

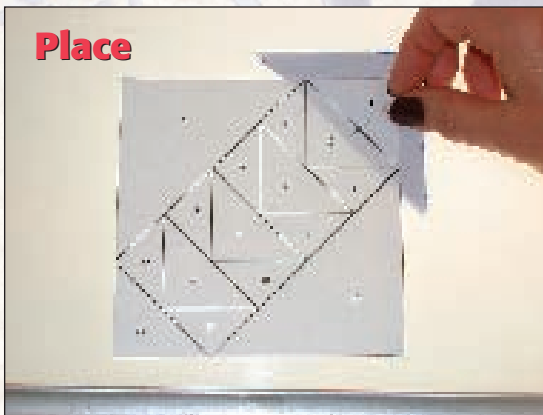
Piece by Piece

A Foundation Piecing Primer Part 3

Join Brenda Groelz as she introduces you to the fun world of foundation piecing. Also known as paper piecing, this is a great method for piecing accurate points, odd angles and tiny pieces. Part 1 (*McCall's Quick Quilts*, November, 2003) covered the basics, trimming tips, and Brenda's favorite tools. Part 2 (*McCall's Quick Quilts*, January, 2004) covered sewing assembly-style. Each article in this series will review the basics (for those just joining us) and will introduce a new topic.

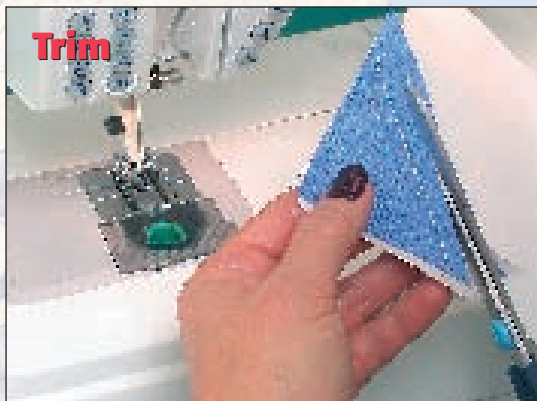
This issue, we work with half-square triangles. Pre-cutting makes quick work of piecing by taking the guesswork out of placing the fabrics. It also ensures that your pieces are on-grain after sewing. Read through the following steps and tips, then try your hand at foundation piecing triangles with Delft Blue, an elegant new quilt that Brenda designed just for you (page 16).

Place



A Place white and blue triangles right sides together, and place behind #1 position, with wrong side of white triangle to the unprinted side of the foundation. Be sure that both triangles extend approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ " into the #2 position. There should also be at least $\frac{1}{4}$ " of fabric extending beyond the edges of the paper foundation.

Trim



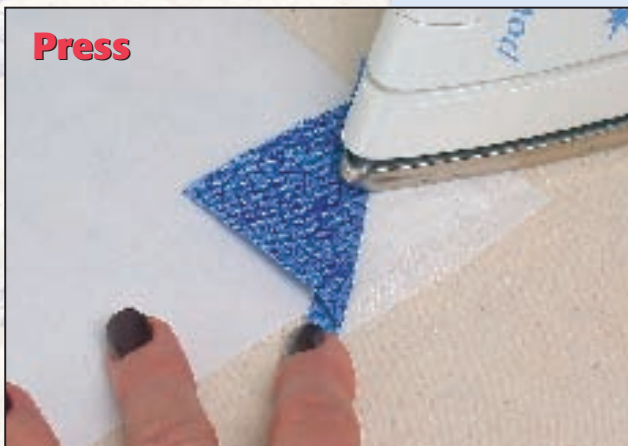
C Using scissors placed between paper and fabric, trim seam allowance to $\frac{1}{4}$ " if needed. Just eyeball it. It doesn't have to be perfect!

Sew



B Hold fabrics in place and turn printed side up. Stitch along line between #1 and #2 positions, using short stitch length (15-18 stitches per inch). Start and end 2-3 stitches beyond the end of the line. Remove from machine and clip all threads.

Press



D Press seam allowance flat from fabric side, then flip blue triangle to cover #2 position and press again. **Note:** If you have photocopied the foundation, avoid touching the printed side with iron. Toner will melt and transfer to your iron and fabrics.

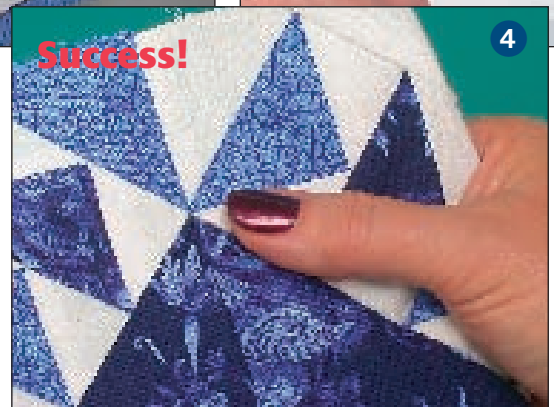
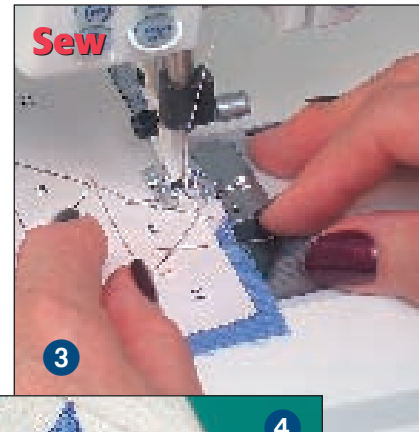
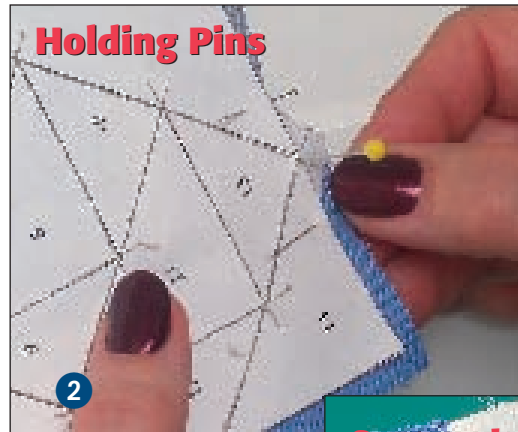
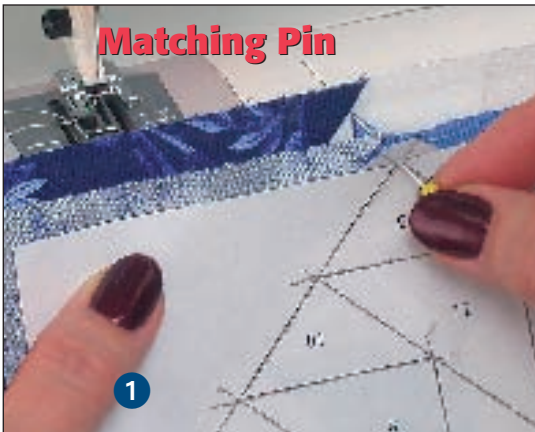
E Place white triangle right side to unprinted side of foundation, with long edge of triangle along seamline between #2 and #3. The triangle should be behind #2, with only a seam allowance extending behind the #3 position. **Note:** From now on, all fabrics are placed right sides to the paper. In this design, all triangles are placed and stitched along their long sides.



F Place, stitch, trim, and press remaining fabrics, following number order until you have finished piecing the entire block. Trim darker seam allowances narrower than light ones, to avoid show-through. Be sure to allow extra fabric beyond the edges of the paper foundation.



G Note: Do not cut fabric along edge of paper! Turn block paper side up and align $\frac{1}{4}$ " mark of ruler along edge of paper foundation. Rotary cut away extra fabric on all four sides, creating a perfect $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. Leave paper in!



Matching Points and Joining Blocks

A design like Delft Blue calls for accuracy when joining blocks. Brenda uses long, thin pins to match points and hold her blocks together.

Photo 1

Push pin through match point of 1st block and then through match point of 2nd block. Leave pin poking straight through fabric.

Note: Stitch slowly if stitching over pins, and wear eye protection (you knew those bifocals would come in handy).

Photo 2

Push pins through on either side of match point pin to hold blocks in place. Remove match point pin. Pin ends of block if needed. Brenda prefers $\frac{1}{4}$ " silk pins, which are long enough to hold well, and thin enough to stitch over if needed.

Photo 3

Change to normal stitch length (10-12 stitches per inch), and sew along edge of paper foundation. Short stitches are not necessary since you're not stitching through paper. Seamlines between blocks will iron flatter with the longer seam allowance (and are easier to rip out, if your pinning was not successful).

Photo 4

Keep pinning and sewing blocks together to finish your quilt. Leave papers in until after borders have been added.