

# Art Deco Gears

by Robbi Joy Eklow



ART DECO GEARS, 44" x 60", by Robbi Joy Eklow

One of the things I love about my hometown, Chicago, is all the Art Deco terra cotta decorating the buildings and bridges. I've used some of the motifs in this quilt, which I created using fusible appliqué and my own hand-dyed fabrics. The quilt may seem complicated, but if you follow the step-by-step instructions, you'll get it!

For more detailed information on making quilts, see the AQS Quiltmaking Essentials & Tested Tips at [www.AmericanQuilter.com](http://www.AmericanQuilter.com). Please read my fusing tips sidebar on page 9 before starting this project.

## Getting started

This basic design of this quilt consists of a wheel surrounded by many colored bands. The wheel and

bands are decorated with petals, gears, squares, and spirals. Everything is fused onto a muslin foundation.

In traditional appliqué, when one piece overlaps another, a little extra fabric is left on the lower piece to avoid a gap between shapes. We can use the same technique for fusible appliqué, too. If you leave an overlap allowance on one edge of a piece, it can be tucked under the finished edge of the piece next to it. Dashed lines on the templates mark the overlap allowance.

### Preparing the appliqué

Trace the templates, including dashed lines and piece letters, on the paper side of the fusible web. Templates A and K are given as ¼ of the pattern piece. For these pieces, trace the template, rotate 90°, align the dashed lines, and trace. Rotate and trace two more times to complete the piece. Pieces B to J are wedges that form bands around the inside circle. Pieces L to T are embellishments added on top of the bands. *Tip: I found the tracing step goes much faster if I first print or trace the pattern onto cardstock or template plastic, cut on the traced line, then draw around the template onto the fusible web.*

Roughly cut out the shapes with about ¼" extra all around. Following manufacturer's instructions, fuse the shapes to the wrong sides of your chosen fabrics. Separate the pieces leaving about ¼" all around. Do not cut on the drawn lines and do not remove the paper.

### Assembling the quilt center

Trim on both short edges of each B piece (photo 1). Don't trim the top and bottom curved edges yet, and leave the paper on. Lay one piece down on your ironing surface, paper side up. Peel back

## FABRIC & CUTTING REQUIREMENTS

Skill level: Challenging

Quilt size: 44" x 60"

- Requirements are based on 40" fabric width.
- Strips are cut from selvage to selvage unless otherwise noted.
- See "Getting started" before cutting fusible appliqué pieces

Lemon yellow – 1⅓ yards

- 14 C, 14 L, 27 Q, 21 S

Golden yellow – 1½ yards

- 9 J, 14 L, 27 N

Orange – 1¼ yards

- 14 B, 14 D, 21 R

Lime green – ⅝ yard

- 14 I, 43 P

Medium green – 1⅓ yards

- 1 K, 28 E, 13 H

Dark purple – 1⅓ yards

- 1 A, 27 G, 27 O

Grape – 1⅞ yards

- border side, 2 strips 2½" x 58½" \*
- border top & bottom, 2 strips 2½" x 46½" \*
- 14 M, 16 F, 9 T

Muslin – 2⅞ yards

- 2 panels, 32" x 46"

Binding – ½ yard

- 6 strips 2¼" x 40" for 218" of continuous binding

Backing – 3⅓ yards

- 2 panels 35" x 52"

Sleeve – ⅝ yard

- 2 strips, 9" x 22"

Batting

- 52" x 68"

\* These borders are cut parallel to the selvages. An extra 2" has been added to the length of the border strips to allow for adjustments.

SUPPLIES: Paper backed fusible web such as Wonder-Under® – 18" x 20 yards  
Optional supplies: Cardstock or template plastic, tracing paper

## NO ROTARY CUTTING

A through T are templates (pages 5–8).

the left edge of the paper about ½". Slip another B piece between the peeled paper and fabric. Line up the paper edge of the first piece with the overlap margin line on the second piece (photo 2). Match the pencil lines along the top and the bottom edges. Using a dry iron, fuse these pieces together. In the same manner, add five more B pieces (photo 3). Trim on the top and bottom curved lines (photo 4). Make 2. *Tip: Fusing the pieces together*

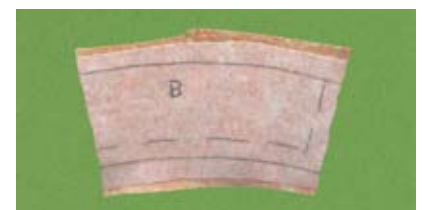


Photo 1



Photo 2

before you cut the outer edge gives a nicer cut edge than cutting them out and then trying to fit them together.

Cut out piece A on the drawn line. Peel back the paper about an inch in, all around the outer edge.



Photo 3



Photo 4

With the paper sides up, slip the two halves of band B between the peeled paper and fabric of A. Adjust the pieces of band B until they fit nicely around A. Using a dry iron, press to secure. Leave the paper on.

In the same manner as for the B band, prepare C pieces and construct the C band. Add to the wheel unit as you did for band B. Construct the D band from D pieces and add to the wheel unit.

Join the muslin panels to make one piece, 46" x 62". Press seam allowances open. In the center, mark a 40" x 56" rectangle. The quilt will be "built" on this foundation. *Tip: As you work on the foundation, it helps to have a surface onto which you can pin and iron. I made a large work surface for my foundation by layering an old table with 2 pieces of cotton batting and a piece of canvas.*

Following the Wheel assembly diagram, remove the paper from the back of the wheel unit and lay it on the foundation, 2" from the bottom line and just touching the right line. Press to fuse the center of the wheel, but leave the outer edge of the band D open so you will be able to slip in the next band.

In the same manner as previous bands, prepare the E pieces and construct band E. Peel the paper from the band. With right sides up, lay the band halves on the foundation. Place the ¼" overlap allowance under the edge of band D. Taking care to leave both band D and band E curved edges open, press to fuse. The band D edge must be left open so you can slip embellishment pieces under that edge later. The band E edge must be left open so you can slip the next band in under that edge.

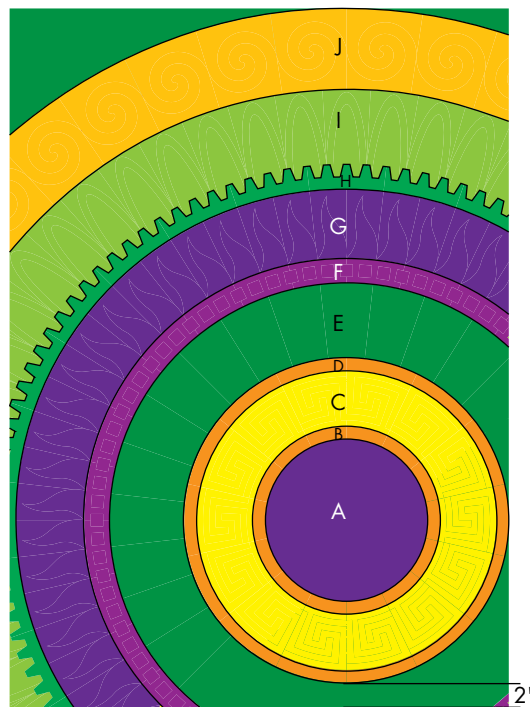
Continue adding bands F through J in the same manner. These bands will not make complete circles, so make sure that foundation lines are covered by the band pieces. Allow the pieces to hang over the foundation lines by at least ¼". As you add a band, press to fuse, being careful to leave the band outer curved edge open. Patch lines from band to band do not need to match up.

### Adding the embellishments

Now we'll add the petals, spirals, and squares to the bands. It doesn't matter if the embellishments are in exactly the same place on each wedge. *Tip: To aid in spacing the embellishments, trace the band and motif patterns onto tracing paper, flip the paper,*

*line it up on the band, and align the element under the tracing.* Remember to remove the paper backing off each piece before fusing.

Referring to the quilt photo on page 2, center K on A. Leaving the edges open, press to fuse. Remove



Wheel assembly

the paper backing from all L patches. Slip each under the edge of K, alternating lemon and golden yellow patches. When all are positioned, press to fuse.

Tucking the overlap margin under the adjacent piece, position M pieces on band C. Press to fuse. In the same manner, position and fuse T pieces on band J.

Fuse an O piece onto each N. Position the units on band E, tucking the overlap allowances under adjacent band D. Fuse. Evenly space P pieces on band F and fuse.

Fuse an S piece onto each R. Position the units on band I, tucking the overlap allowances under adjacent band H. Fuse.

Cut pieces of medium green, at least ¼" larger all around, to fill the space between band J and the foun-

dition's drawn rectangle. Apply fusible web to the back of the piece(s). Trim to fit under band J. Fuse.

Using a ruler and rotary cutter, square up and trim the fused center to 40½" x 56½".

### Adding the borders

Press the quilt center well. Measure the vertical length of the quilt through the center and cut 2 border strips to this measurement. Sew them to the sides of the quilt.

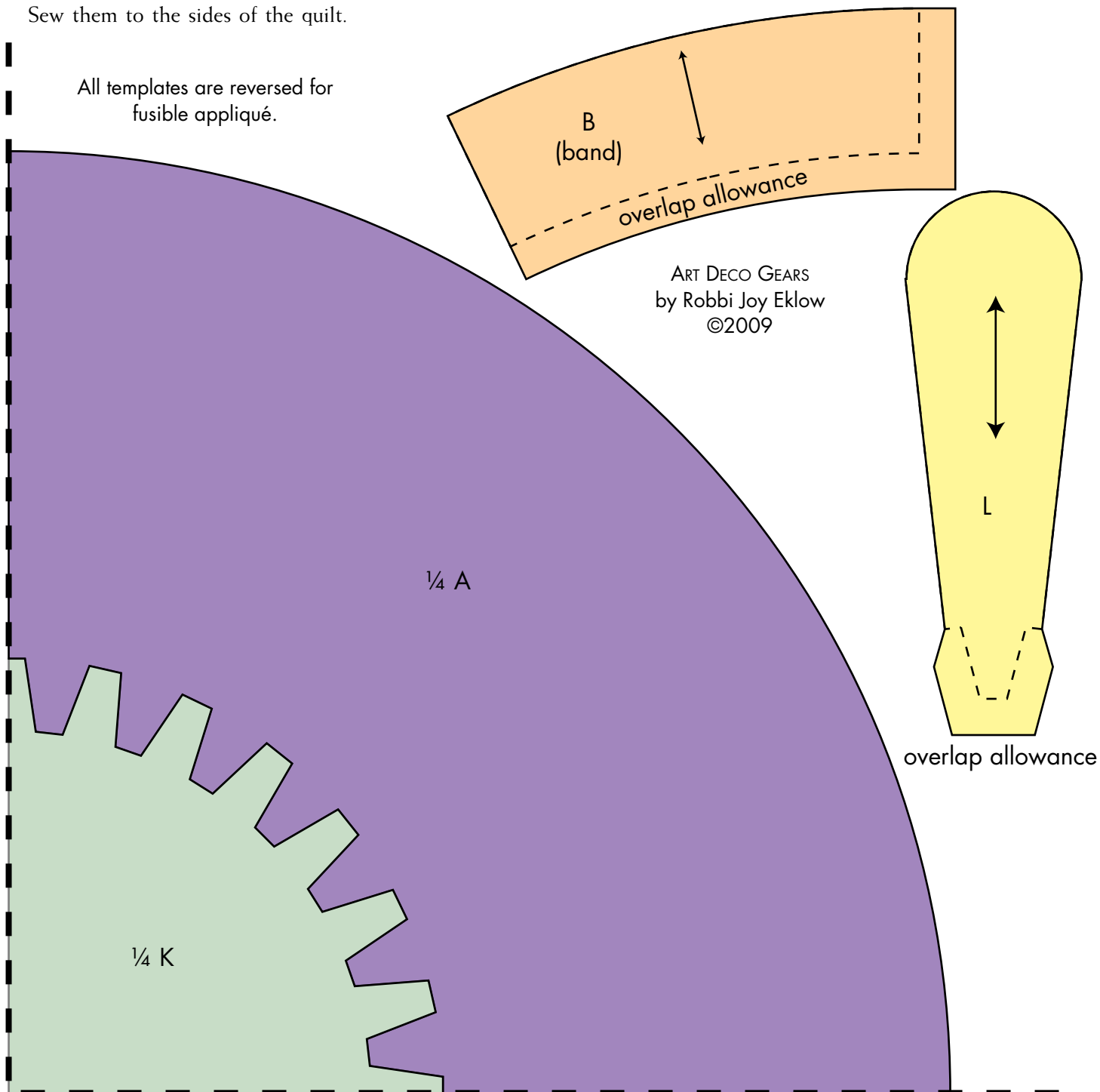
Press all seam allowances toward the border. Measure the width of the quilt through the center, including the side borders you just added. Cut 2 strips this length and sew them to the top and bottom of the quilt.

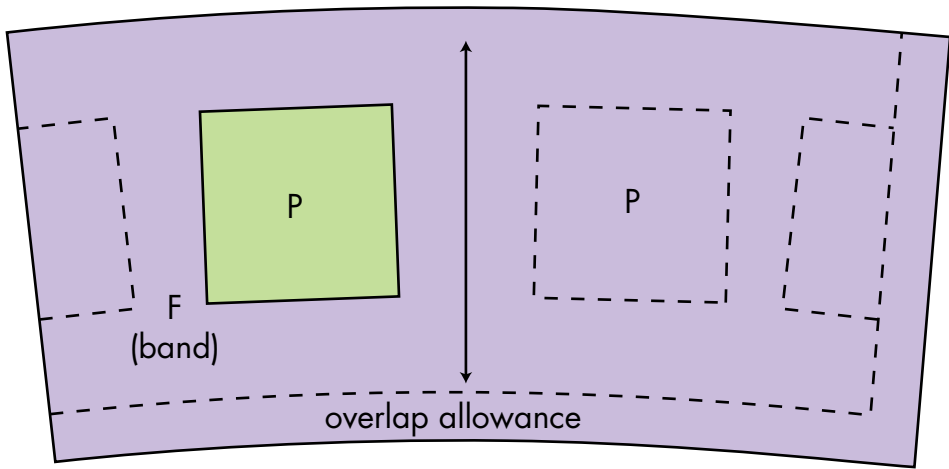
### Quilting and finishing

Layer the backing, batting, and quilt top. Baste the layers together. Quilt as desired. I free-motion

quilted swirls, feathers, ferns, and other small designs in the bands and on the embellishments.

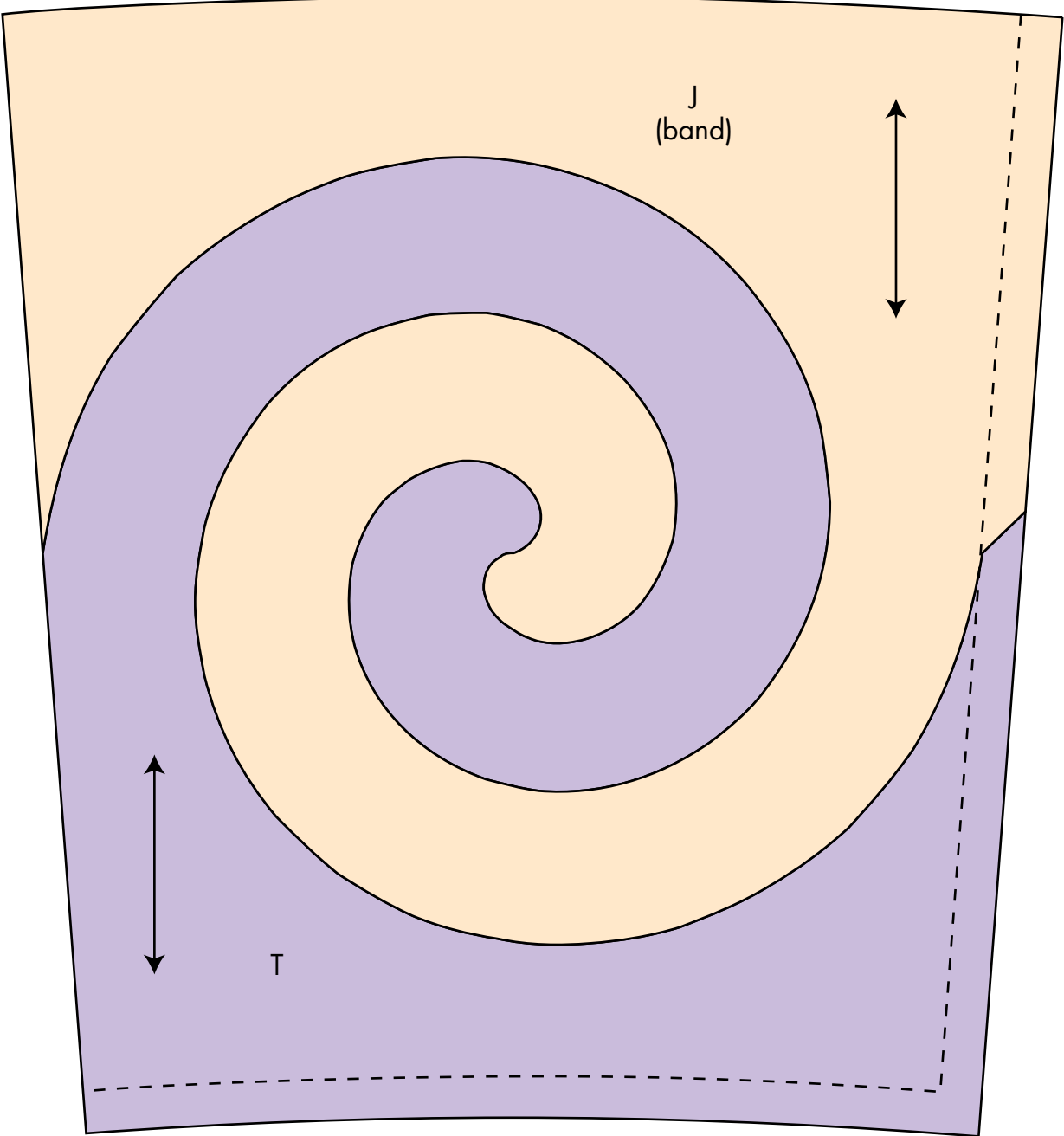
Sew the binding strips together to make 218" of continuous binding. Finish the edges of your quilt with double-fold binding. To display your quilt, make a sleeve and sew it to the back of the quilt.

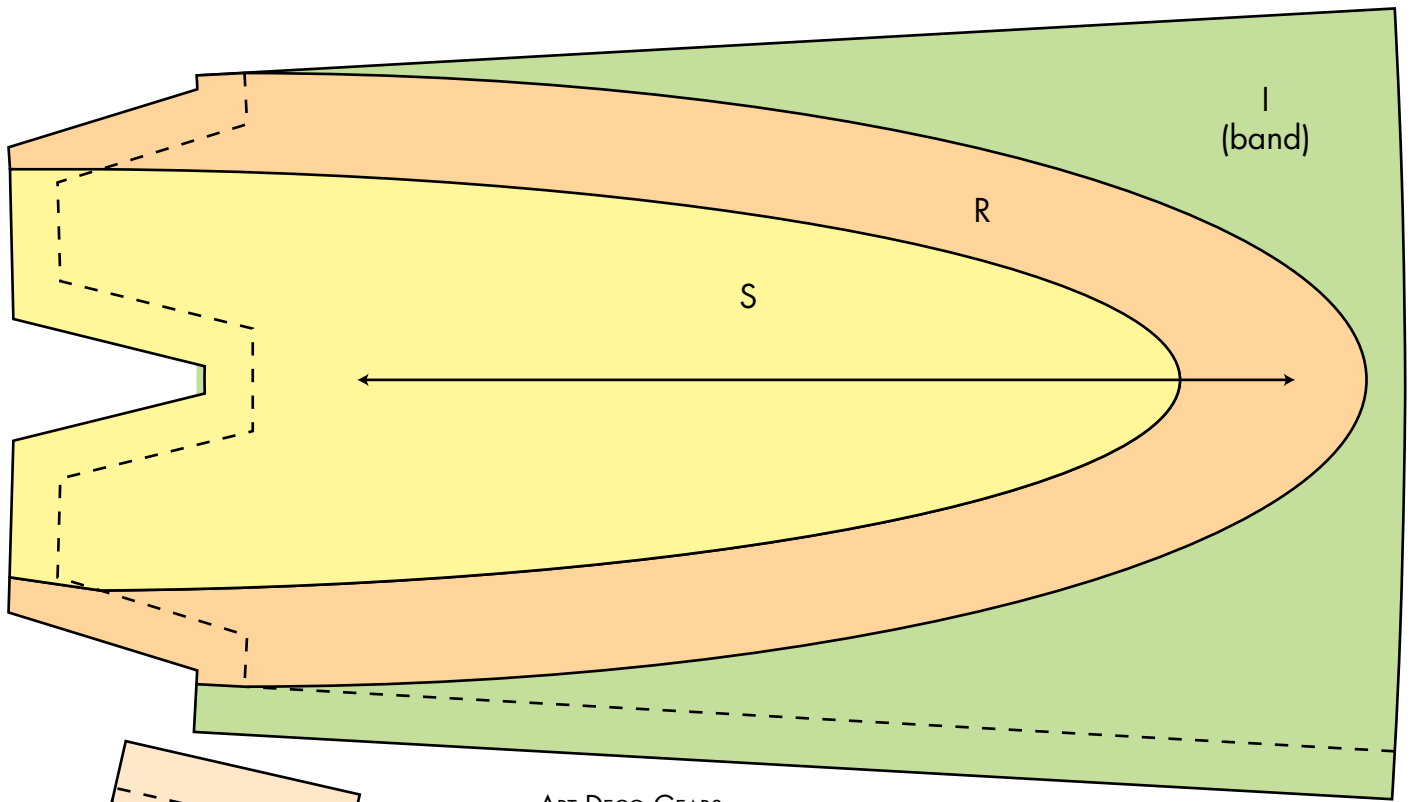




All templates are reversed for fusible appliqué.

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by Robbi Joy Eklow  
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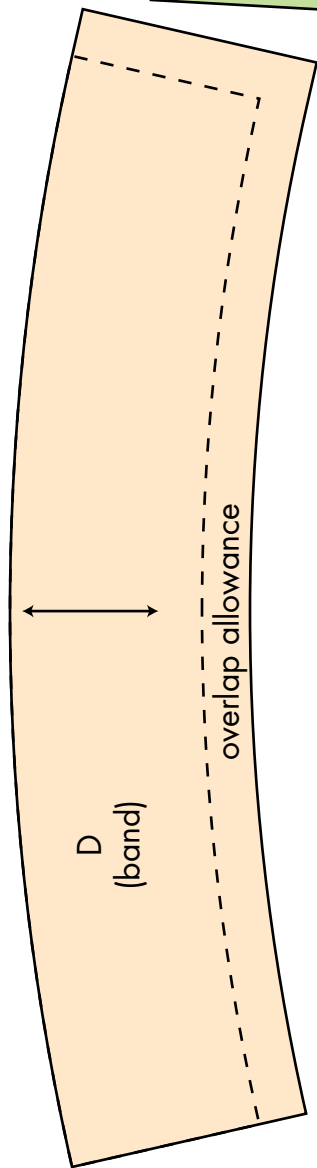
I  
(band)

R

S

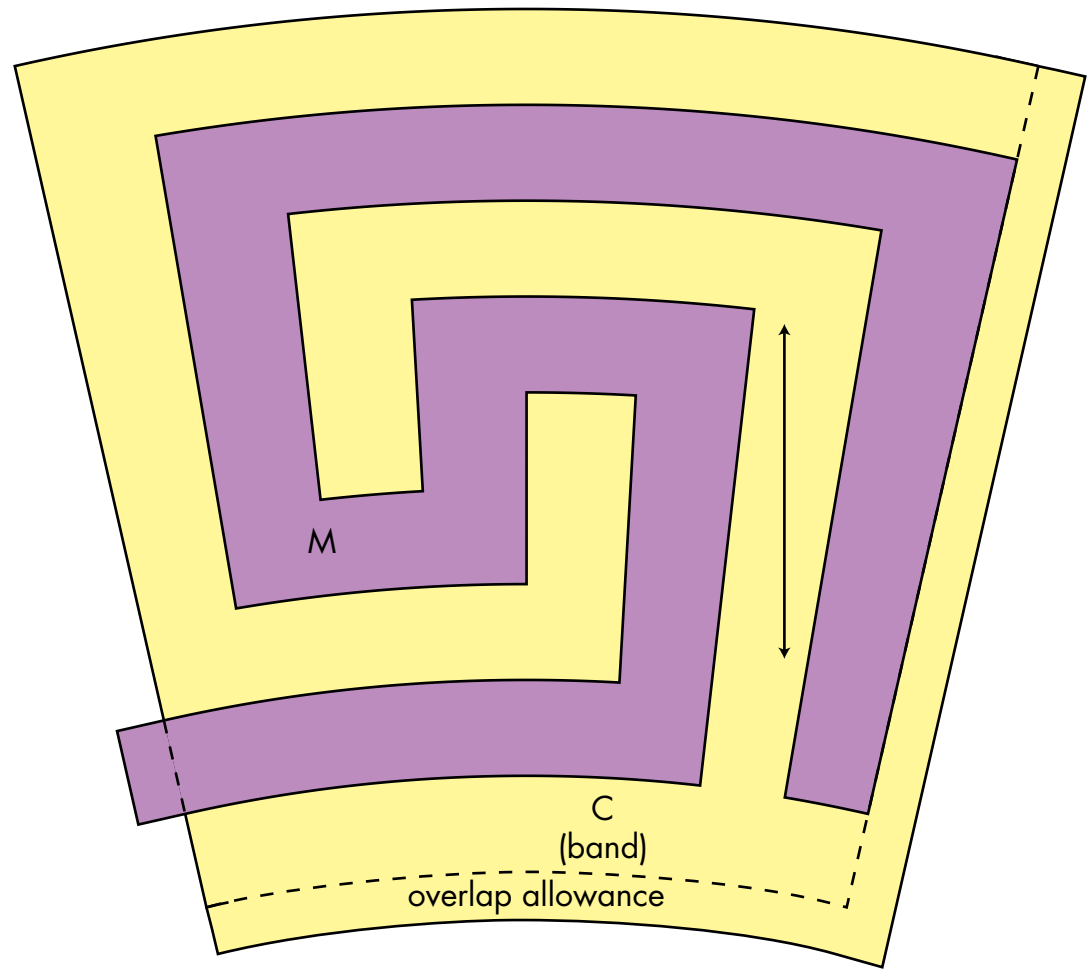
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fusible appliqué.



D  
(band)

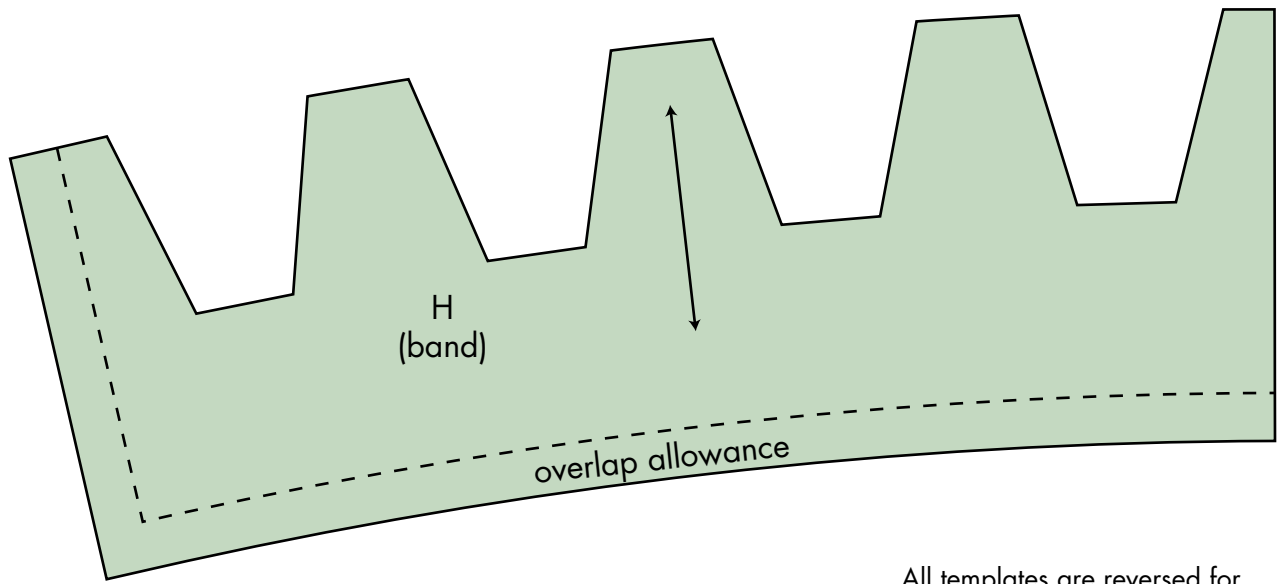
overlap allowance



M

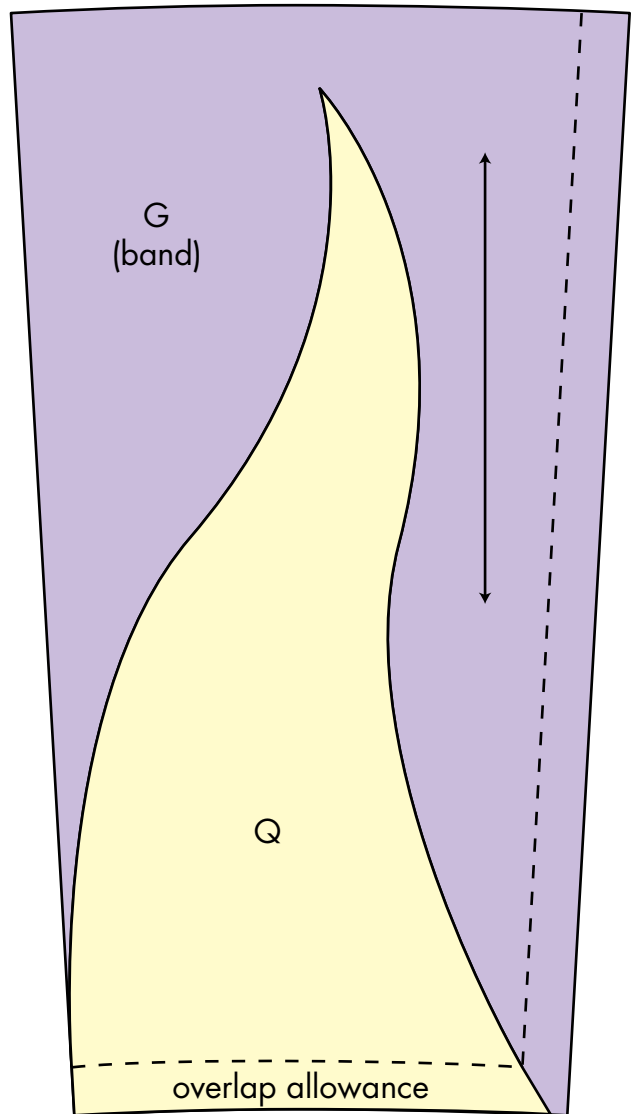
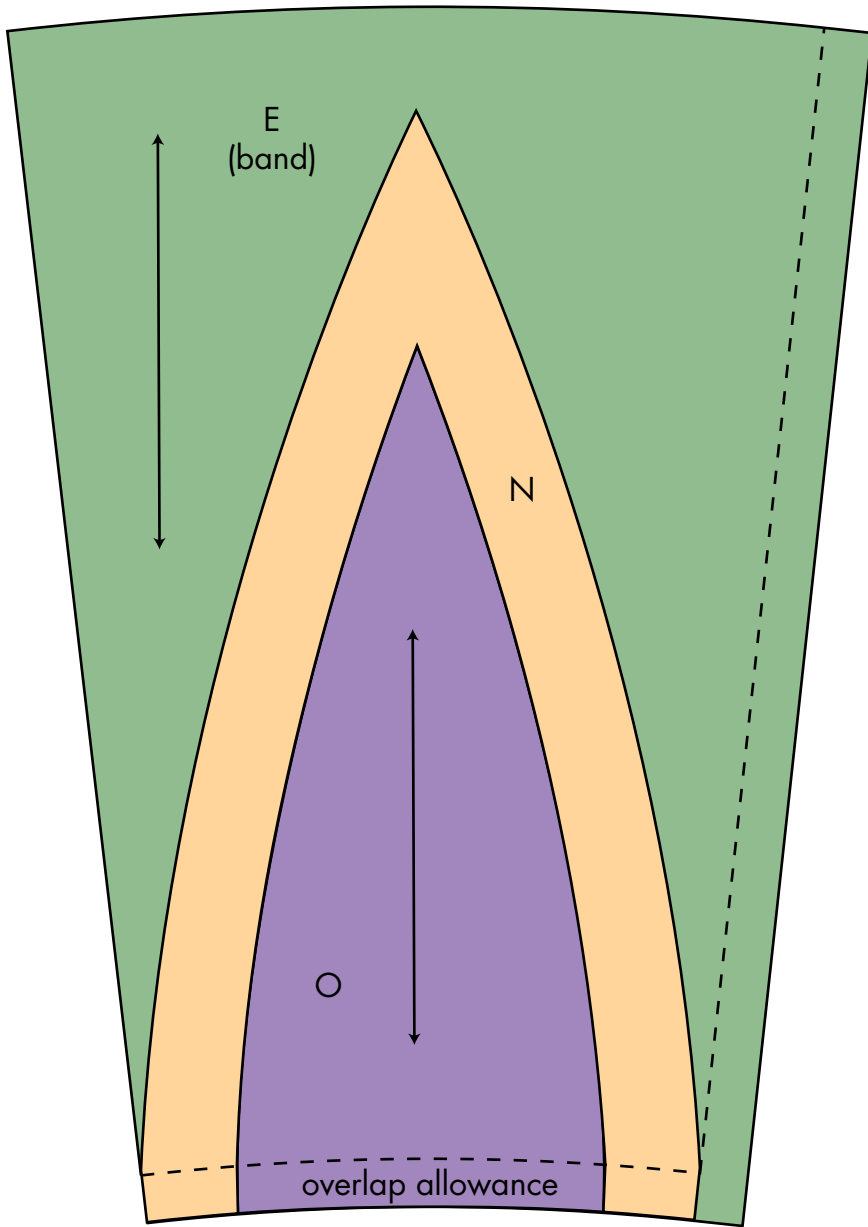
C  
(band)

overlap allowance



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## Robbi's Fusing Tips

1. Fusing is a fast process, so you can change your mind about fabrics and make a new piece quickly. Don't waste the discards. Cut smaller shapes out of discarded larger ones.

2. Trim overlapping layers to prevent darker colors from showing through under lighter ones.

3. Use a dry iron when pressing on the paper side, and a steam iron when pressing on the fabric side to avoid bubbles. Don't worry if you do get bubbles, as they usually come out after the paper is peeled off and the pieces are pressed together.

4. Some older irons get too hot and melt the fusible too much. Always test first.

5. Some fusibles won't stand up to multiple applications of heat. Wonder-Under® does, that's one reason I like to use it.

6. Test different brands of fusibles, as they have different levels of stiffness. The glues used in some show through the fabric.

7. If the paper doesn't peel off easily, use a sharp pin to cut a line on the paper from the center of the shape towards the

edge. Then start peeling at the line. Use a pin to help separate the fabric and fusible by running it between them.

8. To stabilize the edge and minimize fraying, apply the fusible to the fabric before you cut out the piece.

9. Most fusibles will not hold up to repeated laundering. The ones that do are very hard to stitch through. Just assume you will have to stitch down every piece.

10. If a piece does start coming up, hit it with a very hot steam iron.

11. Multiple layers of fused fabric can be quilted by machine. I use a size 90 Schmetz embroidery needle.

12. Polyester threads fray less than rayon when going through layers of fusible. Test your threads on a sample before committing to a large area of quilting.

13. I finish many of my quilts with fused binding, joining short strips together with a diagonal "seam" to mimic the joins in a regular binding. Try using a decorative rotary-cutting blade to cut strips for interesting binding edges.