



Piecing.

Piecing is the name used for sewing pieces of fabric that are sewn together to make quilts. Hand and machine piecing are similar the difference between them is that one is stitched by hand and machine pieced using the machine. A third type is paper piecing and is explained in a page for making Hexagons.

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1. When using a machine find the 1/4 of an inch seam line from the position of the needle. Some machines will now have lines that mark different seam allowances.

To find the 1/4 of an inch mark place a quilting ruler under your needle keeping it straight, place the needle on the 1/4 of an inch mark of the ruler.

Place a piece of masking tape next to the ruler on the machine this gives a longer line to use as a guide when sewing.

There are gadgets that can be attached to the machine to do the same thing. A magnetic seam guide is one of them.

2. Take two pieces of fabric and pin them right sides together, place the pins every couple of inches. Figure 1.

Place the fabric under the sewing foot of the machine, with the edge of the fabric on the 1/4" mark. Figure 2.

Sew down the seam keeping the fabric lined up against the 1/4", at the beginning and end of sewing lock the ends by reversing the stitching for a couple of stitching to prevent the ends of the piece from becoming open while working the pieces.



Figure 1.



Figure 2.



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3. Open the two pieces of fabric and press the seam, figure 2, in most case the fabric is pressed under the darker fabric so it does not show through a lighter fabric, sometimes this is not possible as both fabrics are light enough for the seam to show through. Other times the seam should be pressed in a certain direction so that the two seams do not lie on top of each other so the layers are fabric can be too much for the sewing machine to sew across but all so the seams do not lie as flat and can be lumpy. It is all so possible at times to press the seams open when a lot of seams come together in one place.

Some people prefer to use a hot iron to press the seams straight away, others prefer to use something like a wooden iron or other gadgets, I like to use the wooden iron on small blocks until I have sewn a complete block then use a hot iron to press the block and rows of blocks.

There is no right or wrong way to press seams or which tool you use some people prefer steam irons to dry irons, you will find the method that works for you.



Figure 3.

4. Sew two more pieces together and press, place this right sides together over the first two squares make sure the grey and red squares are placed together. Pin in place, then sew together. Figure 4.

Open the fabric and press. This gives you four squares sewn together. Figure 5.



Figure 4.



Figure 5.

Hand piecing is very similar to that described above only the seam is sewn by hand a knot in the thread holds the thread in place at the beginning and the thread is tied off at the end by sewing some small stitches over each other. Some people prefer to have the pieces tacked together before sewing removing the pins before sewing the peices together.