



TIPS & TRICKS TO IMPROVE YOUR SQUARING UP SKILLS

When cutting:

- Use a quilting ruler rather than following the lines on a cutting mat.
- Hold your rotary cutter so the blade is straight up and down and flush against the ruler.

When piecing:

- Use consistent seam allowances at a scant 1/4.”
- Match thread to your fabric and when in doubt, select a neutral colour.
- Remove excess thread as you are piecing.
- Press seams as you go and try to be consistent as that slight fold of a seam can make a difference in the overall squareness of your quilt. Also consider how you will nest your seams between rows of blocks.
- Press seams toward the fabric that is darker whenever possible otherwise you may see the darker fabric thru the lighter colour. If this is not possible, you may need to trim the darker fabric back slightly to ensure it does not show thru.
- Square up each block before assembling the quilt. DO NOT skip this step or your quilt will not be square.
- Ensure all seams are sewn together securely.

When adding borders:

- It is very important to measure the quilt top in three places – the top, middle, bottom or left, right and middle.
- If the three measurements are more than ½” off for a small quilt or 1” off for a larger quilt, STOP and go back to square the quilt more before adding your borders. You may need to check your seam allowances and make them smaller or larger depending on if you need to let out or take in the seams.
- If the measurements are close, then you can square up using this technique with borders.
- Take the average of the three measurements and cut your two border strips to exactly this size.
Example: $(63\frac{1}{2} + 63\frac{3}{4} + 63\frac{1}{2}) / 3 = \text{approx. } 63\frac{5}{8}$ ”
- Match the middle of the side of the quilt to the middle of the border strip and add a pin.
- Match up the ends of the border strip and add pins.
- Gradually ease in the fabric by finding the approximate middle between the pins and adding another a pin.
- Keep adding pins using this technique of finding the middle between currently placed pins and adding another pin until pins are placed about every inch or so along the length of the border.
- Recommend sewing the seam with the border strip on the bottom then you can see the seams on the quilt top and ensure they lie flat when sewing the borders on.