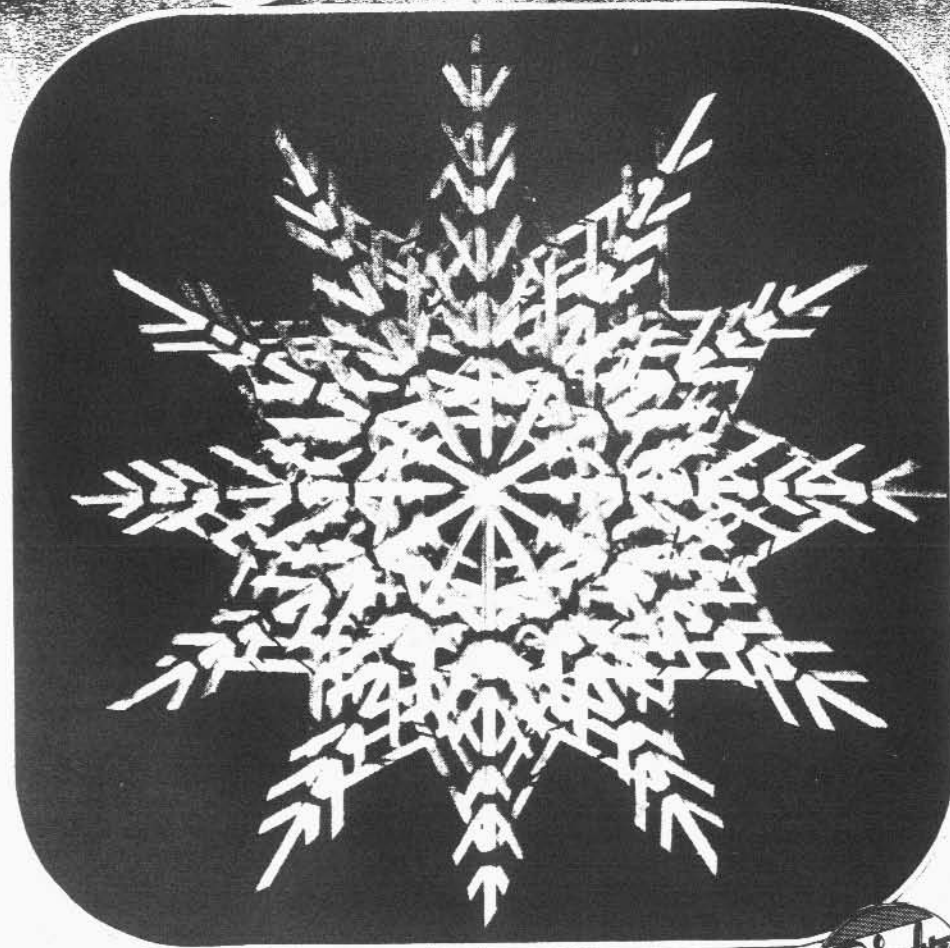


BOOK II

Rolf Dietz

Delicate Straw-Snow-Crystals



Complete instructions for handcrafted straw stars using the universal ring



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Publisher: Andreas Dietz Bastelverlag, 69412 EBERBACH, Koenigsberger Str. 45/1, GERMANY

Title of the original German edition:
„Strohsterne wie Schneekristalle 2, Bastelanleitung für Strohsterne aus der Universal-
Legeform“

© 1987 by Rolf A. Dietz

Translation into English by Nan Bergen/Felice A. Goering, 1840 Cherokee RD.,
Moundridge, KS 67107

Title: "Delicate Straw Snow Crystals. Complete instructions for handcrafted straw stars
using the universal ring"
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Printed in Germany

Preface

The instructions Delicate Straw-Snow-Crystals, Book 1, has found many friends since its publication. The crown formed ring described in it offers a variety of possibilities for straw crafting and beginners should begin with this ring in order to learn and practice this technique.

Crafts friends have now expressed the wish for a larger ring with higher points in which stars with a larger diameter and multiple ties can be made.

So that advanced crafters can be offered optimal possibilities of sizes and variations, the universal ring has been developed. In this ring whole and long straws as well as thin grasses can be used.

As with the smaller ring, you can produce simple and more complex tied stars. This ring allows you to also combine stars and tie them together.

In addition, one can take almost every star produced in the crown ring and expand it in the universal ring.

The organization of this book is patterned after the previously mentioned possibilities: In Chapter 2 you will find the description of the stars which one can make in the new ring; Chapter 3 shows how the universal ring can best be used to expand stars made on the crown ring.

It is difficult to say which of the stars are the simplest to make. Generally it is the rule that the multiple-tied stars prove to have the highest degree of difficulty. If you want to feel your way slowly, you should begin with the simple and multiple stars in Chapter 2. Even experienced crafters who have already mastered the tying and placing techniques, will surely find many worthwhile suggestions and hints while paging through this book.

In addition, this instruction book attempts to show all the possibilities of the new ring. Every chapter describes a basic pattern which can be varied as much as you like.

Photos of variations along with a short description are found in the respective chapters.

Surely many of you will discover further uses or develop new placement or tying techniques for the new ring. Even while we worked on these instructions, we came up with new ideas. We would be happy to hear from you if you do come up with new ideas.

We wish you much joy and success while working with the universal ring and this instruction booklet.

1. HINTS FOR WORKING (page 4)

The hints given in Book 1 apply here as well and are not repeated. The following are a few additional hints for the universal ring.

1.1 Description of new ring (page 4)

When looking at the new ring, you recognize that it has 24 points, that is 24 spaces between the points.

It has 12 "tongues" (each with 2 points) and 12 cutout spaces.

The 12 cutout spaces into the middle are helpful to the orientation when placing straws since they make the 12 division more clear.

In addition they are used to tie certain designs.

If one places 24 "side" straws and 12 "cross" straws in every space, one produces a 24-point star. (see chapter 2.1 and 3.)

If one uses only every other space, for instance places straws only on the "tongues", one produces a 12-point star like the smaller crown ring with only 12 spaces. (see chapter 2.2 and 3.)

If only every 3 spaces are used, one produces an 8-point star with four "cross" straws. (see chapter 2.3.)

1.2 Tying technique with a needle (page 4)

Since it is difficult to tie stars which are multiple or those in which the "side" straws cross several times, one can make the work easier by using a needle.

Of course this technique can also be used with the crown ring.

First the star is placed as desired, the clamp ring pressed down, the ring turned over and the first knot placed on any protruding straws. Don't forget: Tie a surgeon's knot so that the knot is immediately tight.

Now turn the ring over again and placed on the table with one edge of the ring *protruding over the edge of the table*.

Cut the thread to approximately 40 inches and tie the end to the eye of the needle.

(See pictures, page 5 for the following instructions)

The needle is brought around the next tying point (top picture) and dropped down on the other side (2nd picture). Hint: The point of the needle should always point upwards. Additionally, if the thread is only pulled up about 3/8 inch, there is less risk of the thread catching on the points of the ring.

Now bring the needle around a second time and let it drop on the other side of the thread (i.e. between the thread and the ring—picture 3), so that the tie becomes tight. Now it is possible to move the straws around to the position they need to be in and lightly tighten the thread.

To be on the safe side, repeat the process a third time before continuing to the next tying point (picture 4).

Alternative: The third time, thread the thread under the "cross" straw as usual. This is also very simple with the needle if you don't bring the thread up too high (bottom picture).

1.3 Tying technique with single knots (page 6)

If tying further out on multiple-tie stars, this can be done with single knots because the star has enough support already. The circulating thread does have a decorative function but sometimes you can do without it. Don't forget: single knots should be formed like the first, i.e. a surgeon's knot.

1.4 Tips for placing straws (page 6)

Normally the ring lies on the table while the straws are being placed. However, one sometimes has problems if the straws are long (9 inches) because the straws are curved and lie outside of the ring on the table, possibly even turning on their sides. That is maddening, because one wants the shiny side up.

One way to eliminate this problem is by elevating the ring. One can use one or two other rings as a base. If you put the clamp ring in between, the whole pedestal is quite stable.

If one sticks a rolled up paper through the middle hole, the upper ring is easily rotated (without clamp ring).

The larger crown ring points fit into the universal ring's cutout spaces from beneath.

Try it out and see what works the best for you.

Don't forget, when placing, the last-placed straw should always be held down.

1.5 Tips for splitting straw (page 6)

When using relatively few straws, use wider pieces, i.e. only split wide straws with the splitter, or use thin whole straws which you flatten in the middle. These flattened straws can also be split once by putting them through one of the splitters "knives". (see picture, page 6 - split at arrow).

In this manner, one gets wide, stable straw pieces which are good for "cross" straws on larger stars. The instruction booklet describes this process also.

Split several straws at once and then sort them according to width.

2. STARS USING THE UNIVERSAL RING (page 7)

In this chapter the stars which you can make using only the universal ring are described. That is, without the smaller crown rings.

Because this ring has 24 spaces, when placing straws in all spaces, so-called 24-point stars are formed.

2.1 24-point stars (page 7)

2.1.1 Simple 24-point star (page 7)

Prepare 24 straws 4 3/4 inches long. They should be evenly placed in the spaces.

For the first attempt, we recommend placing 24 "side" straws "over" 7 spaces because it is relatively easy to tie. Pay attention to the length of the straw for this reason. Use middle-wide split straws. (see first picture, page 7)

Place the 24 straws clockwise one right after the other in the ring, as shown in the picture at the bottom of page 7, until there are two straws in every space. Count spaces carefully while placing straws. Correct any mistakes immediately.

When you have correctly placed the 24 "side" straws, you can place 12 "cross" straws (6" long). Use widely split or whole flattened thin straws.

These are placed over the middle hole on top of the side straws. In this case the cutout spaces and tongues can be of help. If a straw is placed incorrectly, it will be on top of a cutout space on one end and a "tongue" on the other.

After placement of the "cross" straws, every space should have 3 straws. Press the rubber ring into the ring and tie as in Book I: First knot=surgeon's knot then around every set of three straws twice and once underneath the "cross" straw and pull tightly.

Important: The straws must be adjusted to the middle during tying. In addition, one needs to adjust the "side" and "cross" straws *before* removing from ring so that all are the same length. If you try to do this after removing from ring, they are easily pulled out of shape.

See photo on page 8 for finished star.

2.1.2 Multiple 24-point stars (page 9)

Of course it is possible to make multiple 24-point stars, i.e. not only 24 "side" straws, but 2 or 3 times 24 straws, for instance over 3, over 4, over 5 up to over 9 spaces.

Pay attention to the following principles: (Picture 1, page 9)

When you place over 9 spaces, you have very acute angles. In the middle the star will be very thick.

Bottom picture, page 9: If you place over 3 spaces, the angles of the points will be less acute. The middle of the star will appear empty. Tying is more difficult, but the possibilities of creativity are greater.

Suggestion: Combine the placement possibilities!

See an example of the multiple 24-point star in the photo on page 10. This is a double-placed star.

First place 24 side straws (6 in. in length) over 8 spaces in sequence.

Then place 24 side straws (6 in. in length) over 6 spaces on top of the others.

Thirdly, place 12 cross straws (wide, perhaps flattened whole, 8 2/3") on top.

Press in clamp ring and tie, adjusting as necessary. Take out of ring and cut.

It is recommended that one use a needle in tying this star.

2.1.3 Multiple 24-point Star #2 (page 11)

For this star 2 times 24 side straws are placed, however, not directly on top of each other. Rather first a simple 24-point star *over* 7 is made, taken out of the ring and cut (side straws 6 inches, cross straws 8 2/3 inch whole straws).

Then place 24 side straws (8 2/3") *over* 3 in the ring.

Finally carefully press the finished simple star back in the universal ring. The clamp ring is generally superfluous because the finished star holds the other straws in place. It is not bad if the thread of the finished star goes inside at a few points (stakes).

The second tying occurs further out as one can see by the photo (page 11).

This second tying is, by the way, much simpler than if you try to do it all as one multiple star at once.

2.2 12-point stars (page 12)

Anyone who has used the small crown ring and Book I: "Delicate Straw-Snow-Crystals" will probably want to make the stars described there in the new universal ring.

These stars are placed using the 12-point system, which means when a 24-point ring is used, only every other space is used.

As these stars will be much larger, one should use only very wide straw pieces or whole pressed straws for the simple variations so that the stars appear fuller. These stars will be referred to as "Rustic Stars".

In addition, every star made in the crown ring can be made that much larger in the universal ring.

2.2.1 Simple Rustic Star (page 12, pictured page 13)

For our first example use thin whole straws which you have flattened from the center. One needs 12 side straws and 6 cross straws 9 inches long.

Place 12 side straws into the ring as the example (page 12) shows: Count either over 7 free spaces or over 3 free tongues.

As you can see, with the 12-point system the 12 spaces and/or the 12 tongues can be used for orientation.

Place the straws on the tongues, not in the spaces.

In the same manner, continue placing the straws, one after the other, until two straws lie on each tongue.

(page 13) The remaining 6 straws are then placed across the middle hole on the tongues.

Press the clamp ring on and tie as usual, making sure the straws are centered between the points. Take the star out of the ring and cut as wished or use the example on page 13.

Such 12-point stars are very easy to tie compared to the 24-point stars. However, the placement at the beginning is somewhat more difficult. If you have problems, cut out the pattern on page 31 (12-point System) and place onto the ring.

2.2.2 Multiple Rustic Stars (page 14)

Of course, one can make many variations of double, triple and quadruple stars, as described in the first book. Now that you have mastered these stars, the directions given here will be shortened. We don't want to exclude them altogether as it takes some time to get used to the new ring.

Double Rustic Star

First place 12 straws, one after the other, *over 4* free tongues (*over 9* spaces).

Next place another 12 straws *over 3* free tongues (7 spaces). (Sketch, top, page 14)

Six (6) cross straws are then placed and tied as usual.

Quadruple Stars

For these stars you will need 4 times 12 = 48 side straws.

Place the first 12 *over 4*, the next 12 *over 3*, then *over 2*, and *over 1* free tongue(s) (see bottom sketch, page 14). Place the cross straws, clamp, tie and cut.

By carefully removing individual straws it is possible to make other stars.

The more straws are used, the thinner they should be.

Tying with a needle is also recommended. (see 1.2)

(page 15) Here is a variation of a doubly placed, simply tied rustic star.

First place *over 3* free tongues and then *over 1*. The longer the straws, the more difficult to tie it will be. Then one could also make a twice-tied star: First make a star *over 3* with cross straws, then place 12 side straws *over 1*. Place the first star on top and tie further out. This will be explained further in the next chapter.

2.2.3 Multiple tied 12-point stars (page 16)

Because of their size and the 24-points, one can craft multiple-tied 12-point stars in the universal ring without having to use the crown ring at all. The multiple-tied stars which are created by expanding smaller stars are to be found in section 3.

Since multiple tied straws are more difficult to place, the basic pattern is described in detail. The many variations are left for you to experiment with.

Double-tied Stars

Step 1: Make a simple star using 12 whole flattened straws (5 inches) and placing them *over 3* free tongues. Place 6 cross straws (7 inches), clamp and tie as usual.

Now it becomes more difficult!

First leave the star in the ring and look at the drawing (page 16 top) and the photo on page 17. As you see, 12 additional side straws must be tied from the back (ie. from underneath) parallel to the side straws of the first star. In the drawing (top) we have tried to make this clear by leaving off everything that is unnecessary. The parts of the first star are dark whereas the pieces to be placed are white. One can clearly see the intersection where the second tie is made.

One can also note the placement for the next 12 side straws. One begins in the space and places *over 5* free spaces and ends up in another space. Remove the first star from the ring and place the next 12

side straws (5.5 inches) as indicated into the ring. The first two straws are placed for you to consider in the bottom drawing (page 16)

(page 17) When all 12 side straws are placed, carefully place the finished star in the ring. *Note:* The cross straws must lie on the tongues. Make sure you know where the tying is to take place. The drawing on page 16 and the photo on page 17 should help you.

Once you have caught on how to place these stars, they can be made quite quickly since the tying is not difficult.

2.3 8-Point Stars (page 18)

With 8-point stars only every third space is occupied since the ring has 24 spaces altogether.

These 8-point stars are quite simple to produce as the tying is very simple. However one may encounter difficulties in placing straws, because the ring was originally intended for 24- or 12-point stars. In order to make placement simpler, there is a pattern on page 31 which may be cut out and placed into the ring.

The placement possibilities are *over 8* and *over 5* spaces. That is, one can make simple or double stars.

Multiple tied stars are also possible and one can work well with long and whole straws. The dashed lines on the pattern (page 31) serve to help with multiple tied stars.

2.3.1 Double 8-point Stars (Rustic Stars) (page 18)

Place the pattern correctly into the ring.

Place 8 whole flattened straws *over 8* free spaces (on the thinner line); 9" length.

An additional 8 side straws are placed on top *over 5* (on the thick line of the pattern). See also the drawing on page 18.

After the side straws, place four (4) cross straws in every third space. Press in clamp ring and begin tying. The thread should run along the outside of the ring; it can be tightened after removal from the ring by pushing it equally in all directions outward.

Such stars can also be made by children since the tying is so easy. A sample of what the star looks like can be seen in the photo on page 19.

(page 19) As you can see, these 8-point stars are quite pretty. However, there are not as many variation possibilities.

In the pattern you see dotted lines parallel to the solid lines only further out. These are to be used with multiple tied 8-point stars which are described in the next chapter.

2.3.2 Double-tied Double 8-point Stars (page 20, also with photo)

First complete the double star from the previous section. Then place 8 side straws (9 inches) according to the drawing on page 20. On the pattern (page 31) use the dashed line. Now place the finished 8-point star on top and tie at the appropriate intersections. Tie the outer points together singly.

The placed straws lie parallel to the side straws *over 5*.

Of course you may also place the straws parallel *over 8* additional straws (see pattern, page 31).

3. THE UNIVERSAL RING AS BASIS FOR STARS MADE ON THE CROWN RING (page 21)

3.1 24-point stars made from 12-point stars (page 21)

We described so-called "double stars" in the first book. In this section, two such stars from the crown ring are placed on top of each other and tied together. Before one had to hold the two stars in

his/her hand; now one can place them in the new ring making it easier to tie. Certainly one now has the possibility of considerably expanding the double stars as well.

Simple Double Stars (Completion steps) (page 21)

1. Make two simple stars, each *over 3* free spaces, in the crown ring. The larger star is made with 5 1/2 inch side straws, the smaller star with 3 1/2 inch straws. The cross straws for each are as wide as wished and can be any length.
2. Place both stars in the universal ring so that a cross straw can be placed in every space and place the cross straws. Tie on the outside *on every other* cross straw.

You may also use two stars of the same size or put the stars back to back.

Photo on page 21 shows a simple double star (24-point star made of two smaller 12-point stars).

Double star with 24 additional side straws (page 22)

As already indicated, one can expand these stars by "garnishing" a 24-point star. Our example is made as follows:

1. First complete a star *over 3* free spaces (or a simple double star) in each of the crown rings; side straws approximately 3 inches long, wide cross straws, 9 inches long.
2. Place 24 side straws (9 inches) in the universal ring *over 5* free spaces as described in 2.1.1.
3. Now place the two finished small stars on top (in every space a cross straw) so that three straws are in every space.
4. Clamp, tie and cut (for instance as shown in photo #10 on page 22).

Also in this case, one should arrange the straws in the universal ring before taking out and cutting.

If this star doesn't seem attractive enough to you, you may want to place another 24 side straws and tie them on (i.e., *over 7*). Use your imagination.

Photo #10 Triple-tied Double Star

3.2 24-point star from a small 12-point star (page 23)

It is relatively simple to produce stars of this kind: First complete a small 12-point star in a crown ring. Then place 24 side straws however you wish in the universal ring. Instead of a second small star, 6 cross straws are placed on the side straws and then the finished small star is tied on top.

Our example (photo page 23) is made as follows:

1. Make a double star in the large crown ring, *over 2 and 3* (12 side straws, 2 1/2 inches long, twice); 9 inch long cross straws.
2. Place 24 side straws (7 inches long) *over 8* free spaces in the universal ring.
3. Place 6 shorter cross straws (6 inches long) on the tongues of the ring.
4. Now place the small double star on top. Note: Place the cross straws on top of the cutout spaces.
5. Clamp and tie; cut as wished.

Variation, quadruple-tied (page 24)

A veritable showpiece is the following star; however it takes quite a bit of time since one must tie four times.

1. First make a double star (*over 3 and 4*) in the larger crown ring.

2. In the universal ring place 24 side straws *over 5* free spaces and 6 cross straws in every other space (i.e., on the tongues). (These straws can't be seen in the photo #12, page 24, but should be placed for better precision.)
3. Now place the finished star into the universal ring (cross straws in the free spaces) and tie.
4. Take out the star and place 24 side straws *over 6*. Place the star on top and tie.
5. Take out the star and place 24 side straws *over 9*. Place the star on top and finish.

3.3 Multiple-tied 12-point Stars (page 25)

In the first book we explained the multiple-tied stars. However, one had to tie them in the hand without a ring. With the new ring, tying is easier since the stars can lie in the ring.

Before you attempt these stars, read chapter 2.2.3 in this book in which the simple multiple-tied stars using the universal ring are explained.

The goal is to tie additional straws narrowly parallel to a small 12-point star made in one of the crown rings. In extreme cases must one tie in the spaces in order to achieve this.

Stars tied in the spaces

First of all make a simple star *over 3* free spaces in the larger crown form. Side straws approximately 6 inches long; wide cross straws, 9 inches long.

Place this star in the universal ring with the cross straws lying in the cutout spaces. (see drawing, page 25)

In order to better see how to place further straws, place a straw parallel to an already tied straw and count the free spaces in between. Our example shows *over 7*.

Take the star out of the ring and place 12 side straws as determined above. *Note:* Since only every other space is used (12-point star), place a straw from one cutout space to the next (shown, page 25). The tongues remain open at this point.

(page 26) When the 12 side straws are placed, the already tied star is placed on top in order to tie the side straws.

You will notice that the intersecting points of the straws lie within the ring. You will need the spaces in which to tie, so the clamp ring cannot be used yet.

Tying is quite difficult in this case and should only be tried by those who have some experience. The stakes must be used in tying and the tying artist will have fun with this. In the ring you will find concentric circles on which you can orient yourself so that the star will be nice and round.

Take the star out of the ring. It should look like the top picture on page 26.

Since the spaces are wide enough, one can place the next set of side straws again *over 7* (see page 25) and repeat the tying procedure. The intersection occurs this time just outside the ring.

At this point we have a triple-tied star which can be cut accordingly.

However, one can place up to three further sets of side straws: *twice over 5* and then *once over 3* free spaces.

That is, theoretically one can make sextuple stars from one star made in the larger crown ring and septuple stars using a star from the small crown ring.

Whether it is worth the trouble is left up to you to decide.

If you forego placing the straws quite tightly parallel, you can tie outside the ring, and that is simpler.

(page 27) If you severely cut the triple-tied star, it can look like the picture, top of page 27.

However, if you place 12 side straws over 5 free spaces twice and tie tightly (one after the other, of course), you end up with this quintuple-tied star. (photo bottom of page 27). The initial star in this photo is a double over 2 and over 3 star.

Photo #13: Quintuple-tied 12-point star (tied on the inside)

(page 28) The drawing at the top shows more clearly how often one can tie on additional straws. Over 9 is only possible with stars from the small crown ring.

The photo on page 28 (#14) shows a star, the starting point of which is an over 3 done in the small crown ring. In the universal ring tie first over 9, twice over 7 and once over 5 each time using 12 straws.

Stars tied on the outside of the ring (page 29)

Tying inside the universal ring is relatively difficult. But when one wants to place straws tightly together and parallel, one must learn this technique.

It is possible, of course, to expand 12-point stars from the crown ring in such a way that the tying is done outside of the ring and thus is simpler.

In order to do these, use the following variation instructions which have been abbreviated since the detailed instructions were already given in the previous chapter and in chapter 2.2.3.

Triple-tied 12-point Star (pictured, page 29, tied on the outside of ring)

1. Make a double star in the large crown ring (*over and over 3*); side straws 3 1/2 inches long, cross straws 6 inches long.
2. Make a double placement in the universal ring: each placement using 12 straws (7 1/2 inches) *over 5* and *over 7* free spaces.
3. Place the finished star on top, clamp tightly and tie, then remove.
4. Now place 12 additional straws (4 1/2 inches) *over 3* free spaces from one cutout space to another cutout space.
5. Tie the finished star on top and cut.

Quadruple-tied 12-point Star (page 30) (pictured #16, tied outside ring)

1. Make a double star in the large crown ring (*over 3 and over 4*); side straws 3 inches long; cross straws 7 inches long.
2. Place 12 side straws (9 inches) *over 7* free spaces from tongue to tongue in the universal ring.
3. Tie the small star on top and remove.
4. Place 12 side straws (6 1/2 inches) *over 5* from cutout space to cutout space.
5. Tie on the finished star and remove.
6. Repeat steps 4 and 5. Cut.

Alternative to placing and tying

Instead of taking the star out of the form each time in order to place new side straws, one can also place the small star first thing in the universal ring *with the back side up* ("on its face"). The side straws must also be placed accordingly (*shiny side down*). For tying the clamp ring is pressed in and *the form is turned over*) making it possible to tie as usual.

(page 31) These forms can be cut out laid in the universal ring. They make it easier to orient oneself when placing straws. (On the left is the 12-point star, on the right the 8-point star).