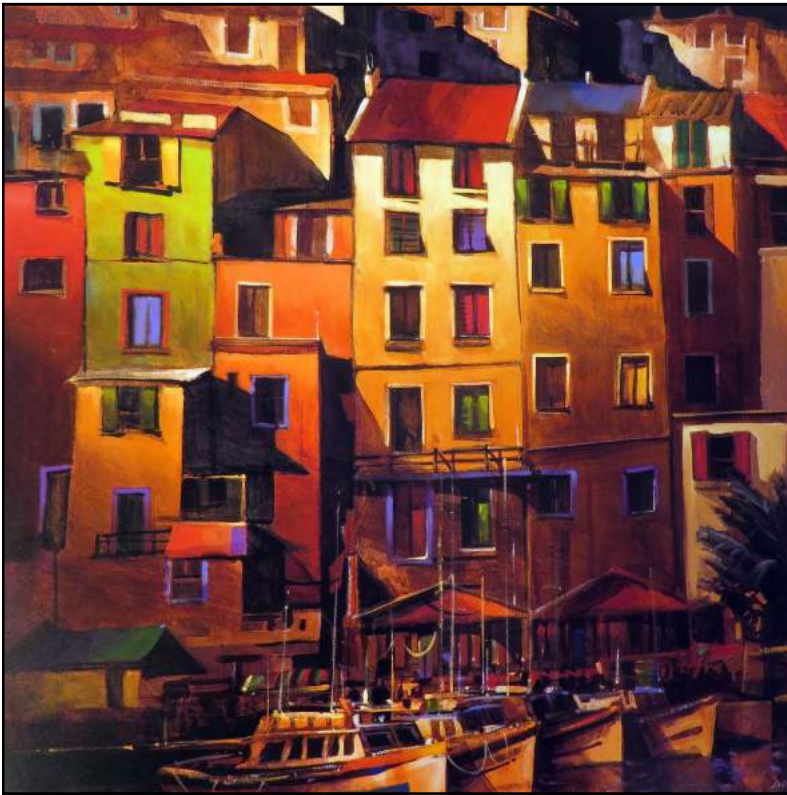
If you close your eyes, and then open them, what is the first thing your eyes go to?

For me it was the beautiful red flowers. This is the focal point.

I felt movement was created by the blue flowers branching off to the left and the greenery cascading down on the right.

The dimension was created by the flowers going over the top of the vase and the table going behind the vase.

The repetition was created by the repetitive flower designs.



When I look at this piece the first thing I see is the bright building right in the middle. This would be my focal point.

The movement was created by the various shapes of the buildings all nestled in together. My eyes kept moving around looking for them all. I also see the boats providing movement as I expect to see them swaying around.

Dimension is created by the various depths of the buildings as well as the boats lined up in front of the buildings.

Repetition was created by the repetitive buildings as well as the boats.

The focal point on this piece appears to be the bright yellow leaf towards the top of the photo.

Movement appears to be created by the rain droplets.

Dimension is created by all the various layers of the leaves

Repetition is obvious with the repetitive leaves.

Now let's see how these basic elements apply to wholecloth quilts.

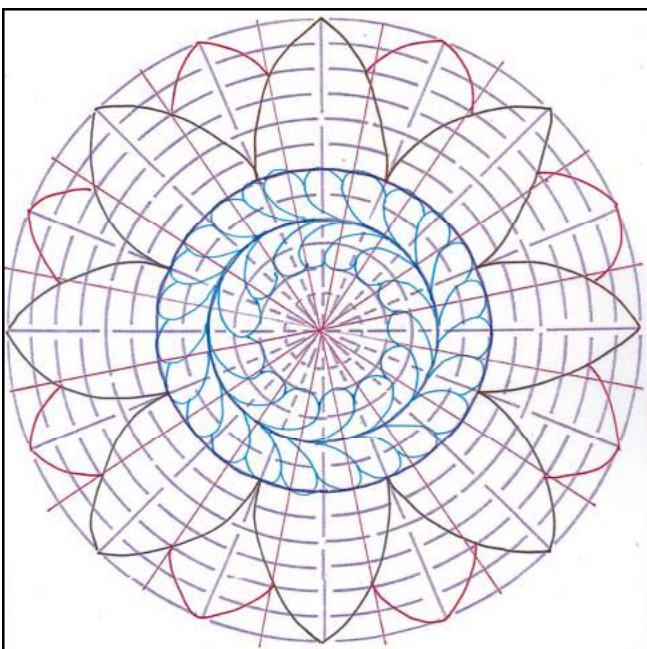
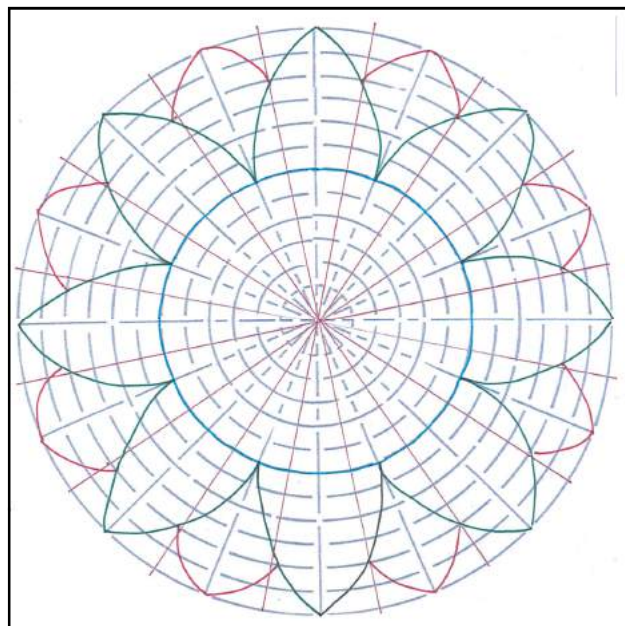


Identifying elements of design in the “art world” is fairly easy...but how do you do it in the “quilting world” ? Sometimes it’s easier said than done.

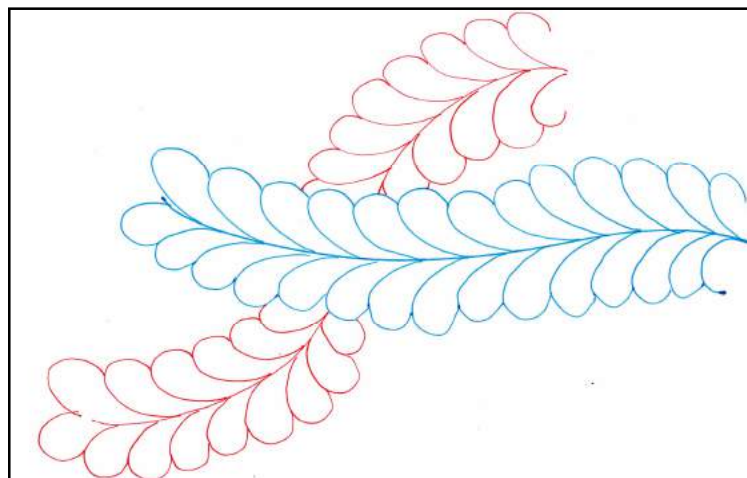
One point I’d like to make, and it’s important for you to remember, is not every quilt is going to have all four of these elements. These are simply a guide when you start to plan your quilting designs.

If you want your quilt to have a **FOCAL POINT**, you may want to choose a large medallion type of design that will instantly grab the viewer’s eye.

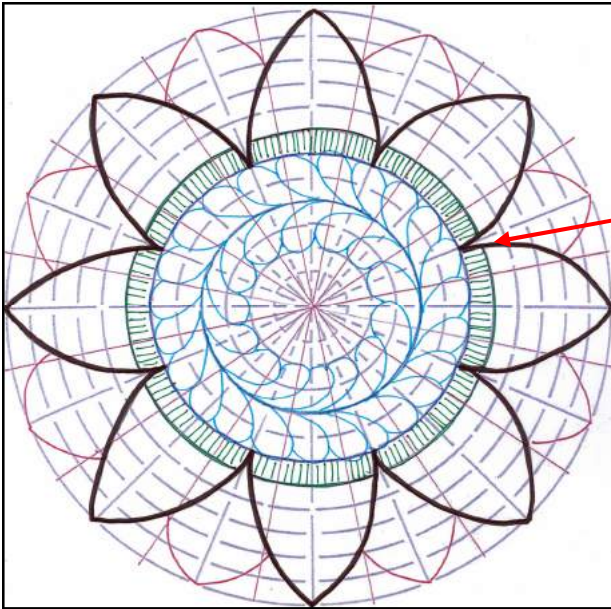
This particular design would work well as you can add lots of goodies in the open areas to make this come alive.



The one thing this particular medallion design is lacking is **MOVEMENT**. There’s nothing that encourages your eye to move around. Let’s add a beautiful feathered wreath in the middle. This provides a focal point but it gives this design a spin and instantly gets your eye moving around.

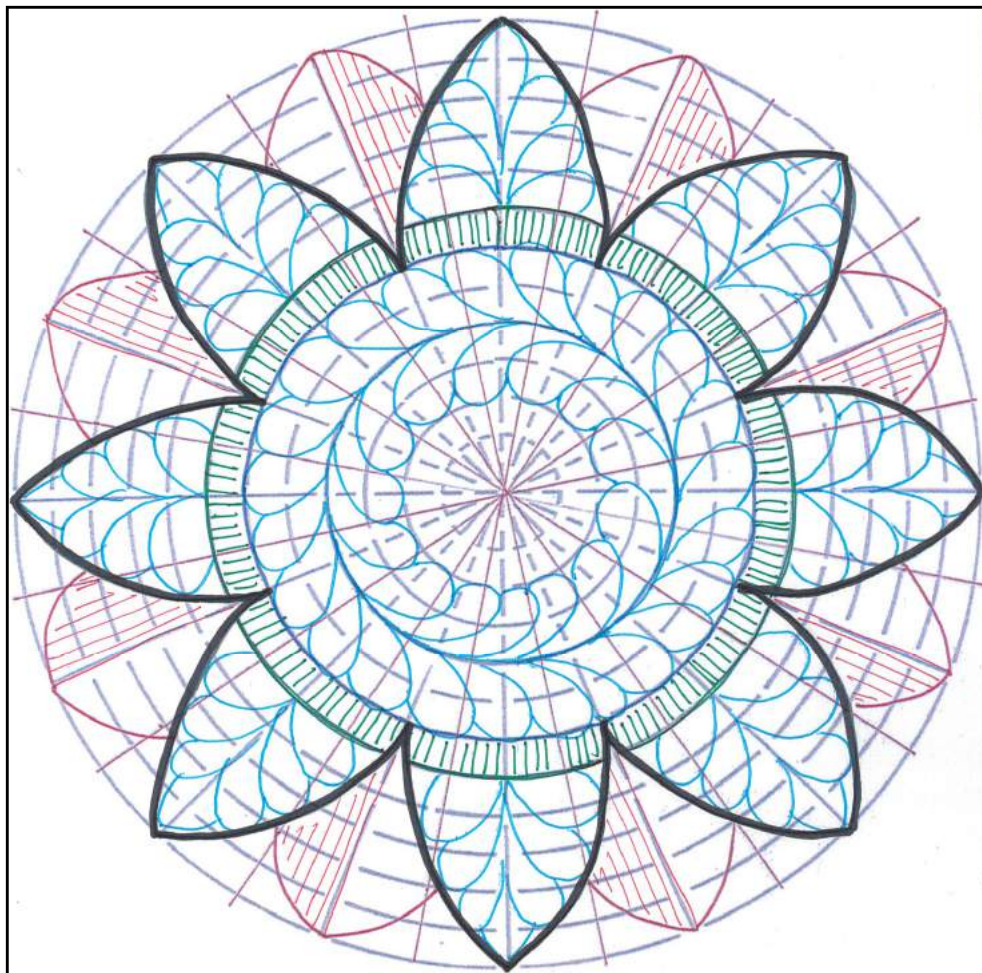


DIMENSION, in my quilting world, is making one design go underneath another. In other words have one design that is primary (the blue feather on top) and another that is secondary (red feather running behind it). Great dimension!



In the case of our medallion I ran a ring of repetitive lines going around the feather wreath but it ends at the base of the blades. The circle stops at each “V”. I darkened the blades to make this easier to see. This circle of repetitive lines also provides a resting spot for your eyes...I call this a “speed bump”.

REPETITION in the case of this medallion is very easy. The repetitive blades going around the outside easily provides this element. Repeating the feathers from the feather wreath into the blades and repeating the lines from the narrow circle into the small blades provides repetition.



When I've taught my design workshops in the past, I am often able to bring a large assortment of stencils from my stash for my students to use...they are thrilled.

One day a student remarked it was nice that I did this but after the class was over I took all those wonderful stencils home with me. My students were left to scramble to find quilting stencils on-line or in their local store which is getting harder to do.

This is one of the main reasons I've come out with The Ultimate Stencils for creating medallion style designs; The Ultimate Shape for creating either medallion or overall repetitive designs and The Ultimate Backgrounds for creating beautiful heirloom backgrounds. It is my intention, in 2017, to create the last of this series of designing stencils which will be The Ultimate Borders.

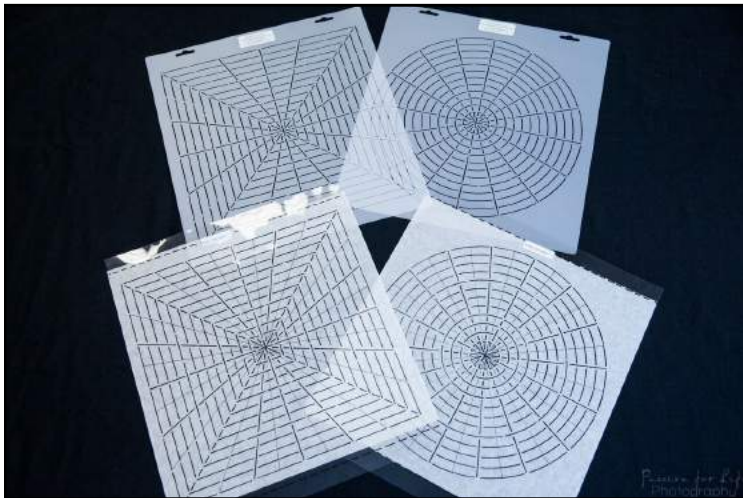
The next several pages will provide basic instruction on how to use the Ultimate Stencils and the Ultimate Shape. These instructions will be used further on in this book to teach you how to design your pieced and wholecloth quilts.

I have included both of the handbooks for these stencils as part of this collection to provide you with some design inspiration.

Using the Ultimate Stencil

I have designed quilting stencils for many years for Quilting Creations and have used a simple grid system on my drafting table as a guide to create my designs. I figured it would be a great idea to take these grids and turn them into stencils so that everyone would be able to create their own designs in any size they wish. It's hard to find commercially made stencils these days...our local quilt stores don't carry them and the quilt shows might have one vendor that has a limited number of designs. For that reason I am going to provide the instruction on how to create medallion designs with these two stencils in this book. I'm hoping this will encourage you to go for it and create your own! If you do wish to purchase commercially made stencils, I HIGHLY recommend visiting www.quiltingcreations.com as they have the best collection of designs I've seen anywhere. They have a catalog too!

The following instructions take you thru creating a very simple eight pointed star, how to enlarge your designs, how to add additional angles, etc. These instructions are taken from The Ultimate Stencil handout.

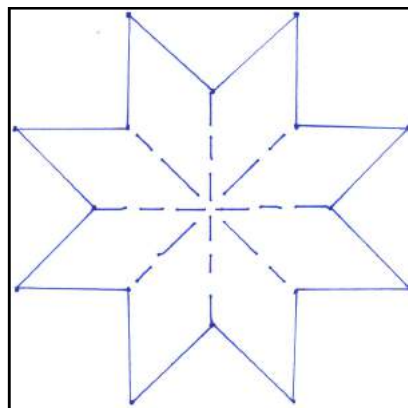
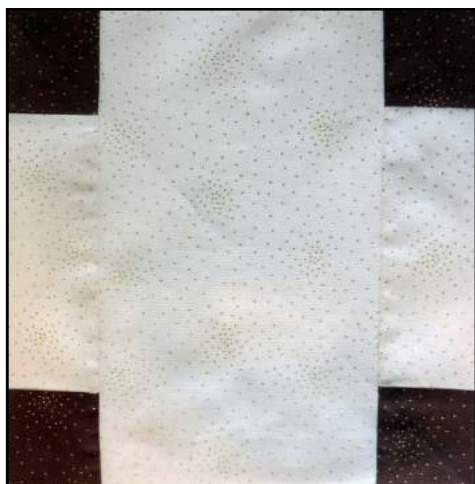


These are the Ultimate Stencils. They consist of two transparencies that you draft your design on first with a dry erase marker and two cut plastic stencils that you will use to draft your design on your quilt top afterwards.

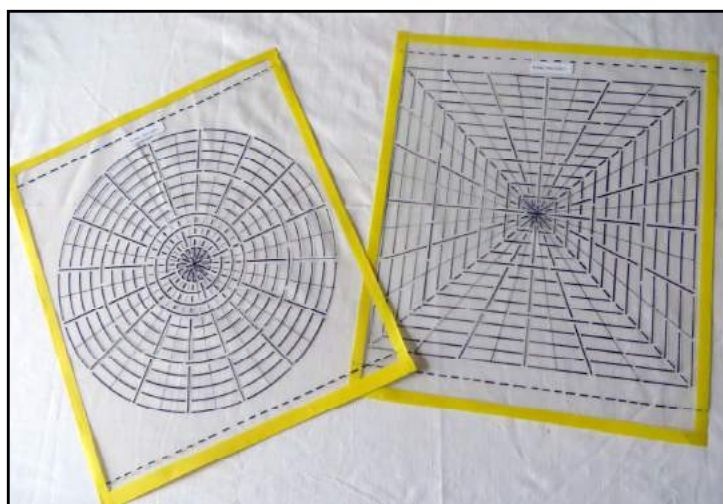
You can create nearly any design by using the circles, squares and angles on the Ultimate Stencils. You can keep designs as simple or as complicated as you wish...you are the boss!

I have included my Ultimate Stencils Sampler of Designs book as part of this collection of handbooks. Please refer to that book for some great ideas for designs! I have a 150+ page E-book called, Ultimate Stencils Design Handbook, that has tons of designs already drafted out on the Ultimate Stencils as well as wholecloth versions of the designs. This is available for sale off of my website.

Let's start by creating a very simple Lemoyne Star.

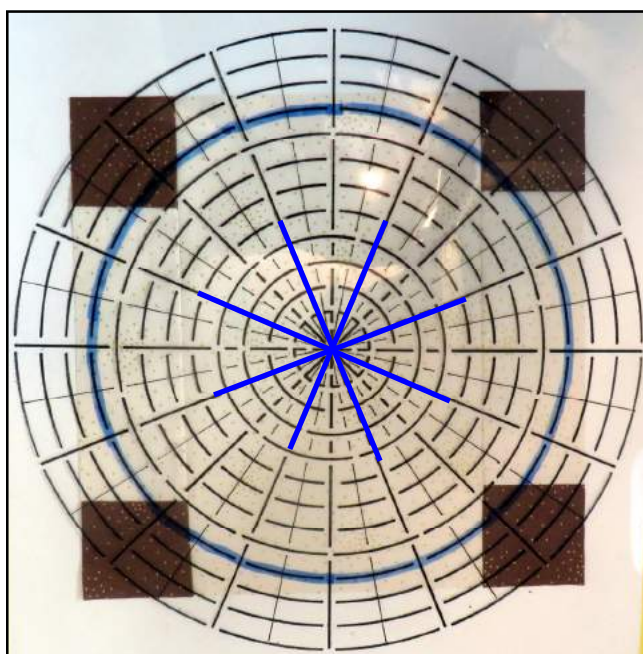


This is the quilt block that you want to draft this star design on.



These are the transparencies you will use to draft your design . We are going to use the circle to create the star.

Notice that I have added colored masking tape to the edges of each transparency. This will help to eliminate the risk of marking past the edge with your marker on to your quilt!



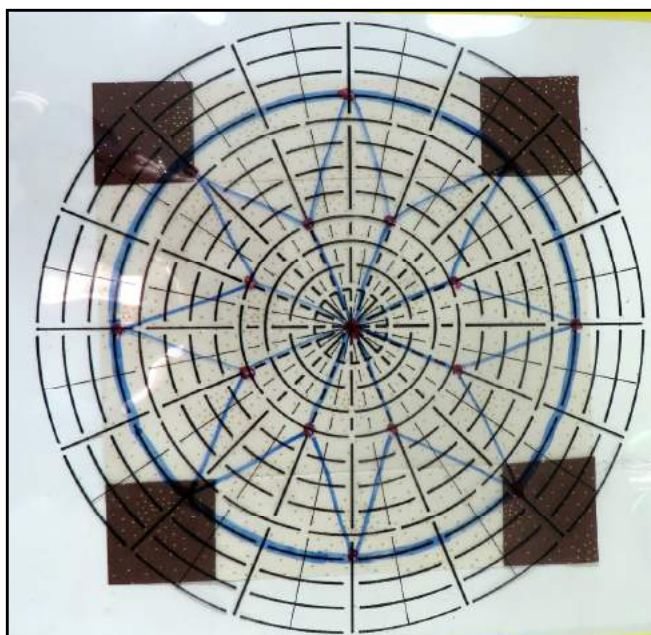
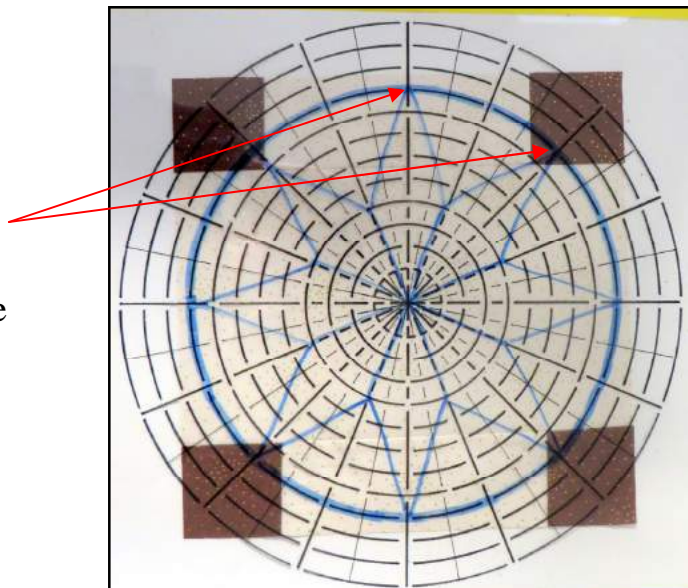
Place the transparency over the top of your quilt block.

Using a dry erase marker, draw a circle guideline where you want your star to extend to.

Draw the middle lines of your star.

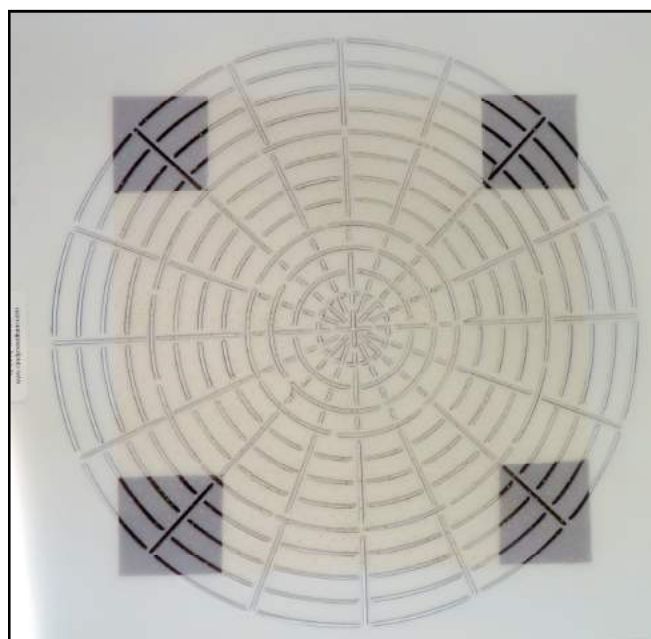
Draw a dot in-between the lines. This is where your star points will be.

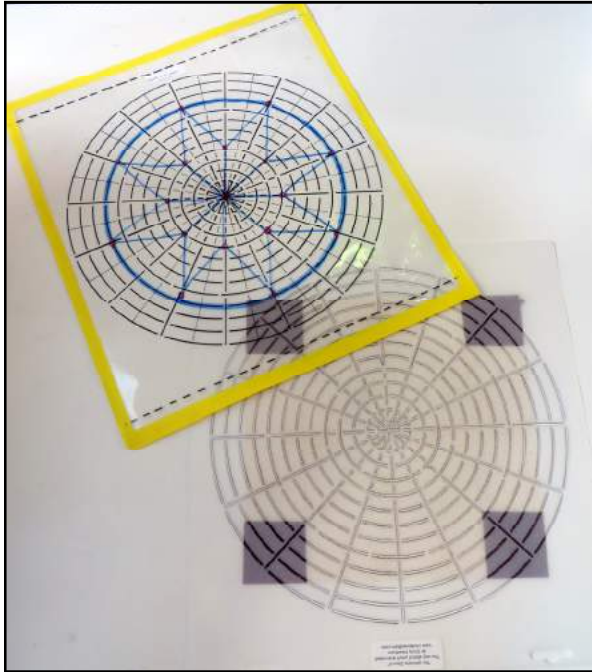
Now connect the base of your star to the outside points.



Now you have a perfect 8-pointed star in a matter of minutes!

Once you are happy with your design place the Ultimate Stencil on top of your quilt block.

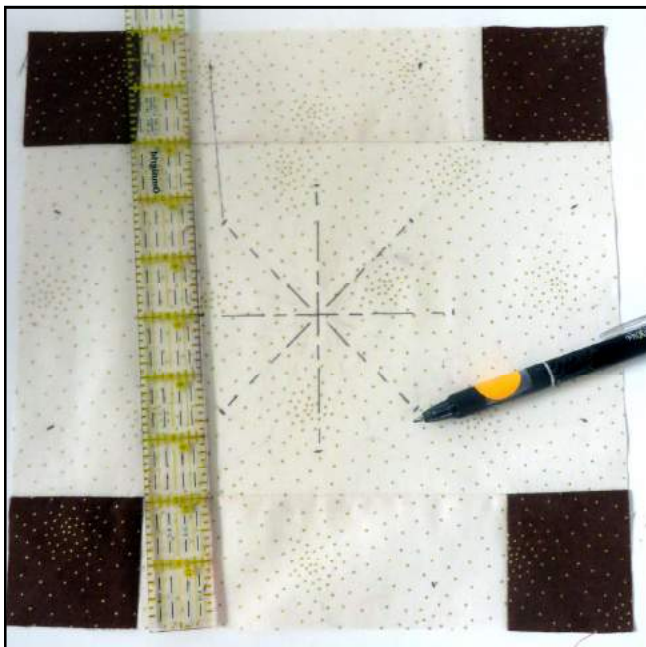
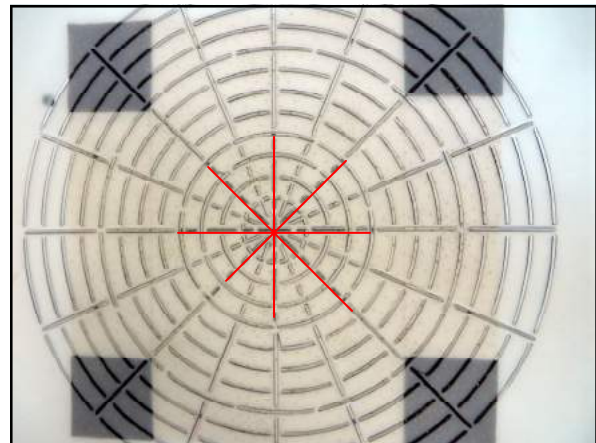




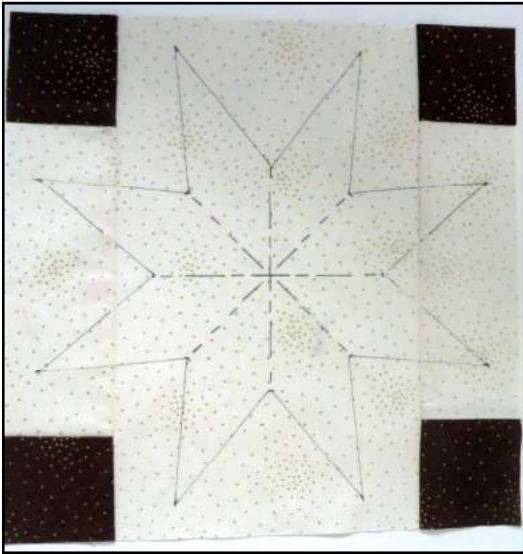
Using the transparency drawing as your guide, and using your quilt marking pen, make the same **dots** on your quilt block that you made on your transparency using the Ultimate Stencil as your guide.

Be sure you are using your QUILT MARKING PEN!!!!

Using the stencil, draw **straight lines** in the middle. This is creating the center of your star.



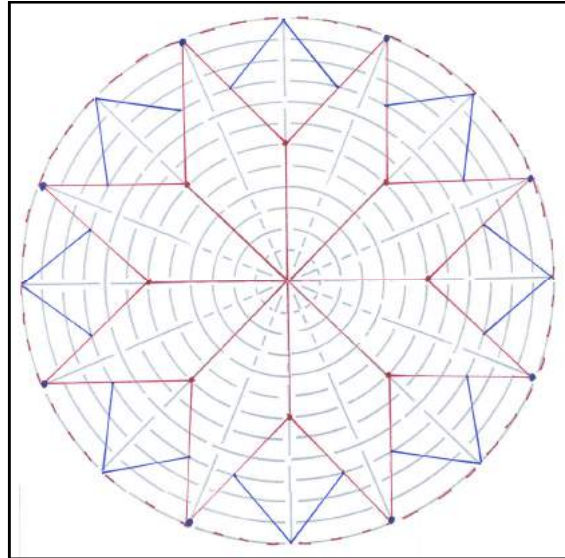
Now use your ruler to connect your inside lines to your outside dots.



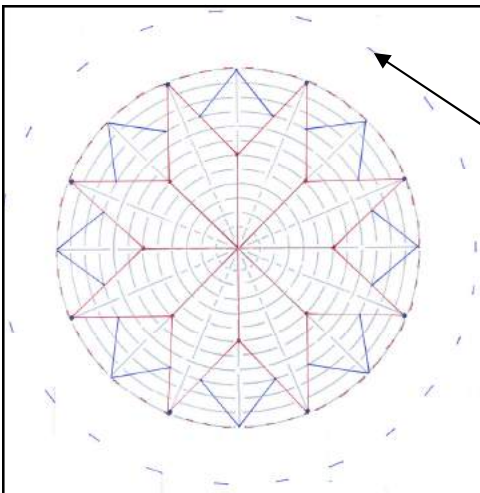
You've just completed your first design! Remember...you can make your star with fat bases and skinny tops...you can add as many points as you like.

Let's say you want to add more details to the star. Very easily done!

Additional points can be added in-between the original star points just by lining up your ruler with the angles and circles.

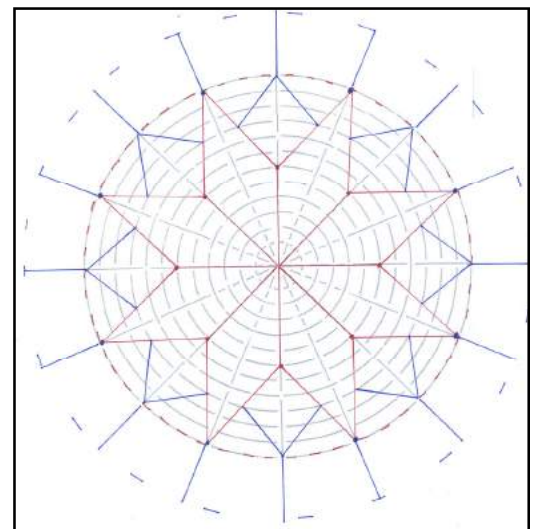


You are not limited in the size of your design by the size of the stencil. You can make your designs as large as you wish.



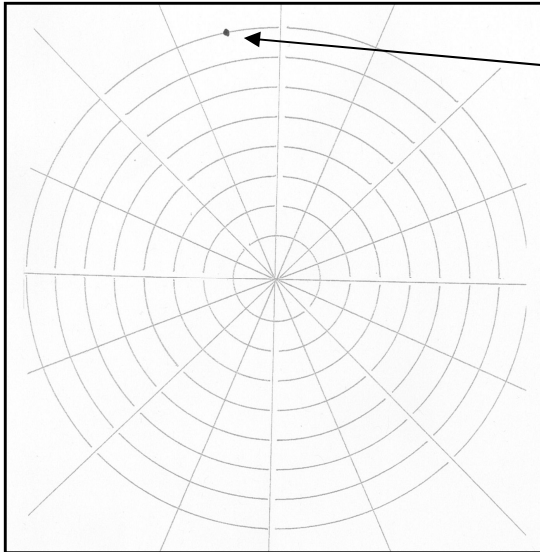
Measure out from the last circle on the Ultimate Stencil the distance you want to enlarge the design. Make little dashed marks all the way around.

Now extend the angled lines all the way out.



Adding Additional Angles to the Circle Grid

(YouTube available with these instructions)



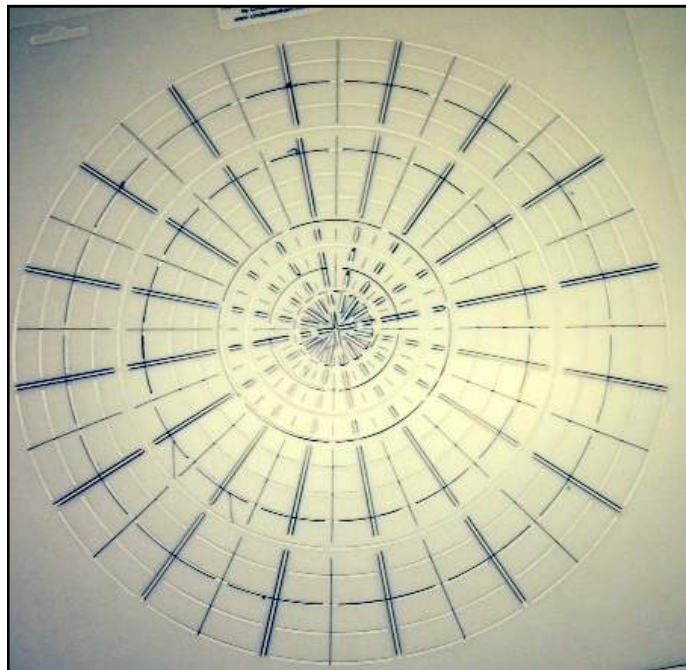
Some designs require more angles than others. It is VERY easy to add additional angles to the Master Grids.

Measure the distance between two of the angles and make a DOT at the halfway point.

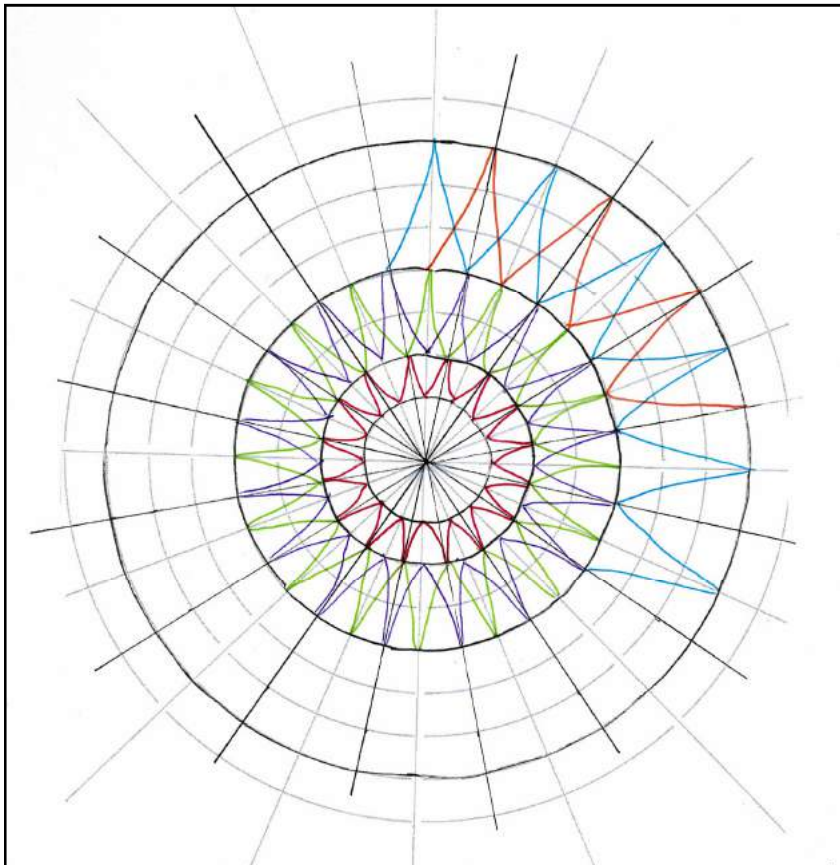
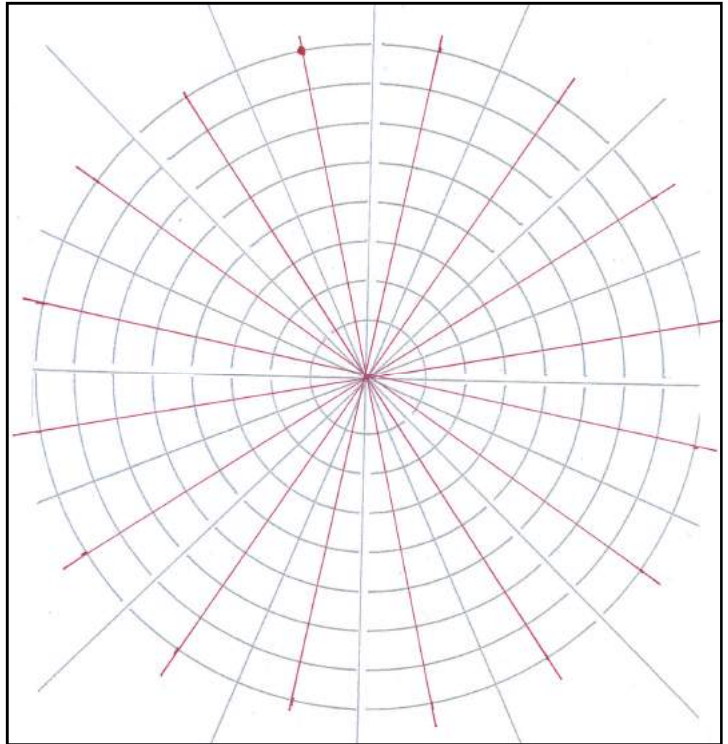
In this case, the distance between the two lines was 2". I made my dot at the 1" mark.

Place your Ultimate Stencil on top of your marked lines.

Now rotate it so that one of the angled lines is lined up with your dot and the middle is lined up at the middle.



Now mark your additional angles
(shown in red).



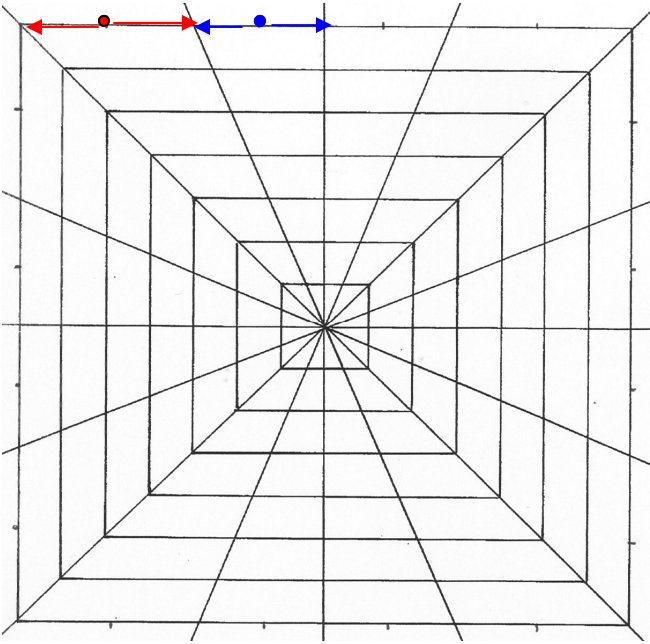
When I have an additional set of angled lines to use, I can easily create this beautiful star!

The little red star circle in the middle is using only one set of angled lines. The other two star circles are using both.

I used different colored pens to show you the pattern used. Remember...you can make your stars as long or as short as you want.

By the way, this design is VERY easy to quilt... completely continuous line!

**Adding Additional Angles to
the Square Grid**
(YouTube available with these instructions)



Adding additional lines to the square Ultimate Stencil is a bit different than the circle...but still very easy!

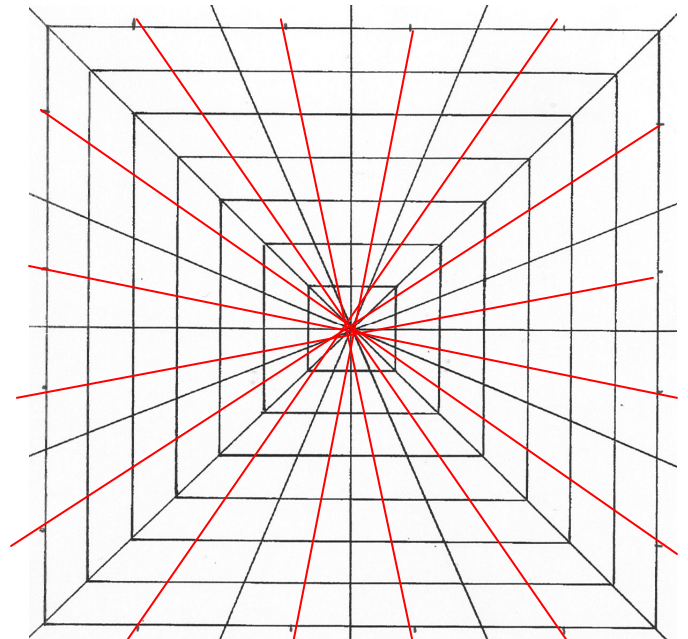
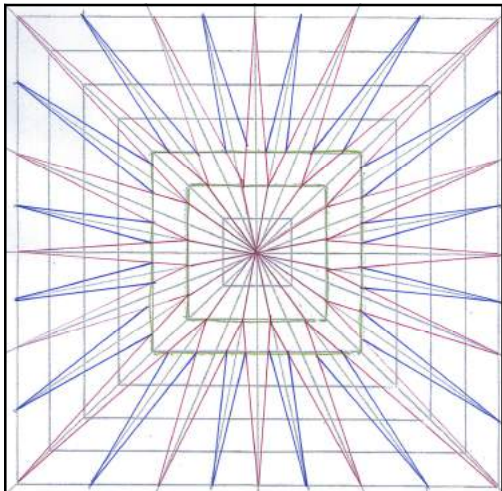
Notice that there are two angle widths to the square stencil...the circle had the same distances all the way around.

To add additional angles, you must measure the width between the angles and find the halfway point.

The distance between these two lines is 3 1/2". The halfway point is 1 3/4".
Draw a dot at the 1 3/4" point.

The distance between these two lines is 1 1/2". The halfway point is 3/4".
Draw a dot at the 3/4" point.

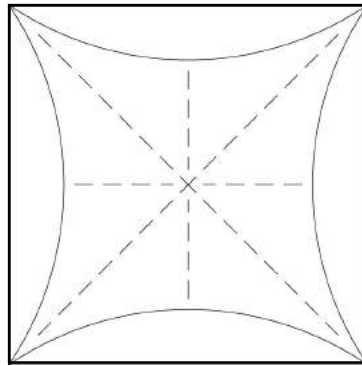
Now use your ruler and connect your dots!



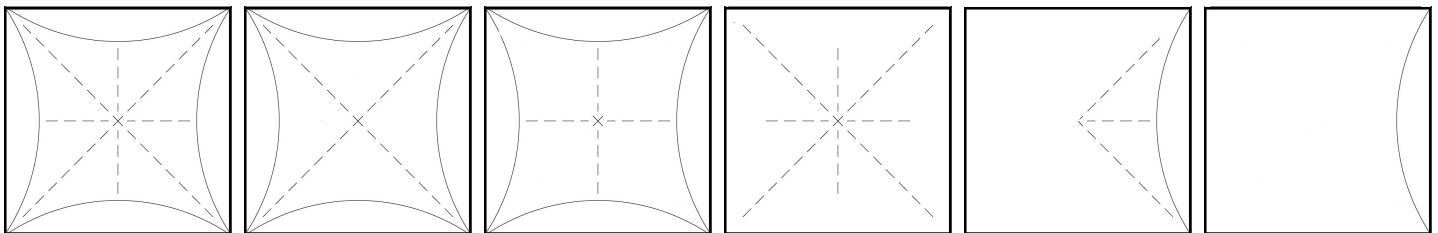
Using the Ultimate Shape

One of my favorite shapes for overall repetitive designs is a square shape. This is easy to repeat and the design possibilities are endless. This is a great way to design for wholecloth and pieced quilts alike. I am going to focus my instruction on using The Ultimate Shape but realize you can repeat ANY square design to create an overall wholecloth or pieced quilt top design.

This is The Ultimate Shape. Obviously very uninteresting all by itself but when you start looking at the parts you will see the endless possibilities of creating lots of designs. There is the obvious square around the outside; arches on all four sides and the very important horizontal, vertical and diagonal guides in the middle. This works on the same theory as The Ultimate Stencils...it provides guidelines for you to be as creative as you wish.



You don't have to use ALL of the lines in the Ultimate Shape. You can pick and choose which ones you wish to use to create your design. That's what makes it so versatile! One of the best parts is that this comes in four different sizes. You can also combine different sizes and parts together to create even more designs.



I have included my Ultimate Shape Design Book as part of this collection of handbooks. Please refer to that book for some great ideas for designs!



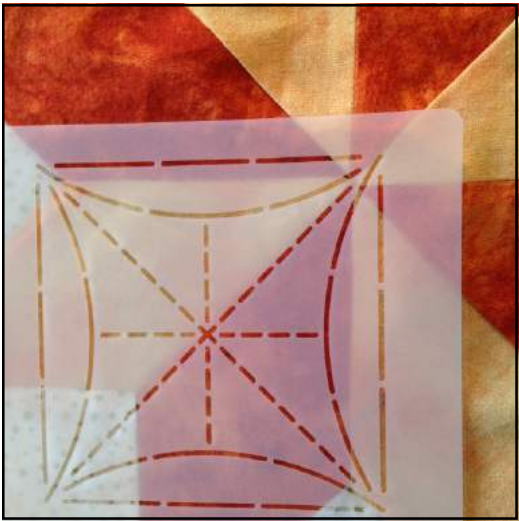
A very common quilting design is the Cathedral Window. The Ultimate Shape will provide perfect arches on all four sides of your block.

If you decide to add lines in the middle those are there too! Use as much or as little as you wish.

If your quilt block is larger than The Ultimate Shape, simply center the stencil in your block and then extend the arches to fit.

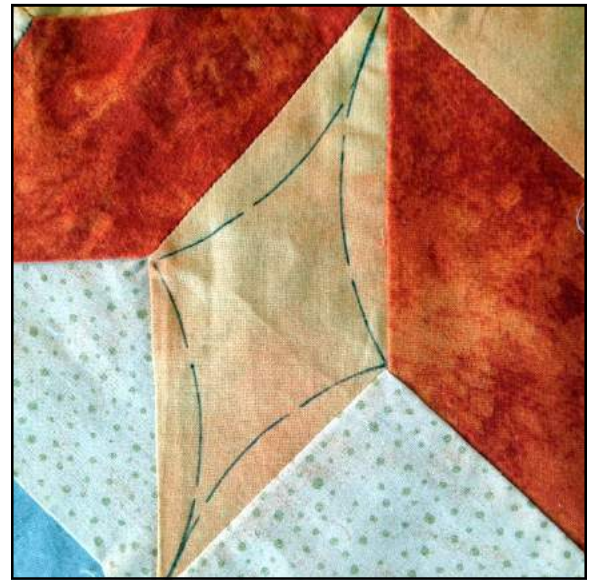


The same guidelines apply to the horizontal, vertical and diagonal lines. Extend them as far as you need to make them fit your block.



If you want to add arches to an area and the stencil is too big, simply extend the stencil past the design as much as you need until the arch fits

This is a great tool to add consistent arches to any design shape.



You don't have to use the stencil as a "whole". There are lots of parts that can be used to create an unlimited number of designs.

In this example the four arches were used to create the cathedral window design in the white circles...

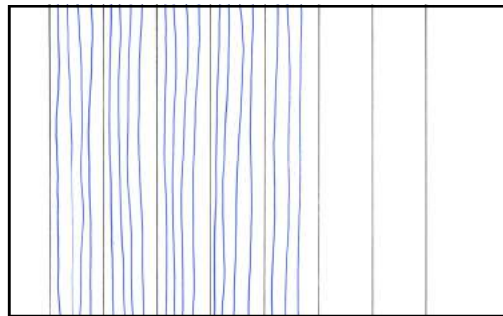
...and then a single arch used to create the elliptical design in the yellow. VERY cool!



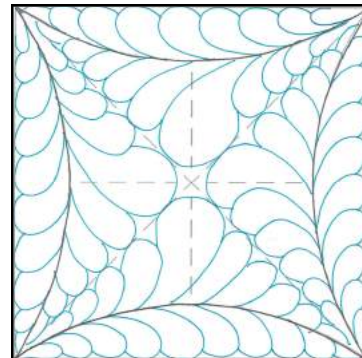
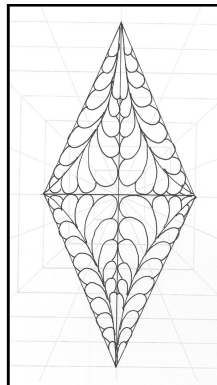
The Basic Three

Before we go any further, I want to show you how you can fill very simple shapes with my Basic Three fillers to create heirloom-style quilting designs with very little effort. The Basic Three includes Repetitive Lines, Free Form Feathers & Pebbles/Bubbles. You can fill any space or any design with one, two or all three of these fills and end up with an heirloom quilt. You will see these fillers used in nearly every one of my quilts.

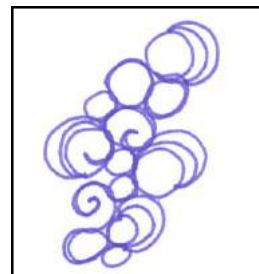
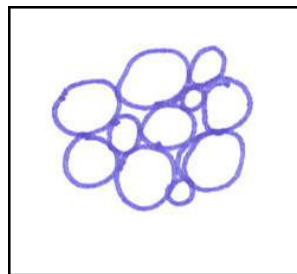
Repetitive Lines



Free Form Feathers



Pebbles/Bubbles



The next set of instructions will be focusing on laying out a wholecloth quilt.

When you are designing a pieced top, your guidelines are already in place, i.e., pieced blocks, sashings and borders. You use these guidelines to determine where your quilting designs will go.

When you are designing a wholecloth quilt you have to create your own guidelines. In other words you need to mark where your focal point is going to be, where your borders will go, where your corners will be.

My instructions will focus on creating a very symmetrical quilt...just trying to keep things easy here! I would **HIGHLY** encourage you to position your focal point off center...maybe in a corner. Be brave and run part of your design off the edge! Maybe create wonky borders...run designs underneath and above each other!

In the introduction to this book I told you that wholecloth quilting defines you as a quilter...it is about YOU. You have been given a blank canvas of fabric to do as you please...pretend you're in the sandbox and have FUN with this!

When I was learning how to design, I found I learned more about the design process from creating wholecloth quilts. Everything I learned here I was able to use in designing my pieced quilt tops.

Even if you never plan on doing a wholecloth quilt, please pay close attention to these instructions because everything that is taught here can be used to design your pieced tops!

Medallion Style Designs

A medallion style quilt is one basic design surrounded by one or more borders, backgrounds and fillers.

In this next chapter I am going to show you how to create a medallion design in both a pieced quilt as well as a wholecloth quilt setting.



This is a miniature linen wholecloth quilt. The medallion that is in the middle of this is the same one that is on the purple silk on the cover of this book. Notice how I have many borders surrounding the middle medallion and two borders around the outside edge. This piece measures 18" square!



This is a basic medallion style pieced quilt. It has one large design in the middle surrounded by four corners and large border. These are the four points of design:

1. Focal Point: Obviously the large star in the middle.
2. Movement: I see the movement being created by the star points coming out as well as the leaves in the corners.
3. Dimension: I don't see much dimension in this piece as there isn't any overlapping of designs.
4. Repetition: I believe the repetition is in the green star points as well as the corner motifs.



Because the quilt lacked dimension and didn't have too much movement, here's a very easy way to add both of those! I traced a large circle to go around the star in the middle and then drew feathers that go "underneath" the white corners...instant dimension and movement.

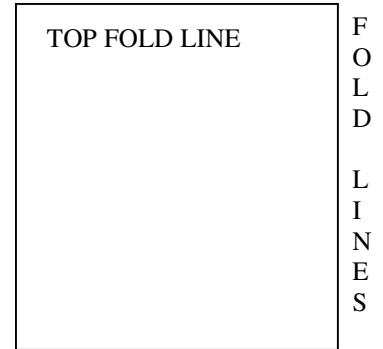
I added a feather wreath in the middle of the star...since this is the focal point of the quilt it instantly picks up your eye and starts moving it around.

I added repetitive lines in half of the red star diamonds. By only doing half this too creates movement and also provides a nice geometric contrast to the soft feathers. I can go in and fill the remaining area with beautiful background fillers.

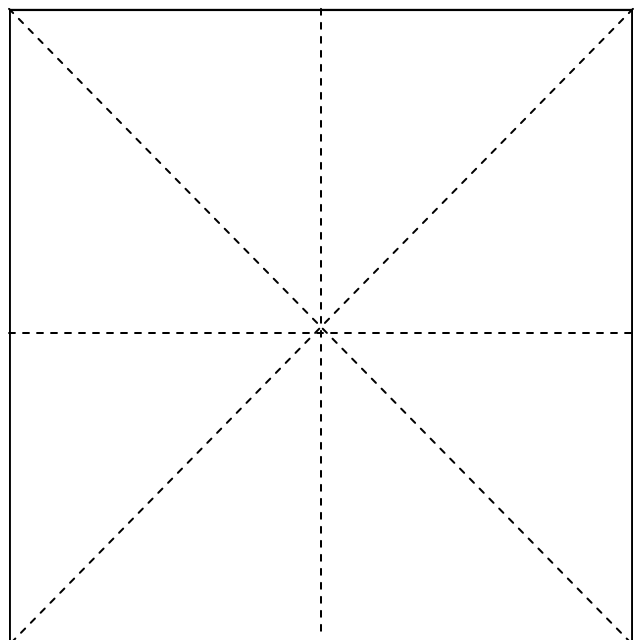
Laying Out a Medallion Wholecloth Quilt

Before you even start designing or marking your wholecloth quilt, there is one important step to take and that is establishing your center point and horizontal and vertical lines. These are VERY important and will make your designing SO much easier. These guidelines apply to both standard wholecloth quilts as well as linen wholecloth quilts.

1. Press your fabric flat. I often use Niagra sizing or Best Press to give the fabric a little more body.
2. Hold your pressed fabric up and fold it in half width wise and then in half again lengthwise. You are quartering it by folding it in half in each direction. Your fabric is rarely perfectly square or straight so don't stress about having your edges and corners perfectly matched.
3. Take your folded/quartered piece and place it back on the ironing board and press your folds into firm creases. You have now established the center of your wholecloth quilt and also created horizontal and vertical guidelines that all of your designing will be based off of.
4. Open up your fabric and lay your long ruler down on these pressed lines. With your quilt marking pen, trace these lines so they are visible. All of your designing will be based off of these lines...they are critical!
5. I highly recommend that you mark additional lines at a 45 degree going from corner to corner.

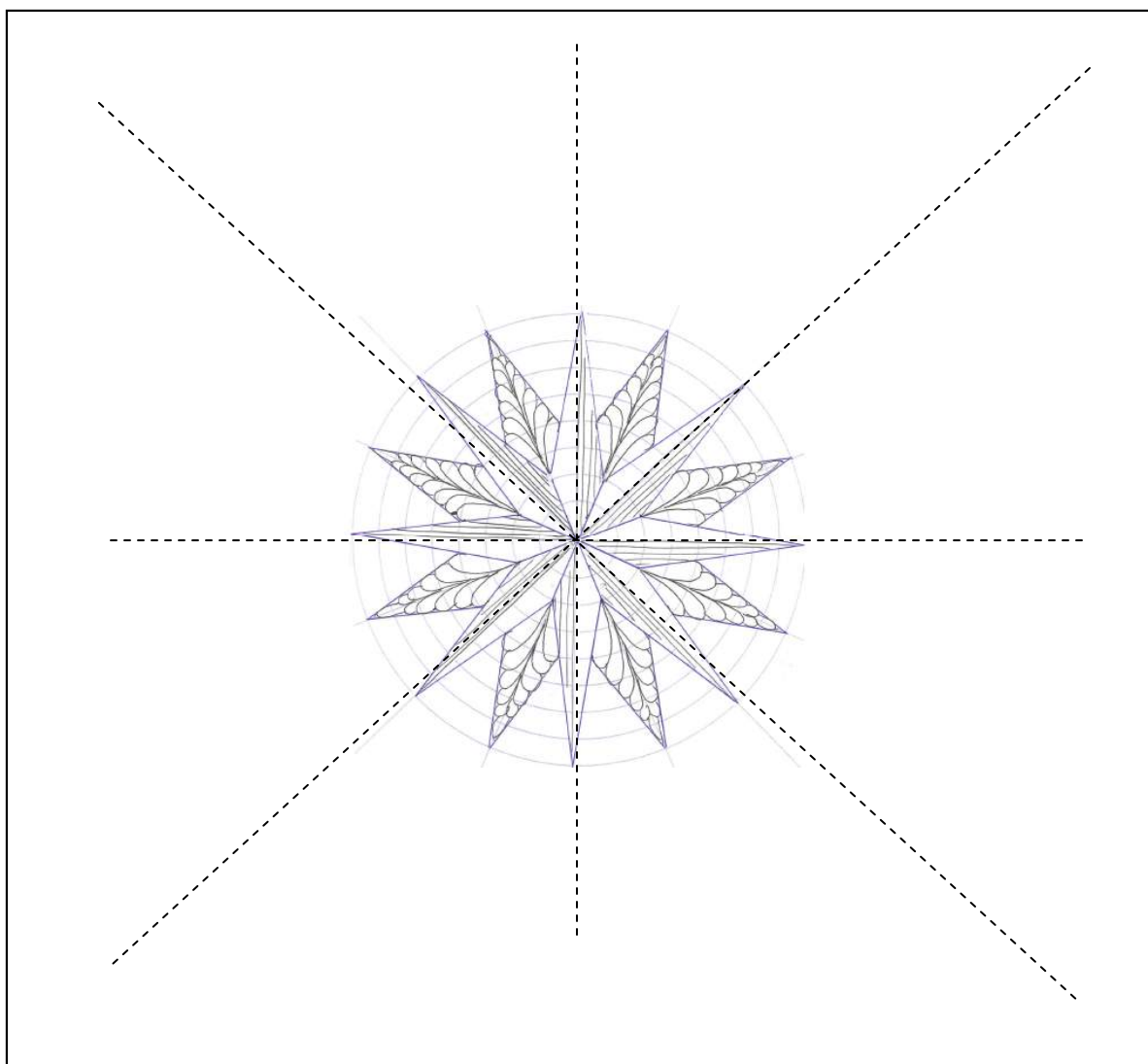


All four lines will be used to keep your medallion design in the middle (if that's where you want it) and establish guidelines to keep your repetitive square designs straight and lined up.

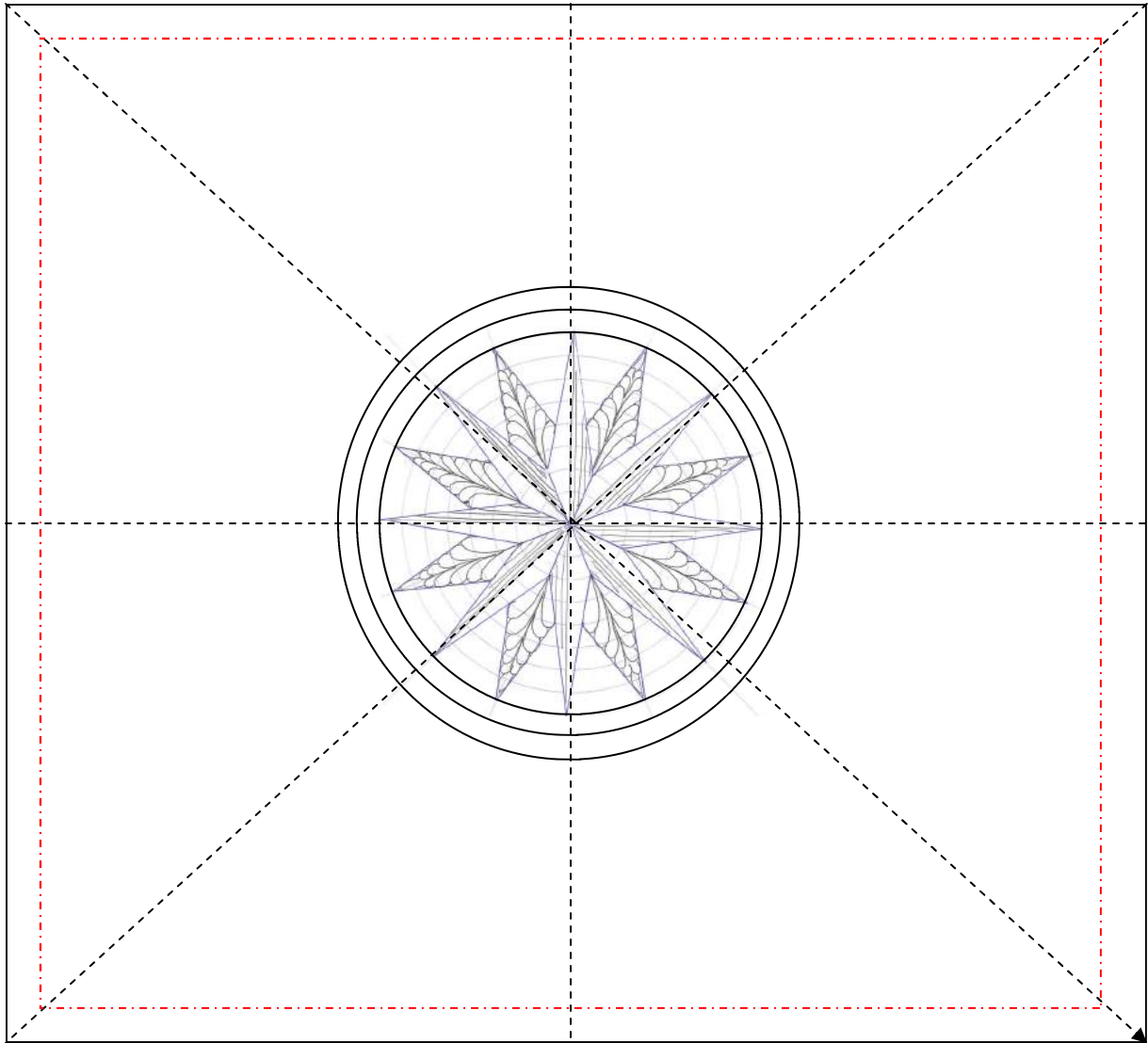


The most common style of wholecloth quilts is a medallion. Rather than creating a repetitive or overall design, you are focusing on one main design surrounded by one or more borders or corners. This is where your four main points of design can really come in to play!

I've chosen a Mariners Compass design for the medallion of my wholecloth quilt and decided to have it in the center of my piece. I used my marked guidelines for placement.

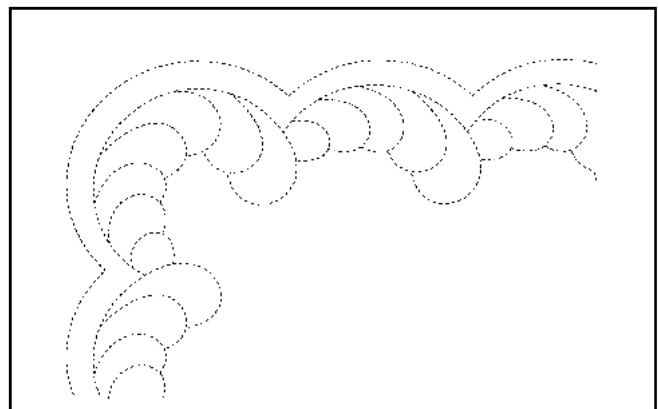


Sometimes it's fun to add additional lines around your medallion just to strengthen it a bit and add more detail. I love a three-line repeat and love how this looks around the compass. You can add any kind of detail or border around your medallion...the sky is the limit!



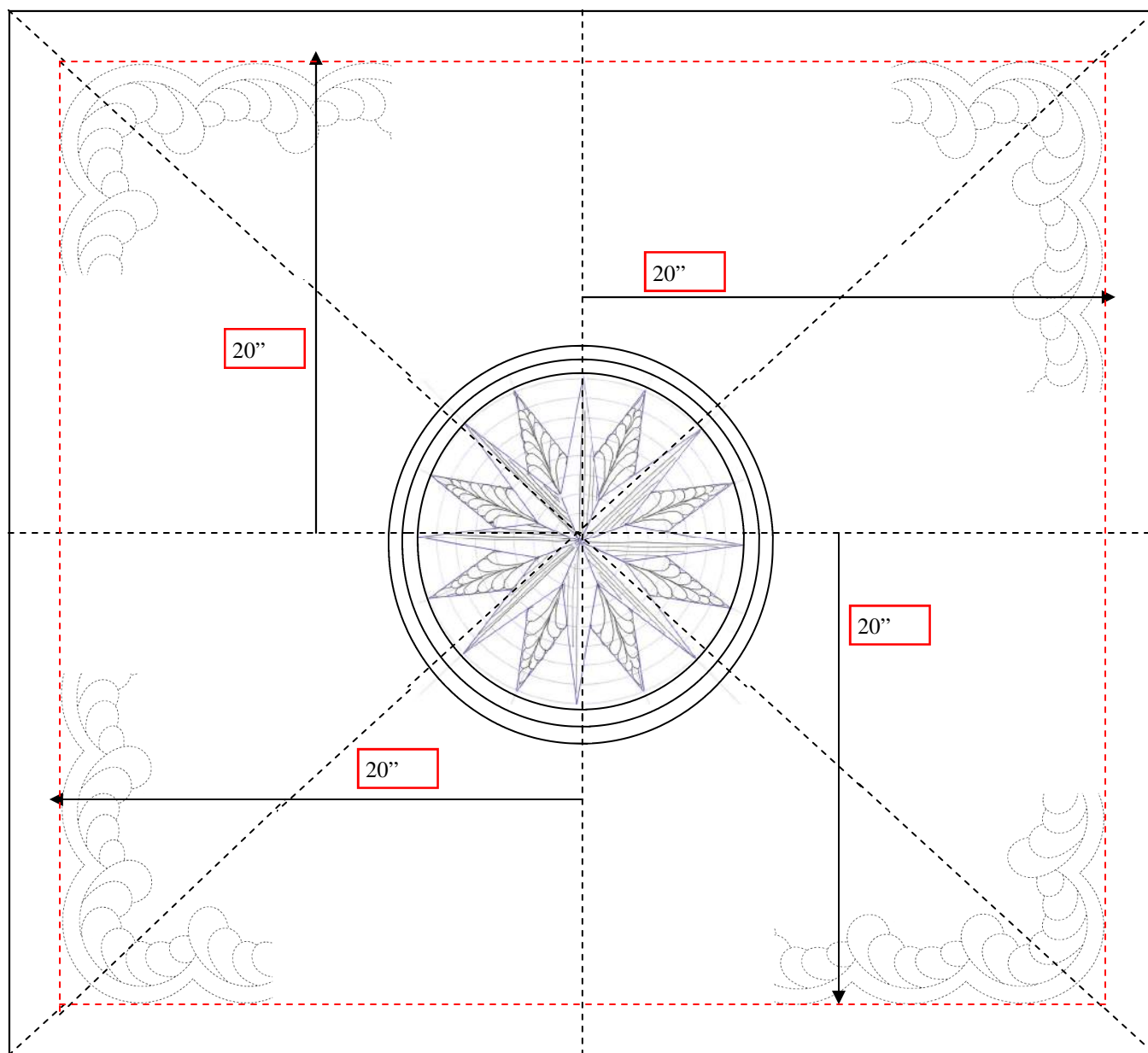
Now it's time to choose and lay out a border should you want one. This is simple to do in a pieced quilt setting because you have a pre-set area already laid out for you. It's just as easy for a wholecloth quilt.

The first step is to choose your border design.



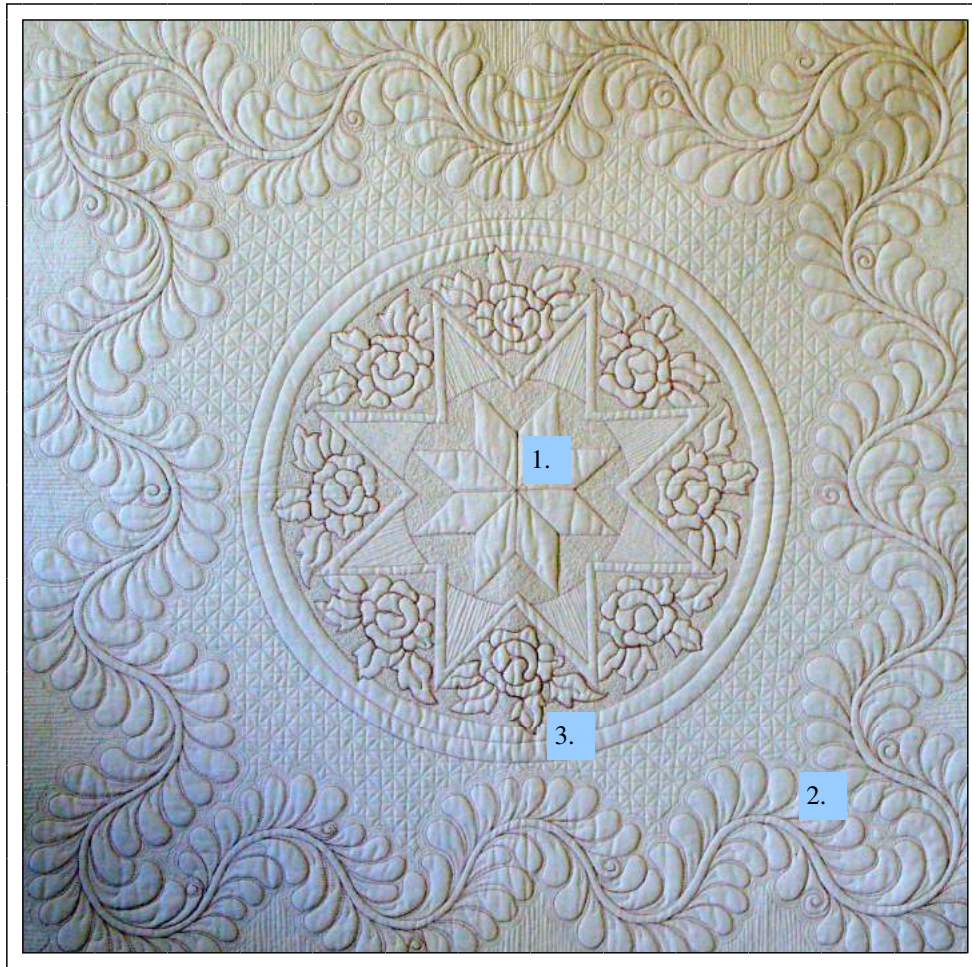
Determine how far out you want the outside edge of your border to be. Be sure to leave at least 2" from the outside edge of your border to the outside raw edge of your fabric for squaring up later on. In this case I want the outside edge of my border to be 20" from center. Using a ruler, I measure out from both the horizontal and vertical lines and mark a dashed line all the way around at 20". This is my guide for marking my border...very important!

Mark all four corners first and "fudge to fit" in the middle. I'll show you how to fudge on page 48.



Once the middle medallion design is drafted and the borders are placed, you can fill in the remaining area with additional designs or background fill. Don't be afraid to run border designs "underneath" your medallion to provide some great dimension and movement!

This is a VERY basic medallion style wholecloth quilt. Remember your medallion doesn't have to be centered...you can off-set it if you wish for a totally different look!



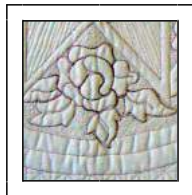
This is a basic medallion style wholecloth quilt. This has the one main design in the middle surrounded by a border and backgrounds. These are the four elements of design:



1. **Focal Point.** The first thing you see on this quilt is the center medallion.



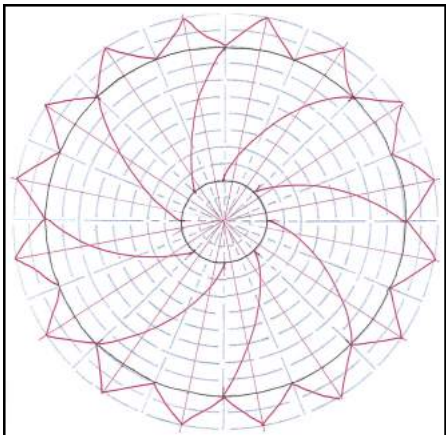
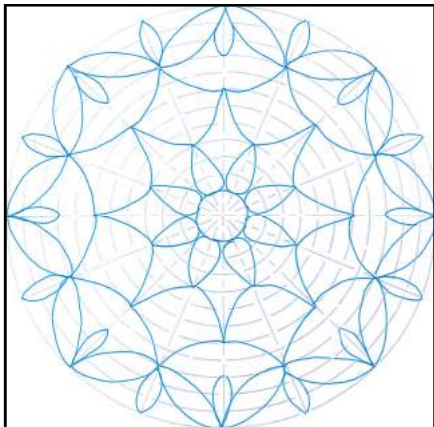
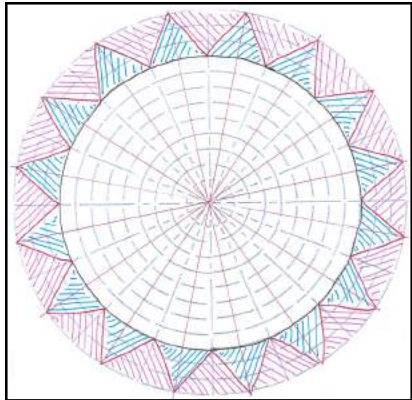
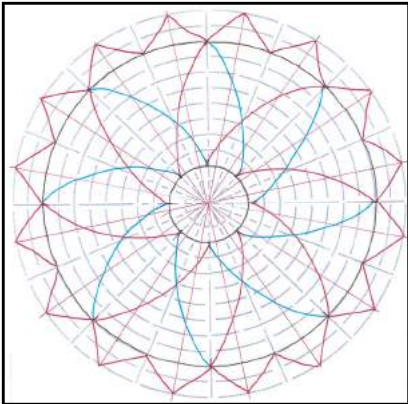
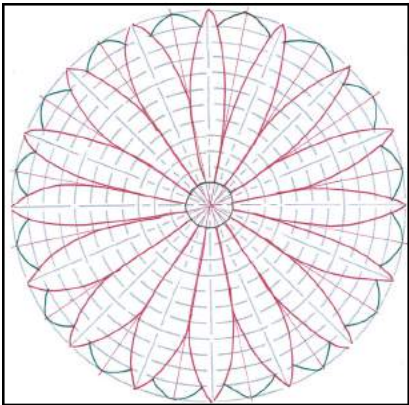
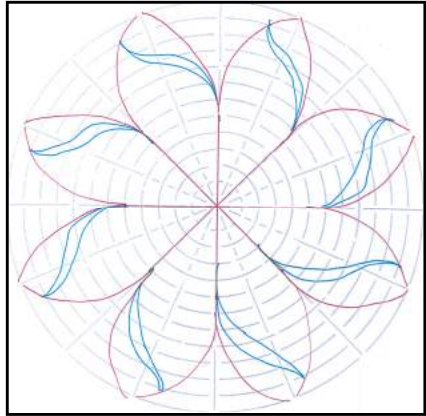
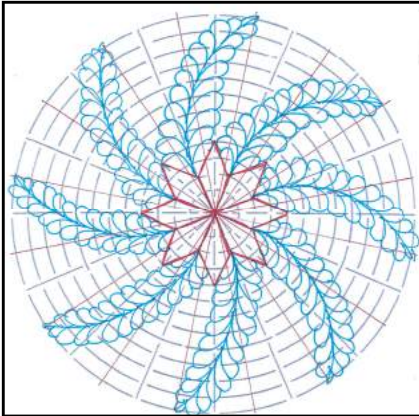
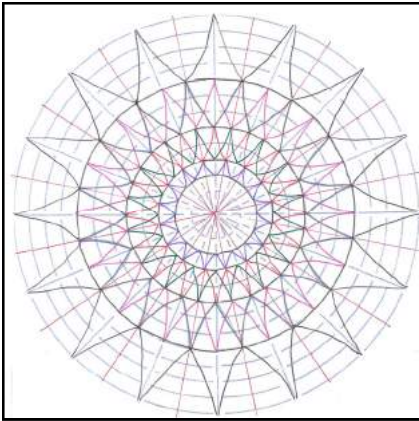
2. **Movement.** Notice how the feather border picks up your eye and moves it around the quilt.



3. **Dimension.** See how the leaf overlaps the double circle?

4. **Repetition.** This was created by the repetitive star designs in the middle as well as the repetitive flowers surrounding the star.

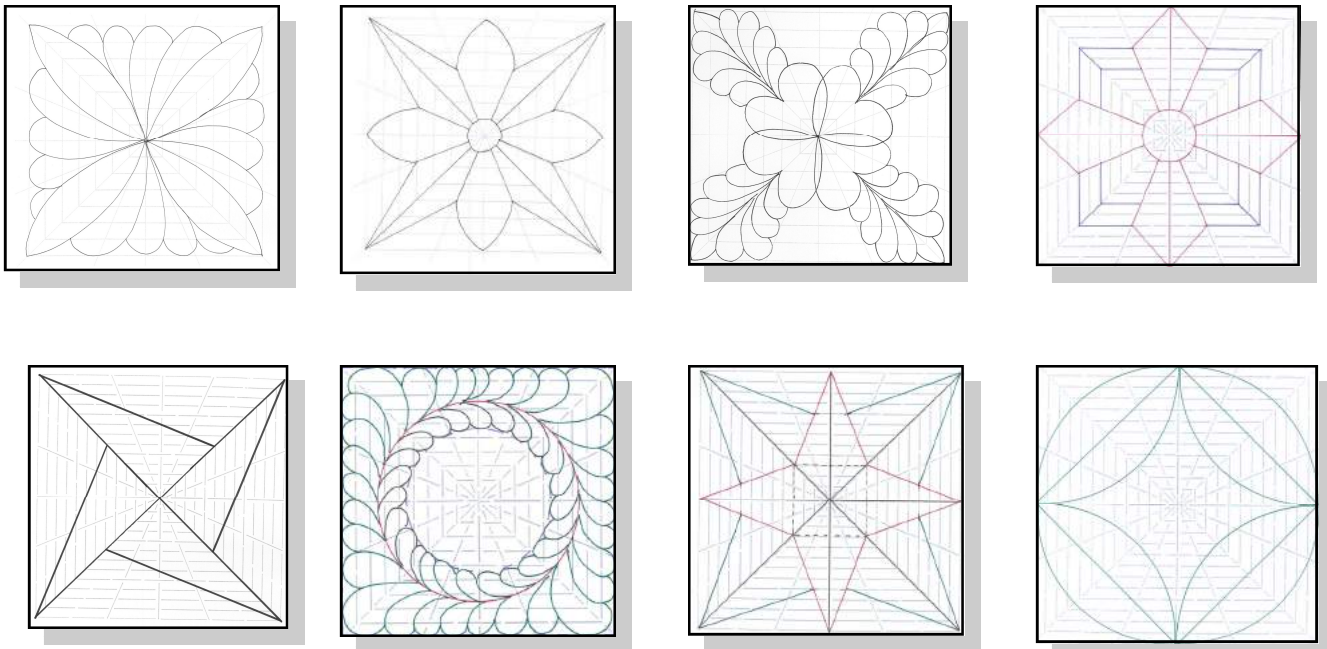
This is a sampling of medallion designs created using The Ultimate Stencils!



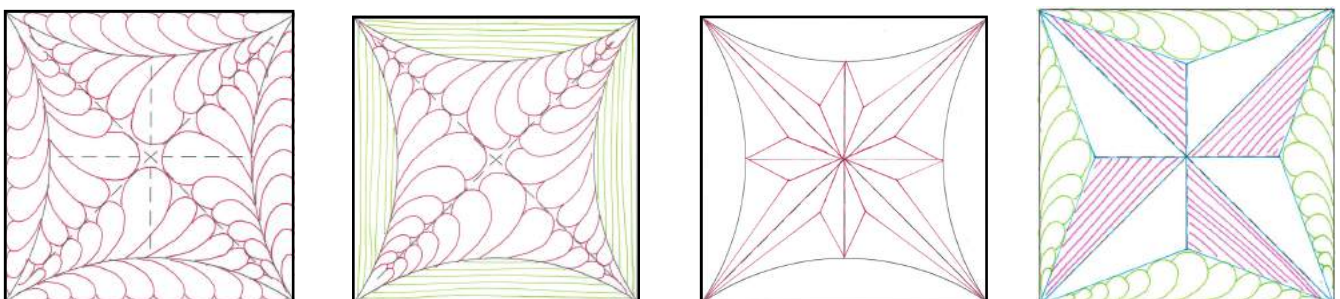
Laying Out a Repetitive Design Wholecloth Quilt

The guidelines for folding, quartering and pressing your fabric are exactly the same for both medallion designs as well as repetitive overall designs. Mark the exact same guidelines as you did before, i.e., horizontal center, vertical center and corner to corner.

The difference with a repetitive style design is you need to use a square design. In other words, you need something with four corners! These eight designs were created using The Ultimate Stencils.

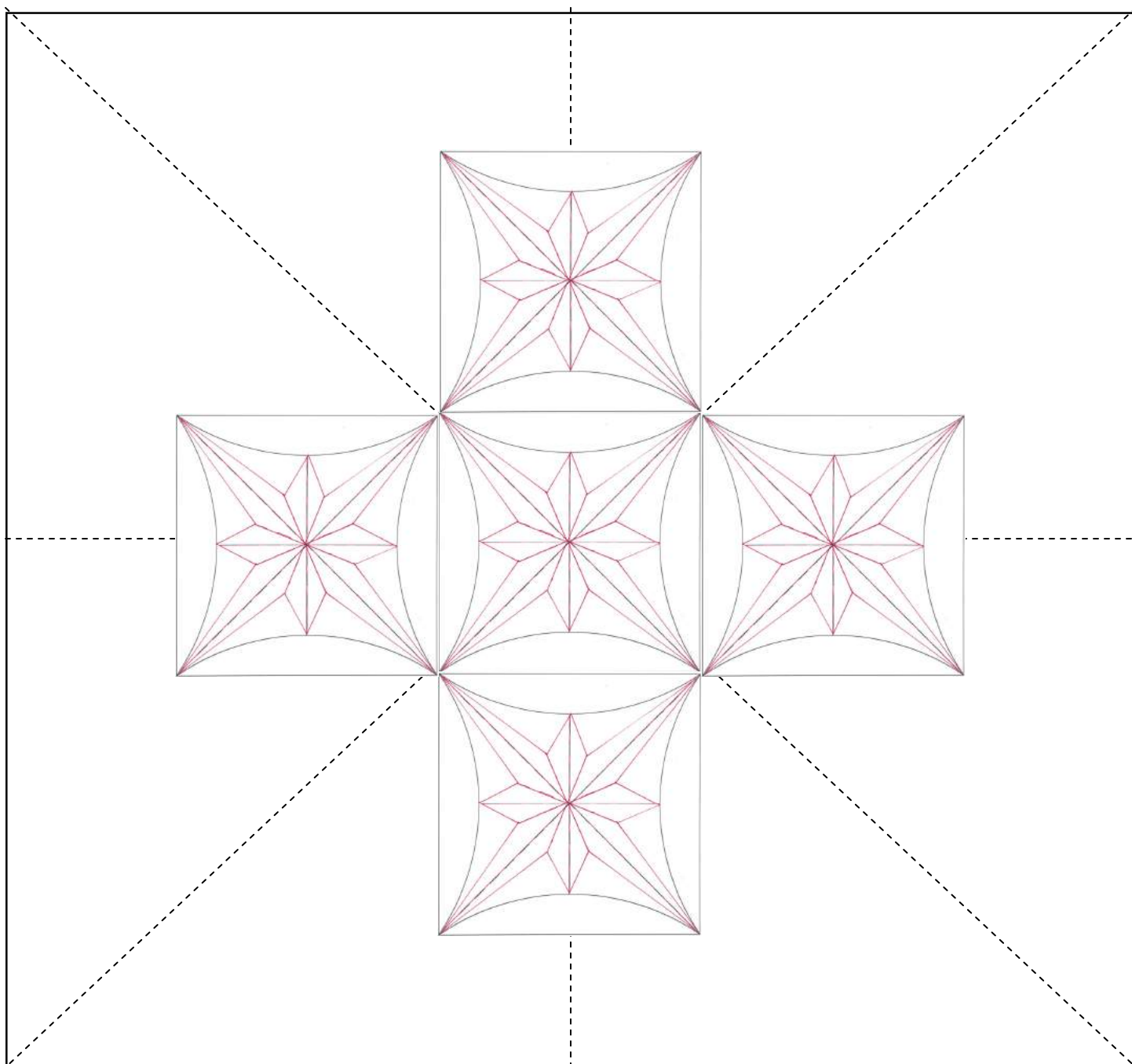


These four designs were created using The Ultimate Shape. Remember, you don't have to use these stencils to create designs...you can use ANY square shape you wish!



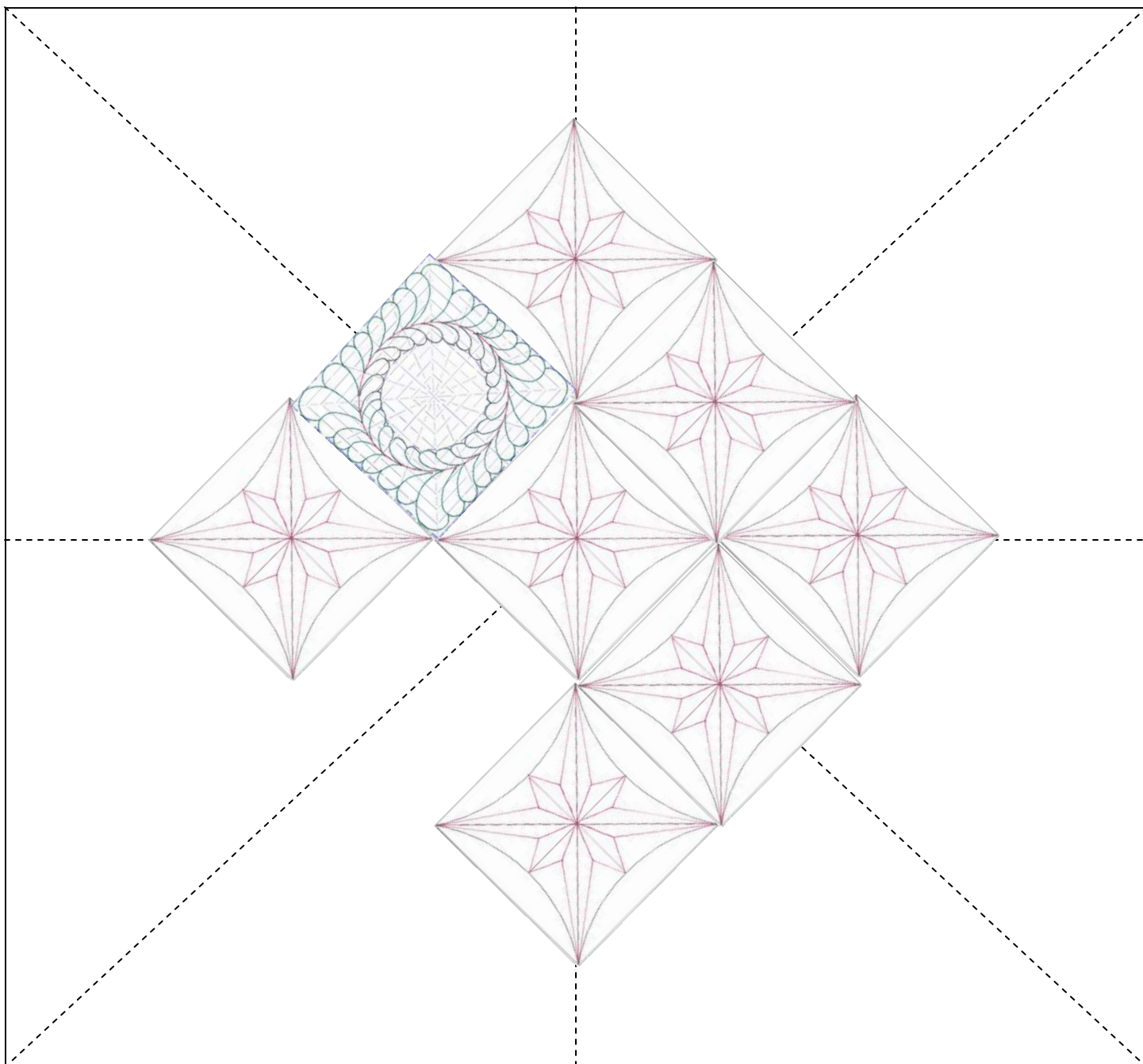
This is the basic layout for a repetitive design wholecloth quilt...the same one we used for the medallion style.

1. Choose your square design and place it in the middle of your quilt being sure to line up the center and corners with your marked guidelines.
2. Now repeat that design horizontally and vertically always lining up your design with the marked guidelines. Keep repeating the design until you have filled your space. See the beautiful secondary design that is created by the repetition???? Very cool!
3. If you have a pieced block quilt you can place your design on your blocks and repeat it in every single block and you will end up with the same overall design.

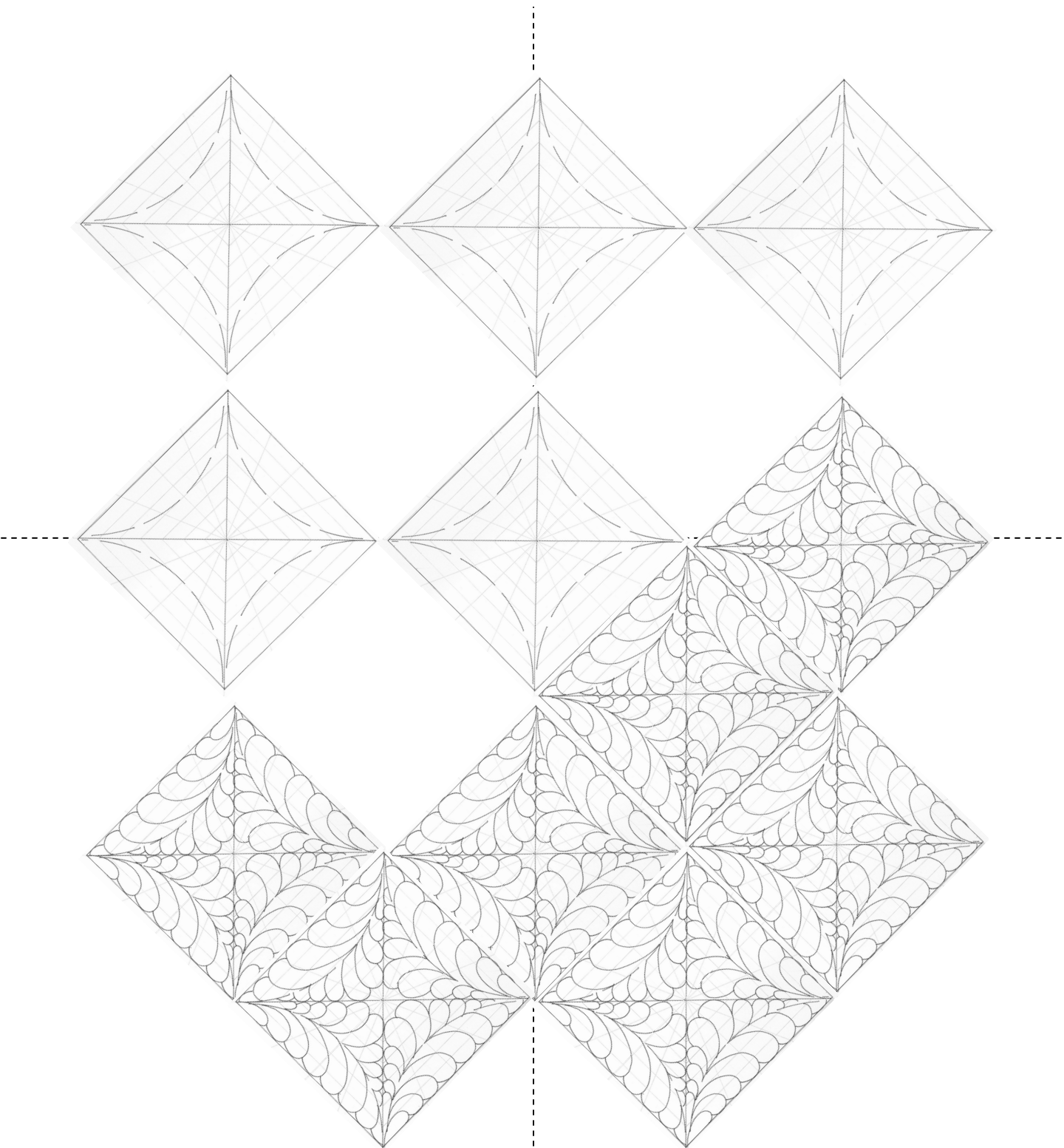


The previous page showed one square design repeated horizontally and vertically. When I audition designs I always try them “on point” too. You get a totally different effect. You still line your design up on your marked guidelines to keep everything lined up. Keep repeating your design until your space is filled.

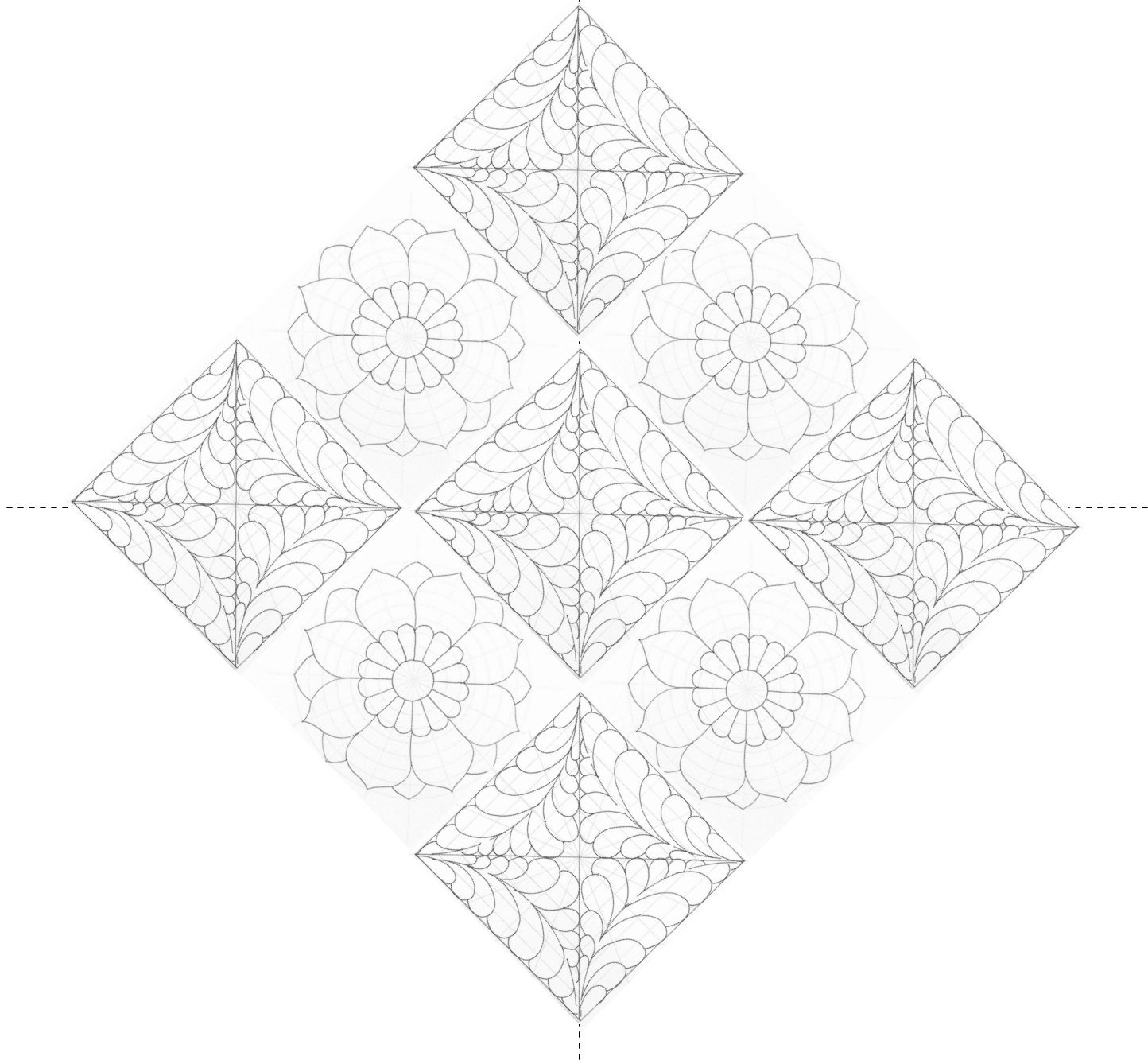
One fun thing about repeating a design on-point is you may end up with open areas where you can add a completely different design such as this squared feather wreath. Use your imagination here...the sky is the limit!!!



Here's another example of a repetitive design on point. This is the Ultimate Shape filled with free form feathers...one of The Basic Three.



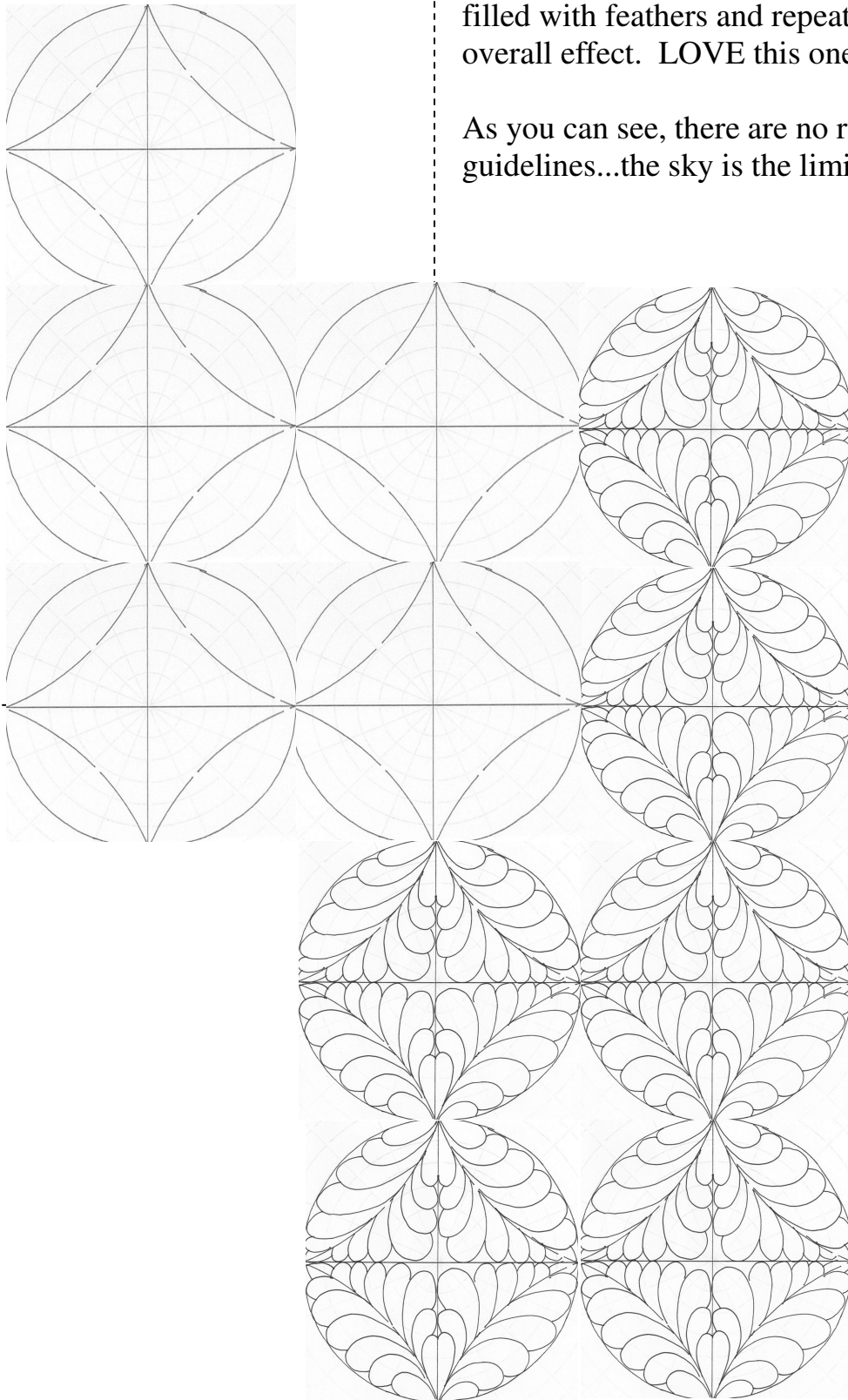
Another example of a repetitive design repeated on point. I took the previous square feather design and filled in the open space with a circular flower. Nice combo!



The possibilities for wholecloth designs are infinite. All you need is a beautiful piece of fabric, four intersecting lines and some imagination!

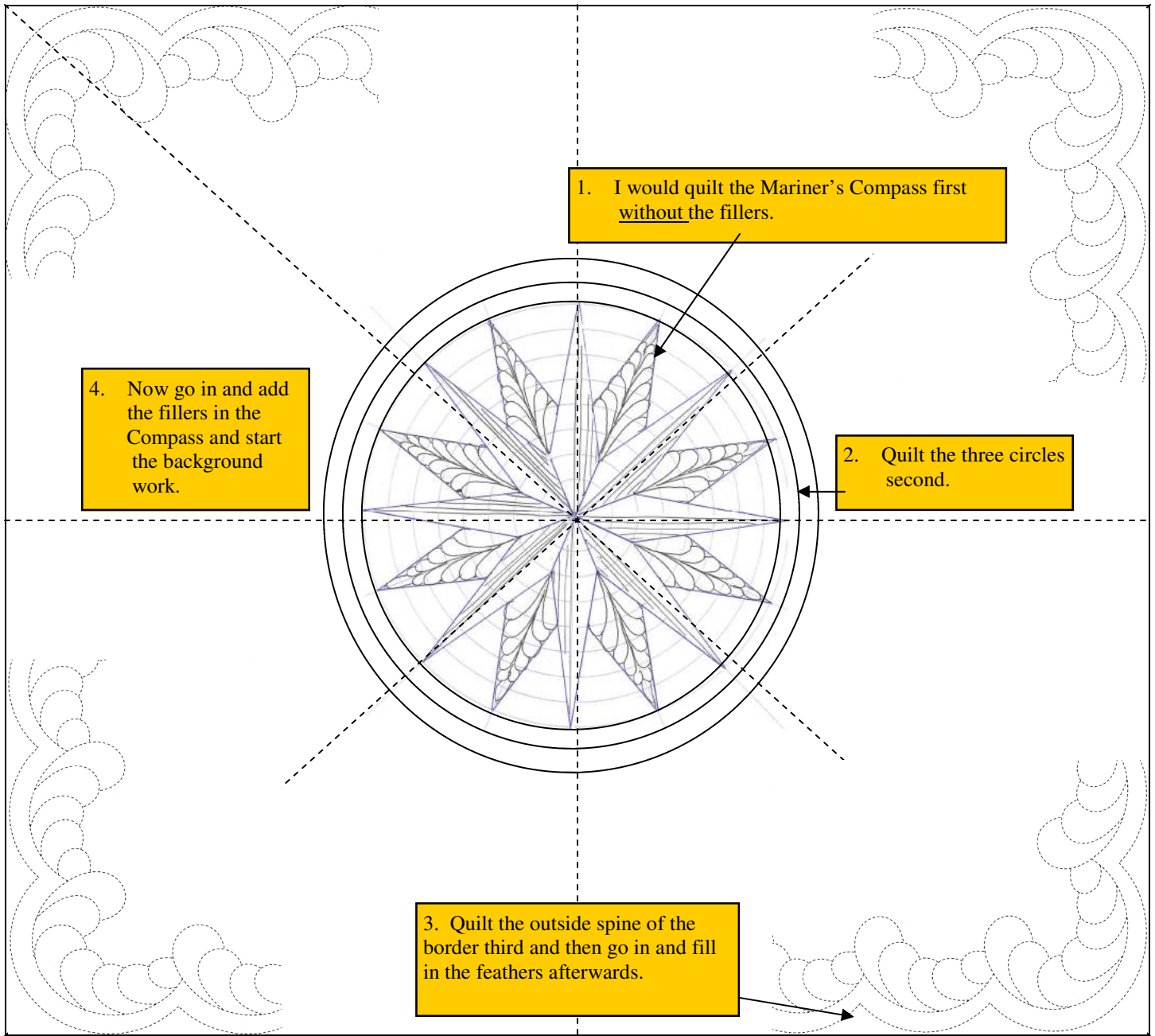
In this instance I made a “circular” design filled with feathers and repeated for an overall effect. LOVE this one!

As you can see, there are no rules, only guidelines...the sky is the limit!!!



Order of Quilting

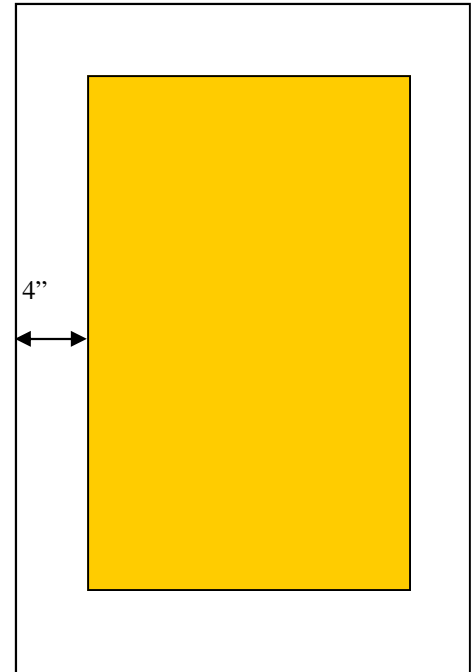
I recommend that you quilt your piece from the “big bones” to the “little bones”. Do your major designs first throughout the entire piece and start working your way down to the smaller designs. If you were to let’s say start in the center and work your way out, you would more than likely end up with a twisted/tweaked quilt. By quilting the designs evenly throughout the entire quilt, big bones to little bones, it should be relatively flat when you are done. Your background designs are always last. I have numbered the designs in the order I would quilt this piece.



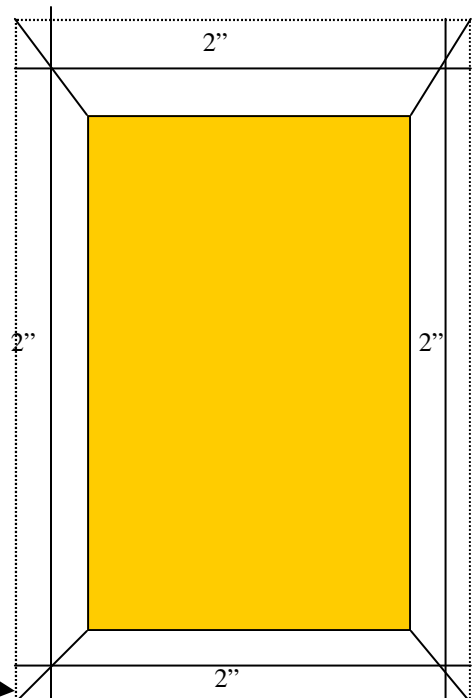
Making Borders Fit-Pieced Quilt

On The Quilt:

Measure the width of your border from edge to edge.
(*The width of this border is 4"*).



With your Omnigrd ruler, make a lengthwise horizontal mark at your halfway point from edge to edge. Do this on all four sides. (*halfway point is 2"*).



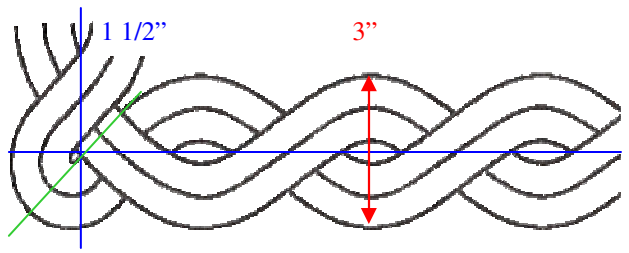
Using the 45 degree mark on your ruler, mark your corner miter in all four corners. This should intersect the horizontal lines you just marked.

On The Stencil:

Measure the width of your border design from high point to high point. Divide this number in half and mark this halfway point horizontally and vertically on your stencil.

(our design is 3" wide...our halfway point is 1 1/2".

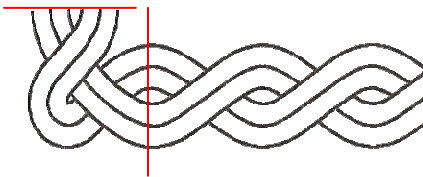
I drew a line at 1 1/2" on my stencil)



Using the 45 degree mark on your ruler, mark an **intersecting line on your stencil in the corner**. (the lines that you've marked on your stencil will match with the lines you just marked on your quilt border).

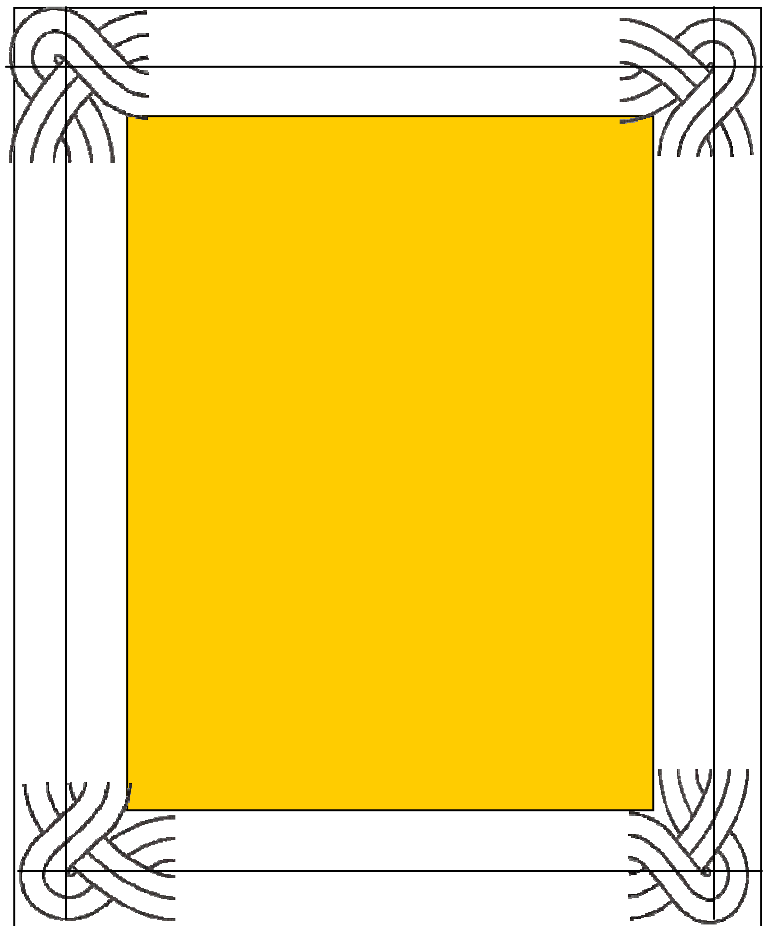
Always start marking your corners first! This is the one area that is very difficult to fudge in.

On your stencil, find and mark The **corner repeat**. Your corner Must end the same on both sides!



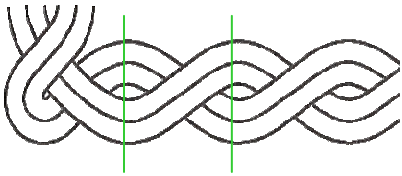
Now mark all four corners.

Be sure to use the lines you marked on your stencil to lineup with the lines you marked on the quilt top. This will ensure that your corners are centered and straight. Be certain that you do NOT flip your stencil over as you move from corner to corner!

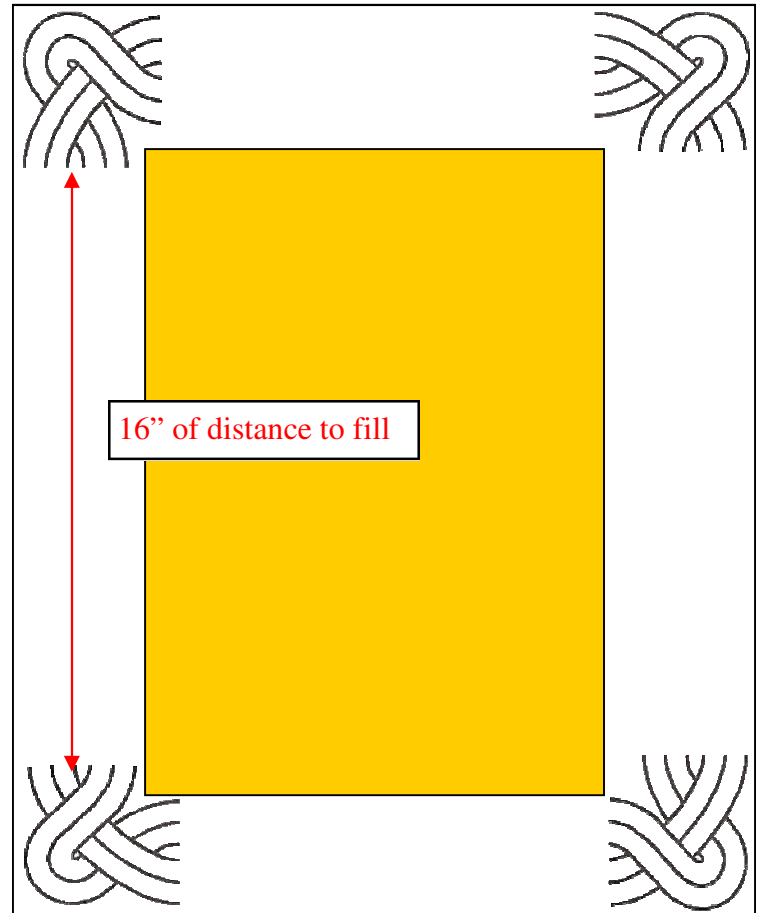
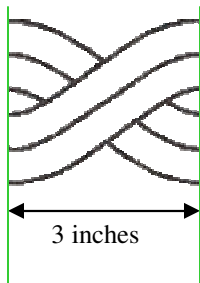


Once all four corners are marked (*please notice that all four of them are marked exactly the same!*), measure the remaining distance between the corners. In this case we have **16" of distance to fill**.

Most border designs have a repeat. Find the repeat on your stencil. Ours is **here**:



Measure the length of your repeat. Our repeat is 3".



You want to find out how many repeats of this stencil will fit into the space you have.

Divide your repeat into the distance available. This will give you the number of repeats you can fit into your space. **16" divided by 3" = 5.33repeats.**

You need an equal number of whole repeats. It's up to you to decide whether you want to squish or stretch your design to make it fit into the available space.

Use this guideline to make your decision:

Distance to fill: 16" *divided by* Length of repeat: 3" = 5.33 repeat

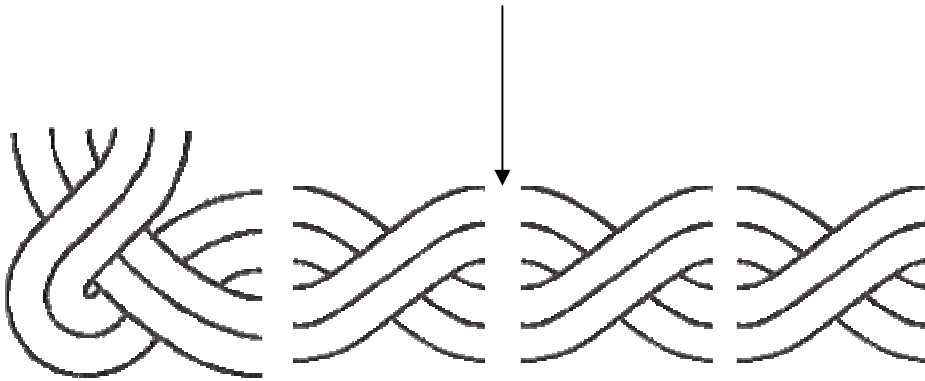
round your # of repeats to a whole number

$$\begin{array}{rcccl} \underline{3"} & & \underline{5} & = & \underline{15"} \\ \text{Length of repeat} & \times & \text{rounded whole number} & & \text{total inches of space used} \end{array}$$

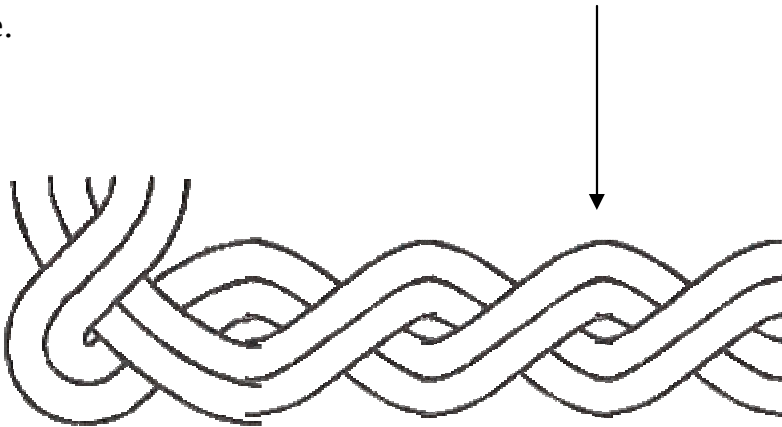
$$\begin{array}{rcccl} \underline{3"} & & \underline{6} & = & \underline{18"} \\ \text{Length of repeat} & \times & \text{rounded whole number} & & \text{total inches of space used} \end{array}$$

We have made the decision that it will be easier for us to “stretch” our design by 1” rather than “shrink” it by 2”.

Each time we mark the repeat, stretch it a little bit and this will eat up that 1” of space.



The same is also true if you want to shrink it...we would just compact it a little bit each time.



Making Your Borders Fit- Blank Handout

Distance to fill: _____ Length of repeat: _____

_____ divided by _____ = _____
distance to fill *length of repeat* *# of repeats*

Round your # of repeats to a whole number

_____ x _____ = _____ +/-
Length of repeat *rounded whole number* *total inches*

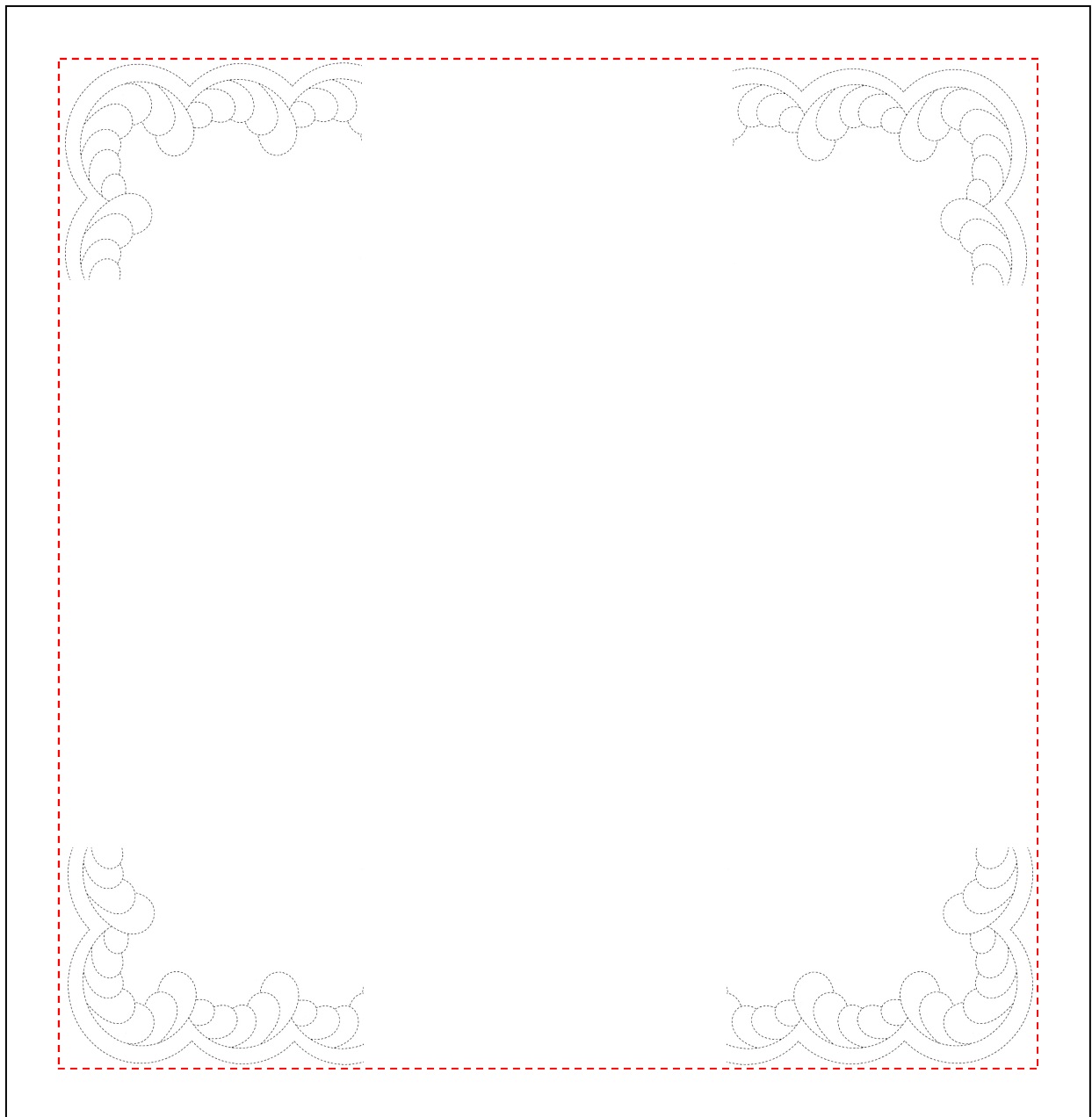
_____ x _____ = _____ +/-
Length of repeat *rounded whole number* *total inches*

I want to _____ my design by _____
stretch/shrink *# of inches*

Making Borders Fit-Wholecloth Quilt

Making a border fit for a wholecloth quilt is basically the same as it is for a pieced quilt. You will still mark all four corners first. Line up the border corners with the guidelines that you marked for your border (red dotted square) explained on page 39.

Do the same math for your repeats as you did for a pieced quilt. The only real difference between laying out a border on a wholecloth quilt is you aren't measuring the width of your border and making the half-way point guideline. You only need to use the border guides (shown as the red dotted square)



I hope that this handbook has provided some inspiration and a little confidence to help you on your way in designing the quilting for both pieced quilt tops as well as wholecloth tops.

The best piece of advice that I can offer is to take your time, enjoy the process, and be a good listener. Believe it or not your quilt will “talk” to you and let you know what it wants. Some quilts talk better than others!

One trick I’m doing quite a bit now is taking a very large piece of heavy, clear vinyl...sealing the edges with masking tape, and placing this over the quilt top. I use a dry erase marker and sketch in my ideas. The lines are easily erased off of the vinyl. This gives me the freedom to experiment. The taped edges of the vinyl is a clear reminder NOT to mark off the edges with my dry erase marker!

Using the Ultimate Stencils and Ultimate Shape for designing has broadened my designing horizons ten-fold. I am no longer limited to the stencils that I just happen to have on hand.

Enjoy your journey and please keep in touch with any questions you may have. I’m always here to help!

Hugs, Cindy :)

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