

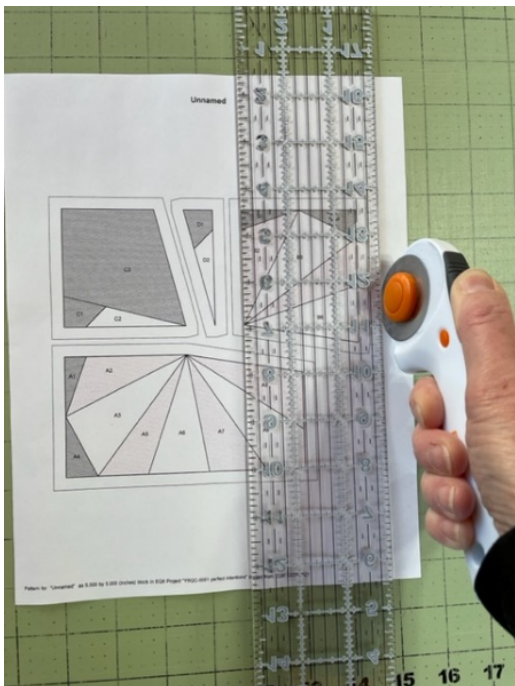


GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR FOUNDATION PAPER PIECING (FPP)

Foundation paper piecing may seem difficult, but once you “get the hang of it”, the process is very simple and the results are very accurate. I have done my best to take you step-by-step through the process. However, I would suggest you read through these instructions, then go to YouTube and search for tutorials and watch a couple. Then, come back and follow the steps to create your first block.

GATHER YOUR SUPPLIES

- Foundation Pattern
- Paper – either copy of special foundation piecing paper, to print pattern onto
- Fabric scraps or strips
- Sewing machine
- Neutral color thread
- Bright window or light
- Quilters Ruler
- Add-A-Quarter Ruler (not necessary but very helpful)
- Rotary Cutter
- Cutting Mat
- Straight Pins
- Wonder clips (not necessary but handy)
- Seam Roller or Iron and Ironing Mat

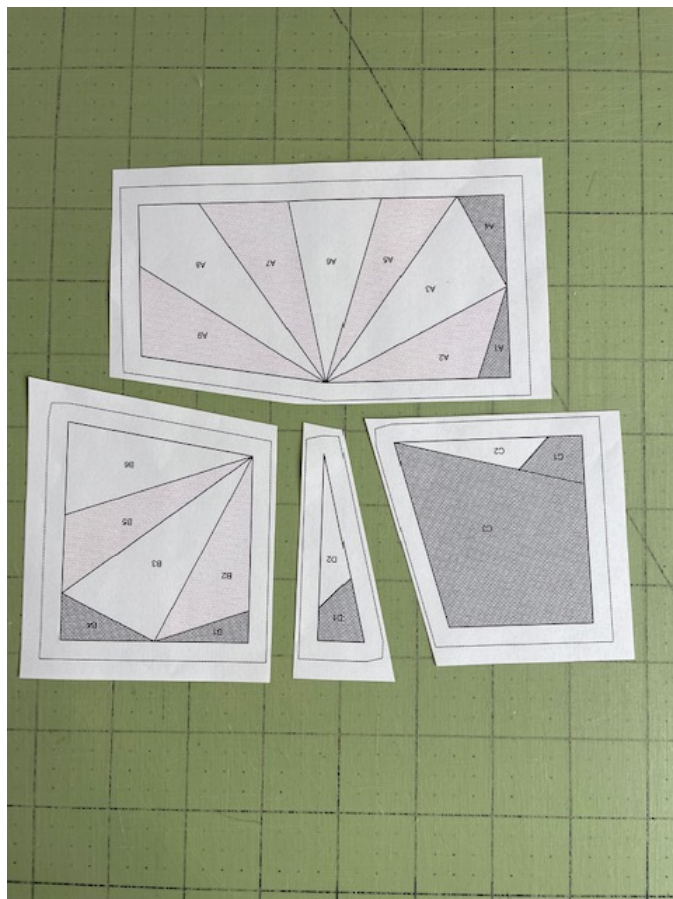


STEP 1. PRINT AND TRIM YOUR PATTERN

Print the foundation pattern onto inexpensive copy paper or paper sold specifically for FPP. You may notice that the printed foundation pattern is a MIRROR IMAGE of the finished block. This is because you will be sewing through the paper, with the fabrics on the reverse side of the paper pattern. When all is done, and you flip the pattern over, the block will be as shown in your pattern.

TIP: Since cutting paper can dull rotary cutter blades, keep a rotary cutter specifically for FPP.

Some blocks will consist of just one section and others will consist of multiple sections. Trim the paper pattern(s) by cutting about $\frac{1}{4}$ " beyond the dashed seam allowance line. The solid border on the pattern is the finished size of the block after it is sewn to other blocks. You will need one foundation pattern for each block you intend to complete. Please note that each section of the pattern is labeled with numbers that indicate the order that the fabric will be sewn down.



STEP 2. PREP YOUR FABRICS

Gather all the fabrics you intend to use. You can either use strips of fabric or scraps, whichever you prefer. If you plan to use strips, cut each strip in a width large enough to cover the designated area on the pattern. If you plan to use scraps, make sure they are large enough to cover the intended area.

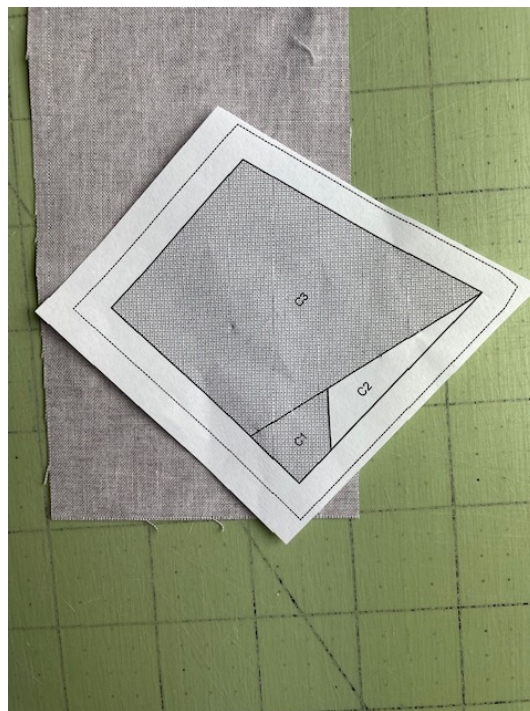
If this is your first time doing a FPP project you may find it helpful to label each numbered section of the pattern with the color of fabric you plan to place there.

STEP 3. PREP YOUR SEWING MACHINE

Thread your sewing machine with a neutral thread and set your stitch length to a very small setting (1.5 mm or 18-20 stitches per inch depending on your machine). This small stitch length makes removal of the paper pieces easier.

STEP 4. ALIGN THE FIRST FABRIC

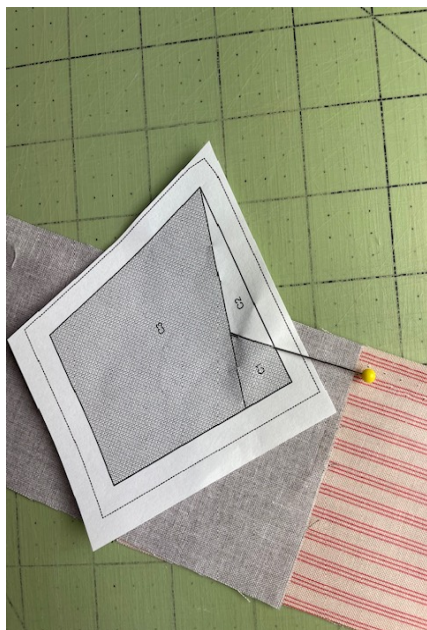
Find the Section labeled 1 or A1 on your foundation template. Cut a piece of fabric from a scrap or a strip of the appropriate color that is at least $\frac{1}{4}$ " larger than the designated section on all sides. Place this piece of fabric right side up on the wrong (unprinted) side of the first section to be covered. The wrong side of the fabric should be against the wrong side of the pattern. Check to see if the fabric will cover the entire area by holding the unit up to a light source with the printed side of the foundation facing you. If the entire section is covered, pin it in place (or use a dab of glue from a glue stick). If there isn't at least $\frac{1}{4}$ " of fabric extending past each line of Section 1 (or A1), you will need to adjust the position of the fabric.



TIP 1: Having a larger seam allowance is fine since this will be trimmed away. Better to be safe than sorry.

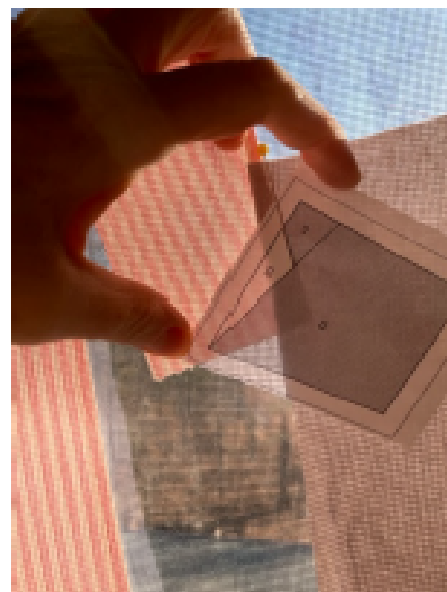
TIP 2: The first piece of fabric is the only one that you will align with wrong side to wrong side. The remaining fabrics will always be placed right sides together with fabric 1 (which has been secured to your template) while sewing.

STEP 5. ADDING THE NEXT PIECE OF FABRIC AND SEWING THE FIRST SEAM

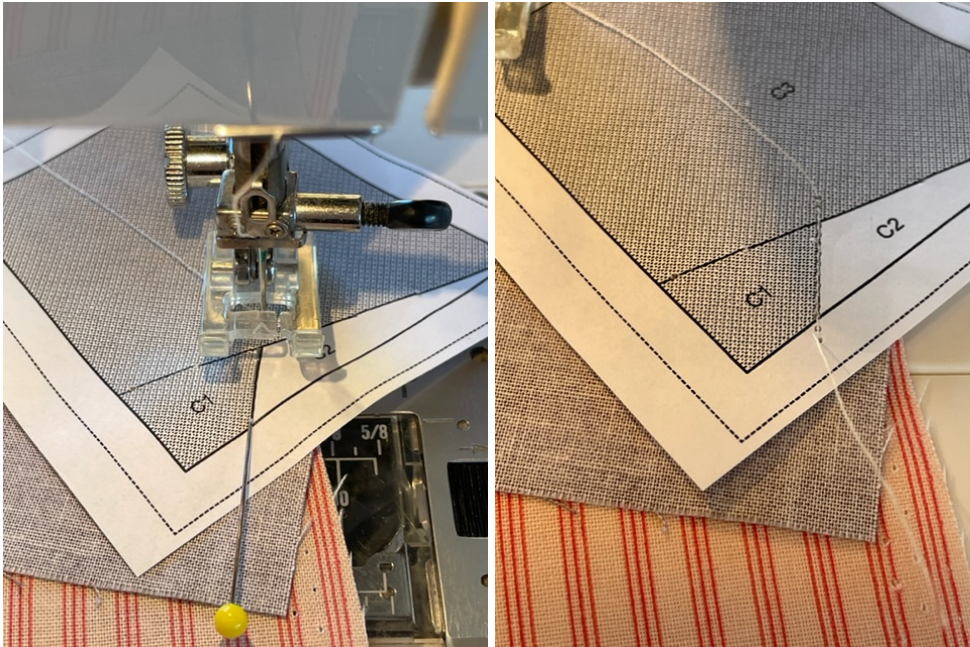


Prepare the piece of fabric for Section 2 (or A2) by cutting a piece that measures at least $\frac{1}{4}$ " larger than the designated section on all sides. Place fabric 2 right sides together over fabric 1, making sure there is at least $\frac{1}{4}$ " overlapping the template line between Sections 1 and 2. This overlap will become the seam allowance between after sewing.

On the printed side of the foundation paper, pin directly into the sewing line. Flip the fabric over as if you had already sewn it, and hold it up to a light source. Is it covering Section 2 with at least a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance on all sides? If not, unpin and reposition. (Once you are comfortable with FPP you can skip this step.)

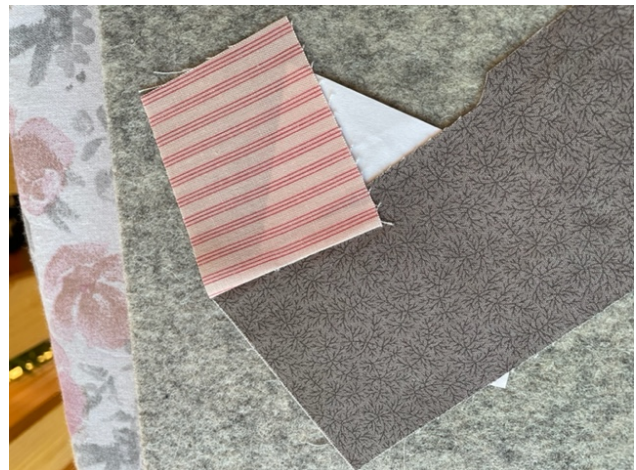
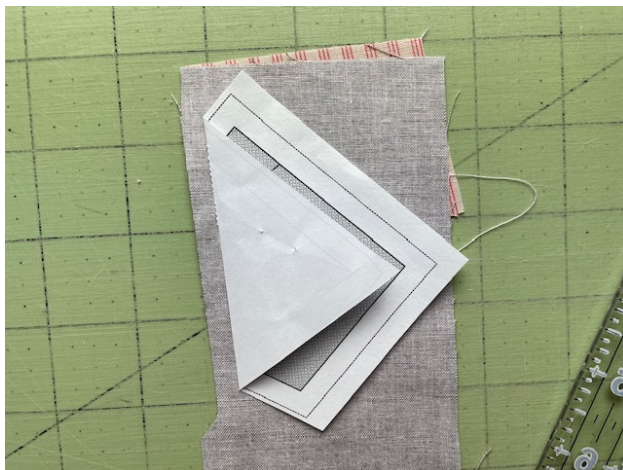
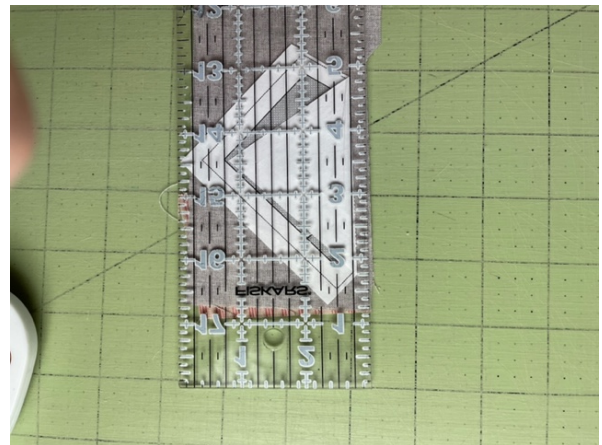


Once you are confident with the alignment, take the piece to your sewing machine, position it under the presser foot with the printed side facing up, and carefully remove the pins. Lower the needle a few stitches before the beginning of the line that divides Sections 1 and 2, then lower the presser foot. Sew directly on the line, extending the line of stitching 3-4 stitches after the end of the stitching line. There is no need to backstitch to lock the stitches.



6. TRIM THE EXCESS FABRIC, FLIP AND PRESS

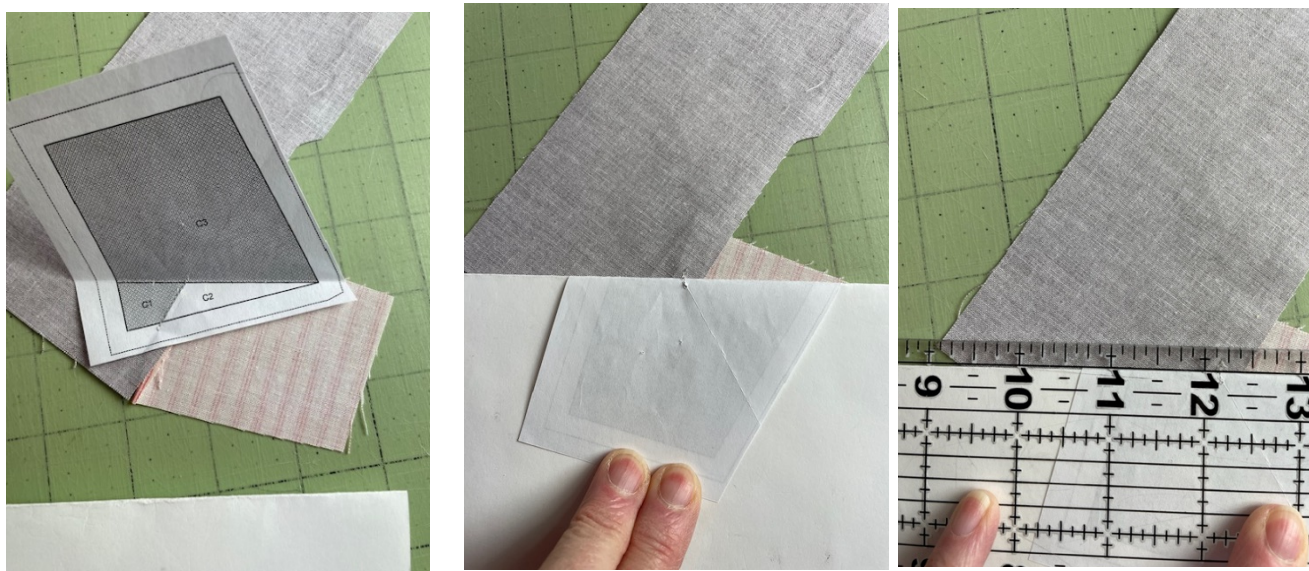
Gently fold the foundation paper, exposing the seam allowance, and using an Add-a-Quarter ruler or a quilting ruler and rotary cutter trim the excess fabric. Then place the foundation, with the printed side down, on a pressing mat or ironing board. Fold the fabric into place and press it with a dry iron. Do not use the steam function.



STEP 7. PREPARE THE NEXT SEWING LINE

With the printed side of the foundation paper facing you, align a piece of cardstock or a straight edge along the next sewing line. Fold the paper back over the cardstock to crease the paper along this line. This will expose the excess fabric from sewing the fabrics to Section 1 and Section 2. If the previous stitching prevents you from folding the paper, carefully tear it away from the stitches so the paper folds completely over the cardstock.

If you have an Add-A-Quarter ruler place it on the crease so the $\frac{1}{4}$ " lip is pushed up against it, then trim the excess fabric, leaving a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. If you do not have the Add-a-Quarter ruler, you can use a regular quilting ruler and line up the $\frac{1}{4}$ " line on the ruler with the crease in the paper and trim to create the $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. **DO NOT** align the edge of the ruler with the crease as that will result in you cutting off the seam allowance.



STEP 8. PRESS

After trimming, unfold the template and place it flat, fabric side up, and open fabric 2. Press using a hot, dry iron (or a seam roller or finger press). Your seam allowance will automatically press to the side.

STEP 9. ALIGN, SEW, CHECK, FOLD, TRIM, PRESS, REPEAT

Now we just repeat as many times as needed until the block or block section is complete!

First - Align the fabric for template Section 3 (or **A3**) and place it right sides together with the fabrics already sewn to the template. Hold the unit up to a bright window or light source to make sure there is at least $\frac{1}{4}$ " of fabric 3 overlapping the template line that joins Section 3, and that when the fabric 3 is

opened it will cover all of Section 3 with at least 1/4" of fabric around the edges of Section 3. Pin or hold the fabric in place and move to your sewing machine, printed template side up.

Second - Sew along the line that joins Section 3 to the foundation template, starting a few stitches before the start of the line and stopping a few stitches past the end of the line.

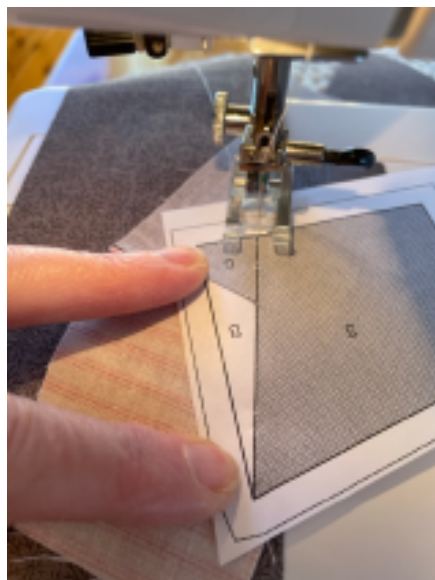
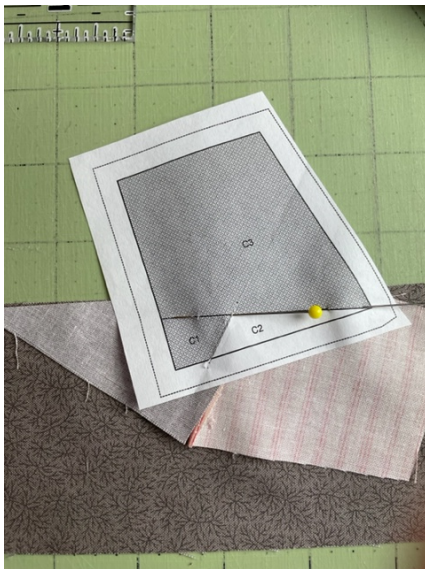
Third - Check that the fabric still fully covers the designated section by at least 1/4" fabric around all edges.

Fourth - Fold back the template paper along the stitching line you just completed.

Fifth - Trim away any excess fabric by aligning your ruler 1/4" from the fold of the fabric to create the seam allowance.

Sixth - Press the fabric open by laying the template fabric side up on a flat surface. Use a hot, dry iron, or a seam roller, or finger press.

AND..... Repeat these steps until your block or block section is complete!

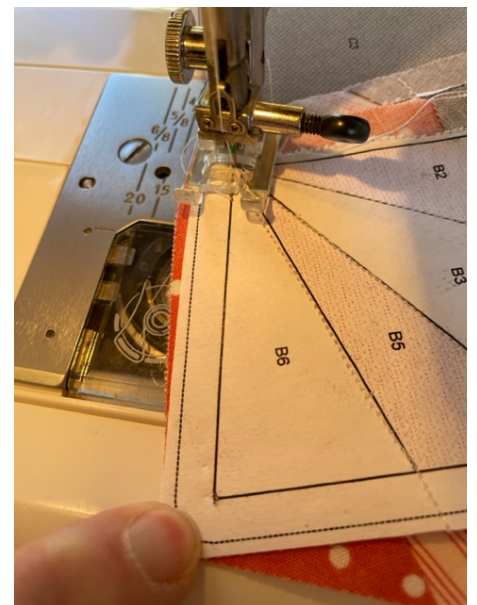
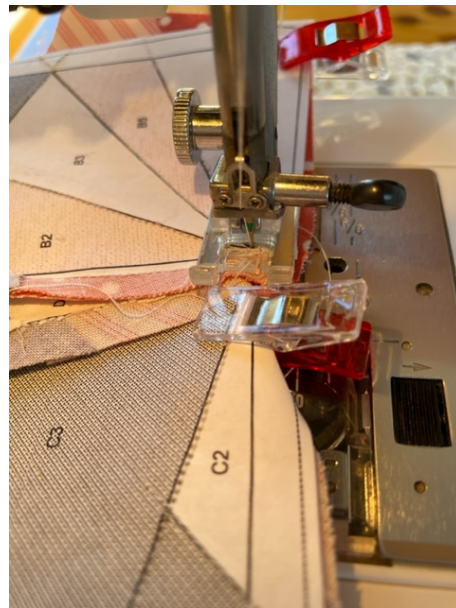
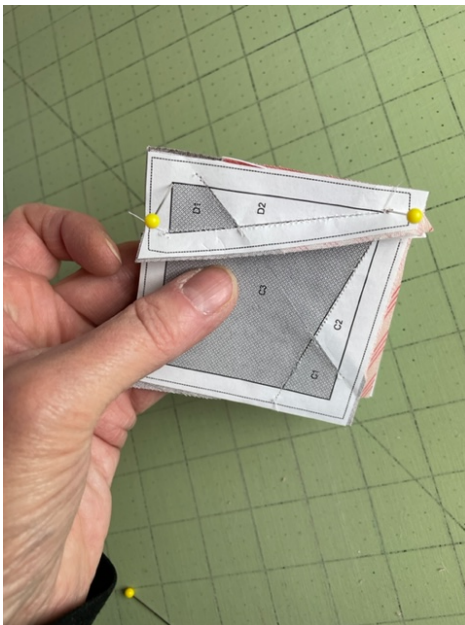
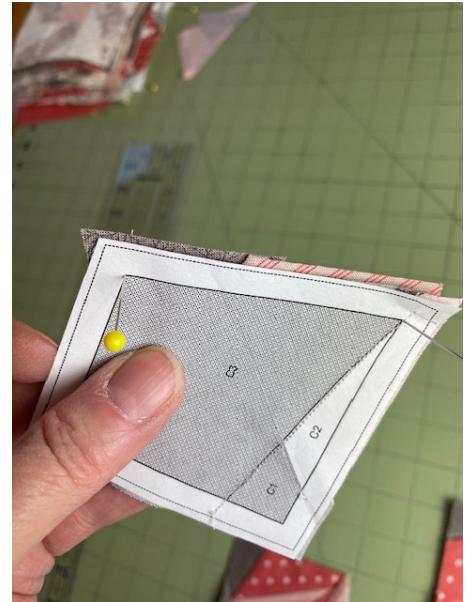
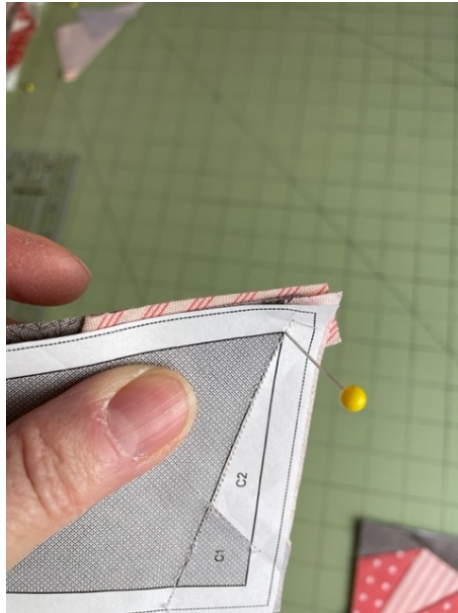


TIP: If this is your first time working with an FPP project, be sure to work slowly and complete one template piece at a time. Until you get in a good groove, avoid chain piecing or batch piecing, as that can easily get confusing when sewing FPP.

STEP 10. JOINING TEMPLATES TOGETHER (IF NEEDED)

Many FPP patterns will have multiple template sections that need to be joined together for the finished quilt block. These can be joined using the same methods used in traditional piecing. Line up the two pieces to be joined. Put a pin through the end of one line into the end of the line on the piece being sewn to it. Use the pin to secure (or wonder clips).

Sew along the 1/4" seam allowance line using a small stitch length just as in the previous steps. Flip the two templates open and press on the fabric side of the joined templates. Follow your pattern instructions on which direction to press your seams.



STEP 11. BASTING THE OUTER EDGE

After the block is completed, trim the foundation along the outer line (dashed) to remove the excess fabric and paper from the section. Do not remove the papers yet if you will be joining this block to others as it helps to stabilize the blocks for sewing. Give the block a good pressing.

STEP 12. WHEN ITS TIME TO REMOVE THE PAPERS & PRESS TO FINISH

The last step to complete your FPP block is to remove all of the papers. Start wherever there is a section of paper already coming loose and gently give it a little tug. It will usually come out very easily. If there is some resistance, place the thumbnail of your other hand against the seam line as you tug the paper with the other hand.

