

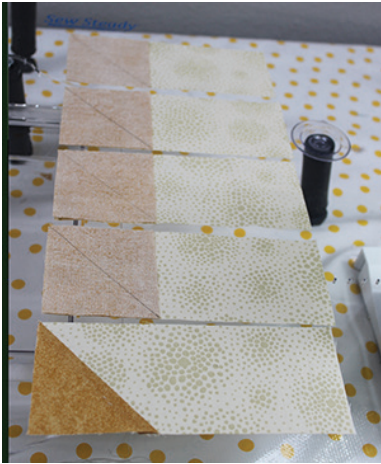
Part 1 Notes

Mystery Quilt 2014 Quilt Along is Connecting Threads second mystery quilt activity. The Notes section, for each of the three parts of the pattern, will provide some instruction, tips and photos to complement the pattern.

Stitch & Flip:

The stitch & flip technique works well for adding the corner triangles on the rectangles in Part 1, Steps 1 to 3. Place an **A** on the left end of a **C** with the marked diagonal line oriented as shown. The pattern's design will not work later if the diagonal line goes the wrong way.

Chain-piecing helps with speed and consistency of sewing. Lay out several units in the same way.



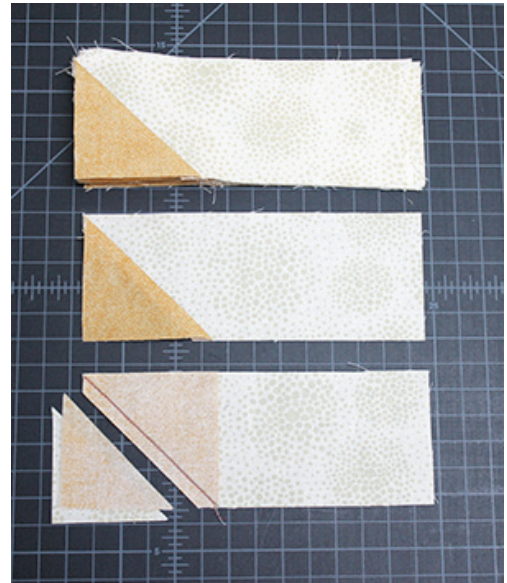
Sew the units one after another without stopping to cut the threads between them. *Hint:* It is important to make one unit correctly first! It is frustrating to have to “unsew” the same mistake in several units. Been there, done that!

Sew alongside the marked line on the side closer to the corner, instead of directly on the line. This method, which takes into account the thickness of the thread and fabric, allows for precise placement of the fabric fold over the sewn seam line.



Cut the threads joining the chained pieces. Trim leaving a 1/4" seam allowance. Press toward the corner.

Note: It is very important that the diagonal seam is exactly at the corner for an accurate 1/4" seam allowance and sharp point later.



Fabric gets jammed down in throat plate?

If the corner of the fabric gets jammed down in the throat plate at the onset of sewing, here are some things to try:

- Hold both threads with first stitches
- Start sewing the diagonal line on the side instead of the corner
- Use a fabric leader to start and/or chain stitch
- Switch to a single hole throat plate
- Replace needle with a fresh one

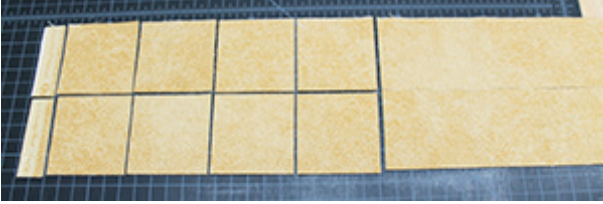
Too many diagonal lines to draw?

Here are some sewing aides which eliminate the need to draw lines for stitch and flip and making HSTs:

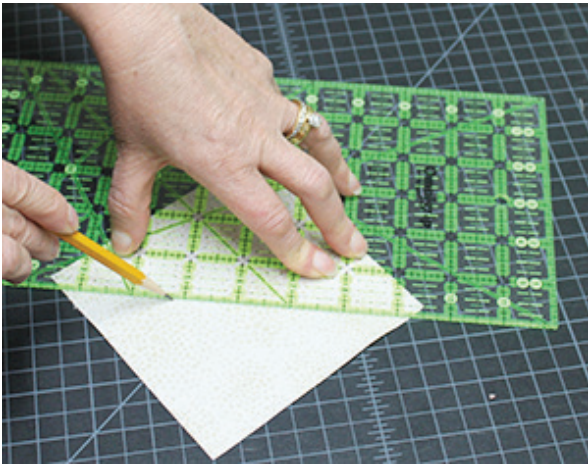
- 81088 The Angler Tool 2
- 81762 Sew Easy Guide
- 82016 Fast 2 Sew
- 82167 Sew Steady Universal Table Insert Grid

Half-Square Triangles - Method 1:

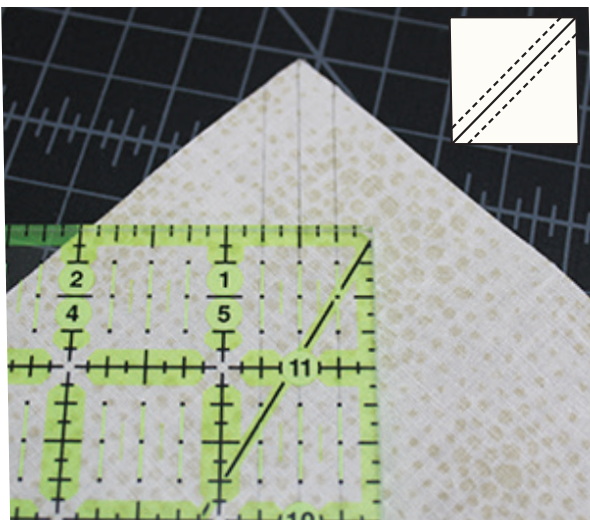
There are numerous ways to construct half-square triangles (HSTs). One common way is to add $7/8$ " to the finished size of the HST, to determine the size of fabric square to be cut. In this pattern, the HSTs will be 4" finished, so squares of two different fabrics are cut at $4-7/8$ ".



One diagonal line is drawn on the WS of the lighter fabric. Place your pencil exactly at the corner; where your line needs to start, and move the ruler up against it. Draw with a sharp pencil held at a 45° angle.

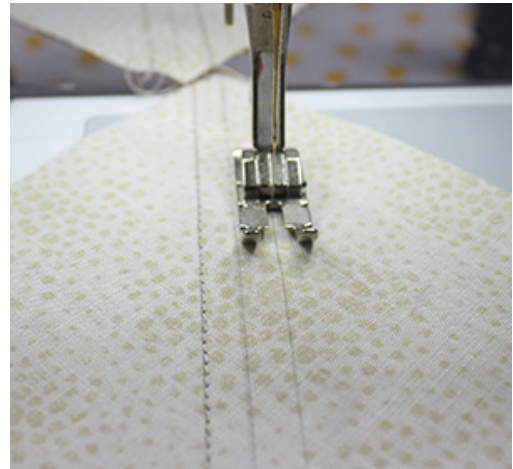


Then draw lines on each side of the center line, $1/4$ " away. The dashed lines in the diagram are the sewing lines; the solid center line is the cutting line. The drawn lines should line up with the lines on your ruler.



Lay two $4-7/8$ " squares with RS sides together and the lighter fabric with the marked lines on top.

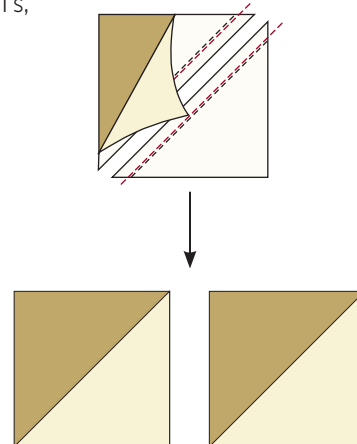
Here is the tricky part - There is no room for error with this method if you use $4-7/8$ " squares. It works best to sew alongside the $1/4$ " (dashed) lines, not on them, on the sides closer to the center. This allows the fabric to fold on the marked line. Sewing a straight line is very important!



To decrease the number of drawn lines, some quilters draw only the center line and use the edge of a $1/4$ " presser foot to guide sewing. Others place the $1/4$ " line of a ruler on the centered diagonal (solid) and only draw the sewing (dashed) lines.

The sewing aides mentioned in the stitch and flip section may also be used to avoid drawing lines at all. Keep in mind, if you are using $4-7/8$ " squares, a scant $1/4$ " seam is needed; drawing the lines may increase accuracy.

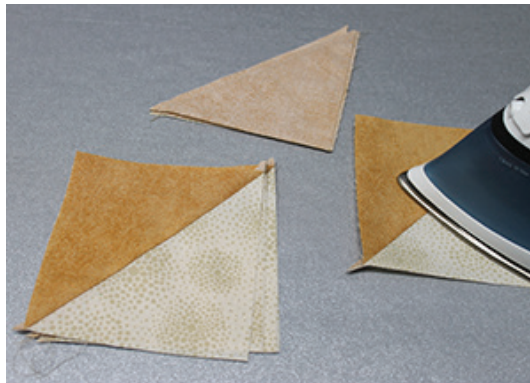
Cut on the center diagonal line to separate the unit into two HSTs,



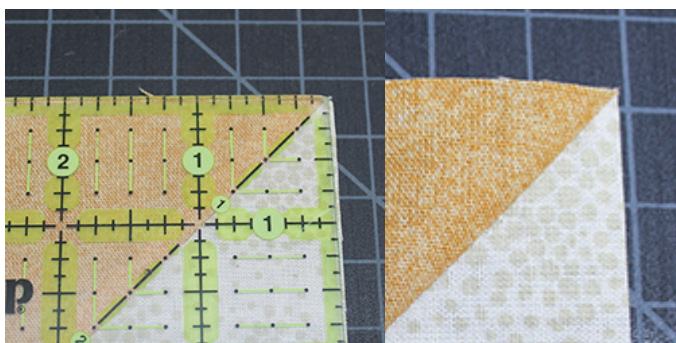
For efficient pressing, decide which direction to press the seam allowance (the pattern tells you). Stack the HSTs with that color triangle on top and the seam away from you. Pick up the HSTs, one at a time, and set the seam with your iron.



Gently open the HST and press. Tips to minimize stretching of the HST unit include using a dry iron, a non-slippery pressing surface, and pressing instead of vigorous ironing.



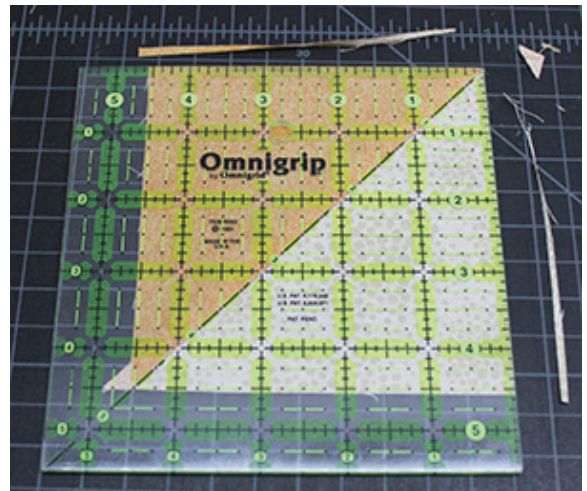
The seam line should be exactly at the corner! If not, trim slightly if needed. This will help you have an adequate 1/4" seam allowance and sharp point later.



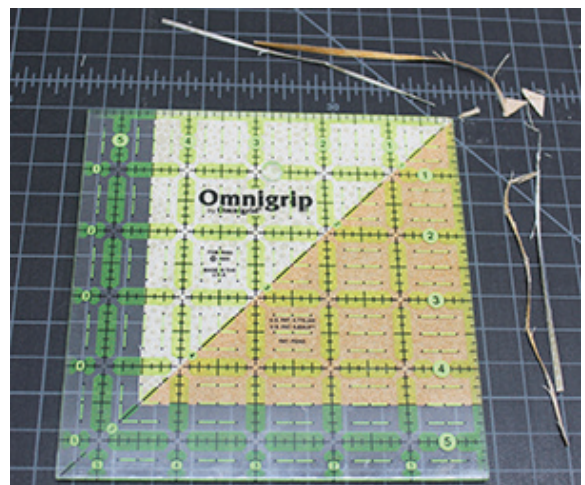
Precise cutting, sewing, and pressing are needed to make HSTs from 4-7/8" squares turn out well. We use this measurement in patterns because it is the correct math. However...

Many quilters, including myself, find it much easier and more accurate to cut the squares slightly oversized by adding 1" to the finished size (instead of 7/8"). For this pattern, I would prefer to cut 5" squares, sew and press, and square-up the HSTs to 4-1/2" after pressing. This usually results in a perfect HST even if the cutting, piecing, and pressing have been less than perfect!

To square up a HST, place the ruler (preferably a square one) with the 1" and 1" in the upper right corner; the 45° angle line on the diagonal seam, and the seam exactly in the corners. Make sure there is room for the 4-1/2" HST to be cut. Trim as needed on the top and right edges.



Rotate the HST 180° so the previously cut edges are on 4-1/2" lines are on the left and bottom edges. The 45° angle line should be on the diagonal seam with the seam precisely in the corner.



Tah dah! A stack of beautiful HSTs ready for Part 2!

