Little Star
By Amy Clarke Moore

My two-and-a-half daughter loves to sing Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star at the top of her lungs or in a little whisper. I love the time we spend singing and drawing together—so I made this star for her. We’ll hang it on our Christmas tree—but it could also be a pendant or easily made into a pin to wear.

⭐ FINISHED SIZE:
2¼” x 2¼”

🔗 MATERIALS:
- Star cartoon, cut to the exact shape you want your pendant to be
- 4” x 5” quilting fabric
- Size 11˚ Japanese and Czech seed beads in shades of red, orange, yellow, and brown
- Size 8˚ orange, red, and pink Japanese seed beads
- Bail or pin back
- White Silamide thread
- Red or orange Silamide thread
- Cotton batting or wool roving (less than 1 ounce)
- 3” square piece of quilters heavy duty plastic template
- 3” piece of ultrasuede for backing
- 20” red ribbon

🔧 TOOLS:
- Size 11˚ sharp needle
- Scissors
- Permanent marker

⭐ TECHNIQUES
Bead embroidery

A Beading Daily Exclusive!
**Little Star**

**Note:**
A quilter’s template is designed to withstand the heat of ironing, but the top of a yogurt container or other flexible, flat plastic will work to stabilize the ornament or pin to make it firm. Cardboard is more likely to break down with time, use, or moisture.

**Step 1:** Print the star on a color printer. Use 24lb cotton resume paper, archival quality, if available, to create a lasting heirloom. Or draw your own star with colored pencils, making sure you gradate the edges, similar to the illustration below.

**Step 2:** Cut out your star in the exact shape you want to bead—don’t leave a border. You will completely cover the paper with beads. The paper will become embedded in the piece and will not be removed. Don’t worry about getting it wet—the paper is so firmly ensconced in the piece that it will never come out, show, or fall apart. I’ve tested this on pins that I’ve accidentally left on clothes and then sent through the washer and dryer—several times.

**Step 3:** Stitch your cartoon to the top of the fabric using a running stitch, knot off.

**Step 4:** Choose your focal point for your star in an area that doesn’t have too much color changes. (The center white area is a good place to start). Knot your thread, bring your needle and thread to the top of the fabric from the bottom in the center of your focal point.

**Step 5:** String two beads—remember to match them to the color of the cartoon underneath them. Tap them to the end of the thread, place the needle in the fabric a needle’s width from the last bead, and take the needle to the back of the fabric. Pull firmly on the thread each time you make a stitch to assure that the beads are resting securely on the top of the fabric. Come up behind the two beads, and go through them. String two more beads place them along side of the two already stitched down creating a little square of beads. **Note:** Your thread should be coming out of the last two beads you strung—not the fabric—at this point. This is how backstitch creates such a tight, straight line.

**Step 6:** Come up behind the last two beads you stitched, and go through them. String 2 more, stitch them perpendicular to the four already placed, come up behind them and go through them. Now there is space to string 3 beads. String 3 beads, come up on the outside of your spiral, next to the last two strung and go through the last two beads. **Note:** From this point on, you’ll always be going through just the last two beads.
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Step 7: String 3 again, go through the last two beads. Now there is room for 4 beads. String 4 beads, go through the last two beads. Continue in this way until you can string 6 beads at a time. Six is a comfortable amount to string at one time. If you do more than six, you risk having your rows pop up.

Step 8: When you reach the edge of the paper cartoon, you’ll want to make sure your beads cover it so that you can’t see the paper even when the edge of the fabric is turned under—so go over the edge of the paper by one row of beads. When you reach the edge, turn your row around and go back to fill in the spaces of paper not yet covered.

Step 9: When you’re finished beading the star, trim the fabric around the star to about 1/2 inch to create a seam allowance, then place the piece of plastic template over the back and trace the shape of the beaded piece onto the template with a sharpie. Cut the plastic template to size and use it to cut the piece of ultrasuede.

Step 10: Sew a running stitch around the seam allowance, then place the template against the back of the beaded star, insert the cotton batting or wool roving between the fabric and the template to add a little dimension to the piece and cinch up the running stitch so that the fabric gathers around the template. Stitch the fabric in place around the template.

Step 11: Sew the pendant bail in place securely before attaching the ultrasuede using a picot edging stitch. If you’re going to make the piece into a pin instead, cut a slit in the ultrasuede to insert the pin back before sewing on the ultrasuede using the picot edging stitch.

Picot Edging

Step 12: Hold the ultrasuede against the back of the pin, taking care to line it up carefully with the pin. Thread a contrasting color thread and knot the thread and hide the knot between the fabric and the ultrasuede. Hold the piece in your left hand with the ultrasuede facing you.

Step 13: Come out on the fabric side of the piece and string 3 beads (a size 8˚, a size 11˚, a size 8˚) *stitch through the fabric and ultrasuede in one stitch, one bead’s width from the last stitch. 2. Go back through the last bead strung without piercing the fabric. 3. String 2 beads (a size 11˚ and a size 8˚) and repeat from *.

Step 14: Pull tightly between each stitch to make the size 11˚ bead pop up and sit on top of the two size 8˚ beads. The picot edge will create a frame for the piece at the same time that it secures the ultrasuede to the piece.

Step 15: Thread a ribbon through the pendant bail and deck your halls! 🎄
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RESOURCES:
Check your local bead shop. Findings and beads: San Gabriel Bead Company, beadcompany.com
Czech seed beads: Orrs Trading Company, orrs.com
Japanese seed beads: Beyond Beadery, beyondbeadery.com; Beads Gone Wild, beadsgonewild.com
Star kits: Amy Clarke Moore, www.sixswansflying.etsy.com

AMY CLARKE MOORE is the editor of Spin-Off magazine, published by Interweave Press and co-author of Beaded Embellishment: Techniques and Designs for Embroidering on Cloth (Interweave Press, 2002). When she’s not working, she spends time with her family, and beads, spins, knits, weaves, and felts in her home in Lakewood, Colorado. Visit her website at www.amyclarkemoore.com or her blog, www.sixswansflying.blogspot.com.

Spiral Back Stitch

The technique of a spiraling back stitch is pretty straightforward—the trick is getting the spiral started. Once it is started, then proceed as you would with a normal back stitch.

Beaded Embellishment

Techniques and Designs for Embroidering on Cloth
by Amy C. Clarke and Robin Atkins

Rich on history and technique, this definitive work by two leading beadworkers offers the first comprehensive look at the vast opportunities for self-expression with beads on cloth. Fabrics of all kinds—woven, non-woven, patterned, and plain, come together with beads of all kinds—seed, bugle, art, and novelty.

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