

Royal City Quilters Guild

Summer Milady Mystery 2021

Week One

Half-Square Triangles

This week is devoted to making all the necessary half-square triangles (HSTs) for the quilt. Many people have their favourite method of making them, so go ahead and make them as you wish.

The videos below both illustrate how to make HSTs by drawing lines. I will be illustrating a method of making them *without drawing lines!* If you have never made HSTs, watch a YouTube video to get a feel for it before you begin.

YouTube Videos:

Leah Day “How to Make Half Square Triangles--Two at a Time”

Deb Tucker “Eight Half Square Triangles at Once”

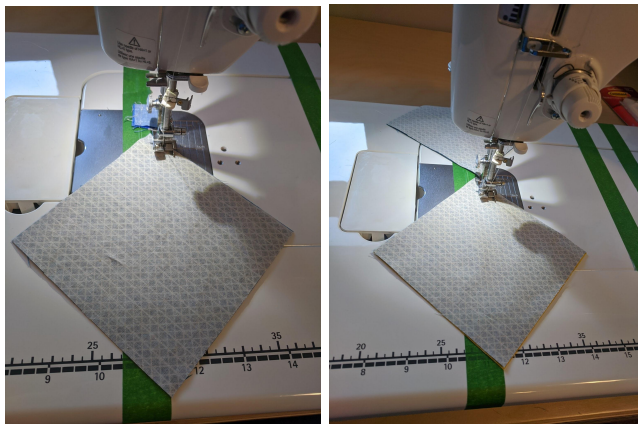
My method involves a bit of work upfront, so it is perfect for making a whole batch of HSTs. Drawing lines on 50 blocks is not that much fun. What you need to stop drawing these lines is a *roll of painter's tape* or some similar brightly coloured tape which does not gum up the bed of your sewing machine.

First, I find it useful to stabilize the extension table by taping it at the right of the needle as illustrated. Then, take what you have to measure $\frac{1}{4}$ ” to the left of the needle. Tape a long strip of painter's tape on a path $\frac{1}{4}$ ” from the needle. Although your table or bed might not be perfectly square, the measurement lines on the needle plate are likely parallel to this imaginary line. Line up your ruler to accurately tape from the space in front of the needle as far back as you can go. I often tape a small piece and then add a longer piece over top.



N.B. I have taped to the right of the needle, and it works just as well. But, by applying the tape on the left of the needle, you can still sew with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam on the right if you have to break up your work and get other things done.

Use the tape as a guide. The perfect diagonal of your block should follow the tape's edge at all times. Make sure both corner points are following the tape line as you sew. If you do this, you are sewing $\frac{1}{4}$ " away from the imaginary diagonal line that you would draw from corner to corner in the two-at-a-time HSTs or the eight-at-a-time HSTs. Chain piece the many sets of blocks as you wish. Turn the blocks over to sew the other side.



Cutting Instructions

- Strips are cut to use in future clues as well as this one.
- WOF means width of fabric.
- Most HSTs will finish 2" (2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " unfinished). The few that don't will be clearly indicated.
- Keep all remnants of fabric until the top is finished.

Fabric #1: ⇨ Cut one (1) strip 5 1/2" wide WOF. Subcut into eight (8) 5 1/2" squares. (You may not have enough fabric for all eight. Cut a second strip if necessary. Use the remainder of the strip to make the 3" strip that follows.)

⇨ Cut one (1) strip 3" wide WOF (or from above remnant). Subcut into four (4) 3" squares.

Fabric #2: ⇨ Cut one (1) strip 6" wide WOF. Cut two (2) 5" squares. Subcut the remainder of the 5" strip into two (2) 3" strips. Subcut into twenty-two (22) 3" squares.

Fabric #3: ⇨ Cut two (2) strip 3" wide WOF. Subcut into fourteen (14) 3" squares.

Fabric #4: ⇨ Cut three (3) strips 3" wide WOF. Subcut into thirty-six (36) 3" squares.

Fabric #5: ⇨ Cut one (1) 5 1/2" strip WOF. Subcut into eight (8) 5 1/2" squares. (You may not have enough fabric for all eight. Cut a second strip if necessary. Use the remainder of this strip to make the 5" strip that follows.)

⇨ Cut one (1) strip 5" wide WOF (or from above remnant). Subcut two (2) 5" squares.

Piecing Instructions

- Sew all seams right sides together.
- Follow the pressing instructions. Some are pressed open, some to the side.
- Trim the HSTs with your desired tool. I love the Bloc Loc trimmers. The Tucker Trimmer works really well too.

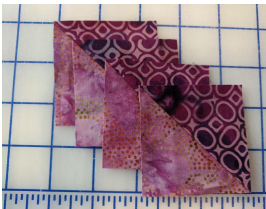
1. Using the twenty (20) 3" squares cut from fabric #2 and twenty (20) 3" squares from fabric #4, **make** forty (40) HSTs using the two-at-a-time method. Press the seams to the darker fabric #2.



- Using the twelve (12) 3" squares cut from fabric #4 and twelve (12) 3" squares from fabric #3, **make** twenty-four (24) HSTs using the two-at-a-time method. Press the seams open.



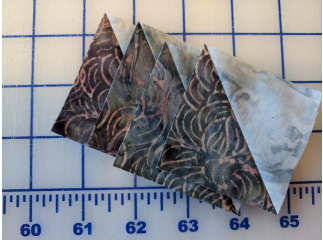
- Using two (2) 3" squares from fabric #1 and two (2) 3" squares from fabric #2, **make** four (4) HSTs using the two-at-a-time method. Press the seam open.



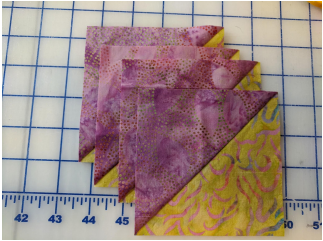
- Using two (2) 3" squares from fabric #1 and two (2) 3" squares from fabric #4, **make** 4 HSTs using the two-at-a-time method. Press the seam to the darker fabric #1.



- Using two (2) 3" squares from fabric #3 and two (2) 3" squares from fabric #4, **make** four (4) HSTs using the two-at-a-time method. Press the seams open.



6. **Trim** all of the HSTs made so far to $2\frac{1}{2}$ " **unfinished blocks**.
7. Using two (2) 5" squares from fabric #2 and two (2) 5" squares from fabric #5, **make** four (4) HSTs using the two-at-a-time method. Press the seams to the darker fabric # 2. **Trim to $4\frac{1}{2}$ " unfinished blocks**.



8. Using the eight (8) $5\frac{1}{2}$ " squares from fabric 1 and the eight (8) $5\frac{1}{2}$ " squares from fabric 5, **make** sixteen (16) HSTs. Press toward the darker fabric. **Do not trim**.