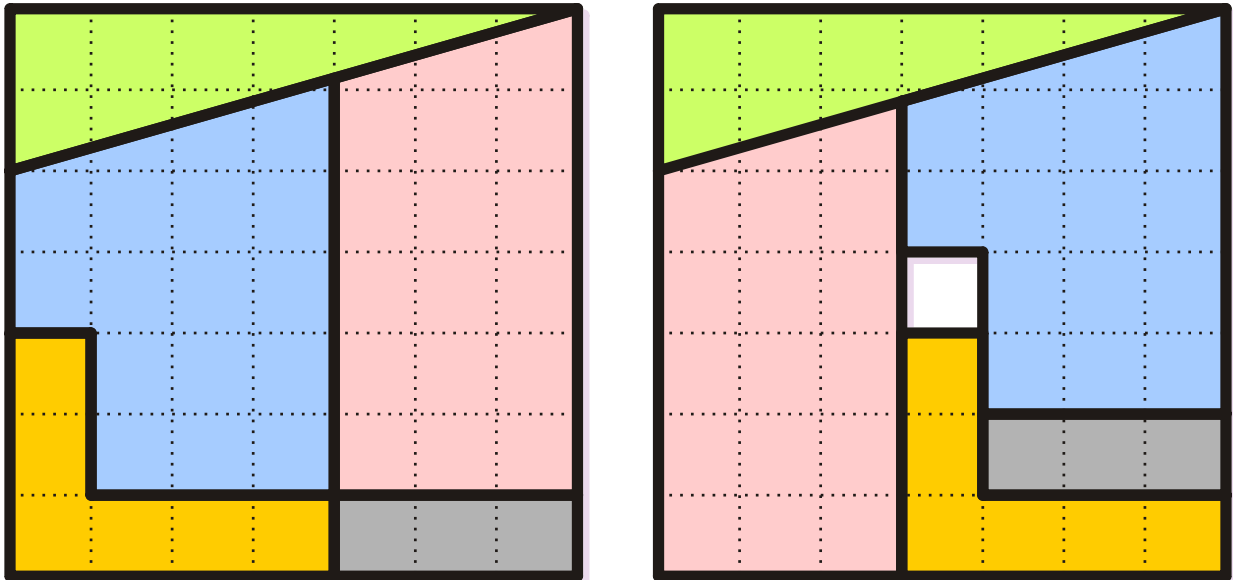


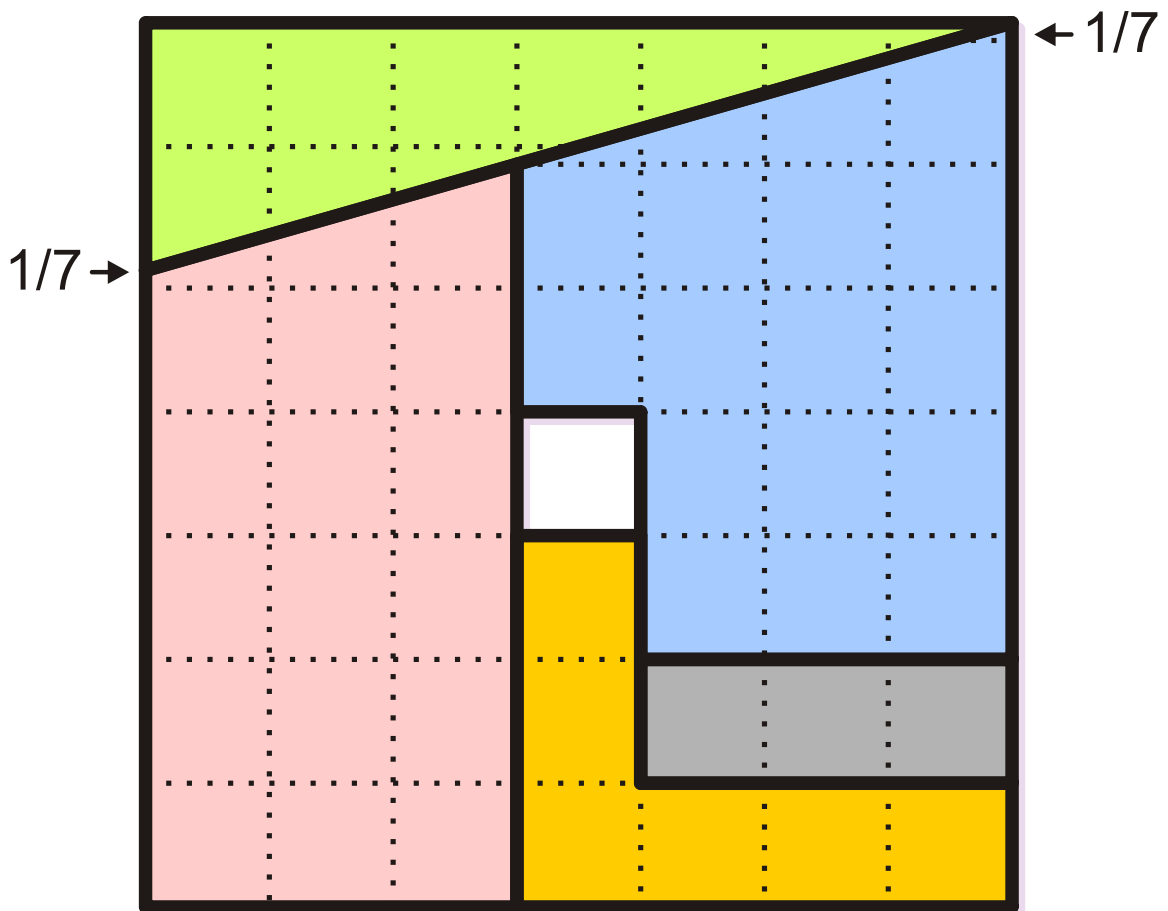
Magic Square

by Paul Curry

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A 7x7 square in the left part of the illustration is divided into five pieces. Now if we rearrange the pieces in the way as shown in the right part of the illustration, we will get the same 7x7 square but... with a small square hole in the center. How could this happen?



When the two largest pieces are exchanged, each small square that is cut by the diagonal line becomes a little bit higher than it is wide. This means that the large square is no longer a perfect square. It has increased in height by an area that is exactly equal to the area of the 1x1 hole.