

# Tips for Beautiful Pieced Blocks

## Piecing Notes:

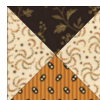
For those of you who struggle with accurate piecing, the keys I have found are:

- **Work on being super accurate when cutting.**
  - Tools:
    - A good, non-warped cutting mat
    - A good rotary cutter with sharp blades
    - Good non-slip rulers
- **Find the scant 1/4" spot on your own sewing machine/presser foot that will give you the perfect width seam.**
  - Tools:
    - 1/4" quilter's presser foot
- **Be consistent with that scant 1/4" seam.**
- **Trim and square each sub-unit so it has square corners and is the right size for its spot in the block. This makes a huge difference in the accuracy of a finished block!**
  - Tools:
    - Same as above – good cutting mat, rotary cutter and appropriate rulers
- **Whenever possible, make the block (or block elements) larger and then trim to the right size.**
  - Pieced blocks for which this works well:

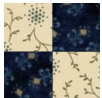
Two-Patch



Quarter-Square Triangle



Four-Patch



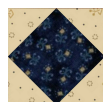
Flying Geese



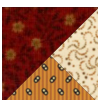
Half-Square Triangle



Square in a Square\*



3-Piece Half-Square Triangle



- **\*See our tutorial on using this method for Square in a Square blocks:**
  - [http://piecingthepastquilts.blogspot.com/2015/02/how-to-use-fit-to-be-geese-ruler-for\\_6.html](http://piecingthepastquilts.blogspot.com/2015/02/how-to-use-fit-to-be-geese-ruler-for_6.html)
  - Tools
    - [Fit to Be Geese Ruler](#)
    - [Creative Grids 6.5" x 12.5"](#) with intersecting 45° lines at the ruler edge or any other ruler thus marked).
    - [Creative Grids](#) or [Quilter's Select](#) square rulers from 3.5" - 12.5"

### **Sewing Note (from a miniatures quilter who shared this with me):**

- **Try sewing more slowly.**
  - Some machines have a speed control that can be set for a slower speed. Even if yours doesn't, speed can be controlled with the foot pedal.
  - This seems to be especially helpful when beginning and ending a seam - that time when it always seems to pull to one side making your seam allowance larger or smaller than an actual scant 1/4 inch. This results in a unit or block that does not measure the correct size.

### **Pressing Notes:**

Pressing means something different than ironing and does a different job.

- **Pressing** is an up-and-down motion rather than a side-to-side motion and is meant to press seams in one direction or another and to open seam intersections without distorting the fabric.
- **Ironing** is used to take out wrinkles.
- Pressing seams toward the "dark side" is the norm whenever possible.
- Using Jo Morton's clipping and pressing trick is an awesome way to reduce seam intersection bulk and improve the look of your blocks.
  - You can see her YouTube video at this link: <https://youtu.be/4bpGBAR6FXM>

### **Squaring Notes:**

- When I square my blocks, there are times when I have to make a choice between keeping my points/seam allowances and having a true-to-size block.
- I always choose to keep my points, and then when it comes time to sew the blocks into the quilt top, I "ease in" the fullness of the sides that are greater than the required block size.

2.