

# Basic Paper Piecing Instructions

(Again, remember to keep these instruction pages in the back of the calendar because you will use this technique throughout the year.)

This very popular technique ensures accuracy because you use the pattern lines as your sewing lines:

1. Photocopy or trace as many foundation patterns as needed for your project. Make all photocopies from the original, and not from a copy. The printed side is the side you will be sewing on and will be the **BACKSIDE** of your finished block (Illustration 1). The finished block will be the **MIRROR** image of the pattern.
2. Some blocks are pieced as a whole and some are subdivided into sections. A block with more than one section (as indicated with a heavy, **RED** line) must be cut apart, pieced separately, and then each section is joined together into a whole. Always allow for **1/4" seam allowances** around each unit.
3. Choose a #80/12 or #90/14 sewing machine needle and adjust your stitch length to 15-20 stitches per inch. This perforates the paper and makes it easier to tear it away from the fabric block after the block is finished.
4. Be generous in cutting out the fabric for your patches. You must have enough fabric to not only cover the intended space, but the fabric should extend **AT LEAST 1/4"** across the seam line.
5. Fabric is placed on the **UNPRINTED** side. Place fabric patch #1 right side up and secure it with a tiny dab of paper/fabric glue or a small pin (Illustration 2). Make sure the raw edges of Patch #1 extend beyond the sewing lines. Hold it up to a light source to aid in placement. (**Remember, when a pattern is asymmetrical, it will be the mirror image of the finished block**).
6. Place Patch #2 over Patch #1, right sides together. Again, make sure the fabric is large enough to generously extend 1/4" to 1/2" over the seam line. Secure both patches with a pin (Illustration 3).

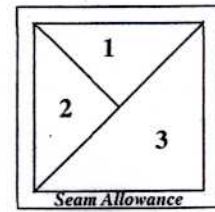


Illustration 1

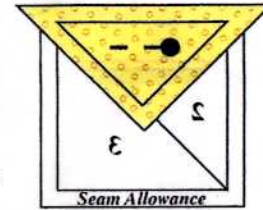


Illustration 2

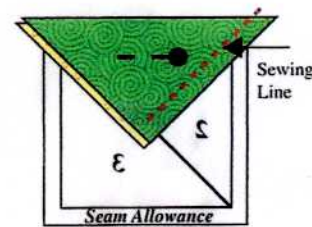


Illustration 3

7. Flip paper over and sew along the line on the paper, joining these two patches. Illustration 3 shows the fabric side with the stitching line. Fold back paper along sewn line and trim the fabric seam allowance to 1/4". Press open the patches from the right side (Illustration 4).
8. Add piece #3 in the same manner (Illustration 5). Continue sewing your patches in numerical order until the block (or unit) is finished.
9. Use a rotary cutter and ruler to trim your block to 1/4" seam allowance around the outside edges (Illustration 6). The finished block is the reverse/mirror image of your paper pattern.
10. You can remove the paper now or wait until all your blocks are joined into a quilt. When removing the paper, take care to gently tug—**do not overly strain the stitching**. Support the seam with one hand as the other is pulling the paper away. Using lightweight paper is a perfect choice for your foundation.

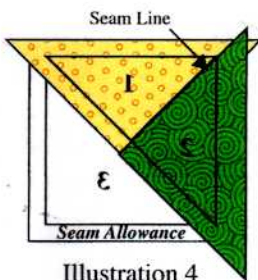


Illustration 4

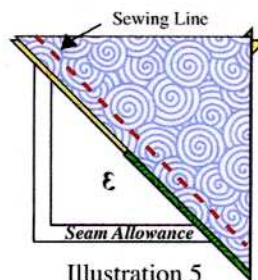


Illustration 5

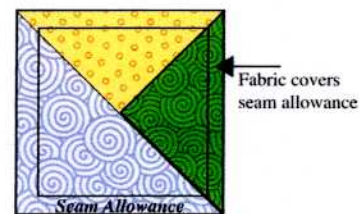


Illustration 6

For more detailed paper piecing lessons, visit [www.quilterbydesign.com](http://www.quilterbydesign.com), *Quilt Magazine's* website at [www.quiltmag.com](http://www.quiltmag.com) or Marcia Hahn's website at [www.quilterscache.com](http://www.quilterscache.com).