

The Magic 8 Method

Making 8 Half-Square Triangles at a Time

Making many HST (Half Square Triangles) can be very tedious. First you have to cut triangles, layer them, sew them on the bias, press them carefully so they do not stretch, etc... How about if you could cut that list of steps in half?

Well, here we go.

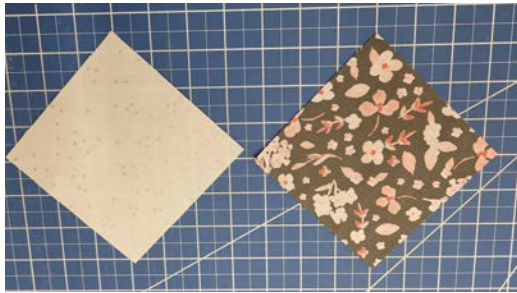
Step 1: Decide what size block you will need to cut.

There is a very simple formula for that. You need to know what the FINISHED size of your HST. This is not the size you want it to be when you make it, it is the size you will end up with after it is put into your project.

For the Weekend Whimsy our finished size will be 1 ½ inch square.

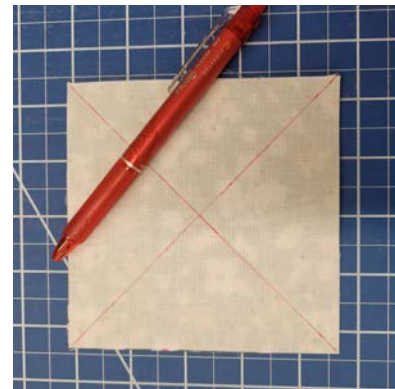
The Formula: Finished Size x 2 + 1 ¾" = Beginning Block size

Our example: $1\frac{1}{2} \times 2 = 3'' + 1\frac{3}{4}'' = 4\frac{3}{4}''$



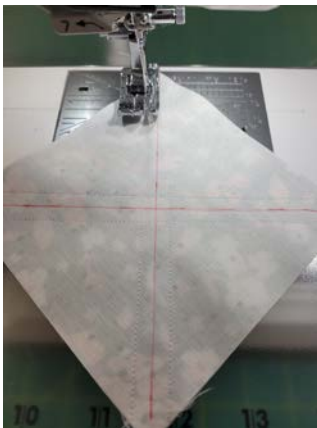
Step 2: Cutting

We need a 4¾" square of two different fabrics. *If you are not confident in your seam allowance and would like the ability to trim your blocks round up to 5"*



Step 3: Marking

Place the two squares on top of each other, right sides together. Draw a diagonal line from corner to corner, twice.



Step 4: Sewing

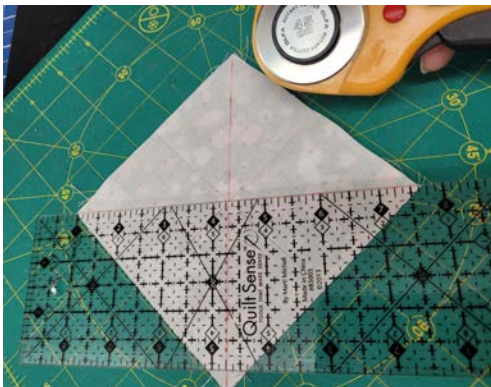
Stitch a total of four lines: ¼" from each side of the marked lines

Step 5: Cutting again.

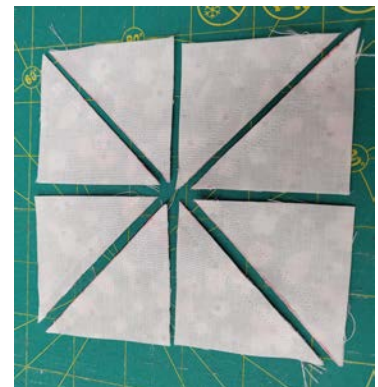
You'll make a total of four cuts. I like to use a rotating cutting mat on this step. If you don't have a rotating mat, cut somewhere you can move around your table so you can cut from all sides.

Cut 1: Cut vertically right down the center. Align your ruler with the center where your drawn lines intersect. Double check your alignment by dividing the original block measurement in half and making sure the edge of your ruler on that line. Example: our block began at $4\frac{3}{4}$ ", which is the same as $4\frac{6}{8}$. Half of that is $2\frac{3}{8}$. So my ruler needed to be on the $2\frac{3}{8}$ line. (I had stretch myself as school was many many moons ago)

Cut 2: Time for a second cut that's perpendicular to the cut you just made.



Cuts 3 and 4: Cut on both of the drawn diagonal lines, between your stitching lines.



Step 6: Open and Press

Separate the cut pieces and open them up to reveal your perfect HSTs! If you rounded up your initial squares, you will need to trim to 2" squares.



Press to the dark side (unless otherwise stated in the pattern) and trim the dog ears.