

# **BOULDER**

MODERN QUILT GUILD

## **APRIL 2018 PRESENTATION**

### **Foundation Piecing/Paper Piecing**

Originally, this method was used to stabilize pieces of fabric that were stitched together and became popular in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century in England. The foundation was fabric/muslin. Now paper (tracing, freezer, wax paper or tissue) is used as the pattern.

In 1976 Lesly Claire Greensburg, had trouble sewing straight lines for her log cabin blocks. She started using foundation piecing and was thrilled with the results. After refining her style she began teaching classes and became known as the “Mother of Foundation Piecing”. After that Mary Gold and Adrienne Johnson, Brenda Groelz and Carol Doak joined in on teaching this great technique!

(References: Wikipedia and Debby Kratovil)

From here on, I will refer to this as Paper Piecing. Paper Piecing is a method of sewing quilt blocks on some type of printed paper. The sections are numbered in the specific sewing order. Fabric is positioned on the back (unprinted side) of the paper. As pieces are added they are placed right sides together. The seam is stitched on the front, printed side of the paper. The fabric is opened out and pressed. This process continues in numeric order until all pieces are sewn to the paper.

The benefits of Paper Piecing are that the finished block is precise, has sharp/perfect points and perfectly matched intersections. Paper Piecing works great with small pieces and odd angles.

## Advantages of using tissue paper:

- Easier to see through
- Use normal stitches
- Use normal needle

## Advantages of using Carol Doak's Foundation Paper:

- Fabric will not slip on the surface
- Lightweight and durable
- Holds up well and irons well ...no shrinking or curling
- Tears away easily when completed
- Use 90/14 needle
- Use shorter stitch length (1.5 or 15 stitches per ")

## The tools needed for Paper Piecing are:

- Paper
- Add A Quarter Ruler
- Open Toe foot
- 90/14 Needle (if using Carol Doak's Foundation Paper)
- Rotary Cutter
- Flat Head Pins
- Piece of Card Stock Paper



## Next are some helpful hints:

ALWAYS leave a ¼" margin on all sides of the paper/block

ALWAYS stitch the pieces in numeric order

ALWAYS press after adding each piece

ALWAYS use a DRY iron (no steam!)

ALWAYS stitch 1 or 2 stitches before and after the line (do NOT reverse)

Pattern is printed on one side and the fabric is placed on the other side (unprinted)

ALWAYS stitch on the pattern/printed side ... on the specific line

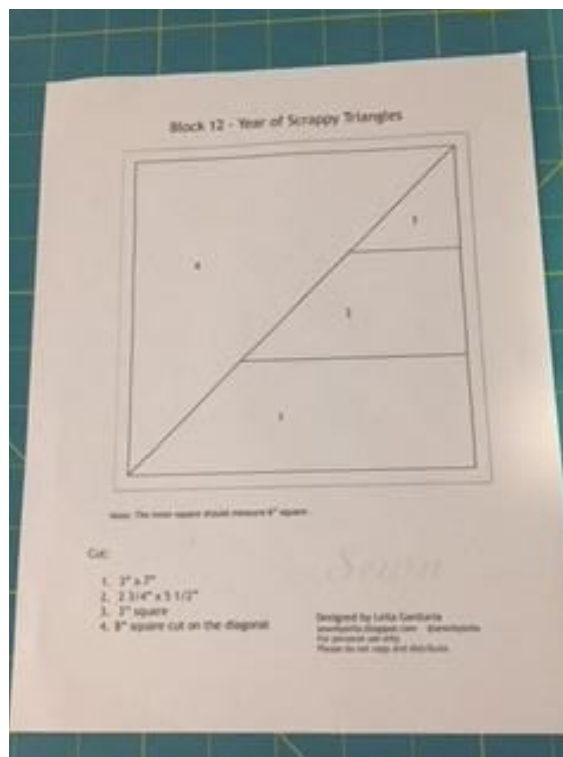
Fabric #1 is always placed Right Side UP

Fabric #2 and all others are ALWAYS placed Right Side Down/Together

ALWAYS leave paper on each individual block until the blocks are sewn together

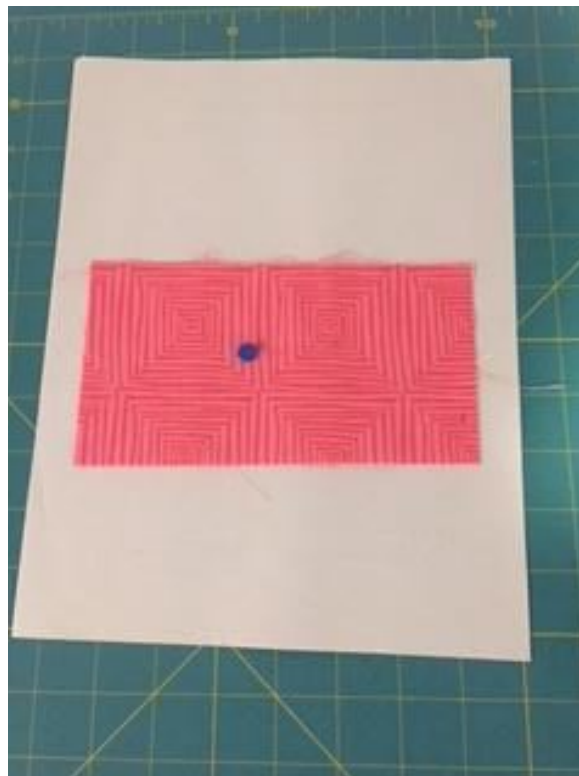
OK ... LET'S GET STARTED ..... I will be using Carol Doak's Foundation Paper

First cut all of your fabric pieces for the block and put them in numerical order.  
Most patterns give you the dimensions for each piece you need

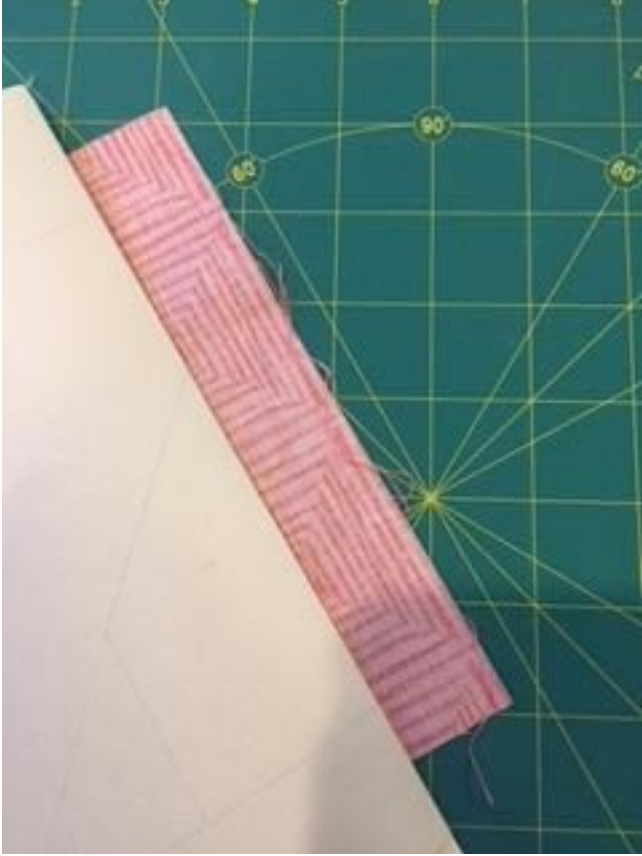




Next take fabric #1 and use a flat head pin to attach it to the unprinted side of the paper in its proper location. Make sure you have the fabric in the correct location. Test this by putting a pin in the fabric at a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " and flipping the fabric over as if it has been sewn. Check to see if the location of fabric #1 when sewn, will be correct on all sides. Keep in mind  $\frac{1}{4}$ " margin!



Place your card stock on the line that you are going to sew and fold over the printed paper (printed sides together), set your Add A Quarter Ruler against the edge of the fold and trim the excess of the fabric.

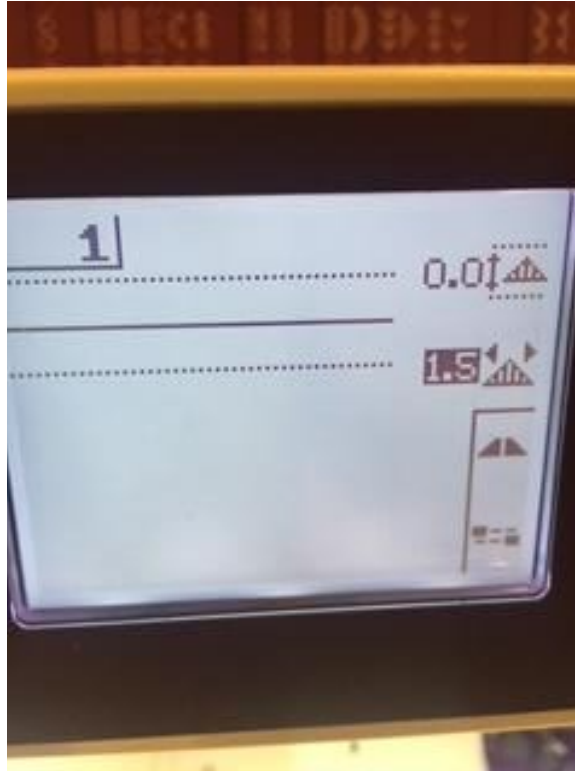




Set fabric #2 on top of fabric #1, right sides together at the trimmed edge of fabric #1. Make sure you have the fabric in the correct location. Test this by putting a pin in the two fabrics at a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " and flipping the fabric over as if it has been sewn. Check to see if the location of fabric #2, when sewn, will be correct on all sides. Keep in mind  $\frac{1}{4}$ " margin!

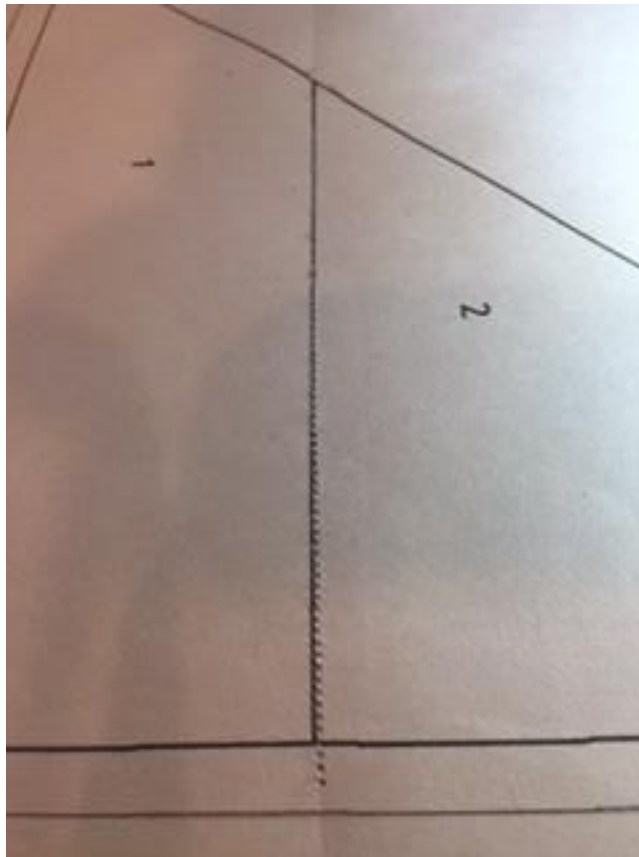


Make sure your machine is set for a shorter stitch length and you have a 90/14 needle in.



Set your pattern down on your machine, printed side up, ready to sew on the line between 1 and 2. Remember to sew 1 or 2 stitches before and after the line.





Open out and press on the right side of the fabrics.





Now we start again and place your card stock on the line that you are going to sew and fold over the printed paper (printed sides together), set your Add A Quarter Ruler against the edge of the fold and trim the excess of the fabric.

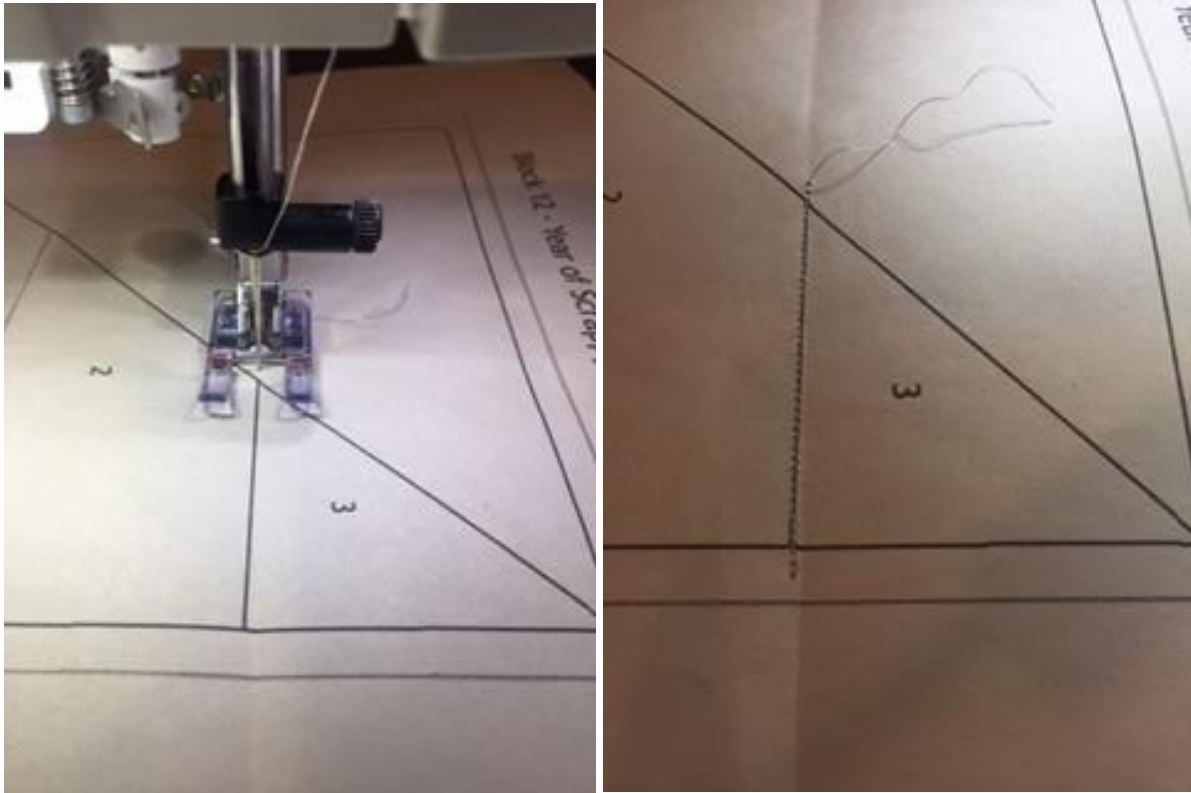




Set fabric #3 on top of fabric 2, right sides together at the trimmed edge of fabric #2. Make sure you have the fabric in the correct location. Test this by putting a pin in the two fabrics at a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " and flipping the fabric over as if it has been sewn. Check to see if the location of fabric #3, when sewn, will be correct on all sides. Keep in mind  $\frac{1}{4}$ " margin!



Set your pattern down on the machine, printed side up, ready to sew on the line between 2 and 3. Remember to sew 1 or 2 stitches before and after the line.



Open out and press on the right side of the fabrics.

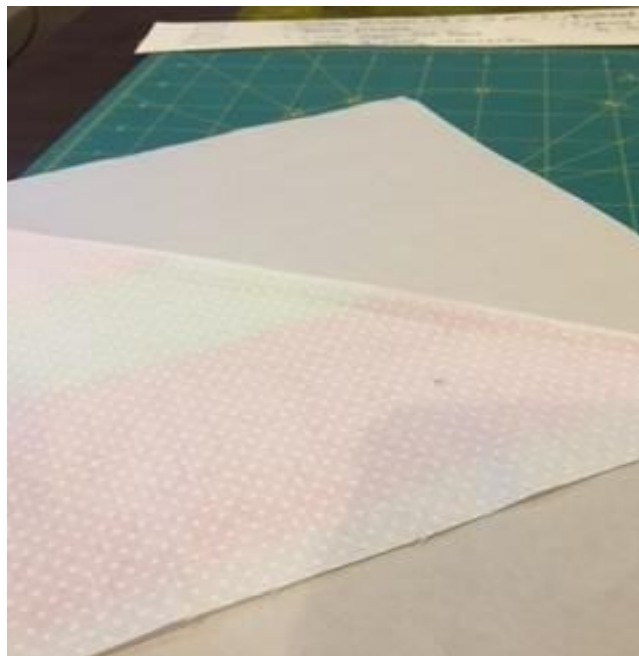


Now we start again and place your card stock on the line that you are going to sew and fold over the printed paper (printed sides together), set your Add A Quarter Ruler against the edge of the fold and trim the access of the fabric.

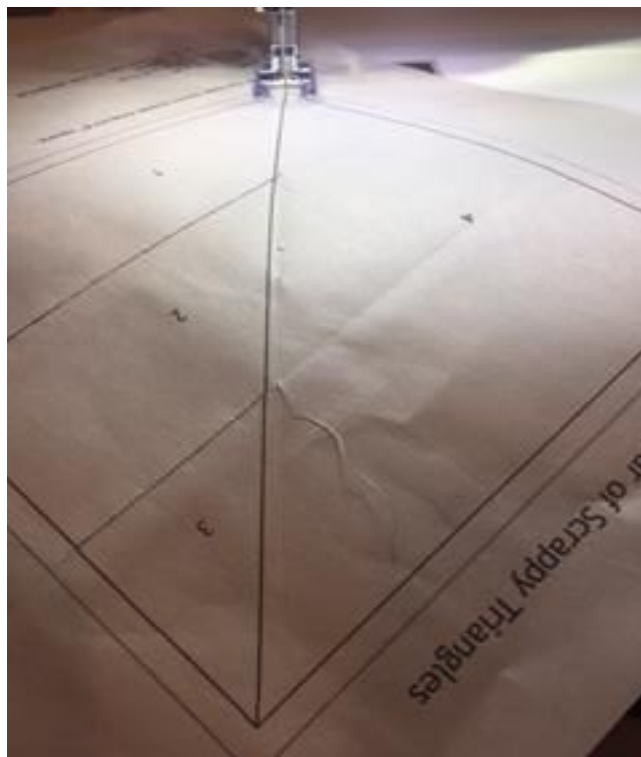




Set fabric #4 on top of the fabrics, right sides together at the trimmed edge of fabrics. Make sure you have the fabric in the correct location. Test this by putting a pin in the two fabrics at a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " and flipping the fabric over as if it has been sewn. Check to see if the location of fabric #3, when sewn, will be correct on all sides. Keep in mind  $\frac{1}{4}$ " margin.



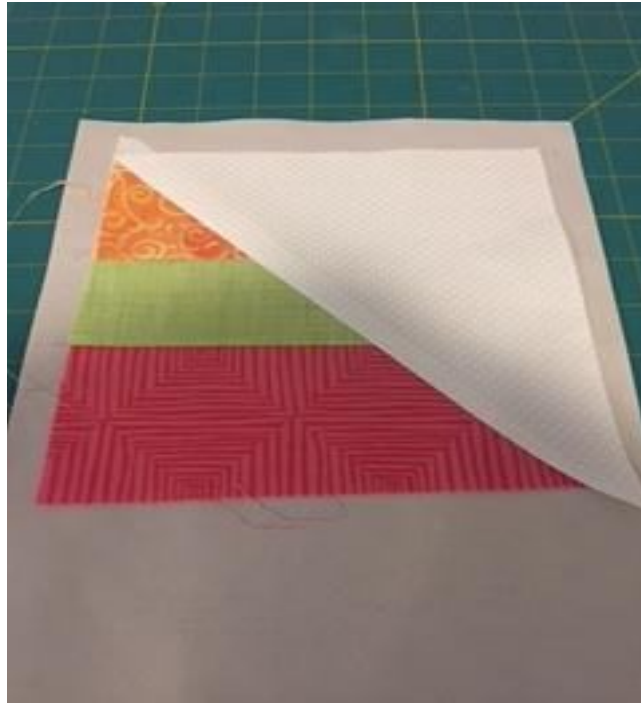
Set your pattern down on the machine, printed side up, ready to sew on the last line (between 1,2,3 and 4). Remember to sew 1 or 2 stitches before and after the line.



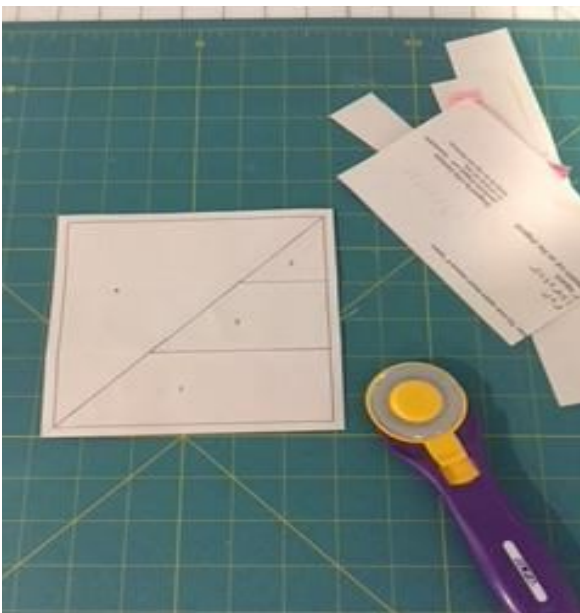
Open out and press on the right side of the fabrics.



Your block is all sewn and will look like this:



Turn your block to the printed side and trim in the  $\frac{1}{4}$ " line all around the block. If your block does not have a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " outside line printed on the paper, simply trim  $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the outside line of your block.



**CONGRATULATIONS ..... YOU ARE DONE with your block!!!! YEAH!!!!**

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## Some Paper Piecing Websites with FREE patterns:

The block I demoed is from "Year of Scrappy Triangles"  
[sewnbyleila.blogspot.com](http://sewnbyleila.blogspot.com)

The "Circle of Geese" is from  
[chasingcottons.blogspot.com](http://chasingcottons.blogspot.com)

"Playing With Blocks" October 10, 2011 (Abstract Mod Blocks)  
[thelongthread.com](http://thelongthread.com)

There are also a lot of ideas on the Boulder MQG Pinterest  
<https://www.pinterest.com/bouldermqg/paper-piecing/foundation-paper-piecing/>

There are A LOT of free patterns out there! Do some searches and have some fun with Paper Piecing!!!!