



Erica's Craft & Sewing Center
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Getting That Perfect 1/4" Seam Allowance

By Erica Broecker

Essential Tools:

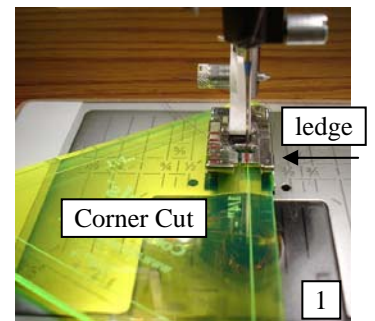
Corner Cut 60 ~ 82443 (It can also be used for piecing 60 degree triangles)
Sewing Edge Strips ~ 29853 (They're purple!!!)

Nice to Have:

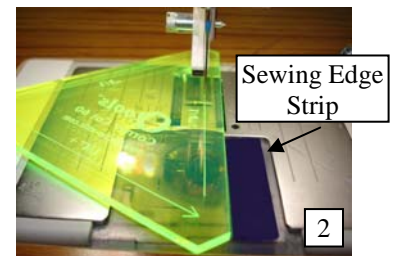
Steady Betty
Velocity Iron ~ 45731

Setting up your machine:

Drop your feed teeth and put on the presser foot you're going to use. I like one that has a ledge on the side, to run the fabric against. Line up your Corner Cut with the ledge (or edge of your foot) with the etched 1/4" side under the foot. Move your needle so it lines up with the etched line, and lower it until it touches. (1)



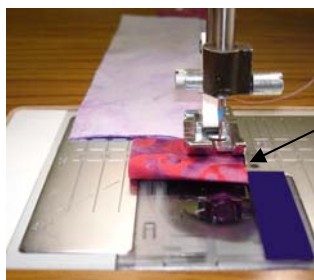
Remove the foot, with the needle still in the etched line, and line the edge of the Corner Cut up parallel to the opening for the feed teeth. Take the paper off the bottom of the Sewing Edge Strip and put it up against the edge of the Corner Cut. The Viking has a drop-in bobbin cover, so I put it on the cover. (I got an extra cover for regular sewing, and I use this bobbin cover to do my piecing.) I put a second Sewing Edge Strip over the first, to make it thicker. (2)



With the ledge in front of the presser foot as well as right at the foot, it leads the fabric in straight, insuring even more accuracy.

Now to be sure you have the right seam allowance:

Cut three 2" strips of cotton fabric 5" long.
Stitch two of the strips together, using the normal 2mm stitch length, the foot and the new purple guide.
(Notice the anchor cloth at the beginning and end of the stitching!)





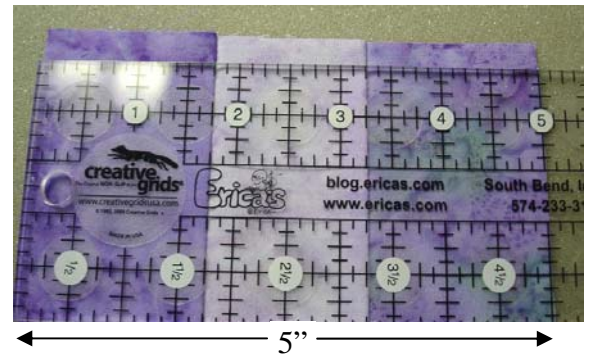
Press the seam flat first, then press it seam allowance to one side.



I use a “Steady Betty” board to press the pieces. (It’s the gray “foam-looking” base you see here.) The pieces stay in place! It eliminates the little fold I used to sometimes get when I pressed without.

Add the third 2” strip to the first two and press as shown.

If you are getting the correct seam allowance, your three pieces should measure 5” across. If they don’t, move your needle a little one way or the other and try again. Once it measures 5”, you have your correct setting.

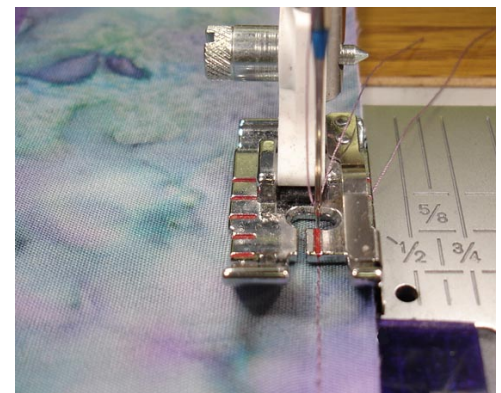


If you have a way to save this setting in your machine, by all means do it! Mine is #7 in my Favorites folder.

If you don’t have a way to save it, be sure you write down the setting.

You can also keep the 5” square as a guide, and when you want to piece again, line it up with the seam you’ve already sewn.

Note- the thickness of your thread will make a big difference! I use So Fine for all my piecing. It’s thinner, and takes up less of the fabric in the seam. If you use different threads, you may need to change your needle position to get the right seam allowance.



An important note ~ no matter how much they might want to help, be sure to keep pins, needles, and thread away from your pets!