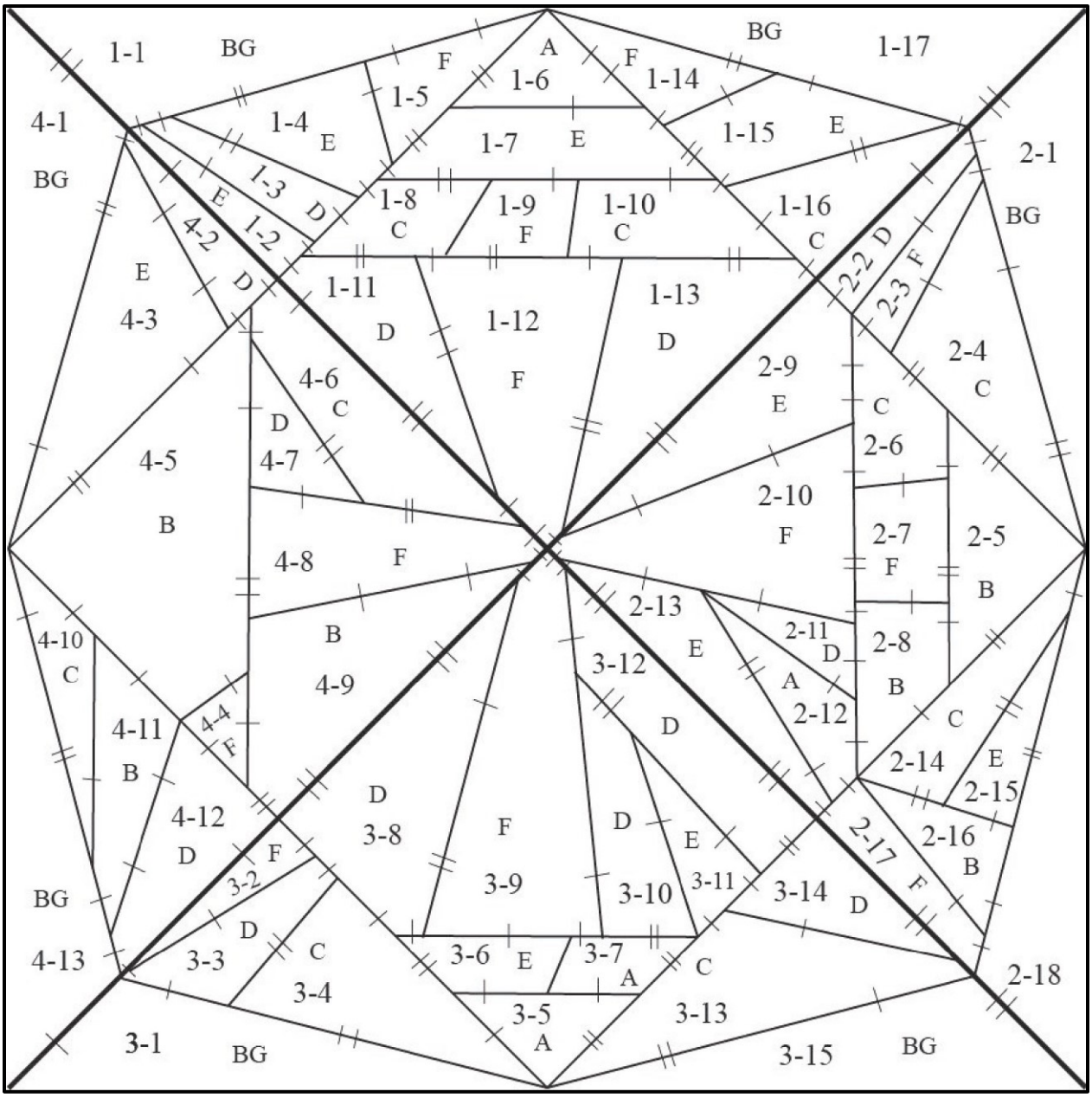
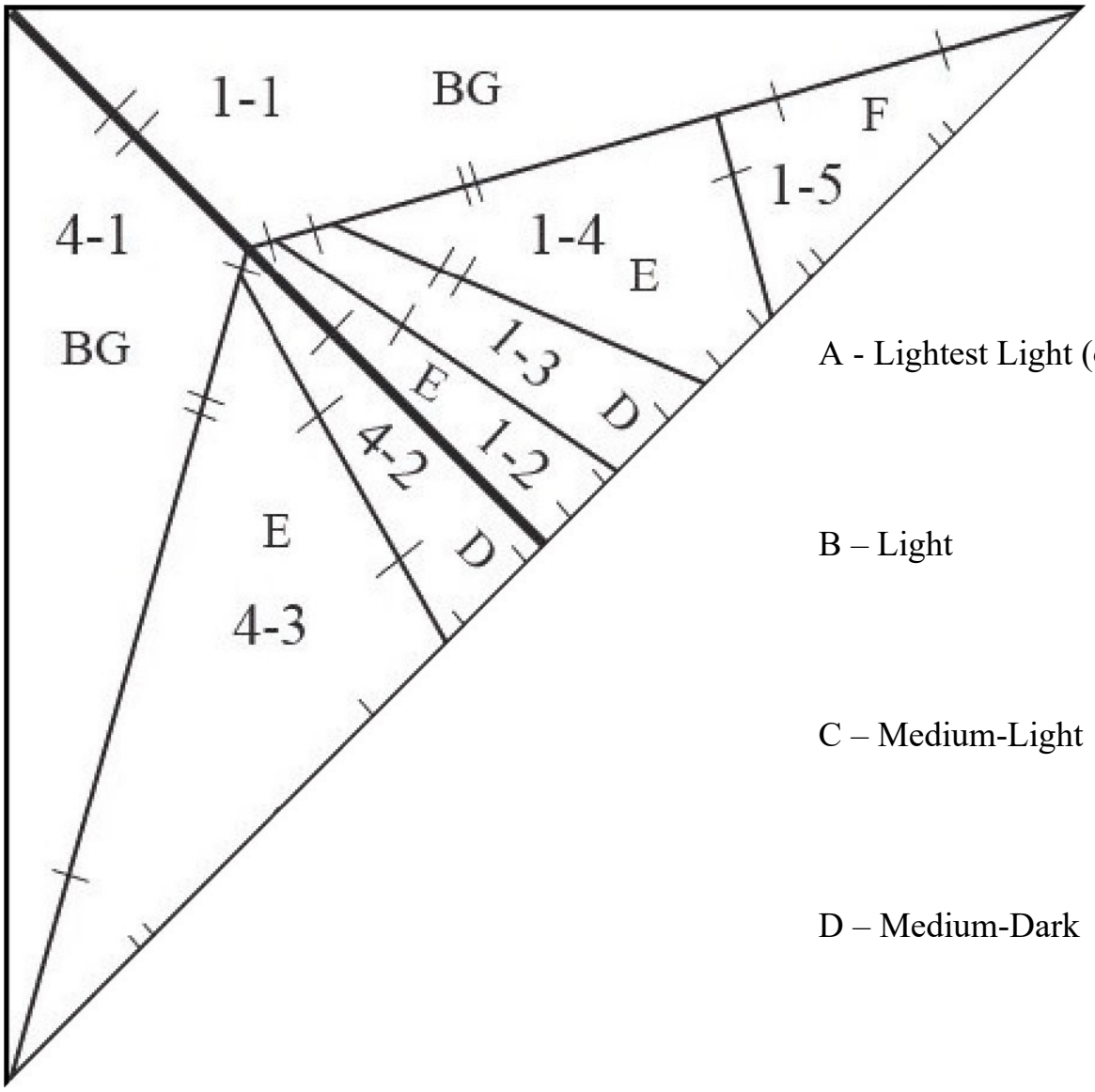
SNOWBALL (12" SQUARE)



February's octagon pattern is inspired by a sweet little Citrine I found on the GIA's website. The GIA (Gemological Institute of America) is the preeminent source of gemological education in the world. You'll find some of the best gem specimens in the world on their site: www.gia.edu. Enjoy!

Snowball (12" square)



A - Lightest Light (or White)

B – Light

C – Medium-Light

D – Medium-Dark

E – Dark

F - Darkest Dark (or Black)

BKG – Background of choice

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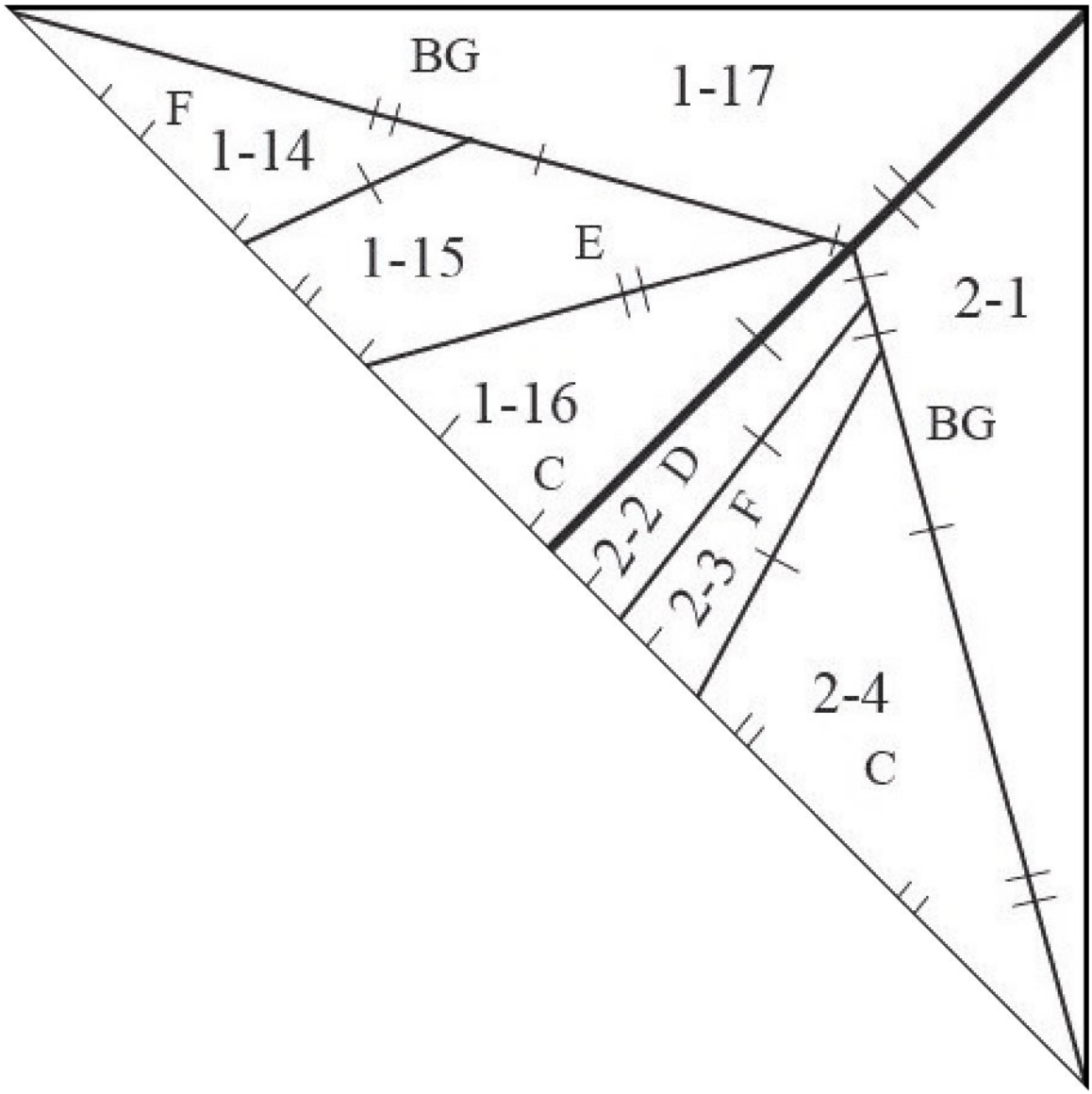

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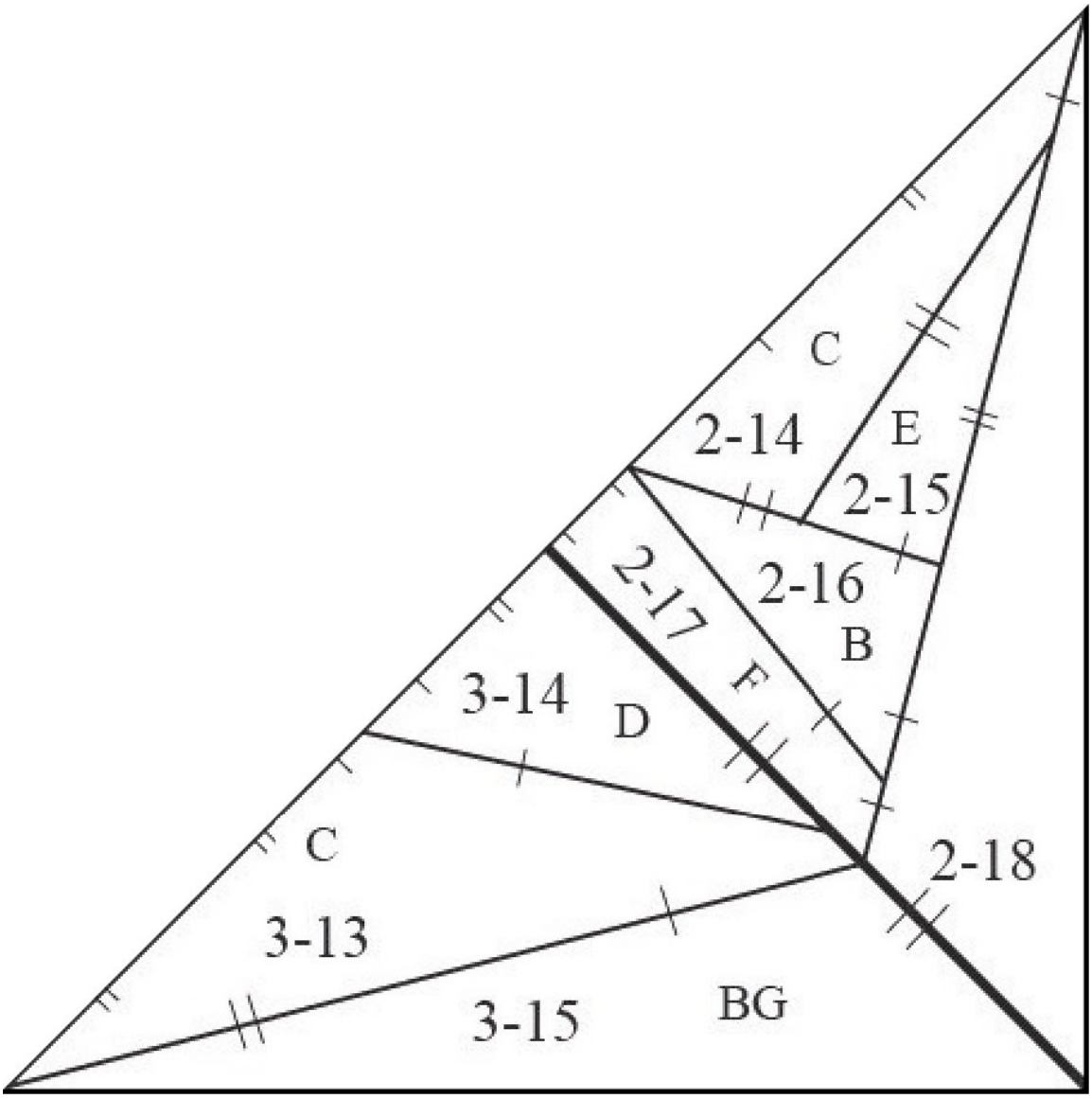

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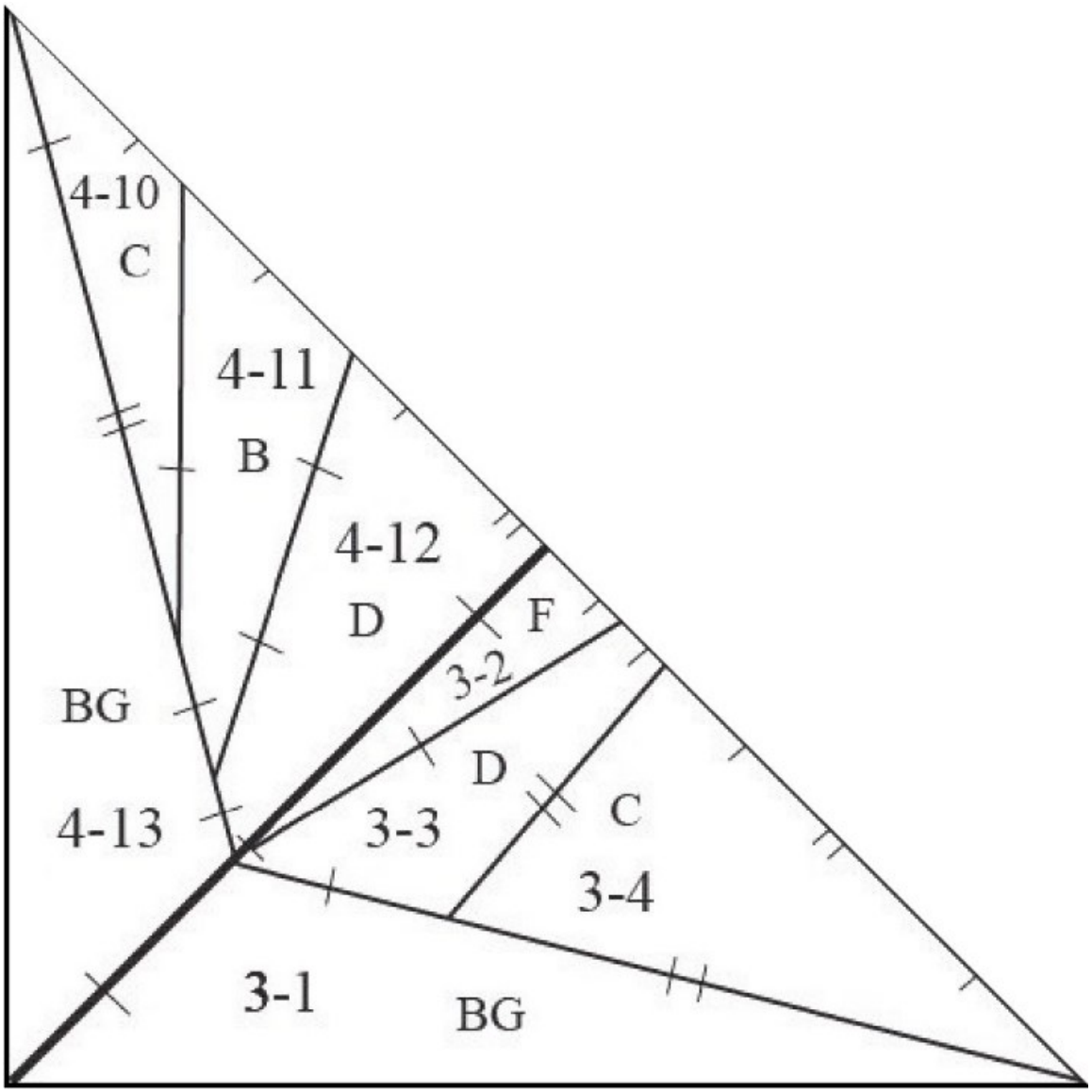
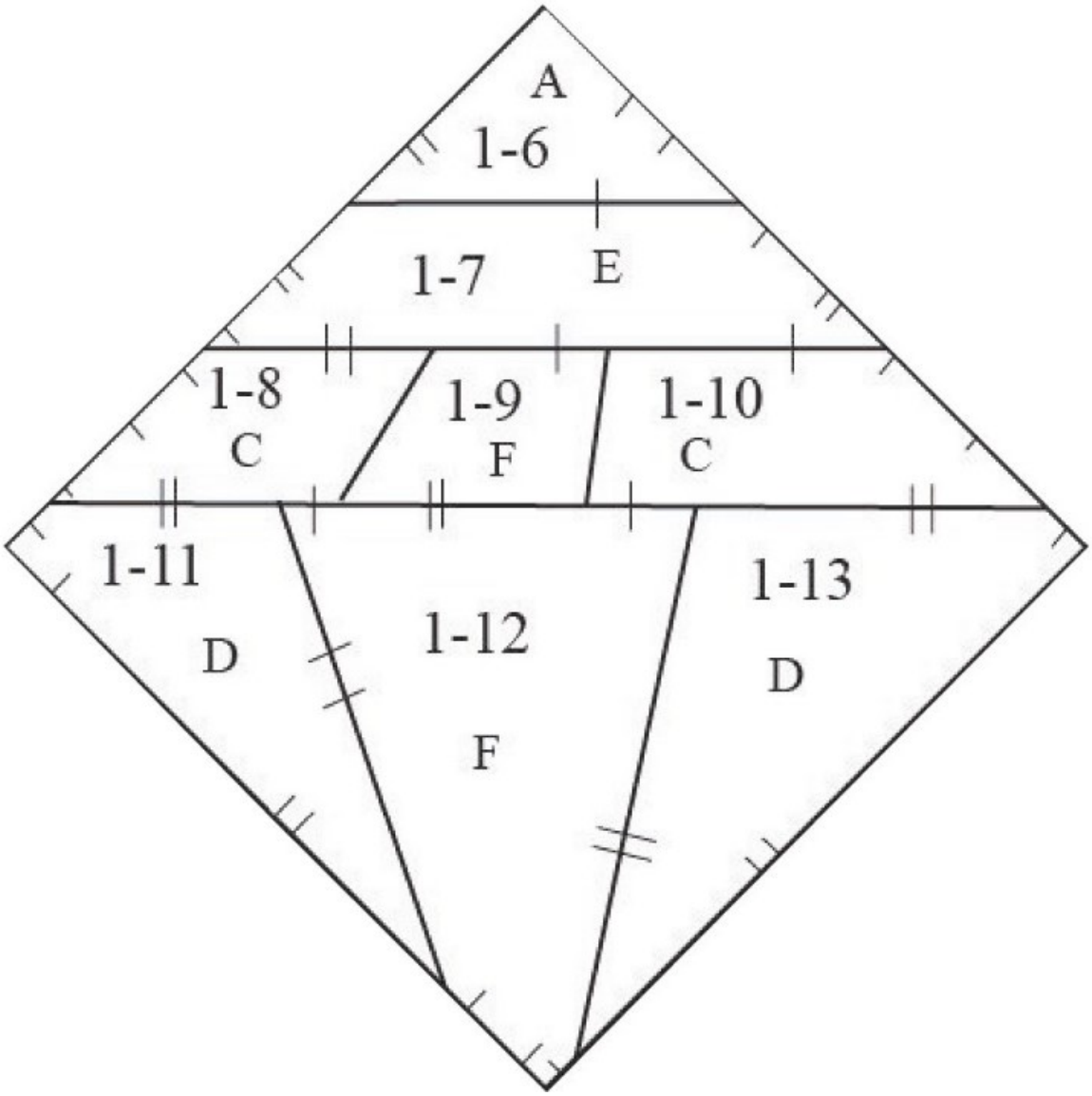


Snowball (12" square)



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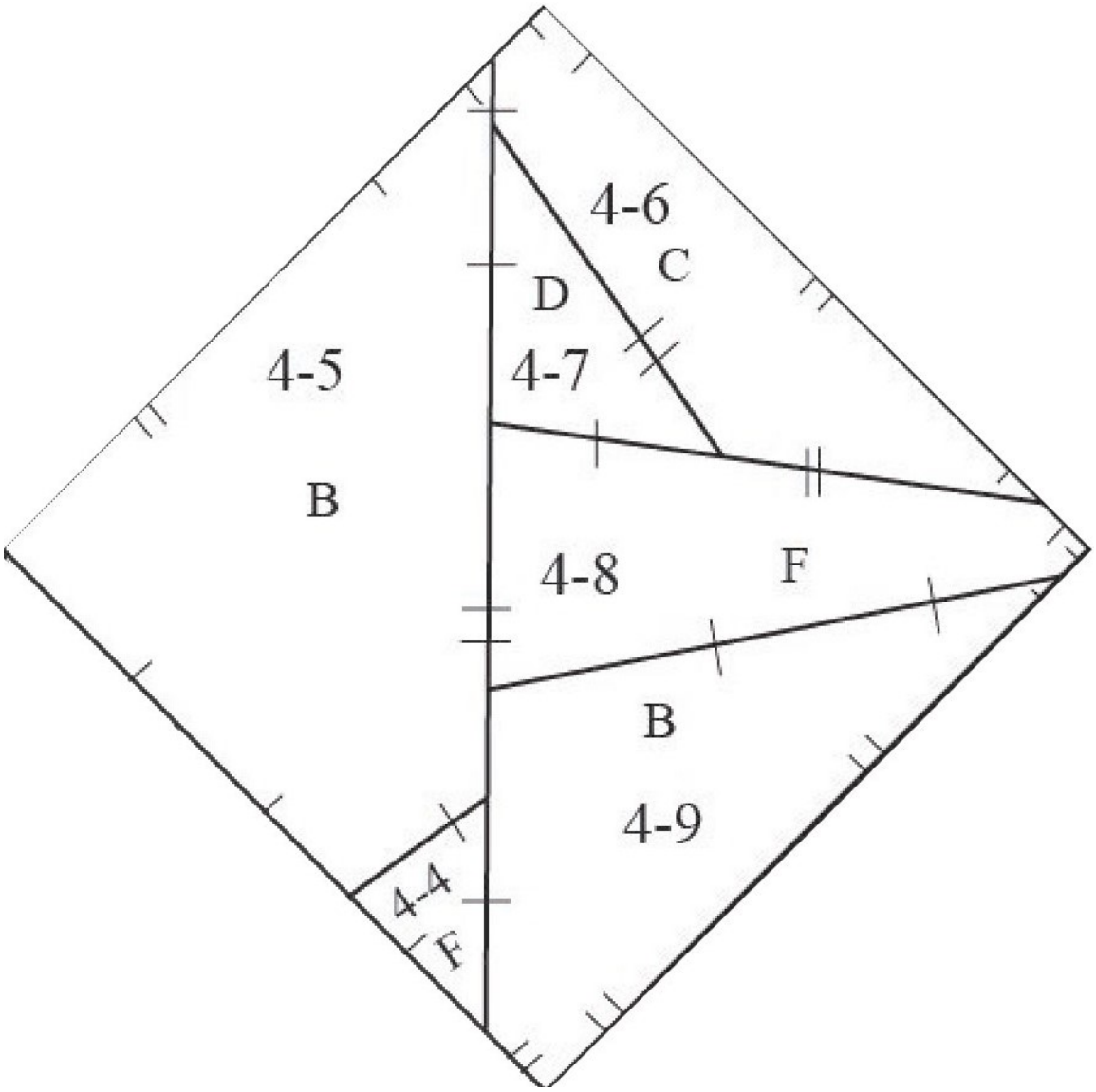

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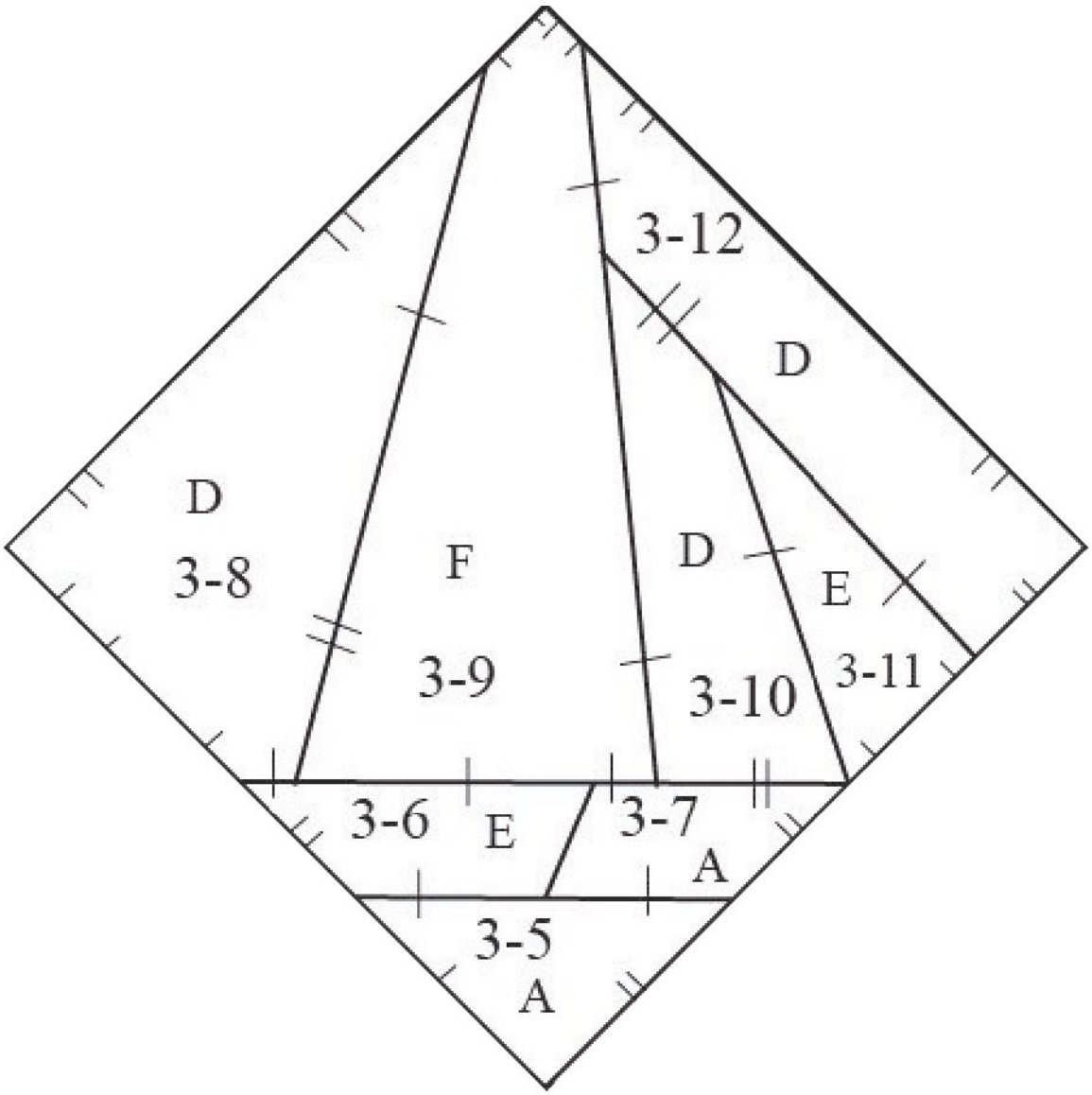
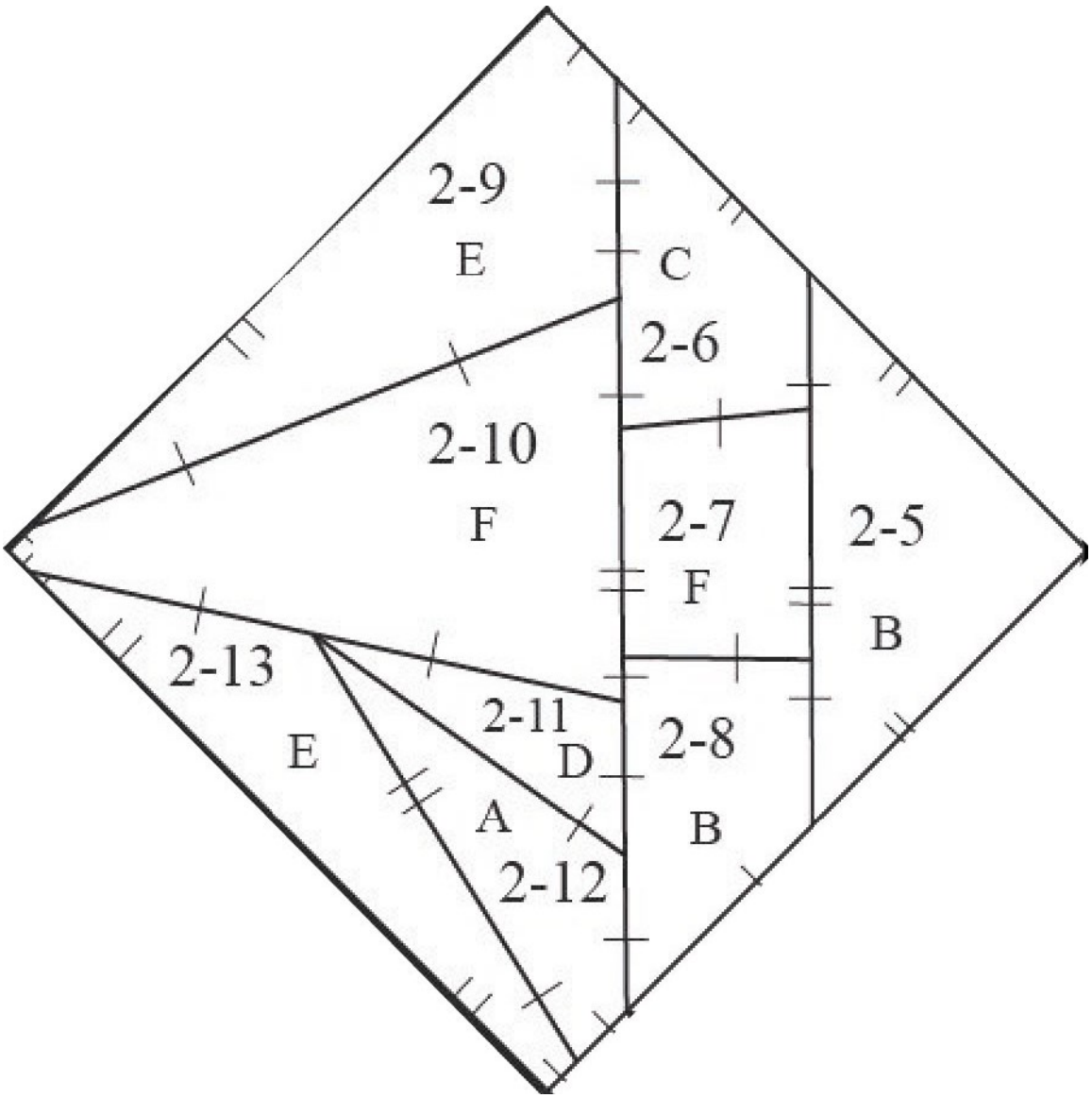


Snowball (12" square)



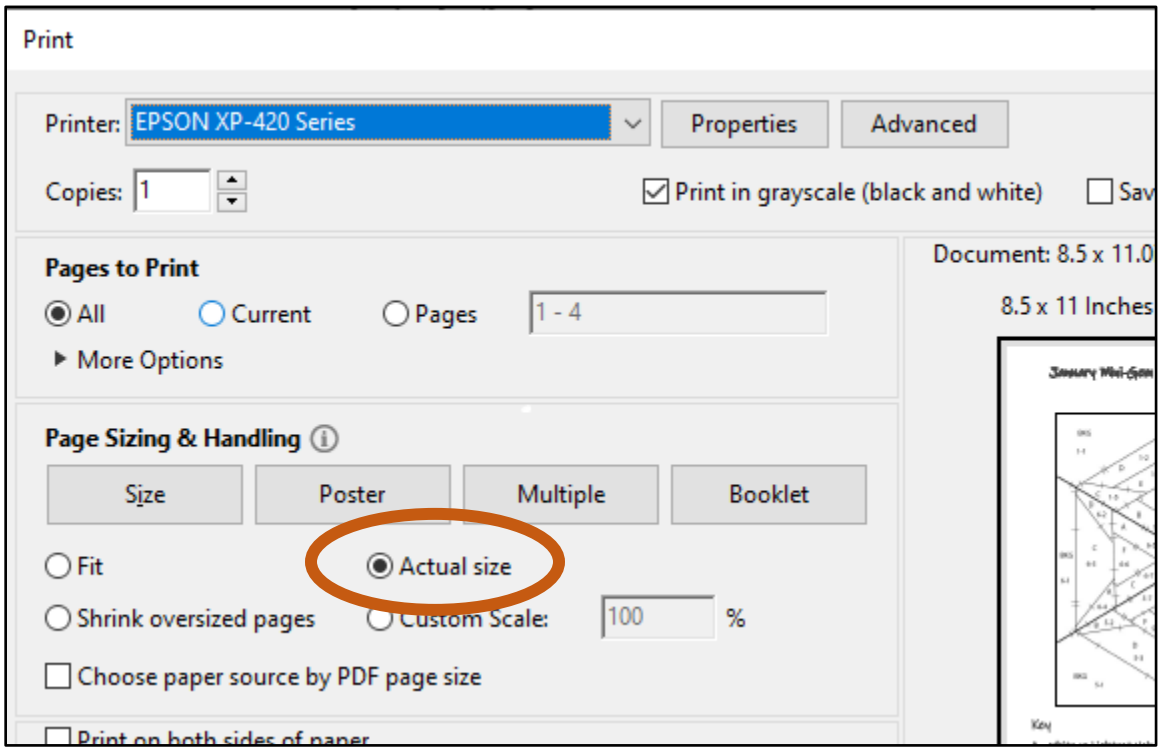
SNOWBALL (12" SQUARE)

Instructions

Preparation

1. Print pages 2 - 9 of this document with the "Actual Size" print option selected onto a piece of 8.5" x 11" freezer paper. Printing "Actual Size" will ensure that your block will be exactly 12" square.

   You can either purchase packs of pre-cut freezer paper OR you can purchase a roll of freezer paper and cut out a rectangle that is 8.5" x 11". This is the chart you will cut up.



2. Print pages 2-9 of this document onto regular copy paper. This will be the copy you will pin or tape to your quilt room wall. It will be your cheat sheet to help you put your block back together.

3. Identify 6 fabrics in a range of values to use in your block, plus a background color. The background could be one of the 6 you use in the block if you wish.

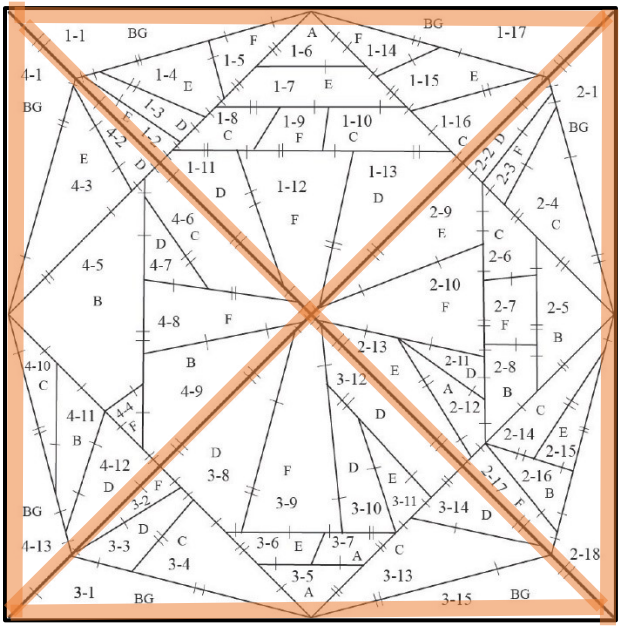
4. Attach a snippet of fabric next to each code of the corresponding value (i.e., light, medium, dark) OR label your fabric by writing the code on the selvedge edge or corner of the corresponding fabric.

5. Gather 7 business size envelopes or plastic baggies in which you'll store your facets once cut apart. Label them with the letters A, B, C, D, E, F and BKG to correspond to your fabric codes.

Cutting Your Fabric Facets

6. With a highlighter pen, trace the inside edge of the block on your FREEZER PAPER. This is the visual clue that will remind you to put the edges of these pieces on the straight of grain when you're ironing on the facets to the fabric. (The straight of grain is the grainline that runs parallel to the selvedge edge.) This step gives the block more stability.

7. Using your highlighter pen, also trace on each side of the diagonal lines that separate the various sections of the block on your FREEZER PAPER. (Remember, you can tell the difference between the sections by the first number of the hyphenated number code.) Your freezer paper pattern will look like this.



8. With a ruler and rotary cutter, you reserve for cutting paper, cut apart the freezer paper template and sort facets into the envelopes or baggies by letter code.
Note: If your ruler slips off the line a little bit, no problem! **Just don't trim it up**. Just be sure that you can still see any hashmarks on either side of the cut.

9. Arrange facets on the RIGHT SIDE of the fabric that corresponds to their color code, allowing ¾" of space between each facet. Press with a hot iron, no steam.

   If the freezer paper isn't adhering very well to the fabric, try heating the fabric first and then laying the freezer paper piece on top of it and press it down. (If you have lots of sizing or dye in your fabric, you may want to pre-wash your fabric. Extra chemicals sometimes prevent freezer paper from sticking to fabric.)

10. Once all your facets are ironed to the RIGHT SIDE of the fabric, relabel 4 of your envelopes or baggies with the numbers 1 through 4, corresponding to the 4 sections of the block.

11. Using a rotary cutter and small ruler, cut out each facet with a 1/4" seam allowance. Take care to make these 1/4" seam allowances as accurate and consistent as possible. Place the fabric facets in your envelopes or baggies by section number (i.e., 1 through 4).

12. Once all your facets are cut out and stored in their respective envelopes, remove the facets from the envelopes one by one and lay them out in numerical order to make sure that one hasn't accidentally wandered away.

Piecing Your Gem

13. Arrange facets into their piecing order using the chart you put up on your quilt room wall as your guide.

    NOTE: I have created a "Piece Plan" that provides a step-by-step process of putting this block together piece by piece. You'll find it at the end of this document.

14. To piece your facets, place RIGHT SIDES together (freezer paper will be inside the fabric sandwich).

15. Peek inside the seam allowance and line up the hash marks on each side of the two pieces. Ensure that the corners of each facet line up together.

16. Pin carefully along the seam OR use a clip OR use a glue product to secure the 2 pieces together.

17. Identify the 1/4" seam guide on your machine's plate.

18. Position the pair of pinned facets under the presser foot so that the edge of your fabric sandwich is just a needle-width to the left of the 1/4" seam guide. This will prevent you from sewing into the freezer paper on the inside.

19. Stitch the seam line using a regular stitch length (i.e., 2.5). I backstitch at the beginning and the end only because it's been my habit to do so for 20 years. Some have said that's not a necessary step for them. Habits die hard!

20. Open the facets with both seams to one side. (Press to the darkest side OR the side that has the fewest intersecting seams.)

    - If there is a gap between the edges of your freezer paper, you can either resew a little bit closer to the ¼" seam guide OR you can pick up one of the templates and iron it next to the seam. Just be sure to trim the seam allowance down to ¼".

    - If you have sewn into the freezer paper, give the two pieces a little tug to see if this frees the freezer paper. If you've really munched the freezer paper, consider ripping that section and resewing. Gaps and tucks change the position of the hashmarks along the sides of the 2 facets, which makes it a bit confusing when trying to match it up to its adjoining unit. In the end, though, perfection is NOT a priority and, once you've removed all the paper from your gem, no one will know the difference!

21. Continue to stitch the facets together, retaining the freezer paper on the front of each piece.

22. If facets come loose, simply iron back on.

TIP: If you want to remove the freezer paper after piecing major sections together, be sure to draw the hash marks onto the seam allowance **before removing the freezer paper**.

23. Once the gem is complete, remove the remaining freezer paper pieces and store them in your envelopes or baggies by color code if you plan on using them again. You can typically get 2 uses out of regular freezer paper, but I know some people who can squeeze 3 and even 4 uses out of their freezer paper pieces!

24. If little bits of freezer paper are stuck in the seam line, use a pair of tweezers to remove. If they are stubborn, try using seam ripper to remove them by pushing the bit of paper from the front to the back side of the fabric. Use tweezers to pull from between the seams.

Congratulations!

Piece Plan for "Snowball"

Section 1

- Sew together 1-2, 1-3, 1-4 and 1-5 (to create Unit 2:5)
- Sew together 1-1 to Unit 2:5 (to create Unit 1:5)
- Sew together 1-6 and 1-7 (to create Unit 6:7)
- Sew together 1-8, 1-9 and 1-10 (to create Unit 8:10)
- Sew together Units 6:7 and 8:10 (to create Unit 6:10)
- Sew together 1-11, 1-12 and 1-13 (to create Unit 11:13)
- Sew together Units 6:10 and 11:13 (to create Unit 6:13)
- Sew together 1-14, 1-15 and 1-16 (to create Unit 14:16)
- Sew together 1-17 and Unit 14:16 (to create Unit 14:17)
- Sew together Units 1:5, 6:13, and 14:17 (to complete Section 1)

Section 2

- Sew together 2-2, 2-3, 2-4 (to create Unit 2:4)
- Sew together 2-1 to Unit 2:4 (to create Unit 1:4)
- Sew together 2-6, 2-7 and 2-8 (to create Unit 6:8)
- Sew together 2-5 to Unit 6:8 (to create Unit 5:8)

- Sew together 2-9 and 2-10 (to create Unit 9:10)
- Sew together 2-11, 2-12 and 2-13 (to create Unit 11:13)
- Sew together Units 9:10 and 11:13 (to create Unit 9:13)
- Sew together Units 5:8 and 9:13 (to create Unit 5:13)
- Sew together 2-14 and 2-15 (to create Unit 14:15)
- Sew together 2-16 to Unit 14:15 (to create Unit 14:16)
- Sew together 2-17 to Unit 14:16 (to create Unit 14:17)
- Sew together 2-18 to Unit 14:17 (to create Unit 14:18)
- Sew together Units 1:4, 5:13 and 14:18 (to complete Section 2)

Section 3

- Sew together 3-2, 3-3 and 3-4 (to create Unit 2:4)
- Sew together 3-1 and Unit 2:4 (to create Unit 1:4)
- Sew together 3-6 and 3-7 (to create Unit 6:7)
- Sew together 3-5 and Unit 6:7 (to create 5:7)
- Sew together 3-8 and 3-9 (to create Unit 8:9)
- Sew together 3-10 and 3-11 (to create Unit 10:11)
- Sew together 3-12 to Unit 10:11 (to create Unit 10:12)
- Sew together Units 8:9 and 10:12 (to create Unit 8:12)
- Sew together 3-13 and 3-14 (to create Unit 13:14)
- Sew together 3-15 to Unit 13:14 (to create Unit 13:15)
- Sew together Units 1:4, 5:12, and 13:15 (to complete Section 3)

Section 4

- Sew together 4-2 and 4-3 (to create Unit 2:3)
- Sew together 4-1 and Unit 2:3 (to create Unit 1:3)
- Sew together 4-4 and 4-5 (to create Unit 4:5)
- Sew together 4-6 and 4-7 (to create Unit 6:7)
- Sew together 4-8 and 4-9 (to create Unit 8:9)

- Sew together Units 6:7 and 89:9 (to create Unit 6:9)
- Sew together Units 4:5 and 6:9 (to create Unit 4:9)
- Sew together 4-10, 4-11 and 4-12 (to create Unit 1012)
- Sew together 4-13 and Unit 10:12 (to create Unit 10:13)
- Sew together Units 1:3, 4:9, and 10:13 (to complete Section 4)

Putting Sections Together

- Sew together Section 1 and Section 2
- Sew together Section 3 and Section 4
- Sew the 2 halves of your block together.