

IQG Block Exchange II: Winter Star Tutorial - By Mindy Gooding



The first time I met a HST, I had completed two quilts. I didn't even know where the $7/8^{\text{th}}$ line was on the ruler and then when I did learn where it was, I had no idea how I would become proficient in cutting pieces to this size and have them turn out correctly. Needless to say, the HST was a nemesis of mine for quite some time. Through my learning process, I realized that there are MANY different ways to accomplish and be successful at the HST. You may prefer to use the Ruler Revolution ruler, Thangles, Triangles on a Roll, Marti Michell Templates, the choices are almost endless. After talking with Karen at the last stitch in, she told me that with the right ruler, you can use $2\frac{1}{2}$ " strips to make your HST's. One of these rulers is the Fons and Porter Half and Quarter ruler. I have one of these rulers but of course, couldn't find it to study it. This tutorial is based upon how I go about making HST's. This is how I do all of my HST's unless I am instructed to do them using another method. You may make the HST's in this block in any manner you wish. As long as they are the correct size, $2\frac{1}{2}$ " unfinished.

CUTTING INSTRUCTIONS:

The block cutting instructions are based on the use of fat quarters to construct the block. From one blue and one cream FQ, you can make two blocks.

From the BLUE FQ: cut 1- 2 1/2"xWOF strip, cut 2- 3"xWOF strips

From the 2 1/2"xWOF strip, cut 4- 2 1/2" x 2 1/2" squares.

From the 3"xWOF strips, cut 12- 3x3" squares.

From the CREAM FQ: cut 1- 4 1/2"xWOF strip, cut 2- 3"xWOF strips

From the 4 1/2"xWOF strip, cut 2- 4 1/2" squares. One of these will be used in the next block you make.

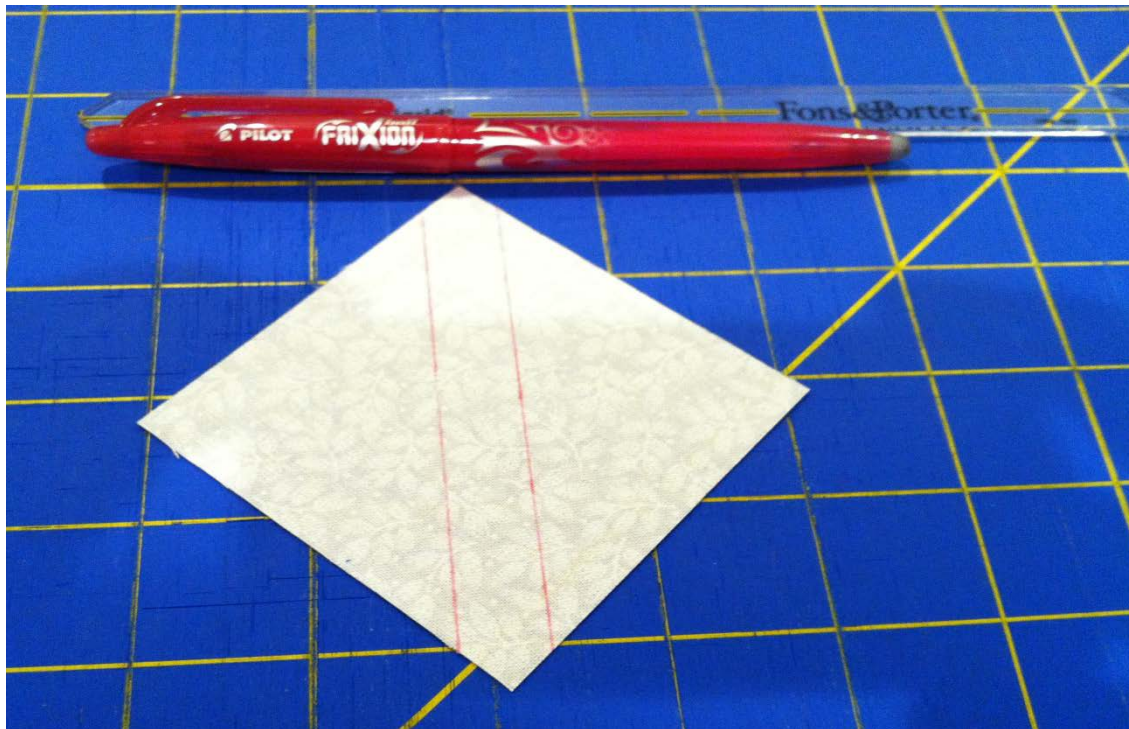
From the 3"xWOF strips, cut 12- 3x3" squares

MAKING THE BLOCK:

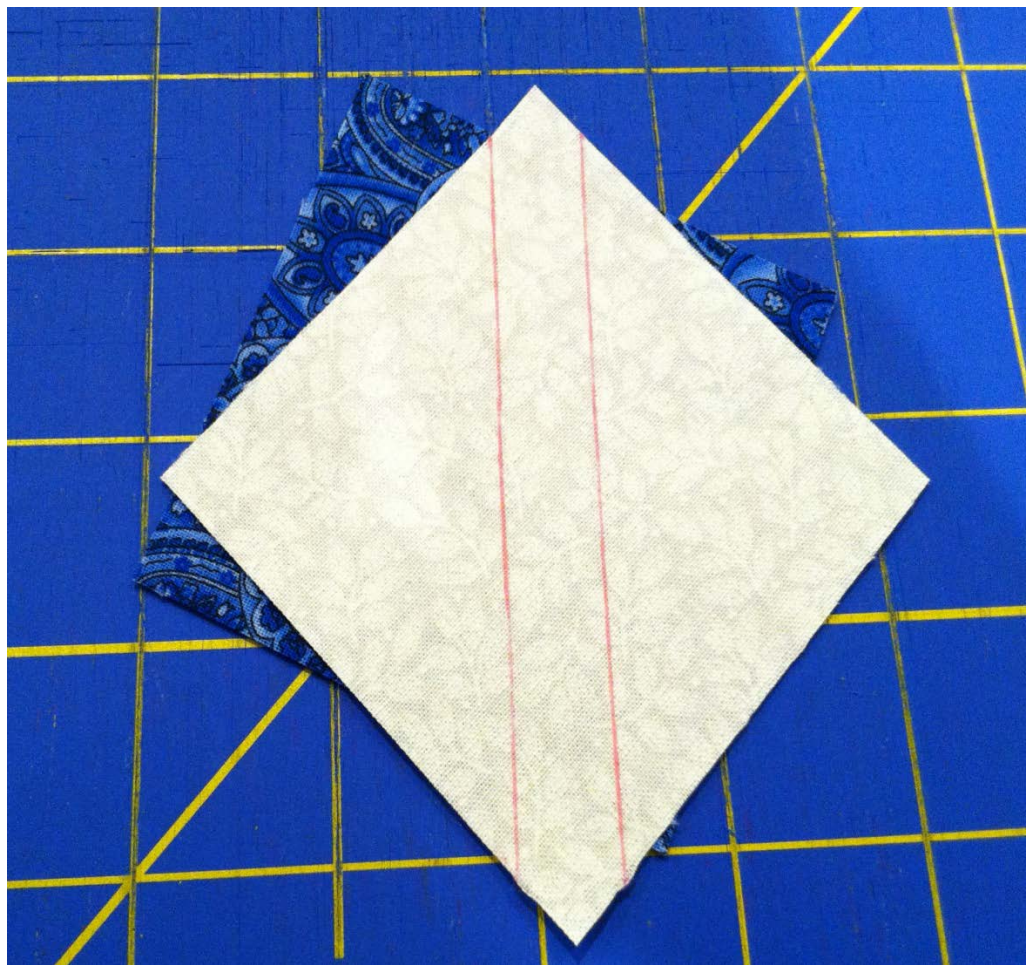
On the wrong side of the 12 cream 3" squares, locate the diagonal of the square. I use an Omnigrid 1/4" measurer.

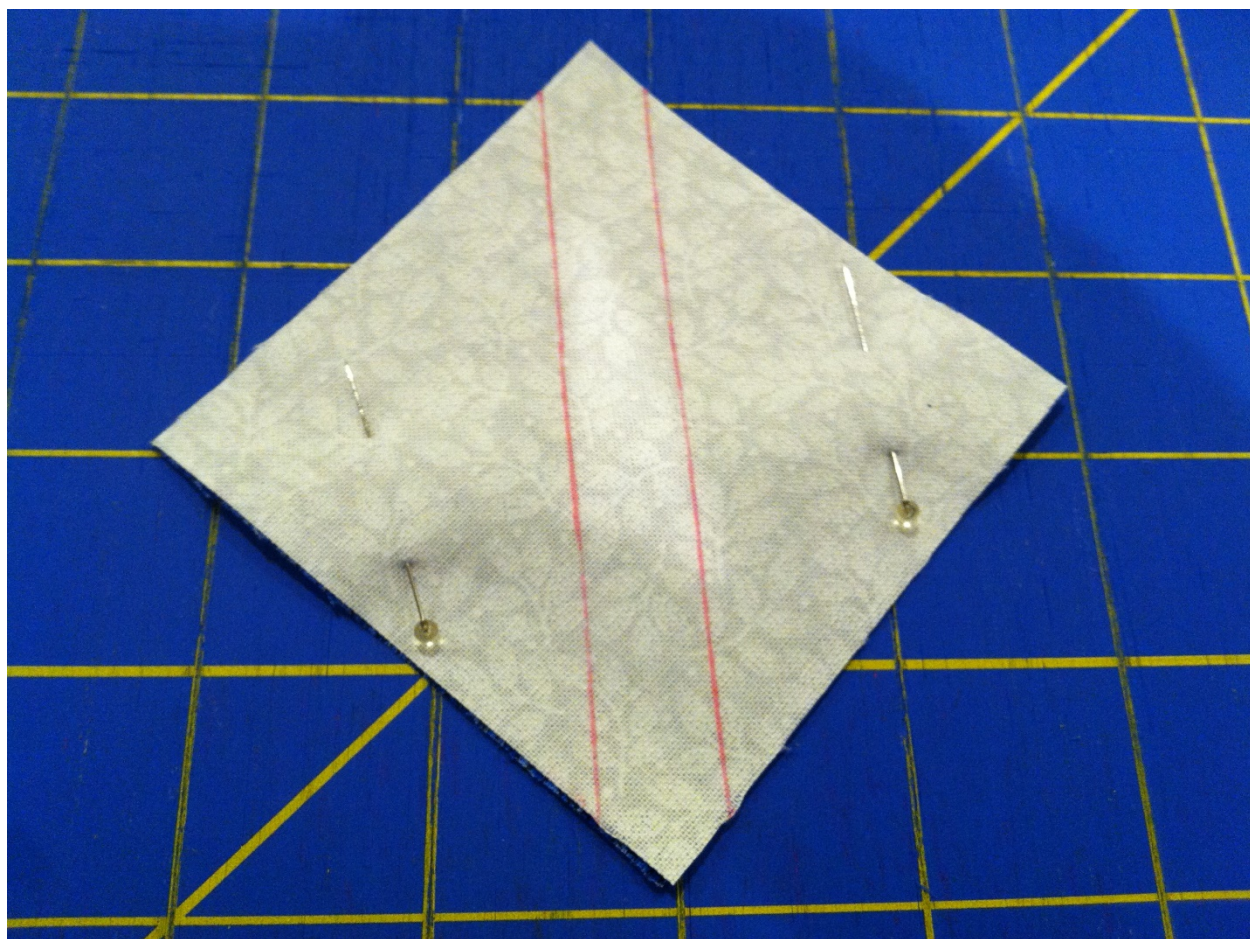


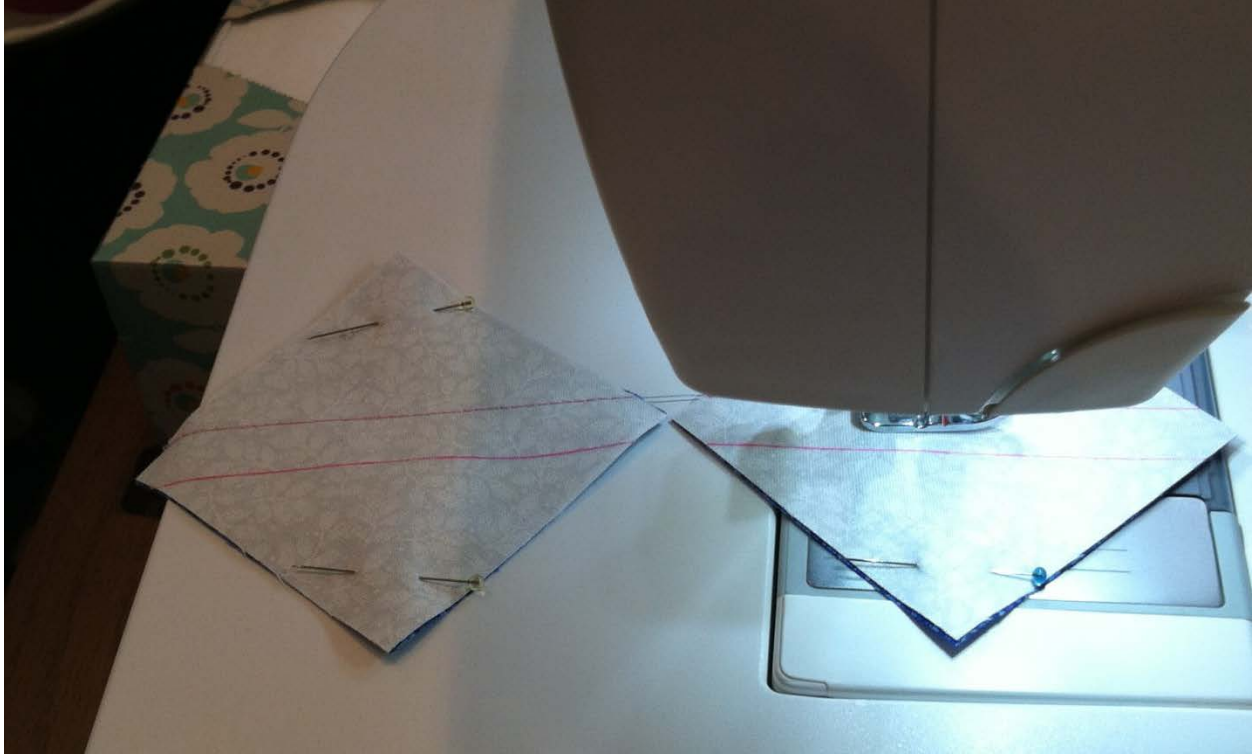
Draw a line on both sides of the 1/4" marker. You may also draw the center diagonal line in and sew a 1/4" away on both sides of the center line or draw the diagonal line and then draw lines a 1/4" away on both sides before sewing.



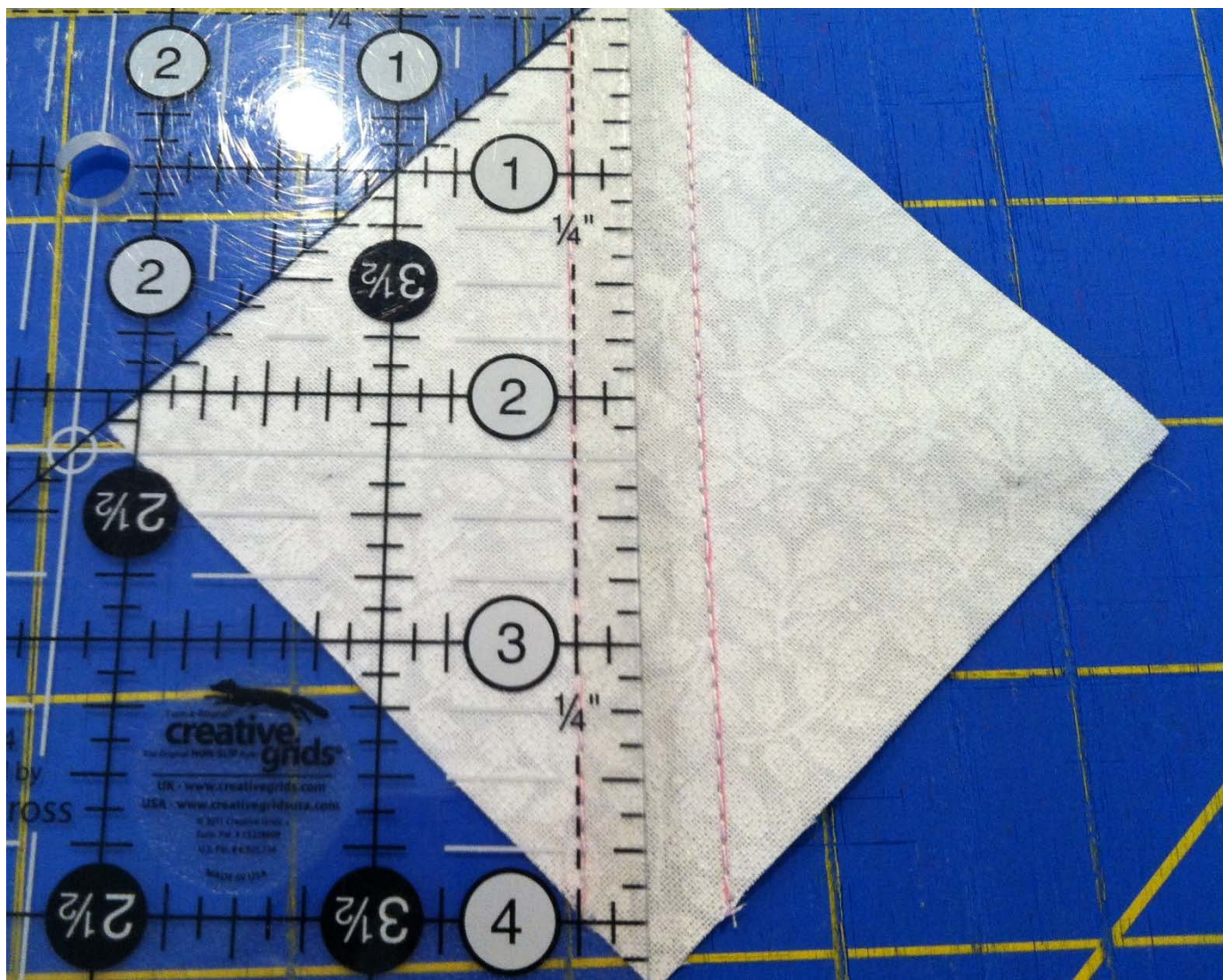
After you have marked the 12- 3" cream squares, place them right sides together with the 12- 3" blue squares and pin.



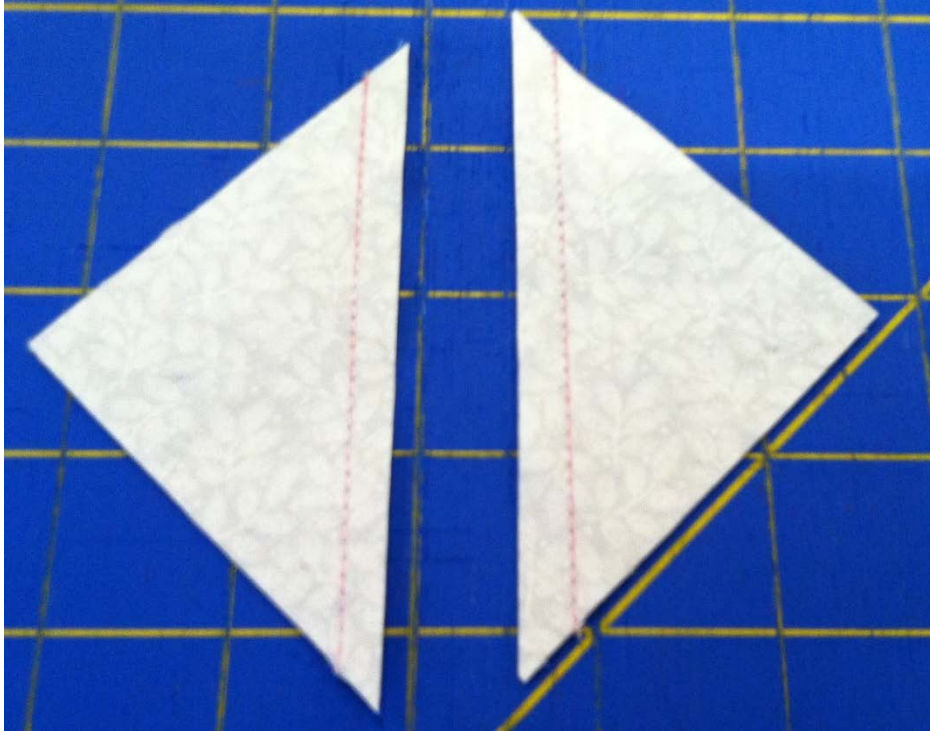




Next, I sew by chain piecing the right diagonal lines. Although you don't have to, I cut the pieces apart. Sew all the pieces on other diagonal lines. I also chain piece this step. I cut my squares apart and then remove my pins. The use of pins is totally up to you. I am a pinner, some people are not.



Cut the squares apart on the diagonal line. You can do this by using scissors or by placing your ruler on one of your sewing lines and using your rotary cutter. This step does not need to be exact because you are cutting into the seam allowance. I use my rotary cutter because it is easier on my hands.



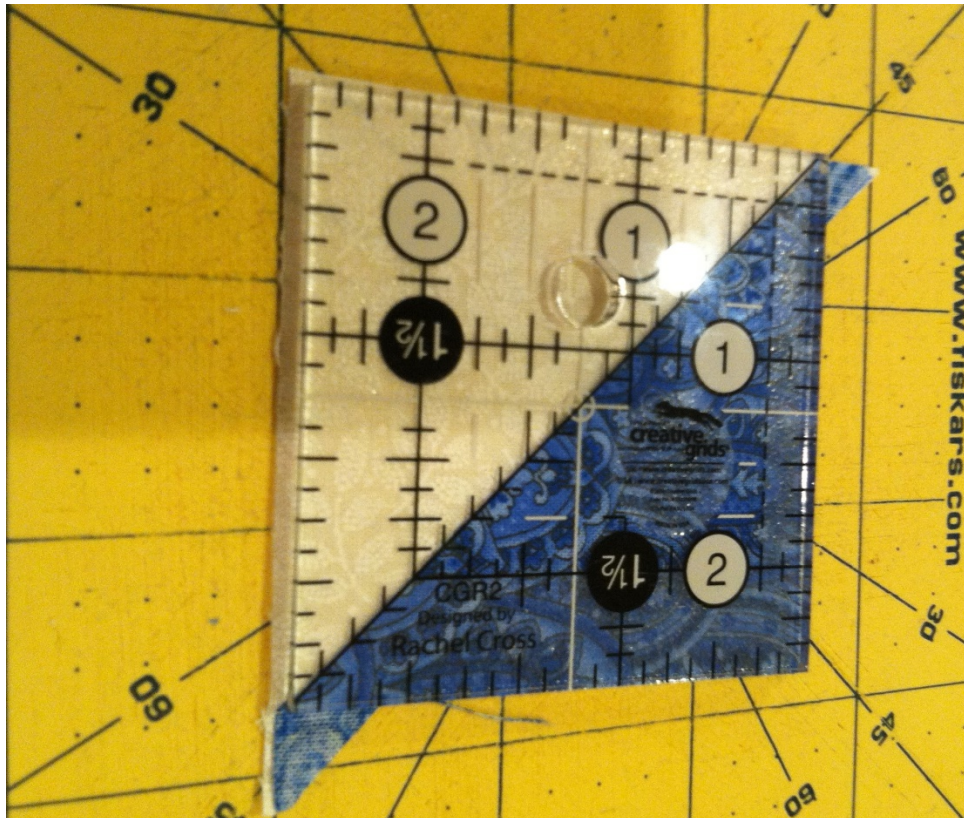
After cutting your squares in half, you should have 24 HST's.



Since we eliminated the $2\frac{7}{8}$ th measurement of our initial squares, and cut them 3", that leaves $\frac{1}{8}$ th of an inch that needs to be trimmed from each side of your HST's. If you are more comfortable with having a little more to trim to accomplish the $2\frac{1}{2}$ ", just cut your initial 3" squares a little larger. I ran across this method on trimming HST's one day when I was messing around on the internet and thought it was quite clever. I use my $2\frac{1}{2}$ " square ruler. If you do a lot of piecing, I think this little ruler is well worth the investment. If you do not have one, here is the website where she shows you how to use any ruler to be able to trim your HST's using this method, (www.littlemissshabby.com/2014/01/epic-hst-technique/) Note the gorgeous block on this web page!!!! She was in an exchange and the

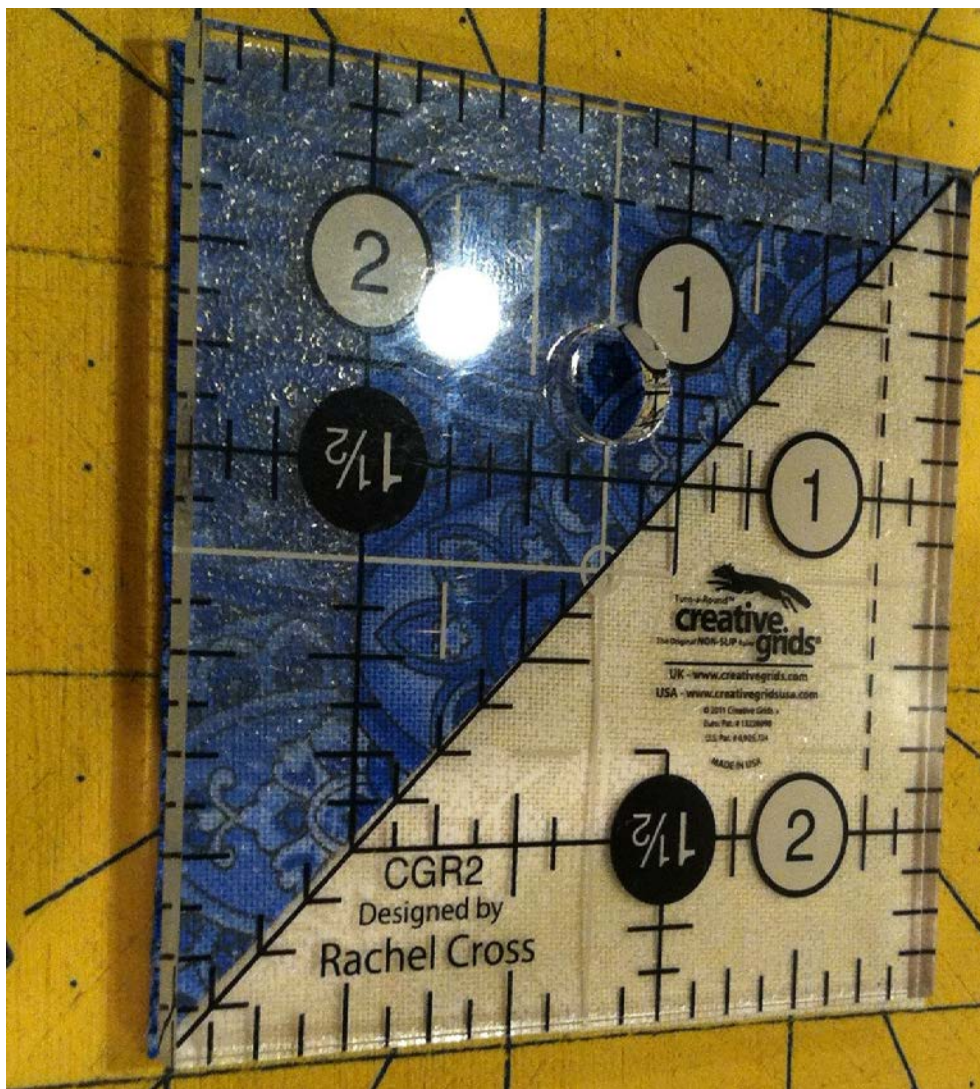
participants exchanged just HST's and then put their own blocks together.

In the above picture, I have used my rotating mat and 28mm rotary cutter for trimming.

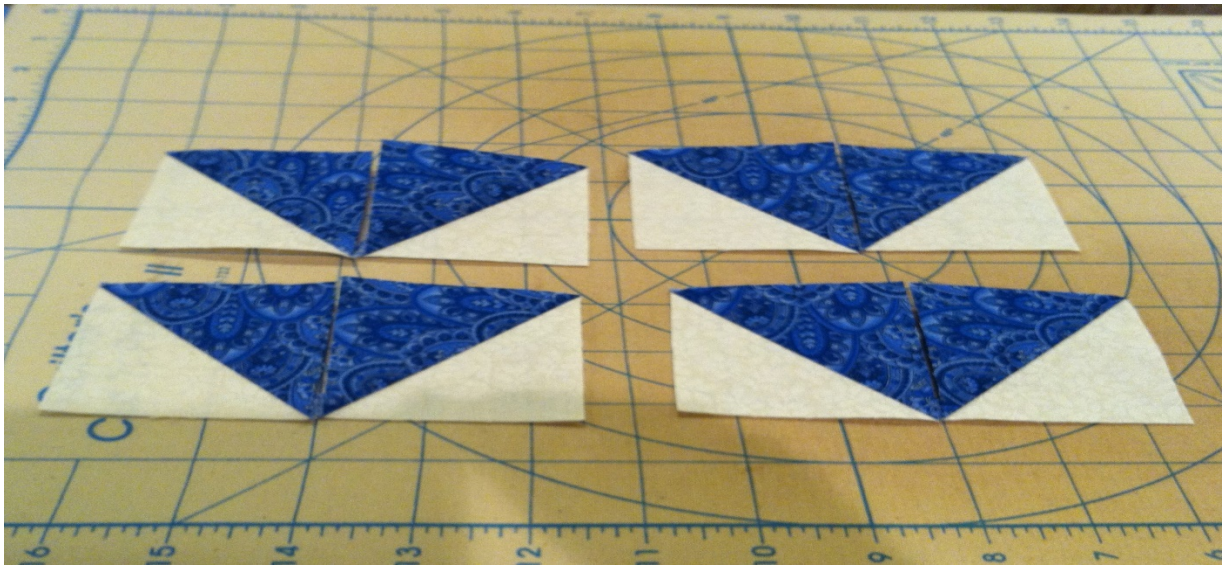


In this photo, I have pressed my HST open before trimming. Before I press with the iron, I finger press the fabric back on the seam. I finger press practically every seam I sew. I believe it helps your block lay flatter and also eliminates the chance of getting little folds in your fabric when you iron. It also aids in keeping your patchwork accurate in size and your points crisp. I don't pull on the fabric at all but I really press the fabric at the seam line.

When I first started making HST's, the trimming part was really frustrating for me. I am directionally challenged and couldn't grasp how to trim both sides. Finally, I got something stuck in my brain that seemed to work. With the ruler in place, as above and the 45 degree line on the seam, trim the blue side. After you have trimmed the blue side, turn your block so the white side is where the blue side was, line up your 45 degree line on the diagonal seam and trim. After I figured out to tell myself to trim the side by color, first the blue and then the white, I solved my directional trimming issues.



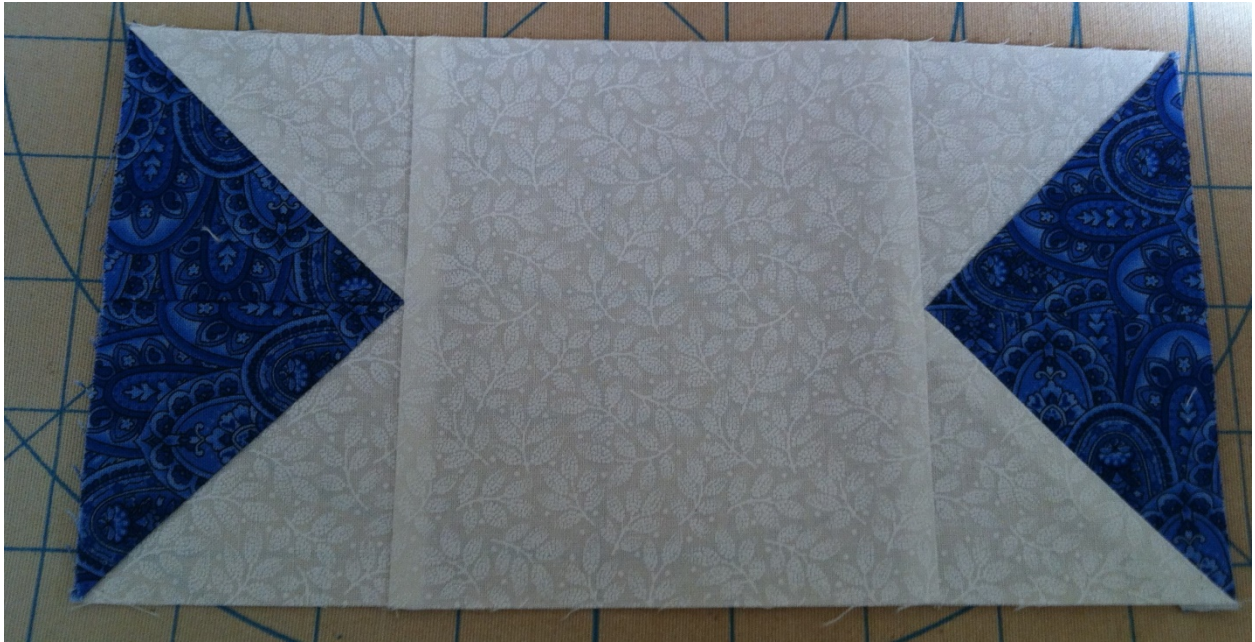
Next, press your HST's open. Press 12 of the HST's towards the blue and the other 12 HST's towards the cream.



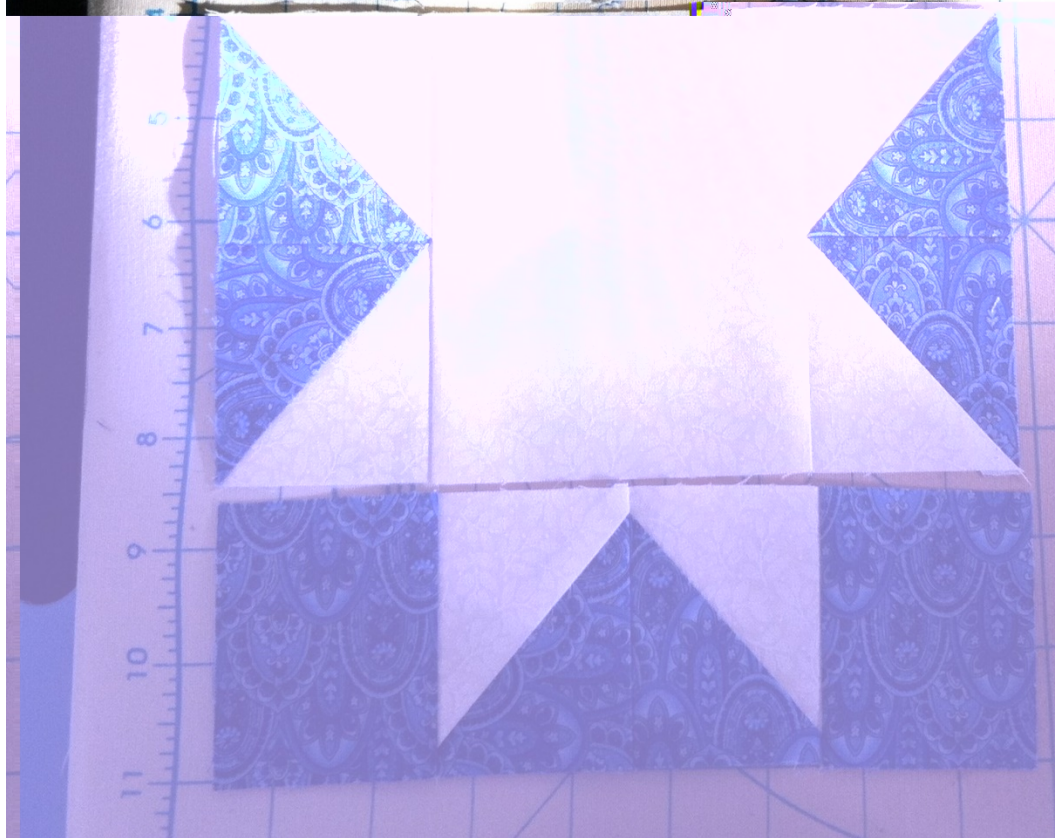
Piece together 4 pairs of HST's as shown. Finger press and then press your seams with the iron.



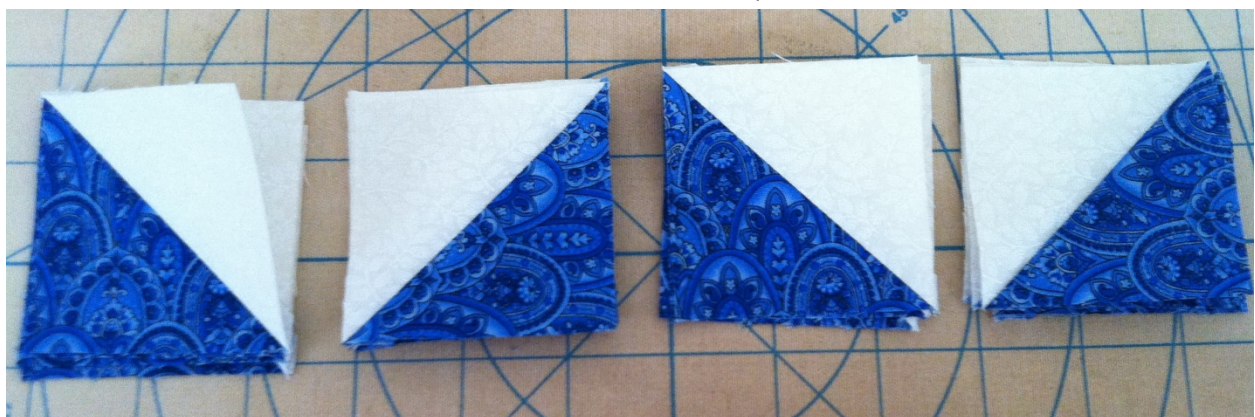
Add blue 2 1/2" squares to each end of TWO of the units you have just made. Press seams towards the blue squares.



Sew the joined HST pairs to the R and L sides of the cream 4 1/2". Press seams towards the square.



Sew the other 2 rows to the top and bottom of the 4 1/2" square unit. Press towards the 4 1/2" square. This completes the block center.



Stack the remaining 16 HST's into 4 piles of 4. Join 4 HST into 4 like rows. The seams on your HST's should nest. I place a pin in the bottom corner of the HST's I am joining. I chain pieced the 4 groups of HST's on the left and then chain pieced the HST's on the right.



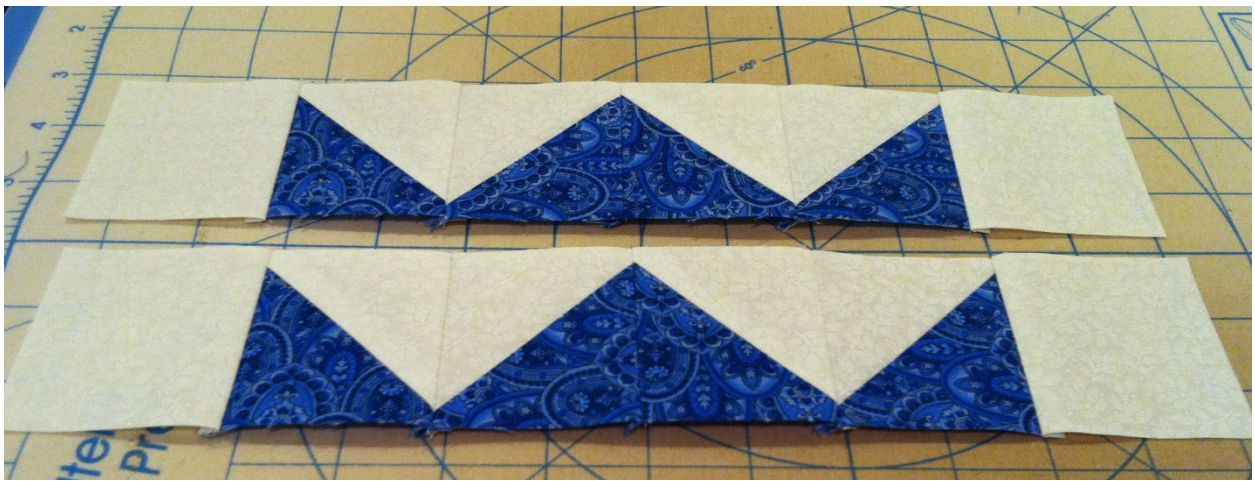
Sew the pairs together to create 4 rows. Press the outer seams out.



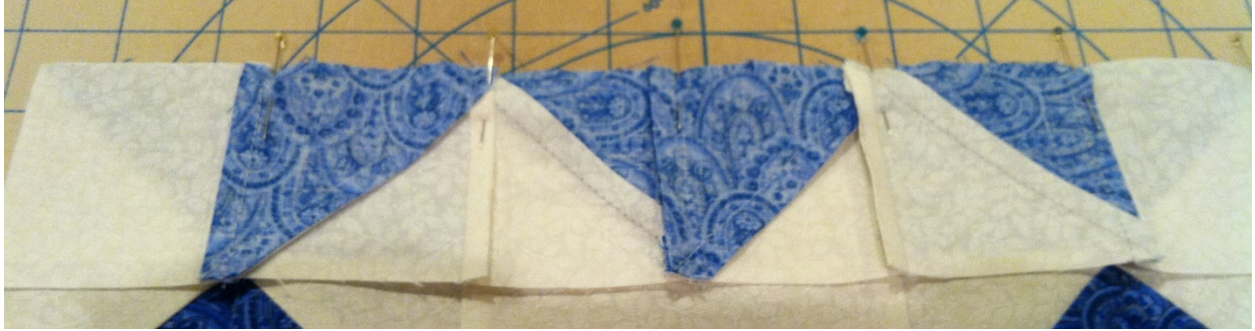
Add a pieced row to the R and L sides of the inner star. When in position for pinning, the middle seam of the joined HST row should be pressed to the left.



Press seams towards the center.



Add the cream $2\frac{1}{2}$ " squares to each end of the 2 remaining HST rows. Press towards the cream squares.



This shows the top piece pinned in position. Note the middle seams are pressed to right, and the other two are pressed towards the left. Repeat with the bottom row. Press the top and bottom seams towards the center square.

Trim your threads and press your block flat. Remember, your block should measure 12 1/2" square. Your margin of error is 1/8th of an inch.

YEAH!!!!!! You completed your block!!! This block isn't difficult once you have completed one. After you have your HST made, it goes together easily as the sewing is easy and straight forward. I can't wait to see all of the beautiful blocks we are going to make!!!!

If you need any help, don't hesitate to contact me.

