# Seam Allowance & Sewing Patchwork

## Seam Allowance:

In quiltmaking, we use a ¼-inch seam allowance.
There are several ways we can achieve a ¼-inch seam allowance:

- ¼-inch foot on the sewing machine
- A machine setting for piecing with a ¼-inch seam
- Painter's tape to make a ¼-inch guide

Sew a sample to check the seam allowance before starting your project.

## Thread: Coats & Clark

Cotton thread (50 wt.) is often preferred for piecing quilts. When piecing light and dark fabrics together, choose a neutral that will blend with the fabrics. Choose a thread color that is darker, rather than lighter. Dark colors recede and light colors jump forward. A beige or gray thread is recommended.
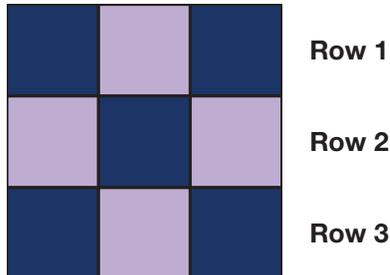
## Making and Using a Design Wall:

Being able to put the sections of your quilt on a design wall lets you keep track of your progress. It is easy to make a portable design wall from flannel. I ordered two yards of 60"-wide flannel for a design wall. After sewing a sleeve to hang the design wall, it is 60" x 68". You could also use a flannel-backed tablecloth as a design wall.

## Sewing Strip Sets:

We are sewing strip sets to reduce the number of smaller pieces needed to make the Nine-Patch blocks. This is called strip piecing. Strips are sewn together and then subcut into sections the same width as the original strips.

## Block A, 4 blocks



Row 1
Row 2
Row 3

For Block A, following the colors in the drawing, sew three of the 4½" x WOF strips together to make strip sets.

Rows 1 and 3: Lay one Dark Blue strip and one Lt. Purple strip with the right sides together. Sew along one long side of the paired strips with a ¼" seam allowance. Press the seam toward the Dark Blue fabric.

Sew another Dark Blue strip to the strip set so that the Light Purple and Dark Blue strips alternate. Sew in the opposite direction by beginning at the other end from the first seam to help keep the strip set straight. Press the seams toward the Dark Blue color.

Cut this strip set into eight 4½" sections. It makes 8 units – enough for Rows 1 and 3 for Block A.

Row 2: Lay one Light Purple strip and one Dark Blue strip with the right sides together. Sew along one long side of the paired strips with a ¼" seam allowance. Press the seam toward the Dark Blue fabric.

Sew another Light Purple strip next to the Dark Blue strip so the Light Purple and Dark Blue strips alternate for Row 2. Press the seams toward the Dark Blue fabric.
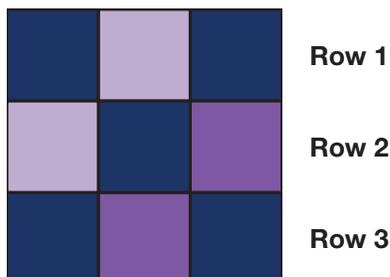
Cut the strip set into four 4½" sections for Row 2.

To complete the block, sew Row 1 to Row 2, aligning the seams. The seams should nest against each other to give a neat joint where the seams meet.

Sew Row 3 to Rows 1 and 2 to complete the block.

Sew four of Block A.

## Block B, 8 blocks



Row 1
Row 2
Row 3

For Block B, follow the colors in the drawing. Sew three 4½" x WOF strips together to make a strip set for each row.

Row 1: Lay one Dark Blue strip fabric and one Light Purple strip with the right sides together. Sew along one long side of the paired strips with a ¼" seam allowance. Press the seam toward the Dark Blue fabric.

Sew another Dark Blue strip next to the Light Purple strip so that the Light Purple and Dark Blue strips alternate. Sew in the opposite direction by beginning at the other end from the first seam to help keep the strip set straight. Press the seams toward the Dark Blue fabric. Cut the strip set into eight 4½" sections for Row 1.

Row 2: Lay one Light Purple strip and one Dark Blue strip with the right sides together. Sew along one long side of the paired strips with a ¼" seam allowance. Press the seam toward the Dark Blue fabric.

Sew a Purple strip next to the Dark Blue strip. Press the seam toward the Dark Blue fabric.

Cut the strip set into eight 4½" sections for Row 2.

Row 3: Lay one Dark Blue strip and one Purple strip with the right sides together to make a strip set. Press the seam toward the Dark Blue fabric.

Sew another Dark Blue next to the Purple strip so that the Purple and Dark Blue strips alternate. Press the seams toward the Dark Blue fabric.
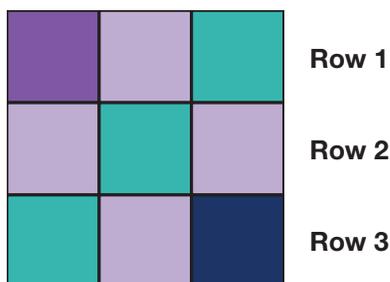
Cut the strip set into eight 4½" sections for Row 3.

To complete the block, sew Row 1 to Row 2, aligning the seams. The seams should nest against each other to give a neat joint where the seams meet.

Sew Row 3 to Rows 1 and 2 to complete the block.

Sew eight of Block B.

## Block C, 4 blocks



For Block C, you will need to cut each of the strips in half to give you shorter pieces (approximately 4½" x 20") for the strip sets. We only need four blocks of Block 3 for the center of the quilt.

Row 1: Lay one Purple strip and one Light Purple strip with the right sides together. Sew along one long side of the paired strips with a ¼" seam allowance. Press the seam toward the Purple fabric.

Sew a Dark Turquoise strip next to the Light Lavender strip. Press the seam toward the Dark Turquoise fabric.

Cut the strip set into four 4½" sections for Row 1.

Row 2: Lay one Light Purple strip and one Dark Turquoise strip with the right sides together. Sew along one long side of the paired strips with ¼" seam allowance. Press the seam toward the Dark Turquoise fabric.

Sew a Light Purple strip next to the Dark Turquoise strip so that the Light Purple and Dark Turquoise strips alternate. Press the seam toward the Dark Turquoise fabric.

Cut the strip set into four 4½" sections for Row 2.

Row 3: Lay one Dark Turquoise strip and one Light Purple strip with the right sides together. Sew along one long side of the paired strips with a ¼" seam allowance. Press the seam toward the Dark Turquoise fabric.
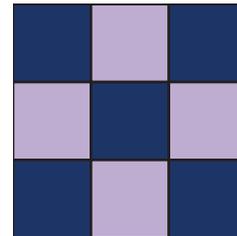
Sew a Dark Blue strip next to the Light Purple strip. Press the seam allowance toward the Dark Blue fabric.

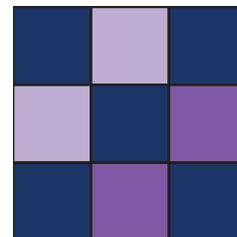Cut the strip set into four 4½" sections for Row 3.

To complete the block, sew Row 1 to Row 2, aligning the seams. The seams should nest against each other to give a neat joint where the seams meet.

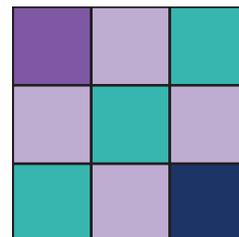Sew Row 3 to Rows 1 and 2 to complete the block.

Your assignment for the next class is to sew the 16 Nine-Patch blocks for the quilt.

**4 of Block A**

**8 of Block B**

**4 of Block C**

# Next Lesson: Assembling the Quilt