

# How to Foundation Paper Piece

Each foundation paper-pieced block is different, but the same basic steps and techniques apply to all.

## COPY THE FOUNDATION

Copy or print the needed foundations. You can use regular printer paper or specialty foundation paper in the copier/printer. After copying or printing, verify the foundation is the correct size by measuring the 1" test square on the printed copy. If printing from a pdf, make sure to set the "page scaling" option in your print settings to "none."

## CUT AND PREPARE FABRIC

Decide which fabric you wish to use in each section and cut all pieces as instructed.

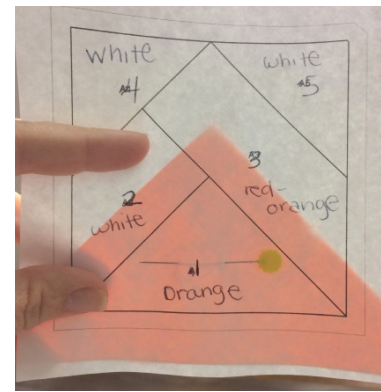
## PREPARE YOUR SEWING MACHINE

Prepare your sewing machine by reducing the stitch length to 18-20 stitches per inch. This is a 1.5 setting on most sewing machines. The smaller stitch size will allow the paper to be pulled off easily.

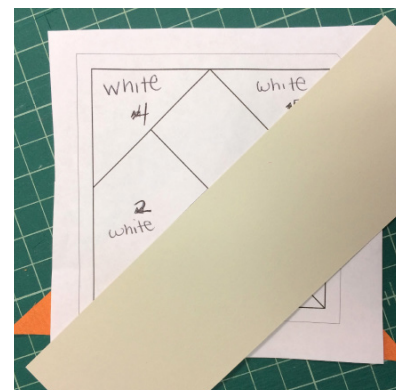
## TRIM AND SEW

Each section of the paper foundation is labeled with a number. The number lets you know in which order the fabric pieces should be added. To avoid confusion, it is helpful to write which color goes in which section of the foundation.

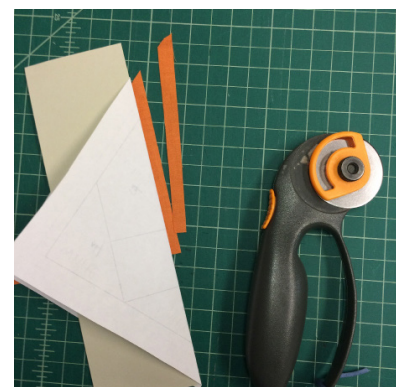
The lines between the sections are the lines you will sew on. For example, if you were adding piece 2 to piece 1, you would sew on the line between sections 1 and 2.



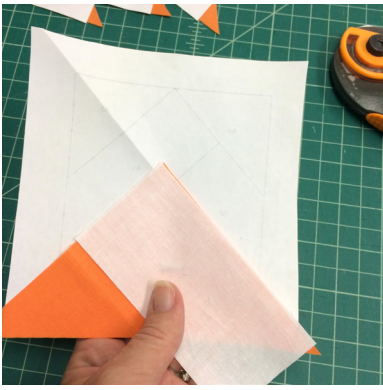
To start, place the wrong side of the fabric that will go in section 1 against the back side of the template. Hold the paper foundation up to a light to make sure the fabric covers the entire area of section 1. It should also overlap the adjacent sections by at least  $\frac{1}{4}$ " on all sides. Secure the fabric with flat head pins.



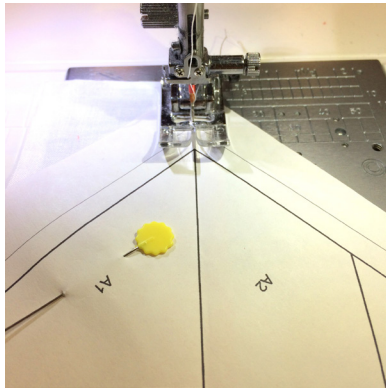
Find section 2 on the printed side of the foundation and locate the line that runs between it and section 1. Using a postcard or piece of card stock as a guide, fold the foundation back along the line between sections 1 and 2.



Line up the  $\frac{1}{4}$ " line on your ruler with the edge of the paper and trim the exposed fabric to  $\frac{1}{4}$ ".

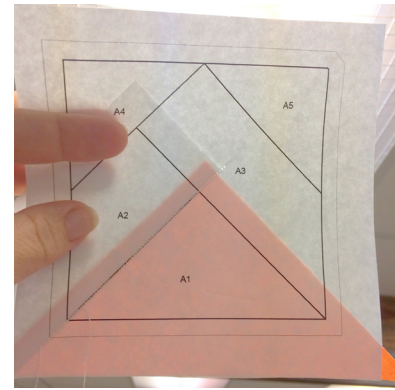


Fold the paper back down and flip the foundation over. Place the fabric for section 2 on top of the fabric for section 1, right sides together and lined up with the trimmed edge. Pin in place if necessary.



Holding everything in place, flip the foundation over to the printed side and sew directly on the line between sections 1 and 2. Start and stop at least  $\frac{1}{4}$ " before and after the line so the beginning of the stitching will be in the seam allowances.

If you are making multiples of the same foundation, sew all of the section 2 pieces to the section 1 pieces. Trimming, pinning, and sewing the same fabric to all the foundations at the same time speeds the piecing process. Set the seam and press fabric 2 open.



After pressing, hold the foundation up to the light and check that the second fabric covers section 2 completely and extends into the neighboring sections by at least  $\frac{1}{4}$ ".

Repeat the previous steps until the foundations are completely pieced:

1. Fold the paper back.
2. Trim the excess fabric to  $\frac{1}{4}$ ".
3. Place the next piece of fabric along the trimmed edge.
4. Flip the foundation over to the printed side and sew on the line.
5. Press.

The basic foundation piecing formula is always the same: trim, sew, and press. It is that simple.

### TRIM TO SIZE

Once the foundation is pieced, trim it to size by lining up the inner solid line with the  $\frac{1}{4}$ " line on your ruler. Trim off the excess. (It is difficult to be sure the ruler is lined up exactly on the outer dotted line, and the trim will be more accurate when measured from the solid inner line.)

### SEW THE PAPER-PIECED UNITS TOGETHER

If instructed, sew the paper-pieced units together or to other patchwork units. Remove the paper only after the foundation is sewn to other quilt units on all sides. This will eliminate any possible stretching and distortion of the block.