

# Never Rip... Control the Flip!

## Planning Fabric Placement for Foundation-Pieced Patterns

by Brenda L. Groelz

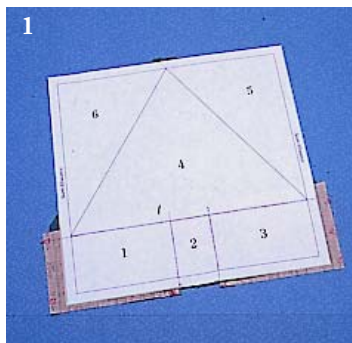
Foundation piecing is done with five simple steps:

- ◆ Place the fabric.
- ◆ Sew the seam.
- ◆ Trim the seam allowance.
- ◆ Flip the fabric.
- ◆ Press the seam.

All this sounds easy, but it can be frustrating if you have to rip out a seam when the fabric doesn't cover a section completely or directional prints point the wrong way. For patches that fall on the outside edge of a block, I like the grain lines to run parallel to the block's perimeter.

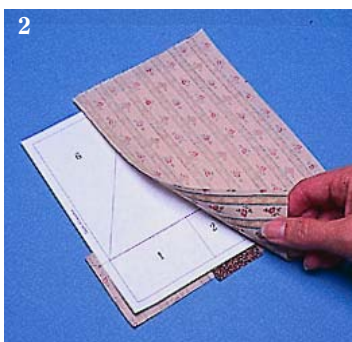
It's easiest to learn by doing, so copy this tree block and, using a ruler and pencil, extend each printed line into the seam allowance. The fabrics for patches 1–4 will be on grain by simply placing the grain line of the fabric parallel to the seam line. If you do that with patches 5 and 6, the perimeter of this block will be off grain.

**1** Sew patches 1–4 placing the fabric for each piece with the grain line parallel to the seam line. Then lay the foundation down with the printed side up.

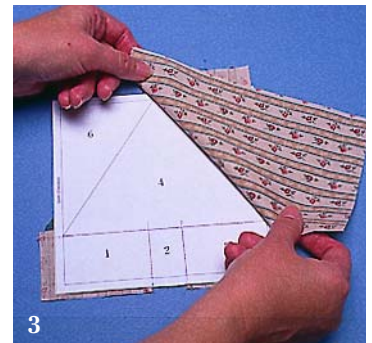


**2** For the moment, cover section 5 with the fabric face down and adjust the placement so:

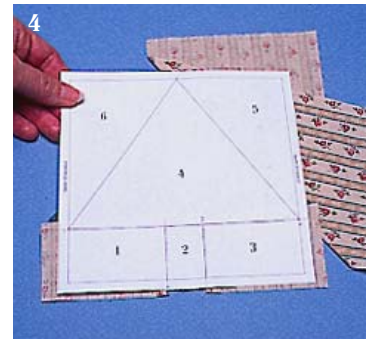
- ◆ the grain line is parallel to the perimeter of the block.
- ◆ any directional print is aligned as desired.
- ◆ enough fabric extends beyond all seam lines so you can later trim the seam allowances to 1/4".



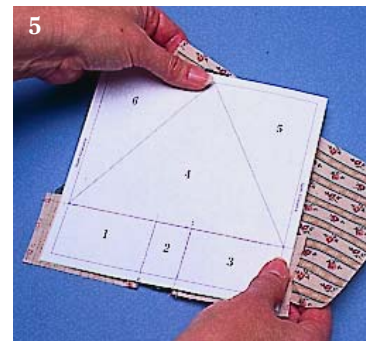
**3** Along the seam line, fold the fabric away from you toward patch 5. Finger press the fold.



**4** Gently slide the foundation from under the folded fabric and place it on top, matching the fold to the seam line.



**5** Carefully pick up the foundation and fabric, keeping the fold and seam line aligned. Unfold the fabric so its right side is facing the unprinted side of the foundation.

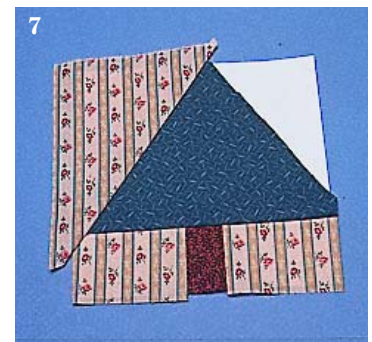


**6** Lower the needle into the edge of the foundation and through the fold. Check the alignment of the fold and seam line. The needle acts as a pivot so you can realign if necessary.



**7** Sew the seam and trim the seam allowance, then flip the patch and press. Add patch 6 the same way.

After you've used this method a few times, you'll become confident enough that you won't need to flip and check each sewn seam before you trim! ■



## Motifs Placed to Order

Want a butterfly in the sky? A flower in a basket? Add some quick steps to the control-the-flip process, and the motifs will end up exactly where you want them.

- 1 Draw the outline of the motif in the desired position on the printed side of the foundation.
- 2 Place the fabric as explained for patch 5 of the tree block, but this time also match the fabric motif to the one drawn on the foundation.
- 3 Fold the fabric at the seam line and make a mark on the fold at the foundation edges.
- 4 Place the foundation on top of the fabric matching the pencil marks to the extended seam line.
- 5 Complete the steps of unfolding, sewing, trimming and pressing. Presto! A butterfly in the sky.

