
Supplies

- Quarter Inch quilting foot with Guide (one is part of Feet included with Stellaire)
- Ultra T Quarter Inch Foot part of the three foot set for Brother/Baby Lock
- Rotary Cutter with fresh blade, Ruler with 1/8" markings and cutting mat
- 100% Cotton Quilting Fabric (very little fabric is required for these tiny patches)
- Very thin batting or a use a piece of flannel
- Best Press 2 or Terial Magic to add body to Fabric
- Very Fine Thread such as Quilter's Select Para Cotton Poly 80 wt. or cotton threads 60 wt. up to 50 wt.
- Quilting Needle size 75/11
- Marking Pen for Fabric and Wet Erase Pen (optional) to mark on Ruler
- Fine Pins

Sharpen Your Quilting Skills by Making a Miniature Quilt



There are several steps in the piecing of a quilt block and each one has potential for creating a problem. Errors, misses and un-matched points are all glaringly obvious in a miniature quilt. It's all there in the palm of your hand when the "patches" are only 1/2" square. Larger quilt pieces can be eased and manipulated to fit, but little pieces leave no room for error. By looking at each step in the process of piecing a block when making a very

small quilt, overcome any tendencies, unlearn any bad habits and sharpen any skills. Well-pieced quilts are easy to finish, lay flat and make it simple to quilt without any tucks. Ready to start Piecing School by making a miniature quilt? Here are the instructions with a series of “Tips for Success” for a Jacob’s Ladder mini quilt.

Itty Bitty Jacob’s Ladder Quilt – Prepare the Fabric

Select fabrics with little print or very small designs. Large-scale prints will just not show in the ½” squares. Use 100% cotton designed for quilting. Usually 1/8 of a yard is plenty for any color. Back the finished quilt with a fat quarter. Standard batting is too thick. Choose a very thin batting or use flannel as a batting. Check any fabrics for dye fastness. Pre-washing is not necessary, but many quilters do.

Tips for Success #1 - Add body to both pre-washed and straight from the store fabric with starch, Terial Magic or Best Press 2. Fabrics with a crisp body will behave better when cutting and sewing. Dampen the fabric with a fine spray and allow fabric to become almost dry. Press the fabric well to create a “crisp” finish.

Itty Bitty Jacob’s Ladder Quilt – Cut and Sew the Four Patch Units

The mini quilt in the video is a Jacob’s ladder and the block is constructed from five (5) four patch units and four (4) half triangle squares. The units shown in the video finish to 1” and are 1 ½” unfinished.

For the four patch unit, cut 1” strips of fabric in both light and dark fabrics. Two 1” x 10” fabric strips is enough for one block. Sew the light and dark strips together

Tips for Success #2 – Set up the machine for a perfect ¼” seam. From scrap fabric, cut two 2 ½” squares of fabric. With the machine turned off, install the single needle hole plate and the bobbin cover with the seam guide. Turn the machine on. In the video, the UltraT foot without guide that is not included with the machine was used for piecing. Select a straight stitch from the utility stitches menu or the center piecing stitch from the quilting menu. Turn on the LED guide light and set it ¼” from the seam line and along the raw edges of the fabric. Sew the two squares together with the raw edges even and the LED guide light along the raw edge of the fabrics. (For strip piecing, also engage the pivot feature.) With the seam pressed to one side, open the pair and

measure the piece. It should measure 2 ½" x 4 ½". Repeat the exercise and make adjustments if the measurement is too large or small.

For this pattern, the strip set will be cut into sub units of two squares and sewn together to form four patches. For other patterns, such as creating a nine patch, sew multiple strips together and sub cut after being pressed open.

Tips for Success #3 – Sub-cut 1" units from the pieced strip and a fresh edge. Using a rotary cutter, ruler and cutting mat trim one end of the pressed open strips perfectly square. The strip needs to be under the ruler. Align the ruler with the raw edges of the sewn strip. An accurate straight end cut is not possible just eye balling the raw edge. Periodically check that the edge is straight and cutting a straight edge to measure from.

Open and press the seam towards the dark side. These units should measure 1" x 1 ½".

Tips for Success #3 – Finger press the units open before pressing them to flatten the seam. With the dark fabric on the top and just lifted along the edge, run the tip of the iron along the seam while pressing the light fabric. Press the seam open with the right side up. Make sure there are no tucks in the seam line.

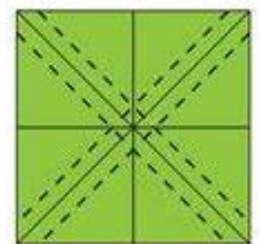
Itty Bitty Jacob's Ladder Quilt – Cut and Sew the Half-Square Triangles

Create half-square triangle squares to sew into the block. Half-square units are easily made in bulk by sewing across a larger square and then cutting it apart. The method used here creates eight (8) triangle units from one larger square. See the chart to find the size to cut the larger square for different size units.

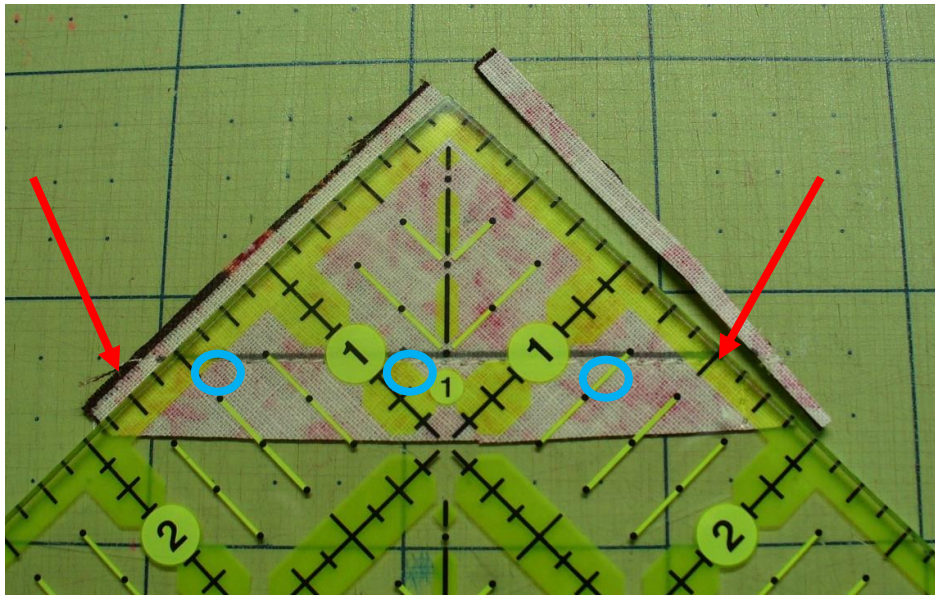
For our quilt, start with a light and dark 4" square.

Unfinished Size	Finished Size	Cut a Large Square
1"	½"	3"
1 ½"	1"	4"
2"	1 ½"	5"
2 ½"	2"	6"
3"	2 ½"	7"
3 ½"	3"	8"
4"	3 ½"	9"
4 ½"	4"	10"

Tips for Success # 4 - Sewing the seam and then trimming to size yields a more precise triangle unit than sewing together pre-cut triangles along a bias edge. Half-square triangles are used in many different quilt patterns there are many multiple methods to create them.



On the light side of the 4" square, mark diagonal lines from each corner to corner creating an "X". Use any marking pen as these lines indicate the final cutting line and will not show on the finished square. Using a quarter inch foot without a guide, such as the UltraT quarter inch foot, sew $\frac{1}{4}$ " on each side of both of the lines shown as the dashed lines in the diagram. The larger square is a slightly larger size than is needed. The quarter square triangle will be trimmed to size using the sewn seam as a measuring point. After sewing, cut the square into quarters and triangles as shown as the solid lines in the diagram.



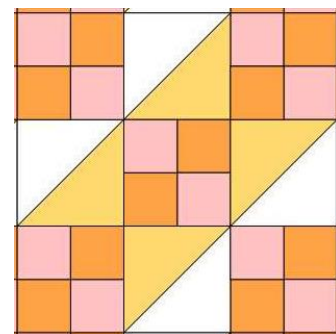
Trim the half-square triangle units *before* pressing them open. Use the corner of a small ruler with measurement markings on adjacent sides. Trim to the correct measurement from the seam line. (The seam line has been darkened in the photo.) Determine the location to place the ruler

corner by aligning the desired measurement of the ***unfinished size*** of the half-square triangle on the seam located at the raw edge of the triangle (the red arrow above). Locate the spot on the diagonal that lies on the seam in the center of the triangle seam. Mark any spots on the ruler that will help place the ruler for timing all the triangles. (Shown in the blue circles.) Align the ruler with the seam at the center and both sides. Trim both the raw edges using the corner of the ruler. Usually only a small amount of fabric will need trimmed as shown in the photo above. Repeat for all eight (8) triangles. Open up the trimmed half-square triangle and press the seam to the dark side. This method works for all half-square triangles. Trim the small corners and the half-square triangle is ready for including in your project.

Tips for Success # 5 – Handling the units will cause the edges to fray and possibly stretch them out of shape. After the units are completed, keep them secure with a minimum of handling. Use inexpensive felt in a block keeper or a plastic tub to hold them until ready to assemble.

Itty Bitty Jacob's Ladder Quilt – Assemble the Mini Quilt

Lay out the four patch and half-square triangle units using the quilt block layout as a guide. The units can be sewn together as individual blocks or layout the entire quilt and sew together as rows and columns.



Tips for Success # 6 – Match the corners of the blocks and lock them in place by aligning adjacent seams in opposite directions as shown in the photo below. Feel the joins with your fingers. When the corners match, the join will feel solid without any lumps or soft spots. This is called “Wiggle Matching”. Secure the join location with a pin. As you sew the rows and columns together, remove the pins just before stitching over the corner joins.

