

A Paper Piecing Photo Tutorial

some tools you might want

Pattern
Scissors
Seam ripper
Pins
Cutting mat, ruler and rotary cutter
Iron and ironing board
Sewing machine



some tips to keep in mind

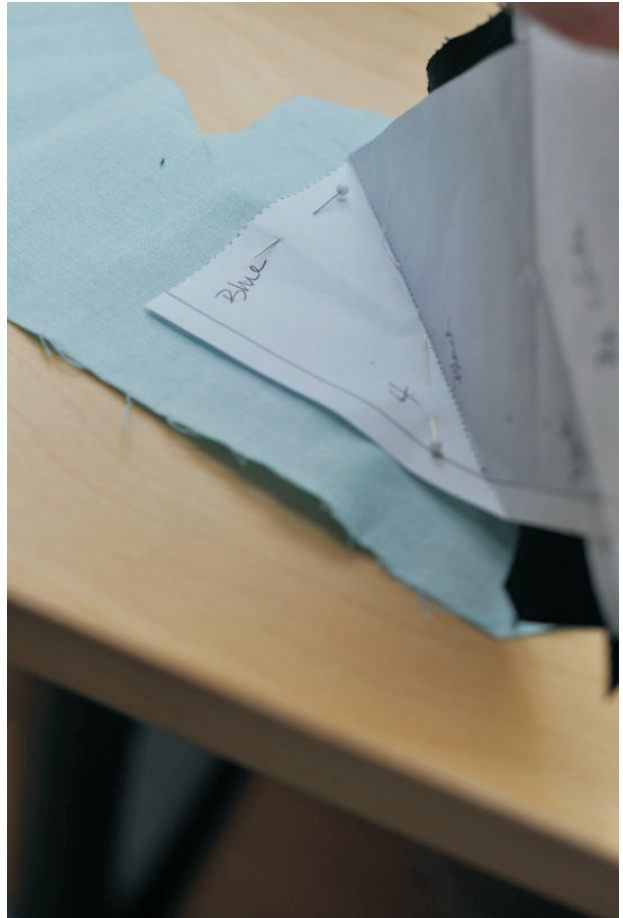
When I sew up paper pieced patterns, I always leave the paper attached to the fabric until the whole block, or sometimes the entire top is pieced. I use the nice straight edges of the paper to help line up my ruler so I can trim perfect $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowances around the pieced sections. I also use the paper edges to help line up the sections or blocks before I sew them together.

I also like to test the placement of the sections to each other, by pinching the seam allowance and spreading them apart to see how they will line up once it's sewn. It's a great way to fine tune your alignment, and will save you from the painstaking task of seam ripping.

If you find that you somehow end up with less than a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance, try to aim your sewing for the proper stitching line, using either the paper edge, or the opposite $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam edge to guide your presser foot. Many of my projects have $\frac{1}{8}$ " seam allowances, and hold up just fine.

1 Lay your fabric face down on the cutting table. **Place your corresponding pattern piece face up on the fabric, so the fabric and the pattern are back to back.** Make sure you have a generous $\frac{1}{4}$ " of fabric showing past all the edges of your pattern.

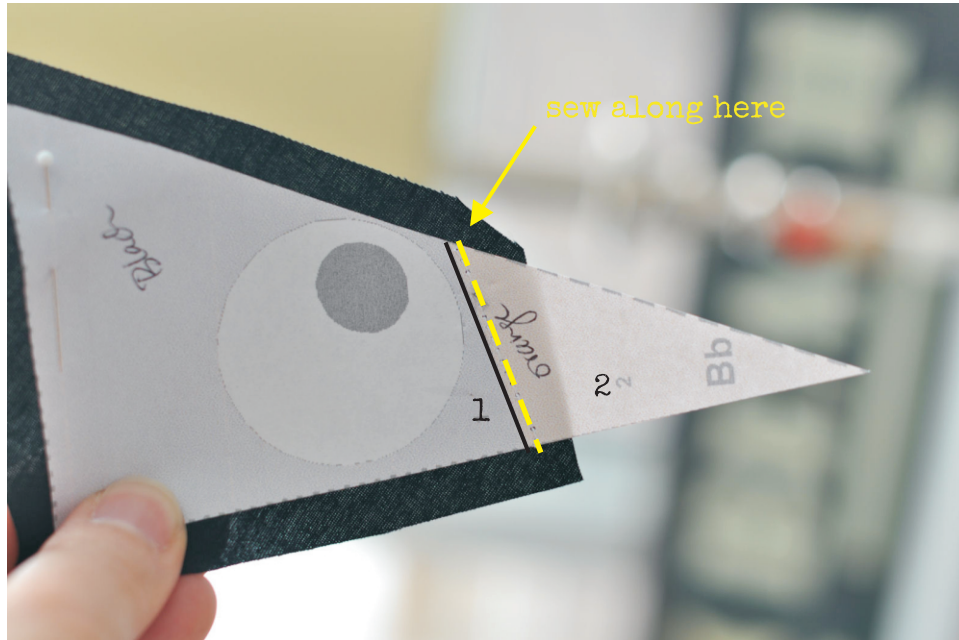
I like to fold away the rest of the pattern to expose the edges of the fabric piece I'm trying to cut. This saves me from having to cut apart an extra copy of the pattern just to cut my fabric.



2 **Cut your fabric to include the extra $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance on the fabric piece,** and cut only one of each piece. Keep all of the fabric pieces pinned to the pattern pieces. It'll save you from losing your mind if you keep your pieces organized and grouped together in each section.

Lay your fabric pieces for the first section you want to sew face down on the table, and arrange them in the way they will be sewn together, just as you see them in the pattern. This will help you stay organized as you sew.

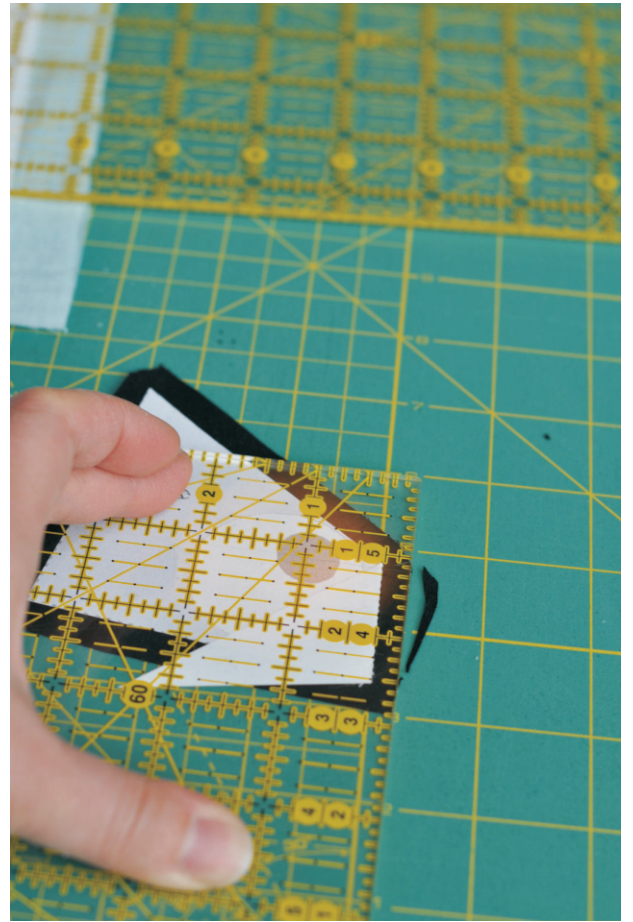
- 3** Place **piece #1** underneath its spot on the pattern template, right side facing out (away from the pattern) and pin in place. Make sure the seam allowance extends past the sewing lines on the pattern by holding it up to the light so you can see the fabric through the paper.



- 4** Carefully slide the pattern (with the fabric pinned underneath) under your presser foot. **You are going to tack this piece in place by sewing beside the stitching line between pieces #1 and #2**, just into the space for piece #2. Make sure to sew within the pattern's lines and always backstitch.



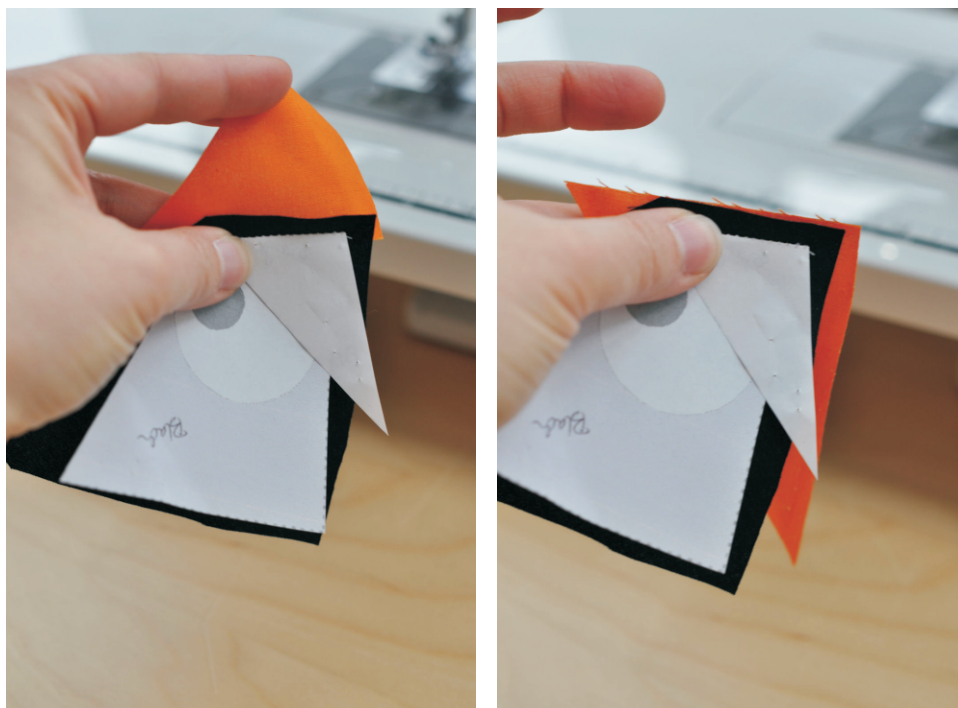
5 Fold the paper back and trim your seam allowance to 1/4".



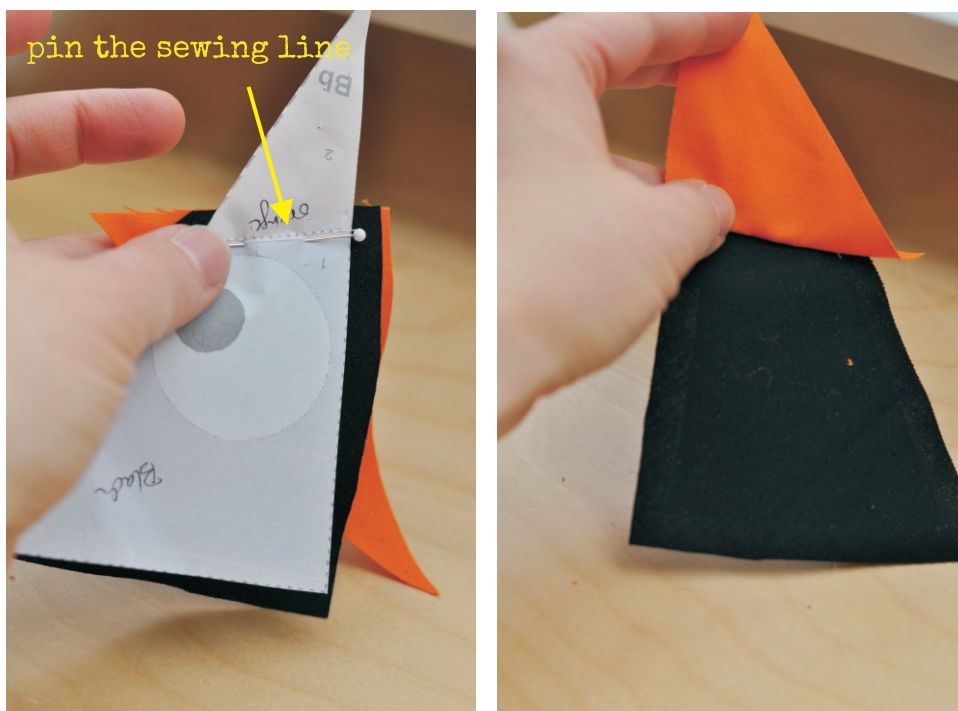
6 Take piece #2 and place it underneath its spot on the pattern, right side facing out. Hold it up to the light and make sure its seam allowances extend evenly past the sewing lines.



7 Taking care to keep piece #2 aligned with piece #1, **flip #2 so that it lays face down over piece #1** with their seam allowance edges nicely lined up past the stitching line below.



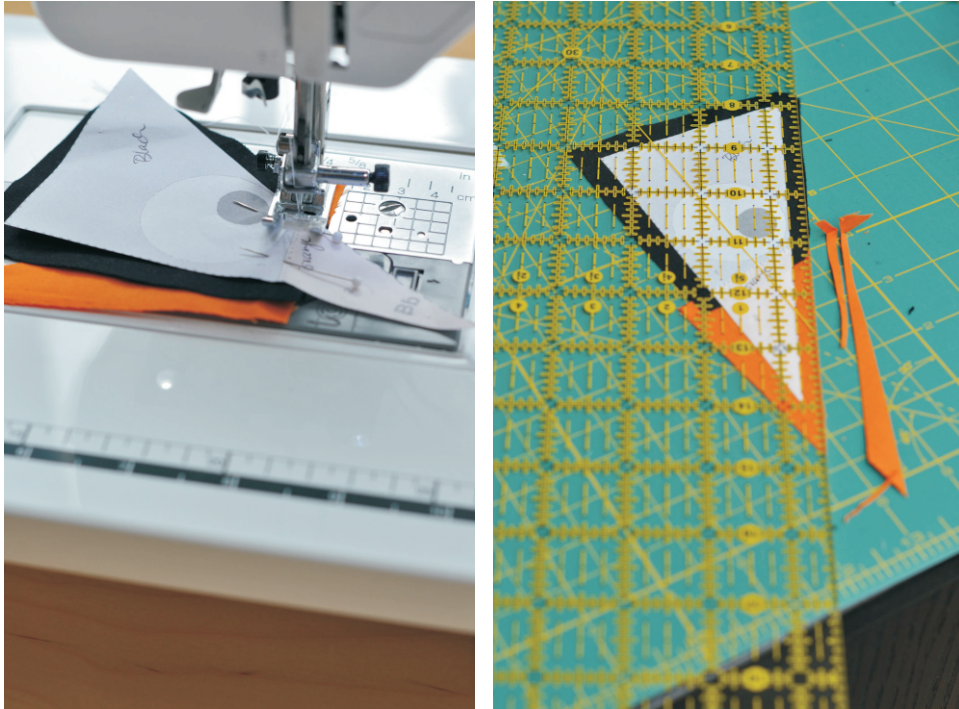
8 **Test your placement by pinning along the sewing line and finger pressing it open.** Hold it up to the light to see how well it lays within its spot on the pattern.



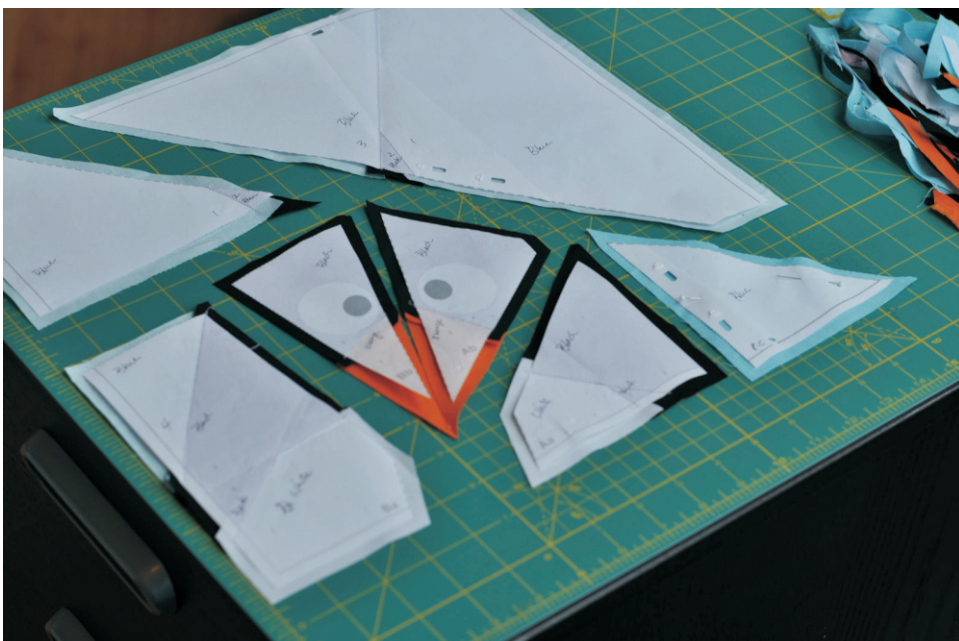
9 **Adjust its placement until you're happy with the final outcome, and pin piece #2 in place on top of piece #1.**

- 10 Carefully slide your pattern face up (fabric underneath) under your presser foot and **sew the line between piece #1 and #2.**

Press and trim your completed section to a nice $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance and lay aside.

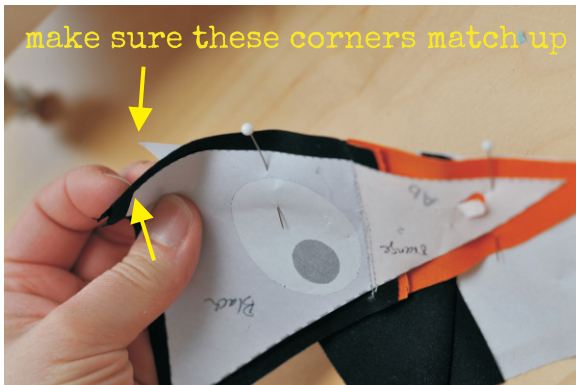


- 11 **Sew up each section using this process.** Trim their seam allowances to a nice $\frac{1}{4}$ ", and pin to secure the corners of the larger pieces.

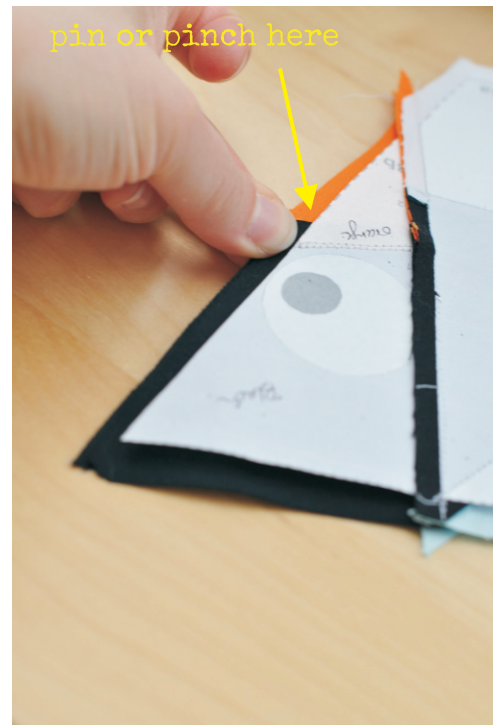


12 When all sections are done, sew them together in alphabetical order.

When aligning the sections, place their right sides together watching closely that you line up the paper edges of each pattern.



13 Always pin or pinch along the stitching line and finger press the pieces open to test out your placement before you go ahead and sew them together.



14 Once all of your sub-sections and large sections are constructed, **you can then sew your block together in alphabetical order:**

- Sew Aa to Ab, etc.
- Sew A to B, then add C etc.

Press your seams in the direction of least resistance.

If the paper is still lying nice and square, use the nice straight edges to align your ruler to trim your assembled quilt block to 12.5" x 12.5".

15 Removing The Paper

Fold each paper section along the stitch line and crease well with your fingernail. Press on the stitch line to support your thread and gently pull the paper to the side to tear away.

Do one last final press to all the seams, and your block is ready to go.

