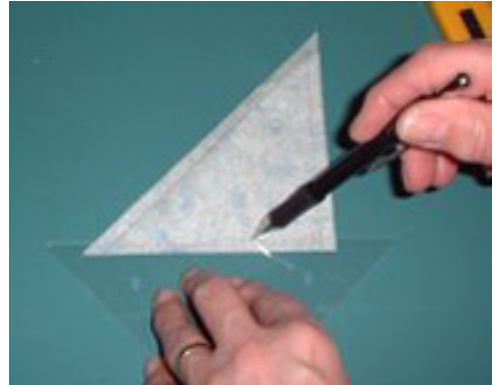


No.5 - SEWING AN ACCURATE QUARTER INCH SEAM

BY HAND

When using our templates we always suggest that you use the template to mark the sewing line :

Marking the sewing line using the template. This ensures an accurate quarter inch seam.



If you are not using our templates then you need to purchase a ruler marked in quarter inch sections and use that or alternatively there are a number of products available for marking or adding a quarter of an inch, ask at your local retailer.

When hand sewing it is advisable to sew on the sewing line only and not out into the seam that is :



Any difficult piecing whether by hand or machine is best done this way, this is called "setting in". See [TESTING YOUR QUARTER INCH SEAM](#) and [SEWING BY HAND](#)

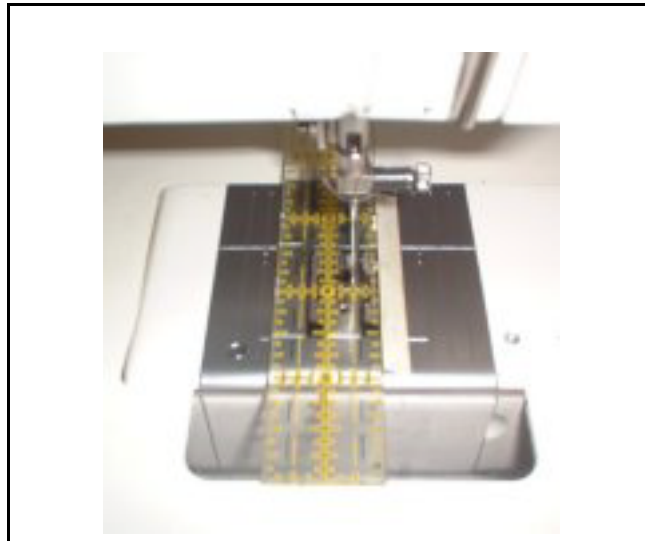
TO SET THE QUARTER INCH ON MACHINE

Many machines today have a quarter inch foot as standard or you can buy one – a lot of the older type machines have a foot that is an exact quarter inch so check and measure ALL the feet that are with your machine before buying one. – do buy one however if you don't have one amongst your collection, it saves a lot of time and trouble and helps to eliminate an all too common fault –inaccurate seams?

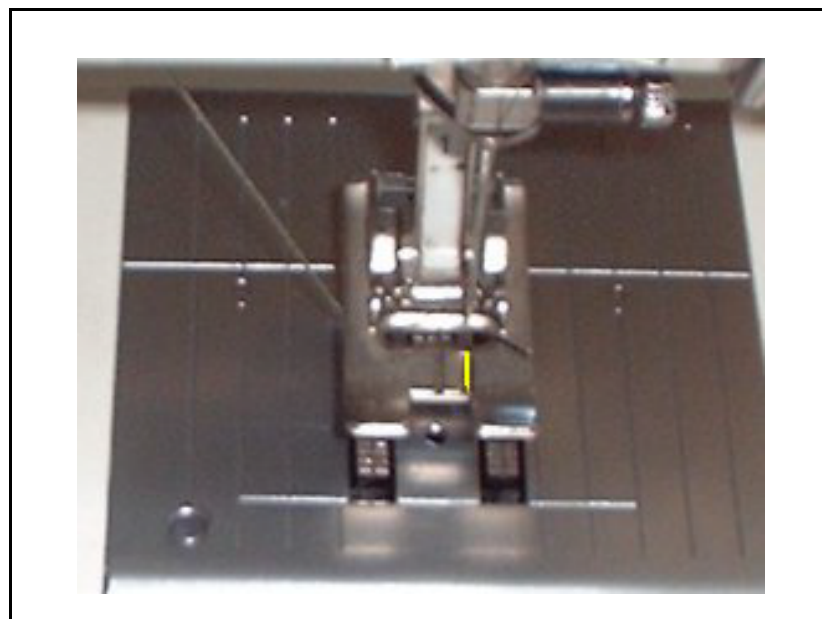


If you do not have a quarter inch machine foot and cannot purchase one for your machine then below are some suggestions to "set" the quarter inch.

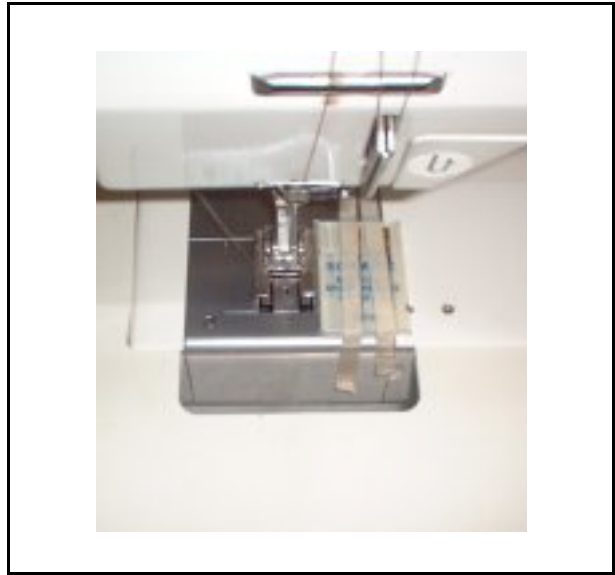
On many machines you can adjust the needle position and use the edge of one of the machine feet. Measure from the needle position on a ruler placed underneath and move the needle the correct distance to give you a quarter inch – choose a foot which best enables you to sew a straight line and see your work.



NOTE: The new computer machines default the needle position back into the centre every time the machine is switched off – you will have to remember to reset for quarter inch every time you switch on – a reminder stuck on the machine helps as does marking a line on the presser foot with a permanent marker.



Some machines come with a seam guide to screw into the bed of the machine, this can slide along until the raised bit is the correct distance away from the needle, it is then screwed into place to secure. If you do not have a seam guide make your own by determining a quarter inch from the needle and stick a piece of masking tape at this distance onto the bed of your machine, you will align the side of your fabric pieces up with the tape to sew the quarter inch (you can if fact make a little wall of say an empty machine needle box to make a more effective home-made seam guide.



TESTING YOUR QUARTER INCH SEAM

When you sew an accurate quarter inch seam you do in fact take a 'scant' quarter this allows for the pencil line and the seams of 2 pieces of fabric being put together. Do try this little test as just one sixteenth of an inch out on say 8 x 2" squares would mean a discrepancy of 1" over a 12 1/2" length. – that's quite a lot to have to 'ease' in over a block and a lot more if it continued over a quilt measuring 60" plus or more – it would end up 5 or 6" out!!

TEST YOURSELF

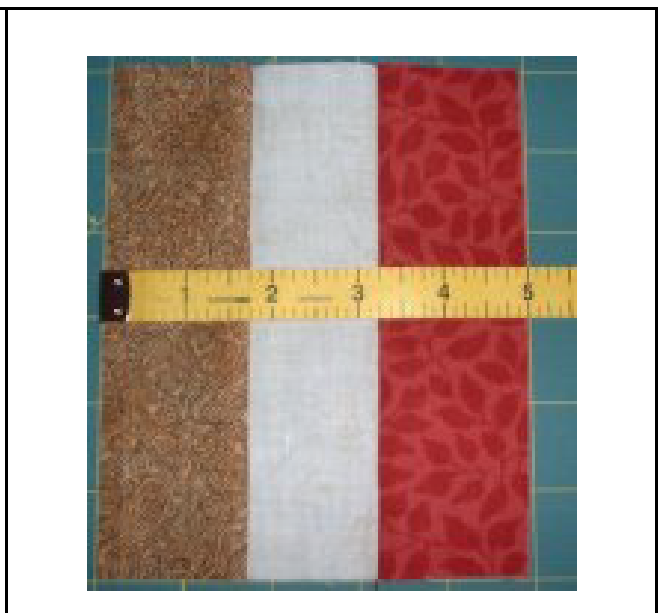
Cut 3 strips 2" x 6"

Sew together using your accurate quarter inch

*Press seams to the dark side

*(Pressing is a gentle lowering, pressing and lifting of the iron along the length of the fabric without moving the iron back and forth along the seam – use a dry iron with a medium to hot temperature) Ironing aggressively back and forth can easily pull and distort your piecing.

Measure across the strips this should be 5" exactly with the centre strip measuring 1 1/2" between the seams.



If this is not quite right then readjust your measurement at the sewing machine and try again until you get it right It really is worth doing and checking from time to time.

Once you have confidence in your machine and your quarter inch you will not always need to mark the sewing line onto the reverse of your fabric pieces.

See READY TO SEW

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