Block Factory: An Overview

The Block Factory Screen

The Block Factory has a simple "point and click" interface. The Block Factory screen is divided into three windows or "panes" . The buttons pane has various function buttons such as *Template*, *Foundation*, *Web site*, *Print*, *Help* and *Goodies*. The Folder pane shows you a list of folders. The block preview pane shows previews of the blocks.

The basic object of the Block Factory is to select a block and then print either Foundations or Templates for the block. You can also print the block as you see it in the preview window.

Selecting a Folder

To select a folder, click on the folder in the folders pane. The selected folder will be highlighted.

Selecting a Block

To select a block within a folder, click once on the block preview button. The selected block will be highlighted.To view the print screen for the block, either double click on the block preview button, or select the block and then click on the View or Open button.

Printing a Block

You can print a copy of a Block (not foundation or templates) by pressing the Print button. You can print fabrics (or solid colors). You can print an outline of the block by selecting the Print White option. Please note that there are no fabric patterns in the Mariner's Compass edition of Block Factory so you can only print blocks with solid colors.
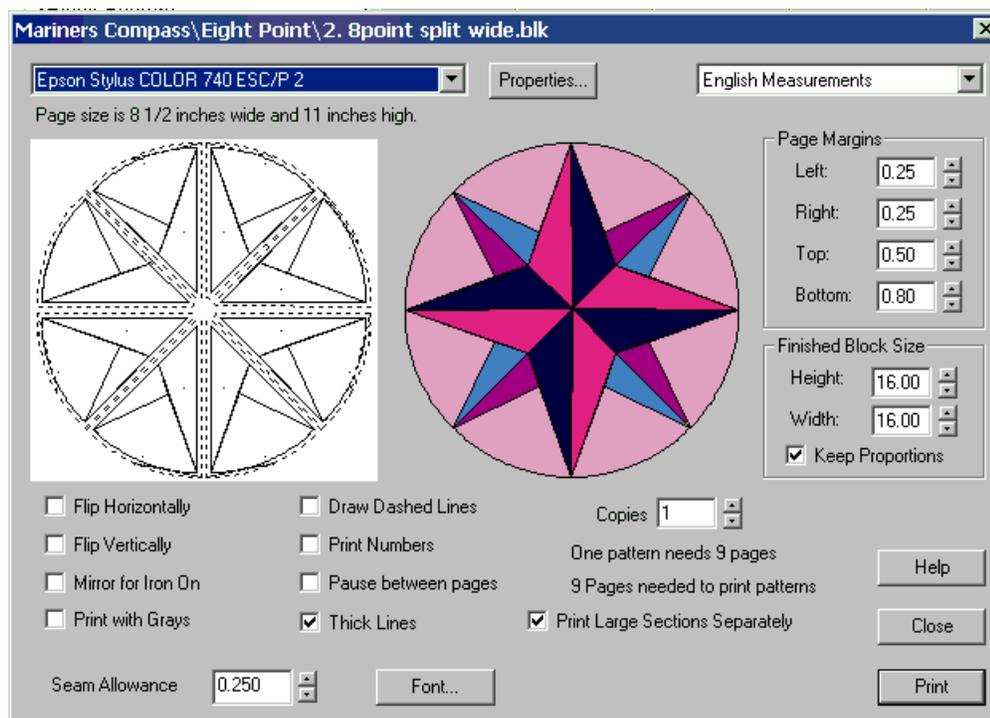
Printing Foundations or Templates

If the block you selected can be foundation printed, the Foundation button will be "active" and you can press it. If the Foundation button is inactive or "grayed-out", you will have to print templates. Since you can print templates of any block in the Block Factory , the Template Button is always active.

If you can print either templates or foundations of your selected block, both buttons will be active and you can choose one or both methods of printing. See Printing Foundations or Printing Templates for more information.

Printing Foundations

Printing a Foundation Block: Overview

To print a Foundation block, select a block in the block preview area and then click on the Foundation button. You can also double click on a block preview. You will open the Foundation Print dialog box.

Print Foundation Screen: Block Factory has many printing options

Select the desired size and number of copies of the block and then click on the Print button. Your printer will start printing the blocks automatically.

Changing the Finished Size of the Block

To select the size of the finished block, simply enter the numbers in the Finished Block Size area on the Print Screen. You do not need to add the seam allowance. Block Factory automatically adds a 1/4" seam allowance to every block and every section in a sectioned block.

Adjusting the Seam Allowance

You can adjust the seam allowance by changing the number in the Seam Allowance area. ¼" is the default seam allowance.

Distorting Blocks

You can distort a block by selecting different numbers for the width and height of the block. Block Factory will preview the block as you distort it. To keep the block's original proportions, select the *Keep Proportions* option.

You can change a circular Mariner's Compass Block into an oval by distorting the block.

Printing Large Sections

Since most Mariner's Compass blocks are large, we have included the option to print each section on a separate sheet of paper. When you check the Print Large Sections Separately option, you will print each section on a separate sheet of paper. If the section is larger than a single sheet, Block Factory will print the section on multiple sheets. You will then have to tape the sheets together.

When you select this option, Block Factory will calculate a page (or more) for each section and an extra page for the section map. For example, a Mariner's Compass block with 4 sections and a center circle will need 6 pages, one for each section, one for the center circle and one for the section map.

Block Factory prints the letter of the section and the name of the block at the bottom of each page.
We recommend that you print each section on a separate page unless you are printing a miniature block. If the Print Large Sections Separately option is not turned on, foundation Sections will print on fewer sheets of paper, but sections will be disrupted and Block Factory will not create a section map.

Section "Maps"

When you select the Print Large Sections Separately option, Block Factory prints a "section map" or piecing diagram. The section map shows you how to piece the block together. Please note that the Section Map is always printed on one page regardless of the actual size of the block.

Changing the Size of Sectioned Blocks

The finished size of sectioned blocks refers to the finished size of the block once the sections are sewn together. For example, If you wish the finished block to be 6 x 6 inches, then enter those dimensions. Block Factory will automatically section the block and space the sections.

Printing Multiple Copies of a Block

You can easily print multiple copies of any block by adjusting the *Number of Copies* setting on the Print Screen. Block Factory reports how many blocks you can print on a page and also how many pages it will take to print the desired number of copies. For example, if you wish to print 20 copies of a 3 x 3 inch block, Block Factory will calculate that it will take 5 pages and that it will print 4 blocks per page. Because Mariner's Compass blocks have several sections, Block Factory will calculate more pages for multiple copies a block.

Multiple Copies of Sectioned Blocks

When Block Factory prints sectioned blocks, it automatically calculates the spaces between the sections when it reports number of copies per page and the number of pages required.
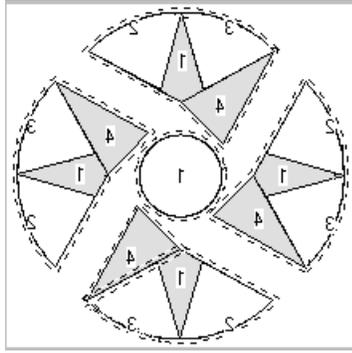
Printing Options

Block Factory includes several printing options:

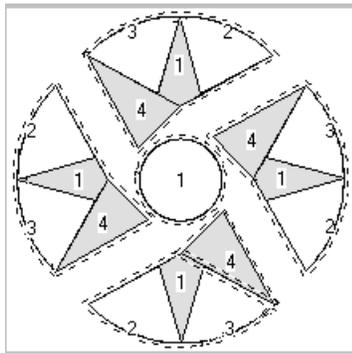**Flip Horizontally:** Flips the pattern and the printed foundation horizontally.

Flip Vertically: Flips the pattern and the printed foundation horizontally. You can flip a block both horizontally and vertically.

Mirror for Iron-On: Select this option to print a block on iron-on transfer paper. This option reverses the block, the title text and the numbers.

The Iron-On Option prints text backwards

Print with Grays: Prints a foundation block with certain areas shaded gray for easy visibility. When you select this option, Block Factory will preview the shaded block.

Print with Grays option shades the block

Draw Dashed Line: This option draws a dashed line for the seam allowance. The standard seam allowance is a dotted line.

Print Numbers: This option prints the numbers on the foundation block. This option is normally selected. When this option is not selected, the numbers do not print. *Suggestion*: Turn off the print numbers option if you are printing a small blocks with many pieces.

Pause between Pages: Select this option if you wish the printer to pause between pages. Pausing between pages is useful if you wish to hand-feed paper in your printer one sheet at a time.

Other Print Screen Options

Page Margins: Adjust the page margins to adjust the printing area on your page.

Help Button: Click on this button for help with the print screen.

Print Button: Click on this button to print the block.

Close Button: Click on this button to close the print screen and return to the block folders screen.

Using Metric Measurements

You can convert Block Factory to metric measurements by clicking on the English or Metric drop box in the Print Screen. Converting to metric will measure block dimensions and the seam allowance in centimeters.

Changing the Font for Foundation Numbers

You can change the font you use for numbers in Foundation blocks. Open the File Menu and select Numbering Fonts.

Using Standard Fonts

If you experience any difficulty with Block Factory printing or displaying fonts, use the Standard Fonts option. When you check this option, Block Factory will display your computer's standard font on the screen. It will also use the default font when printing captions and numbers in blocks.

The Standard Fonts option is in the File Menu. To turn Standard Fonts on or off, simply check the Standard Fonts menu item.

Adjusting Your Printer Settings

To adjust your printer settings, click on the Properties button next to the name of the printer.
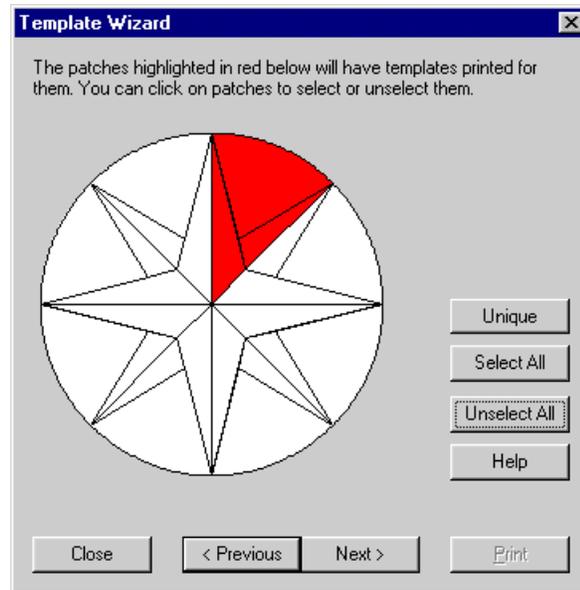

Printing Templates

Printing Templates: Overview

When you select a block and press the Template button, you will open the Template Wizard. The Template Wizard will guide you through the process of printing templates.

The Template Wizard

When you open the Template Wizard, you will be asked to set the finished size of the block (without seam allowances). You can set the size to any desired size, regardless of the current size of the block. Turn off the Keep proportion button if you want to distort the block. Click the NEXT button to move to screen 2 of the Wizard. **Note:** If you print templates for a very large block, Block Factory cannot print one single template that is larger than a sheet of paper.

On Screen 2, Quilt-Pro shows you which patches it will print templates for. These patches are in red. To add more patches, click the patch so that it turns red. To remove a patch, click it so that it turns white. White patches will not print templates.

Printing templates for distorted blocks

If you distort a block by turning a circle into an oval, Block Factory should select all the patches to be unique. If it does not, you will need to select and print all the templates in the block. We recommend that you use the foundation technique to sew a distorted block.

Click the NEXT button to move to screen 3 of the Wizard.

On Screen 3, set the seam allowance, the printer margins (if desired) and select the printer and it's properties. Click the PRINT button to print the templates. To go back to either screen 1 or 2, select the PREVIOUS button. To return to the main screen, click either the PRINT button or the CLOSE button.

Block Factory: Technical Support

To obtain technical support for Block Factory, you may contact Quilt-Pro Systems by doing the following:

E-Mail
For e-mail support, please contact techsupport@quiltpro.com.

Phone
For phone support, please call (972) 625-0819

Mail

For technical support by mail, please write to: Quilt-Pro Systems, Inc.
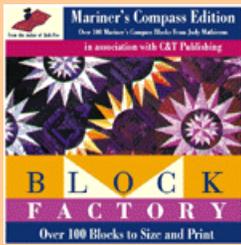P.O. Box 560692,
The Colony, TX 75056

Importing Blocks into Quilt-Pro

When you installed Block Factory, you were given the option of installing the blocks into Quilt-Pro. If you own Quilt-Pro, the Block Factory would then install a complete set of blocks into Quilt-Pro.

If you wish to install your Block Factory blocks into Quilt-Pro now, please exit Block Factory and put your Block Factory CD into the CD drive. You will go through the installation process again and skip ahead to the page where it asks you to install the blocks to Quilt-Pro. Click yes and blocks will install.

For more information about Quilt-Pro and what it can do, please click here.

Block Factory: Goodies!

- Visit **C&T Publishing!** You'll find free patterns to download, contests and free books, a new "Cover Story" twice a month, hundreds of links in our "Ultimate Directory", incredible quilts to view in our "Gallery", and much more!

- Help for Block Factory

- Quilt-Pro has several remarkable products, including Quilt-Pro, 1-2-3 Quilt and the Foundation Factory series. Click here to review all of our products.
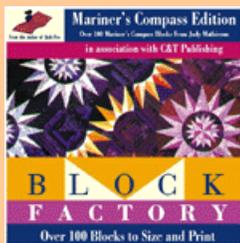
We have two articles written by Judy Mathieson included on this CD:

How to Paper Piece a Mariner's Compass Block with Freezer Paper Foundations

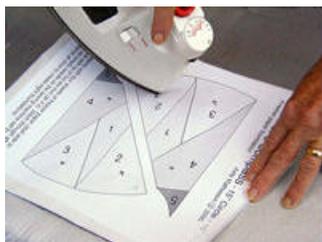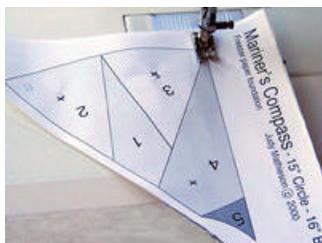Judy's tips for constructing Mariner's Compass Blocks

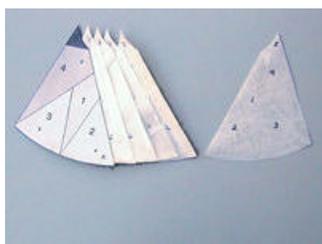For information about the screen saver, click here.

How to Paper Piece a Mariner's Compass Block with Freezer Paper Foundations

1. Place a pattern for the foundation on a single or stack (4 pieces) of freezer paper, shiny side up. Use the tip of a hot iron to tack the pattern and freezer paper together temporarily.

2. To mark the design lines on the freezer paper, perforate by "sewing" along all the lines with an empty needle. Use a regular needle and stitch length, but remove the thread from the needle.
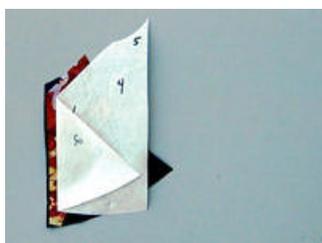

3. Cut along the outside perforations for each section of foundations. A stack can all be cut out together. Number each pattern on the dull side of the segment.

4. Use the original pattern to make an extra set of individual templates from freezer paper and iron to the back of a stack of fabrics. Roughly precut the fabric pieces using 3/8" to 1/2" seam allowance, except for Piece 1 which has 1/4" seam allowance.
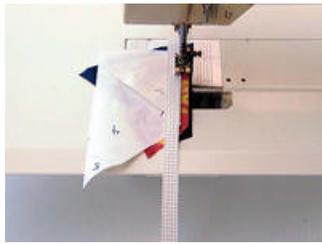

5. Use the tip of a hot iron to attach the back side of fabric Piece 1 to the shiny side of the foundation segment.
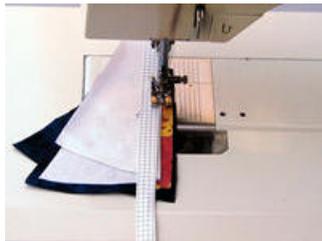

6. Fold the freezer paper back at the perforation to expose the seamline and put the right side of Piece 2 to the right side of Piece 1.

7. Stitch along the edge of the folded freezer paper through the two fabrics, If your pressor foot hangs up on the sticky shiny side of the freezer paper, use a narrow strip of regular paper to shield the freezer paper.

8. Trim seam, fold back and press fabric to freezer paper.

9. Fold back on perforation and place Piece 3 to Piece 1. Stitch along edge of freezer paper. Trim and press.

10. Fold back on perforation and position Piece 4. Stitch along edge of freezer paper. Trim and press seam lightly.

11. Pull freezer paper back from seam temporarily and press seam allowance away from Piece 4. Then press fabric back to foundation.

12. Fold back on perforation and position Piece 5. Stitch along edge of freezer paper. Trim and press.

13. Completed segment. Press and trim to 1/4" around foundation.

14. When segments are complete, pin into position in sets of two along the side of Pieces

4/5 . Pull freezer paper back temporarily on the other side. Stitch along the edge of the paper on the side with the pins next to Pieces 4/5. This allows you to make an accurate intersection at the point of Piece 4.

15. Sew segments of two into larger groups until entire star is pieced. Press flat, seam allowances away from Pieces 4/5 , and then remove freezer paper foundations by pulling gently away from the fabric. Sometimes the foundation segments can be reused.

16. Use freezer paper to make the center circle for the star. Applique by hand or machine. The star circle may be appliqued or pieced to a background.

17. Cut a background square the size required. Place star on back of square and mark around edge of circle and at star points.
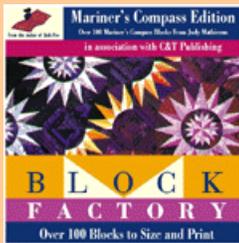

18. Mark a second circle 1/2 inch inside and extend star point marks. Cut and remove inner circle.

19. Pin star into hole at matching marks and stitch.

20. Completed star inserted in background.

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- [Block Factory Help](#)

- [Mariner's Compass Goodies!](#)

- Quilt-Pro has several remarkable products, including Quilt-Pro, 1-2-3 Quilt and the Foundation Factory series. [Click here to review all of our products.](#)

Judy's tips for constructing Mariner's Compass Blocks

This CD-ROM contains the patterns from the two books that I have written and they are presented with the same names as in the books. You can reference the book for suggestions on how to piece these designs.

There are also many other stars presented here, including very simple ones to those with a great deal of complexity. If you have never stitched a Mariner's Compass style star before, I would suggest that you select a relatively simple one on which to practice, such as 8 Point Block #1.

This will give you a chance to practice your piece work and decide which pattern might be best for your skill level.

Templates

If you are familiar with template piecing you can call up the template section. Please be aware that a pattern that is too big for a single sheet of paper will not print. You will have to access the foundation section of the program in order to have it print out that pattern.

The program will also print out the complete design with numbers or letters for the unique pieces. If you don't understand the piecing sequence by looking at the design, go to the FOUNDATION section for the same pattern. A foundation segment is also the sewing sequence for the template method

Foundations

Using foundations on paper is an excellent way to attain the accuracy necessary for these dramatic designs. If you are familiar with these methods you can easily use the patterns presented here in the foundation section. The designs with a large number of points have had to be presented as many different segments.

I have recently developed a way of piecing using paper foundations that is not presented in either of my books. It involves using freezer paper. A single segment of the foundations is "copied" onto the appropriate number of freezer papers by perforating them using the empty needle of a sewing machine. A hot iron is used in this method and eliminates sewing through the paper. This method is illustrated here on the CD-ROM . Click [here to link to this article.](#)
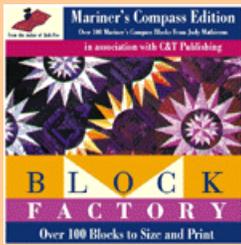
Also see Quilter's Newsletter Magazine issues # 325 and 326 (Sept. and Oct. 2000) for articles I wrote presenting information about drafting curving FLYING GEESE patterns and how to piece them using this method.

Using Patterns with Circles or Smaller Stars in the Center

The patterns for Mariner's Compass blocks that include circles do not finish as circles in the center. They will finish with straight edges that will extend under the circle. You will need to appliqué the circle. If the center of the main star is a smaller center star you will need to piece the star and then appliqué it. You can give yourself a safety margin for the appliqué by increasing the seam allowance on the outside circular edge of the pattern for the background of the star (the triangular pattern that holds the star points).

Mariner's Compass Quilts: New Directions is available at local quilt, fabric, and book stores. Or use the C&T Publishing web site link to the left of this text to order. My first book, Mariner's Compass: An American Quilt Classic, is out of print, but can often be found at quilt shops, in guild libraries, or through on-line searching.

Block Factory Goodies

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- Block Factory Help

- Mariner's Compass Goodies!

- Quilt-Pro has several remarkable products, including Quilt-Pro, 1-2-3 Quilt and the Foundation Factory series. Click here to review all of our products.

Welcome to the Mariner's Compass Quilt Show Screen Saver

This screen saver is a slide show presentation of some of Judy Mathieson's quilts. If you have not already installed the screen saver when you installed Block Factory, you may do so now by inserting your Block Factory CD into your CD-ROM drive and following the on-screen instructions.

We would like to thank Judy Mathieson and C&T Publishing for providing the quilt photographs.

If you didn't install the screen saver when installing Block Factory, you can install the screen saver by inserting your Block Factory CD and double-clicking on the file MarCompassScrSaver.exe.