CORINNE SOVEY

QUILTS & PATTERNS

PLAYGROUND SKILLBUILDER

MONTH 7

FLYING GEESE

I wanted to show several methods for piecing flying geese, so you will have some extra geese and extra fabric cuts leftover throughout the process. Extra units are great for piecing into the back to add a little flair!

Make sure you have starched your fabric! The traditional method will have you working with bias edges.

CUTTING CHART

C1	
C1	
A	(1) 10 ¾ × 5 ¾
B	(2) 11 ¼ × 11 ¼
C3	
C3	
C	(4) 5 ⅞ × 5 ⅞
C5	
C5	
D	(2) 5 ¾ × 5 ¾
C6	
C6	
E	(1) 5 ⅞ × 5 ⅞

COLOR GUIDE

UNITS

ANATOMY OF FLYING GEESE

A NOTE ON UNIT SIZE

Each flying geese unit will measure 10 ½" wide by 5 ½" tall before you sew your three geese together. If your units are too big be sure to trim to size. If they are too small you will want to adjust your seam allowance, making sure it is a scant quarter inch or possibly a hair smaller if you need to.

The finished block size once all three geese are sewn together will be 10 ½" wide by 15 ½" tall.

SAMPLE COLORS →	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6
YOUR COLORS →	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6

TRADITIONAL METHOD

QUICK INTRO (Actual instructions will be found below the intro)

The traditional method has you cut your goose unit by quartering a square diagonally, producing four goose units. We will only be using one, but I wanted to touch on bias edges. The sky units have you cut one square in half diagonally for each goose unit. The right triangles are cut in this fashion so that the bias edge of the triangle is sewn into the unit and not left exposed on the outer edge of the unit. Below you will see an example. The labeled flying geese unit shows how the bias is sewn into the unit. If you ever make a quilt with blocks on point and setting triangles you will follow the same basic principles to keep your bias edges in check. Quilts can warp and be difficult to quilt when bias edges are left exposed on the outside of the quilt. Always be sure to starch when working with bias edges, you will be happy you did!

This method, in my opinion, has fallen out of favor due to the ease of the no-waste, four at a time flying geese method we will cover later. This method is still a good one if you have a die-cutting fabric machine like an accuquilt. Those often even notch your edges to help you line up your triangles. If you use a die-cutting machine to cut fabric be sure to follow their directions for how many layers you can cut at one time. I know from experience that "stretching" that number will cause your cut units to warp as they pass through the machine. You live you learn!

TRADITIONAL METHOD INSTRUCTION

1. This method will use one B unit and the E unit. Cut one of your B units into quarters by cutting diagonally from corner to corner on both sides. You will only need one but can make the others for your backing with leftover fabric for the E squares. Cut the E unit in half diagonally from one corner to another.

2. Sew the long side of one E unit to the B unit along one short side, shown above with transparency. The bottom corners should align as pointed out by the arrow. The enlarged area circled in green shows you how your E unit will hang over the edge of the B unit by a ¼ inch. The point at which they overlap should be the start of your ¼ inch piecing line. Press towards the E (sky) unit.

SAMPLE COLORS →	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6
YOUR COLORS →	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6

TRADITIONAL METHOD CONTINUED

3. Sew the other E unit to the opposite side the same way you did in step two. The E unit should once again hang over the edge of the B unit by a 1/4 inch and that is where your stitching line should be. *(I changed the color of the first E unit above to orange so the illustration would be more clear).* Press towards the E unit.

4. Trim the dog ears off of your unit. It should measure 10 ½" wide by 5 ½" tall. If it doesn't, trim to size making sure to preserve your point. The enlarged area circled in green shows the ¼ inch space above the goose that will be sewn into your final unit, giving you a perfect point. Make sure this is ¼ inch and trim the rest from there if needed.

STITCH AND FLIP METHOD

QUICK INTRO

The stitch and flip method is very popular when you aren't making more than a few flying geese because it avoids the bias edges you deal with using the traditional method. The downside is the fabric waste. I've included extra instructions to combat fabric waste just in case it is helpful for the future.

STITCH AND FLIP METHOD INSTRUCTION

1. This method will use the A unit and the two D units. Draw a line diagonally from corner to corner on both of your D units. <u>The lines you drew will be the stitching lines.</u>

2. Place one of the D units right sides together on the left side of the A unit. Here is the trick for getting an accurate flying geese block. You want to stitch just a hair away from the stitch line you drew in step one, towards the trim side (shown above as the yellow dashed line). This is similar to the scant quarter inch in that it compensates for the fabric bulk you get when you fold the sky back.

SAMPLE COLORS →	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6
YOUR COLORS →	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6

STITCH AND FLIP METHOD CONTINUED

Optional Waste-free Step for Stitch and Flip Step

If you are working with larger units like the ones in this quilt you might want to consider this step to reduce fabric waste. Unless you like working with tiny pieces it probably is not necessary for smaller flying geese.

3a. To reduce fabric waste stitch ½ inch away from the stitch line from step two (or use your ruler to draw a line 1/2 inch away from that stitch line and stitch over the line you drew). Cut the top corner off of the unit between the two stitch lines, approximately 1/4 inch between the stitch lines. You will end up with the first part of your flying geese unit and an extra half square triangle you can use for a scrappy project or the back of the quilt. Press your flying geese unit towards the sky (upper corner).

If you don't want to follow the waste-free method above in 3a, follow step 3b for the regular stitch and flip method

3b. Trim the top corner off of your unit 1/4 inch away from your stitch line. Press towards the sky (upper corner).

4. Sew the other D unit to the opposite side the same way you did in step two. Follow the 3a or 3b instructions for that corner and press your unit towards the sky (upper corner). The unit should measure 10 ½" wide by 5 ½" tall. If it doesn't, trim to size making sure to preserve your point. Make sure the section above the point is 1/4 inch as shown in the last step of the traditional method.

If your unit is too small you need to adjust the hair length at which you stitched from the original line you drew. With excess fabric try a few times to see what "hair length" works best for you and your machine.

SAMPLE COLORS →	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6
YOUR COLORS →	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6

WASTE-FREE/FOUR AT A TIME METHOD

QUICK INTRO

If you are making four or more of the same flying geese the waste-free/four at a time flying geese method is the way to go. I often will do this even for just three flying geese.

WASTE-FREE/FOUR AT A TIME INSTRUCTION

1. This method will use the other B unit and the four C units. Draw a line diagonally from corner to corner on all of your C units (shown as a black line). The lines you drew will be the cutting lines and will help you line up your C units correctly in the next step.

If you are not confident with your scant ¼ inch I highly recommend you also draw a line ¼ inch away from the first line you drew, on both sides. These two new lines will be your stitching lines (shown in blue).

2. Place two of the C units right sides together diagonally from corner to corner on the B unit as seen above. The lines you drew should line up to form a straight diagonal. Pinning your B units will really be helpful for this method if you don't always pin.

If you are comfortable with the accuracy of your scant ¼ inch you will use it to sew a scant ¼ inch away from the first line you drew (the black line) on both sides.

If you chose to draw the additional lines ¼ inch away from the initial black line (shown in blue) you will now sew just hair away from the line on the side near the black line, for both blue lines (shown enlarged above as a yellow dashed line). Like the stitch and flip method, this hair length will help compensate for the fabric bulk you get when you fold the sky back.

Trim your unit along the black line from corner to corner giving you two units. Press towards the sky.

SAMPLE COLORS →	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6
YOUR COLORS →	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6

WASTE-FREE/FOUR AT A TIME METHOD CONTINUED

3. Place your remaining C units rights sides together on the two units from the last step, as seen above. Follow the same stitching instructions as step two for these units. Trim along the black line of each unit, giving you four flying geese units. Press towards the sky. Trim the dog ears off and check the size as you have done in previous methods, making sure you have the ¼ inch space above your point. The units should measure 10 ½" wide by 5 ½" tall. You will only need one of the flying geese units and can use the others for another project or the backing.

BLOCK CONSTRUCTION

TRADITIONAL METHOD →

STITCH AND FLIP METHOD →

WASTE-FREE/FOUR AT A TIME METHOD →

Using the diagram to the left as a guide, sew three of your flying geese units together. Press as desired. You might want to take a look at how you pressed your block from month one (patchwork block) if you are nesting seams.

The finished block size once all three geese are sewn together will be 10 ½" wide by 15 ½" tall.

LABELS TO HELP YOU KEEP TRACK OF CUT UNITS

Color Label followed by Unit Letter & Method

C1:A	C1:B	C3:C	C5:D	C6:E
STITCH AND FLIP METHOD	TRADITIONAL AND WASTE-FREE/FOUR AT A TIME METHODS	WASTE-FREE/FOUR AT A TIME METHOD	STITCH AND FLIP METHOD	TRADITIONAL METHOD