

Educational Tidbit for September 2021

MAKE FOUR FLYING GEESE UNITS AT ONE TIME

Can you believe it? Summer is coming to an end and autumn is near. With the days getting shorter and cooler, geese will soon be flying off in large V-formations beginning their southerly migration. With geese in mind and thanks to a suggestion by two guild members, Shari Riter and Laurie Tate; this educational tidbit features a technique to create 4 flying geese units at one time.

Funny how timing is everything, I just found a really cute quilt pattern featuring flying geese. It even has one bird flying in an applique' airplane, appearing to be in the lead of a gaggle of flying geese. The technique introduced in this tidbit will help me practice making flying geese for that future quilt (minus the airplane). I have to admit, I am diagonally challenged. Most of the time when I try to sew a flying geese unit, it does not really end up measuring what it should, and the diagonals are not very straight. This 4-at-a-time technique really helped me overcome those problems.

For sources of the information provided in this tidbit, please refer to September/October 2021 issue of Fons and Porter's Love of Quilting magazine "Sew Easy – Quick-Pieced Flying Geese Units" page 101 or online at <https://www.quiltingdaily.com/sew-easy-quick-pieced-flying-geese-units/>. Another site where you can find this information is: <https://www.fabric.com/blog/sewing-101-flying-geese-3-ways/>; the source of the measurement chart have included herein.

Using 4-at-a-time technique to create 4 flying geese units, you will use four small fabric squares in one fabric and one large fabric square in a contrasting color. Before you begin cutting your fabric and sewing the pieces together, you will need to determine the desired measurement you want for your flying geese units.

Oh, by the way, if you want all the fabric print to go the same way on your resultant flying geese, this 4-at-a-time method is not for you. Solids and a mixed-up, all-over print works great, but one-way prints do not.

Before cutting your large and small squares, steam press your fabrics to ensure you have dealt with any shrinkage that may occur. When I rough cut my green fabric, it measured 6 ½ inch square. After steam pressing, it had shrunk to 6 ½ x 6 ¼ inches.

Once you have steam pressed the fabric, turn off the steam on your iron. Use Best Press or your favorite sizing or starch to crisp up your fabric before cutting the large and small squares. During starching/sizing and after starching/sizing, use a hot dry iron to press your fabric so you do not wash out the starch/sizing with the hot steam.

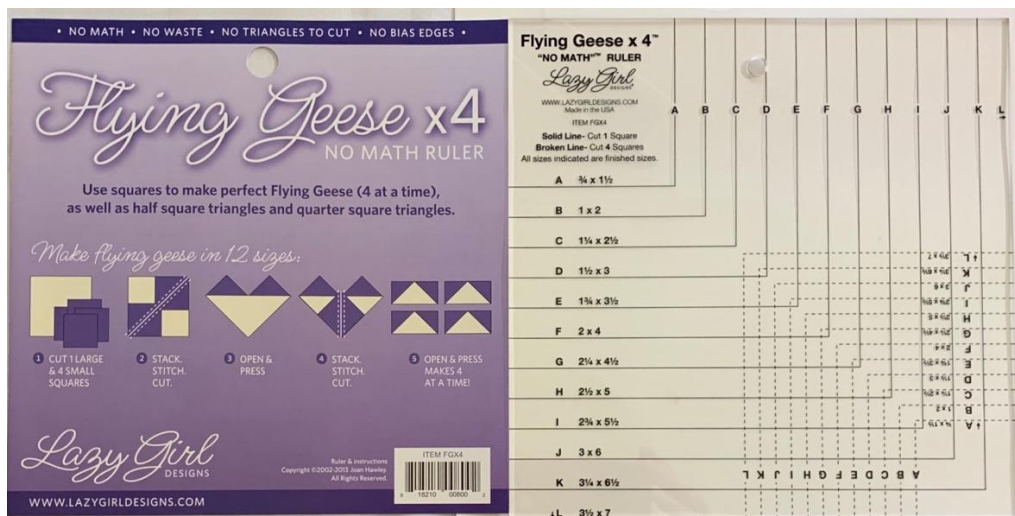
Cut the small squares 7/8 inch larger than the finished height and the large square 1 ¼ inches larger than the finished width. The following handy chart can help you determine sizes for your small and large squares, without doing the math.

Finished Flying Geese Unit In inches (height x width)	4 Small Squares In inches (height + 7/8)	Large Square In inches (width + 1 1/4)
1 x 2	1 7/8	3 1/4
1 1/2 x 3	2 3/8	4 1/4
2 x 4	2 7/8	5 1/4
2 1/2 x 5	3 3/8	6 1/4
3 x 6	3 7/8	7 1/4
3 1/2 x 7	4 3/8	8 1/4





If the finished size drives you nuts like it does my dyslexic brain, here is a tidbit about the unfinished size: add 1/2-inch to the height dimension, and add 1/2-inch to the width dimension when measuring the complete units and to determine any need to trim before stitching in place. In my example, that you will see later, I chose the 2 x 4 finished size. When I made the flying geese units, the unfinished measurement comes out 2 1/2 x 4 1/2 inches, which allows for a 1/4 inch seam allowance all around. I really have to pay attention to patterns when they give only the finished dimensions when I am trimming pieces before sewing them together. I must stop and make a note of the unfinished dimension being larger than the finished dimension, otherwise, I mess up every time.

Recently an error in trimming came up and bit me. I was making a wall hanging with several different sections and mistakenly trimmed some of the pieces to the finished measurement listed in the pattern rather than the unfinished measurement. When I went to sew the sections together, nothing meshed or matched. I did not have enough fabric to remake the too small sections, so I had to fill in the differences with pieces of background fabric. I learned a very hard lesson.

This "Flying Geese x 4" template by Lazy Girl also allows you to cut the large and small squares without doing the math. It arrived after I completed the flying geese example provided in this tidbit. However, I am including it as another alternative to doing the math. I will be using it to cut out my future flying geese projects.



Now let's make some flying geese!

	<p>Cut out your small and large squares and you are ready to begin.</p> <p>For this example, I cut four 2-7/8-inch green squares, and one 5-1/4-inch square of pink, green, and white geese print (geese print fabric for flying geese).</p>
	<p>I use an air erasable pen by Leonis rather than pencil or permanent ink to mark fabric. Pencil marks or permanent ink can permanently bleed through and ruin the fabric. The only downside to disappearing ink is that if you wait too long to sew and/or cut, the line will have disappeared. Leonis makes a water erasable pen as well. The line drawn will not go away until it is washed away.</p>
	<p>Draw a diagonal line on the reverse side of the fabric on each of the 4 small squares. You will use this line as a cutting line.</p> <p>When you get ready to sew the small squares in place, you can sew 1/4-inch away from the cutting line, or you can draw lines 1/4-inch away from the cutting line, and then sew on those lines. I prefer to draw the sewing lines. (Uh oh – my sewing lines are beginning to fade, better get sewing!)</p>
	<p>Lay the large square fabric on point, right side up.</p> <p>Place 2 of the 4 small squares face down on the top and bottom corners of the large square. The opposite corners of the small squares will slightly overlap in the center of the large square, as shown. Line up the cutting lines.</p>



Pin the small squares in place to stabilize the fabric pieces.

Sew $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch away from center cutting lines.



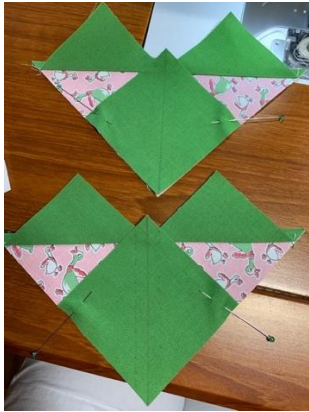
Your stitching will result in two parallel seam lines across both small squares, as shown.



Cut along the diagonal cutting lines of both small squares.



On both halves of the large square, using a hot dry iron, press the small triangles up, as shown.



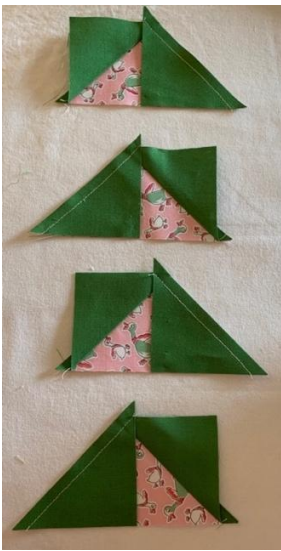
Place 1 small square on each of the large square halves, lining up the lower corners, as shown.
Pin in place to stabilize fabric.



Sew $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch away from center cutting line on each small square down each large block half, sewing 2 parallel seams as you did earlier.



Cut along marked cutting line on each of the small squares on each large block half.



Place the resultant flying geese units on the ironing board.



Using a hot dry iron, press small triangles up.

Trim off the small overhanging triangles at the ends of the seams.

Tada!

You have 4 completed flying geese units and in this example, they each measure 2 ½ inches by 4 ½ inches unfinished, wahoo!

TEASER FOR OCTOBER TIDBIT:

I have finally come up with some solutions to deal with the problems brought on by fraying fabric. The October Educational Tidbit will most likely cover those solutions; unless some other bright idea pops up. Tata for now.