

PATTERN OF THE MONTH

Block of the Month: Karen's Nine-Patch

A **Nine-Patch** block is a basic form in a quilter's design box. It's the generic name given to a (usually) square block divided into nine equal squares, like a tic-tac-toe grid. It can have random colors in each square, or become as complex as the maker chooses by breaking down the squares and colors even more. Ginny Beyer's book, *The Quilter's Album of Blocks and Borders*, shows more than 100 variations, and none of them match mine. So I named it after me!

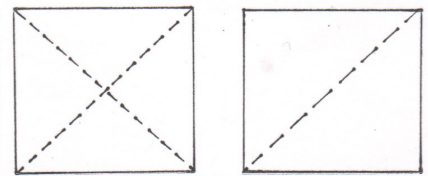
The cutting and piecing directions below will make **two 9" blocks**, one with a light center, and one with a dark center. My dark fabric has a very dark background, with a small-scale light colored, all-over print. My light fabric picks one of those light colors.

Cutting: from **each of your two fabrics:**

cut 1 - 3 1/2" square, 4 - 4" squares, and 4 - 4 1/2" squares

cut the 4" squares into 8 - 1/2 - square triangles

cut the 4 1/2" squares into 16 - 1/4 - square triangles



Assemble the 1/2 -square triangles into 8 squares, as shown. Trim to 3 1/2" square.

Assemble the 1/4 - square triangles into four each of two versions, as shown. Trim to 3 1/2" square. **Note:** this is where a 3 1/2" square ruler will come in really handy for accuracy.



To make my two blocks, I like to lay out the nine components in the proper arrangement, to make sure they will come together as planned. Sew the nine sections together and press. Because there are multiple seams coming together at some of the corners, work out the directions to press seams as you go along. Give a final press from the right side to flatten the bulkier areas.



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Layout Combinations and Variations

Like many quilt blocks, this one creates some interesting secondary patterns as the blocks come together. Make all blocks with either light or dark centers (which will require different cutting quantities), or alternate the two blocks. Sashing and cornerstones can create another look.

