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BEGINNER BASICS – Paper Piecing

Paper Piecing Triangles (1 Video)

Transcript:

In this video, I'll show you how to paper piece this Flying Geese block with triangles. The finished size for this pattern is a 3 inch square but you can use this same technique to make these smaller groups of Flying Geese or for sections of larger blocks.

There are many different ways to tackle this paper piecing pattern – this is my preferred method.

Before you start, you want to download this pattern from LearnHowToQuilt.com. You'll find it in the **Beginner Basics** under **Paper Piecing**. I've cut out my pattern around the dashed lines. The solid lines are my sew lines. The numbers on the pattern show the order in which to sew my fabric pieces.

Here's a list of steps that I will be following. First, you want to make sure that your fabric's been pressed before you begin. Then you want to fold the lines on your pattern between 1 and 2.

I like to use a postcard or an old card to do this. So I just place that card down and fold that line. Every time I fold the paper, the fibers are weakened. Later on this will make it easier to pull the paper off. I also find this helps with fabric positioning and trimming seams.

Sometimes I fold all the lines first as I find it easier to get them done at once.

Here's my Fabric #1. It has to be big enough to cover this space and it has to cover the outside seam here. I see that it more than covers this area. I could use this whole piece but I think it is better to cut it down to a smaller piece. When working with triangles, I like to start with a rectangular shape. So I can see that this is more than enough so let me use my scissors.

When you are sewing on paper pieced patterns the fabric always goes on the back over that number. So I'll put the fabric on the back and I like to pin this.

Then hold this up to a light to make sure it is covered but we can see that that is going to cover that space with more than enough room.

My first line that I am going to sew is between 1 and 2. So I fold down that pattern and then trim. I eyeball about a $\frac{1}{4}$ inch seam. If it is a little smaller; that's OK. If it is a little larger, that's OK. This seam doesn't have to be perfect. Some people don't trim at all but I find it easiest to trim first.

For Fabric #2, I'll also cut a rectangle. Let me turn this over. Here's #2. Here's my fabric. Let me put that over the top and just cut this. It doesn't have to be perfect. I just need to make sure that this fabric will cover #2 but it goes on the back. I like to put my finger on #2 while turning over the pattern so I know where to place the fabric. Fabric #2 goes right here.

When we sew, usually we are putting right sides together. This is also how we sew when we are paper piecing. I can't move Fabric #1 because it is pinned BUT I can move Fabric #2 to put right sides together. I'll line it up with that cut line.

I could flip the pattern over and begin sewing right now but I like to check to make sure that everything is in the right place. I do this by pinning on this "sew line". Let me turn the pattern over and flip the fabric back. So after I've sewn my fabric will come back looking like this. Let me make sure that fabric is covering that line. I see that it is more than enough; that it is covered over here. I also want to make sure that it covers down in this corner.

To sew, I'm using red thread so you can see well. Usually I am using a neutral color of thread like this. A larger needle will help perforate your patterns to make it easier to tear off but it is not necessary. You can also use a shorter stitch length to help with this perforation.

When I start sewing, I come in beyond this dashed line. Some people like to draw a line from the solid line to the edge but I usually just eyeball it or just follow the

folded line. I take the pin out. I've got the right sides together here and I am ready to sew.

When I stitch I just want to stitch on the black line. I'll follow that black line as best I can. When I come to the end of the black line I'm going to cross this other black line. I'll add 1 to 2 stitches and I don't have to backstitch. And then I'll take my piece out. I'll clip those. This is what my piece looks like. I'll take this over to the ironing board and press.

Now that I've sewn #1 and #2 together, I'm ready for Fabric #3. My Fabric #3 is going to go right there. By the way, I'm down here – "Fold the line between #2 and #3. Repeat from #5 above." I'm going to come back here and I notice it says to fold the paper back. I fold this back and trim. So I'm going to eyeball that ¼" seam and I've got something that looks like this.

I've cut my fabric big enough to go over the top of that. It's going to go right here. Keep my finger there and turn it over. I see Fabric # 3 will go right there. It's going to look like this or something like this. When I sew I have to put right sides together. This fabric is sewn in place and I can't move it. So I'll flip this back. Line it up along the edge here and pin. The reason why I am doing that is that's sort of a basting stitch. So I can see or make sure that I have this positioned properly.

If I hold it up to a light or I've got a this flashlight, I can see down in the corner here that that fabric is big enough to cover and that that fabric comes all the way pass up here. So I want to make sure that that piece covers that area and it's more than enough. I'll flip it back and now I'm ready to sew.

This time, I'm going to start up here in the center of the pattern. There's no rule about whether you start here or here but I just want to show you what that looks like. I will start sewing 1 to 2 stitches before that solid line. I can take a pencil and draw that out or I am just going to eyeball it. I don't lock my stitches. I just come forward and I stay on that black line. I don't stop at the end of the black line. I have to stitch all the way through into this corner. I want to go pass those dashed lines or at least up to those dashed lines.

Clip those threads. Flip that back and that's what your piece will look like up to this point. Take this over to the iron or I can finger press this. The paper piecing patterns are small and you can get away with finger pressing them.

Now I am going up to Fabric #4. The first thing I need to do is fold the line between (well now it is #3 and #4)...so I'm going to fold this line. You'll notice that the stitches are kind of getting hung up in here. Don't worry about it. You will sew over the top and catch. When I fold that down – that's going to help me tri. Eyeball a ¼" and trim across. That's not such a great ¼" but it will do. It doesn't have to be perfect.

I'll fold that back. I've cut my piece of fabric. Fabric #4 (this rectangle) more than enough covers that. Fabric #4 goes right here. When I sew, I have to put right sides together. I can't move these fabrics so this must be the one that has to flip down.

I like to come in and use my pin; a sort of basting line. When I flip it back, what's it going to look like? Well, I can see that it's going to more than enough cover everything so I am ready to take this to the sewing machine.

I don't want to start right on this black line. I want to start out pass the dashed line.

Trim these threads and I'll fold that back. I have a nice place where the points meet. That looks good. I'll take this over to the ironing board and press.

I'm going to fold down #5 and see this stitching is not going to make it. It's going to be too hard to fold properly so I'll just fold it as best I can because I'm really just using that to give me an idea of where to cut this line. When I get up here, I'm just going to turn that to the side and there.

Now I am ready to take Fabric #5. Let me put my finger here on #5. I'll turn it over and now I am going to flip Fabric #5 down. And let's see. Let's say that I flip it. Let's do it like this. I flip it down. Put my pin in on the sew line and I move this back. I look at this and take my flashlight. I see that that green fabric is not covering all the way up to this point. That happens sometimes. So I know that I

am going to have to reposition this and move it in that direction. I'll take this out. I'm moving it in that direction. I see that I have more than enough up there. Sometimes with triangles it's tricky. You think you have more than enough and you find out that's not true.

I pin this back in and I'll flip that over. I don't think we need the light because I can see that that's going to be more than enough. I will take this over to my sewing machine. I will begin sewing; coming on the outside edge of that dashed line. I sew straight in to this solid line. Some people like to mark that but I can eyeball it. You really want to make sure you come in on that line though, to make sure all your points will be in the right spot. When I sew, I sew all the way up to the top.

I'll fold that back. I can finger press it or take it over to the iron. I'm ready for my next piece.

Fold this – oh, it's really hard to fold down now. So maybe I'll just go with this. Here's where my piece is going to go. I flip it. Take it over to the sewing machine. I'm not going to use a pin now because I have done this a number of times and I know where that belongs. Here we go.

I want to make sure I am going to hit this solid line. I'm going to cross right over on that red (stitching) line right in that corner so I get a nice neat point.

I'm ready to trim the excess. So let me turn it over. I want to trim on these dashed lines. Sometimes I'll stitch a line between these dashed lines and the solid line to keep these pieces from flapping but that's not necessary.

Let me show you what that looks like. I'm between the solid line and the dashed line. This is a stitching line that nobody's going to see. It's just helping to keep that fabric down. When I'm trimming this, the fabric stays in place. It makes it a little easier to trim. As opposed to this side; the fabric's flapping and sometimes it makes it more difficult to trim.

So let me trim this up and show you what my completed piece looks like. Here's my completed block. That stitching won't show because it's sewn into the seam allowance.

Let me turn it over. If I was just to use this for a card, I can leave the paper in. But if I want to put it in another quilt, I need to take the paper out. So you just reach in and start tearing the paper out like that.