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BEGINNER BASICS – Paper Piecing

Paper Piecing Long Thin Pieces – 3” Pennants (1 Video)

Transcript:

In this video, I'll show you how to paper piece this block with these long skinny triangles. The finished size for this pattern is a 3 inch square but you can use this same technique to make different sized blocks like this one seen here.

To get started, you'll need to download this paper piecing pattern at **LearnHowToQuilt.com** under **Beginner Basics – Paper Piecing** or you can find it in our pattern section.

I've cut out my pattern out around the dashed lines. It doesn't have to be perfect; just make sure you can see those dashed lines all the way around your pattern. These solid lines are my sew lines. The numbers on my pattern show the order in which to sew my fabric pieces. When paper piecing, your fabric always goes on the back of the pattern. You also want to make sure when you begin his project that your fabric has been pressed.

I like to take an old postcard/card and fold the lines between #1 and #2. Every time I fold this paper, the fibers are weakened. Later on this will make it easier to pull of the paper. I also find this helps with fabric positioning and trimming the seams. I can fold these lines as I sew or I find it easier to get them done all at once before I start my project.

I'll be following these guidelines as I paper piece. You can download a copy at **LearnHowToQuilt.com** under **Beginner Basics – Paper Piecing**.

Here's my first fabric that I pressed with a hot dry iron. It has to be big enough to cover the #1 piece and I can see that this more than enough covers that. So I like to cut it down into a smaller size. When I am piecing triangles, I usually like to use rectangles. You can see that this piece of fabric covers that #1 spot along with this

¼" seam allowance. Since I'll be using this fabric 3 times in the block, I like to cut a long strip of fabric and then cut them down like I did these but it is not necessary.

I'll place Fabric #1 on the back of my pattern. I'll put my finger on #1 and turn it over. It goes with the right side up and the wrong side down. I'll pin that in place. Turn it over.

I can take this and hold it up to a light source to see that shadow in the back of the fabric but I can see just by looking at this that the fabric more than enough covers this point up here. On triangles this is really tricky so make sure that on each one of these that you have covered this area up to the seam allowance. (Make sure) that you have covered this corner here and this corner here.

Now I am ready to trim. Fold this down. Take my scissors and I'm going to eyeball about a 1/8 inch seam. It's not really necessary to trim but I like to do this because it helps with fabric placement. And when you have these long skinny points, that seam gets very bulky. That's why I am saying to trim down to a 1/8". It just makes it easier.

Now I am ready for Fabric #2. Here's Fabric #2. I've cut it more than enough to cover #2 along with the seam allowance up here. I also want to get it to this line here.

I'll put my finger here and turn it over. Fabric #2 will go in this spot. I have to sew these two together. So in order to sew, I put right sides together. This piece can't be moved because it is pinned down. So let me put right sides together. Turn it over.

I could take this to the sewing machine and sew this line but I like to check to see if my piece will cover where it belongs. I like to pin base that line. Let's turn it over and let me see. If I turn this back and move that back like that, will fabric #2 cover that whole spot after it has been sewn? And I see that it covers all the way up to the top, all the way to this corner and down at the bottom. So I am ready to take this to the sewing machine.

To sew, I'm using red thread so you can see well. Usually I am using a neutral color of thread. A larger needle will help you perforate your patterns to make it easier to tear off the paper later on but it is not necessary. I use a shorter stitch length when the pieces are tiny.

I need to sew from beyond this corner here on this pattern. Ahead of time, I've taken a ruler and drawn this line. Sometimes I just sew on the fold line. In the case of these points, I want to make sure that that line is perfect. So I've just taken a ruler alongside of the black line and marked that. I did that for each one of these points.

When I sew I want to make sure that I start past this dashed line and sew all the way down past this dashed line. Make sure to remove my pin. You want to stay on that black line. When I come to this point, I want to make sure that I sew all the way through. When I finish, I want to make sure that I always clip these threads because they have a tendency to get caught up all over the place. Clip them now to avoid headaches later on.

I'll flip that back. I have piece #1 and piece #2. I'll take this over to my iron to be pressed.

Now I'm ready to go on to the next step. Fold the line between Fabric #2 and #3. I already did that earlier but let me fold it down. Then I repeat from #5 above. It says, "Fold it and trim." I want to trim about a 1/8" away from the seam.

Now I am ready for my piece #3. Here's my fabric. It more than enough covers that triangle and seam allowance. Let me flip it over. Fabric #3 will go right here. When I sew, put right sides together.

I'll pin that just to make sure that I've got everything lined up properly. Fold this back and I can hold it up to a light or in this case I can see. Here's #3. I want to cover up at the top. I want to cover down at the bottom so it's perfect. Turn this over, flip it back and take it to my sewing machine.

Notice how I am holding this up on the top. I don't like to pin there but if you're having problems that this is coming down like this and it is not working out, then

you might want to pin. Let me show you where you put the pin. You might want to put a pin in right here. You also might want to put another pin in (I'll just take that one out) the back here. So you can see that that is pinned down so you won't have problems with that getting caught up in your sewing machine.

When I sew this, I could draw a straight line here just like I did with these slanted lines, but I can see my crease line there. I'll come in past the dashed lines and just sew forward. I'll take the pin out and sew all the way past that dashed line. I'm ready to take this out. Let's turn this over and I'll need to take this over to the iron to press that line.

The piece has been pressed and now I am ready for #4. The first thing I need to do is fold that line between #3 and #4 and then trim. Here's #4. It's big enough to cover that triangle plus the seam allowance above and below. I'll flip this back. Fabric #4 will go right here. I need to put right sides together. I can check it with a pin to make sure it is going to work and then come over and sew. I'll repeat this process with the next 3 pieces.

After it has been pressed, I'll trim. Fabric #5 will cover this spot. I'll turn it over. Fabric #5 goes here. Let's flip that over. I'll pin baste that and take it to the sewing machine. I'll take this to the iron and press.

After pressing, I'm ready to trim. I'll fold this back and eyeball that 1/8" seam. Fabric #6 more than enough covers this area. Fabric #6 goes here. I'll put right sides together. Fold it back and press

After my block has been pressed, I'm ready to trim. I can trim this with my scissors but I prefer to use my rotary cutter. You want to cut a 3 1/2" square around these dashed lines.

Here is the completed block. If I want to use this for a card, I usually leave the paper inside. If I am going to sew this into a small quilt, then I need to tear the paper off. To tear that paper off, you just gently tug at it. You might need to use tweezers to get into these points.

For more information about paper piecing visit LearnHowToQuilt.com under **Beginner Basics – Paper Piecing**.