

Blotto - Tips & Techniques

May 2017

Sewing:

-to check the accuracy of your $\frac{1}{4}$ " setting on your machine, you can use a ruled index card. Place the edge of the foot or the sewing machine guide line at the first line and slowly bring the needle down into the second line, if they match up, you have an accurate $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam, then when sewing make it just a tiny bit narrower than $\frac{1}{4}$ " for a scant seam.

To check your $\frac{1}{4}$ " scant seam allowance, cut two $1\frac{1}{2}$ " x 6" strips of fabric. Stitch together with a scant $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam. Press using the pressing tips on this sheet. The new strip should measure $2\frac{1}{2}$ ". *Note: Different weight threads will impact the fold. An adjustment may be necessary for the weight of the thread you are using.*

-for a smoother start at the beginning of a seam (especially when starting at a point or corner, as in half square triangles) use a starter piece of fabric to start sewing on first, then chain stitch on to the block.

-to lock seams so they match at intersections; fold the interlocking seams opposite of each other before sewing

Half Square Triangles:

-to allow for folding over after sewing a half square triangle, sew just to the right of the drawn line. *Note: Different weight threads will have an impact on the fold.*

-before cutting the underneath part of a half square triangle that has been added to another piece of fabric, first fold over to match the point underneath, press the fold, then open up and trim the bottom two pieces to a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam.

-when squaring a half square triangle block, always line up using the diagonal line on the ruler with the diagonal sewing line on the block, then adjust for the rest of the block before trimming.

Pressing:

-always "set" the seam before pressing to one side by pressing the sewn line.

-pressing is more of an up and down action rather than pushing the iron side to side or back and forth; pressing rather than ironing will help prevent stretching.

-usually press towards the darker fabric

-to make sure seams are pressed flat without hidden folds or creases, first "set" the seam. On the wrong side press the seams to one side, usually to the darker fabric. Turn the block over to right side and with the tip of the iron, using small circular motions, press on the seam line. This will ensure the seam is completely flat and it helps prevent stretching the fabric.