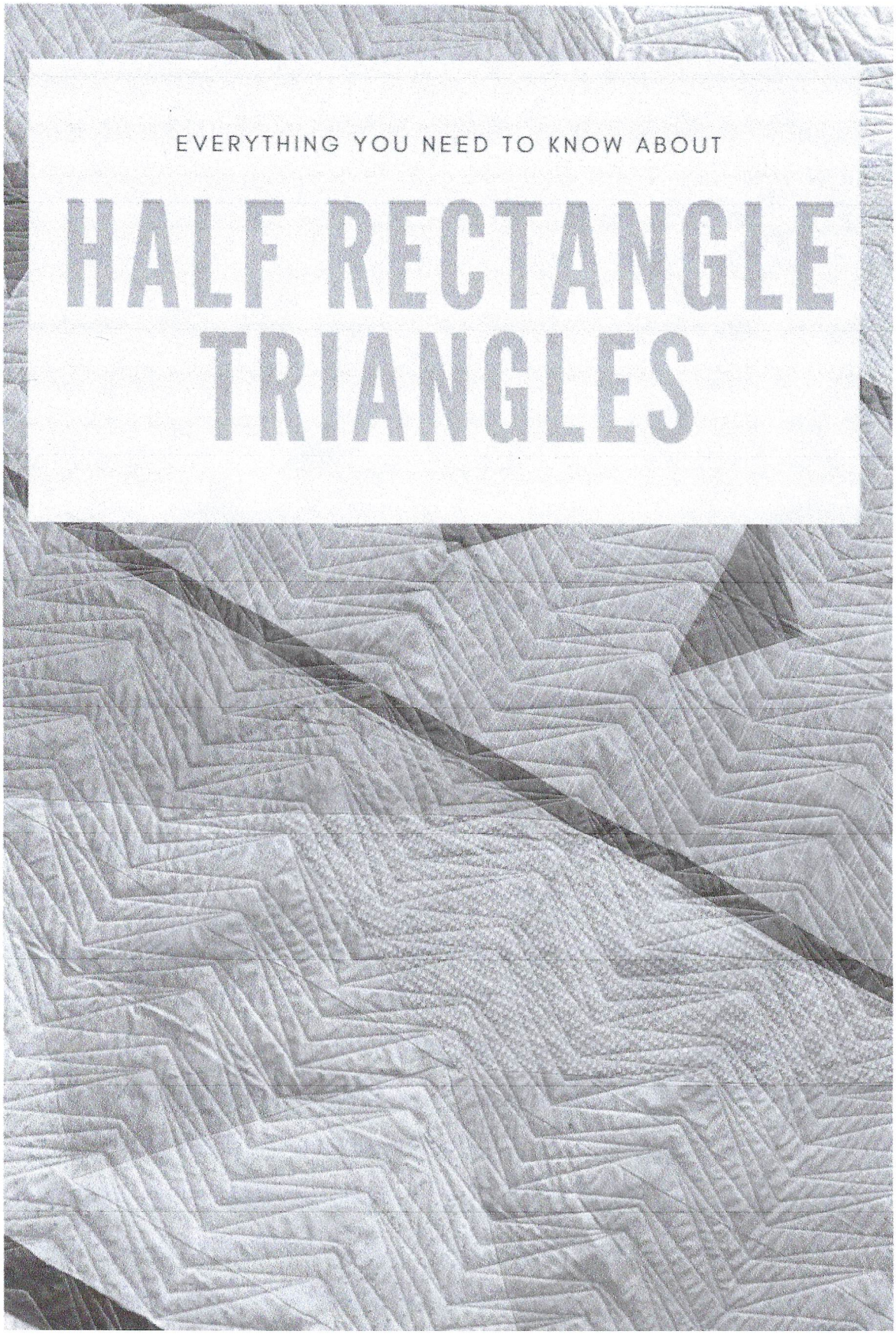
Trish Hill

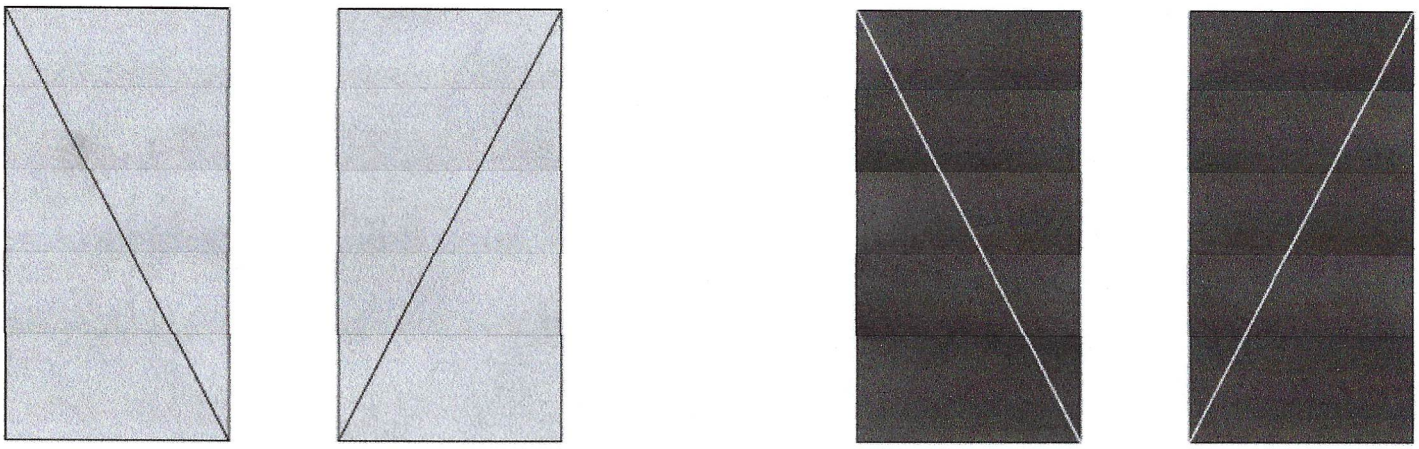


Method 1 and Orientation

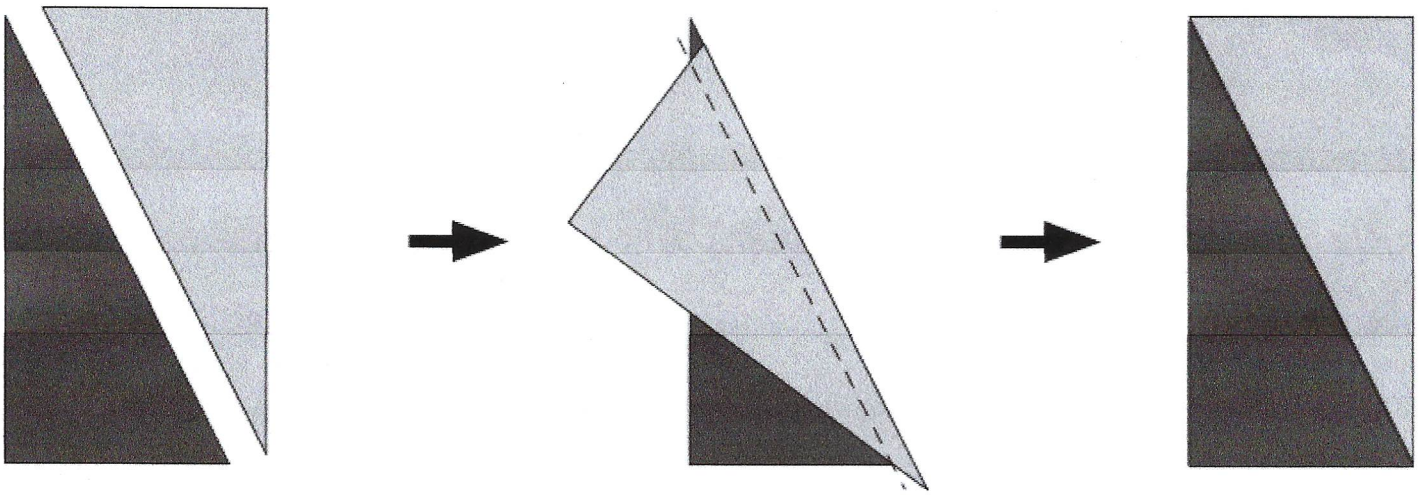
A common mistake when making half rectangle triangles is to think that they're similar to half square triangles. Because the width to height *proportion* is different though, they have to be constructed differently. Another important difference to keep in mind is that **orientation matters.**

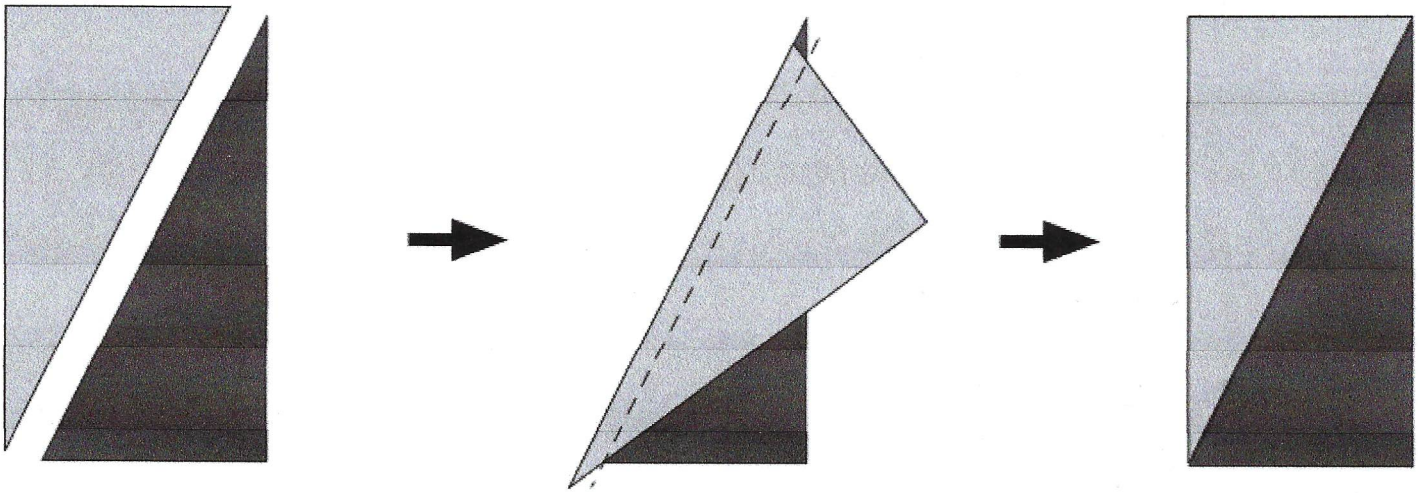
Let's run through an example. This is the first method of making HRTs, which makes 1 at a time (but you cut the fabric for 2). The first thing you'll need to do is cut two rectangles, and then cut those rectangles along the diagonal.

But it's not quite that simple. Remember before when I said orientation matters? Look at the diagrams below, and think about what the end result would look like if you cut each rectangle along the line shown.



Let's find out! Here's the general steps to construct your HRT. Using differently cut orientations will result in different HRTs.





1) Line up your two complimentary cut triangle pieces.

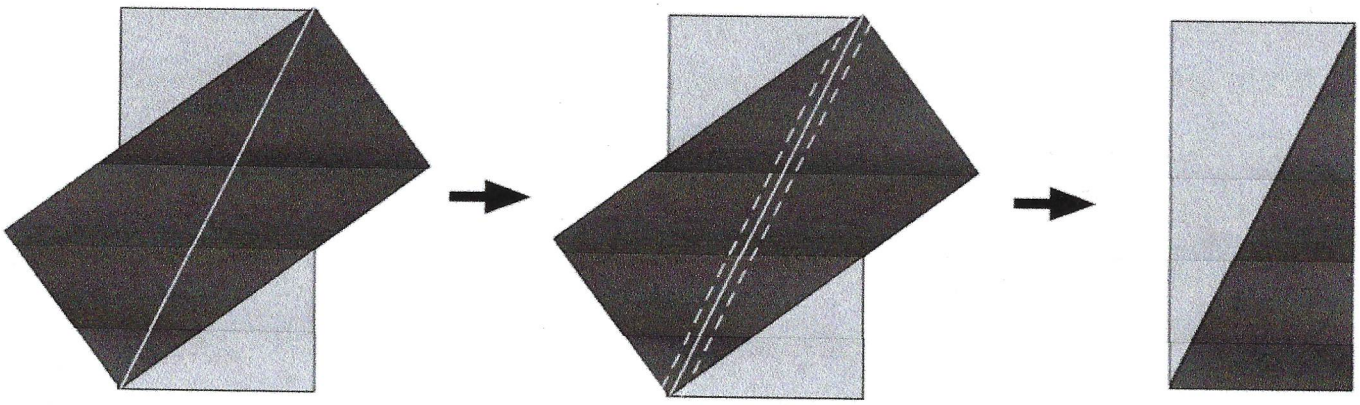
2) Overlap one of the triangles with the other as shown, leaving a 1/4" overhang on each end for a seam allowance.

2) Sew the two triangles together, then open, press, and trim.

The actual construction of HRTs is pretty straightforward, once you figure out what orientation you need. The next part to master is trimming!

Method 2

This is a method that is more similar to how HSTs are constructed, with a twist. *Literally*. All you do is twist the top rectangle!



1) Figure out what orientation you need you HRT to be. Draw a line on the diagonal for your desired orientation on the top rectangle.

2) Lay your top rectangle over your bottom rectangle *twisted* so that the corners line up.

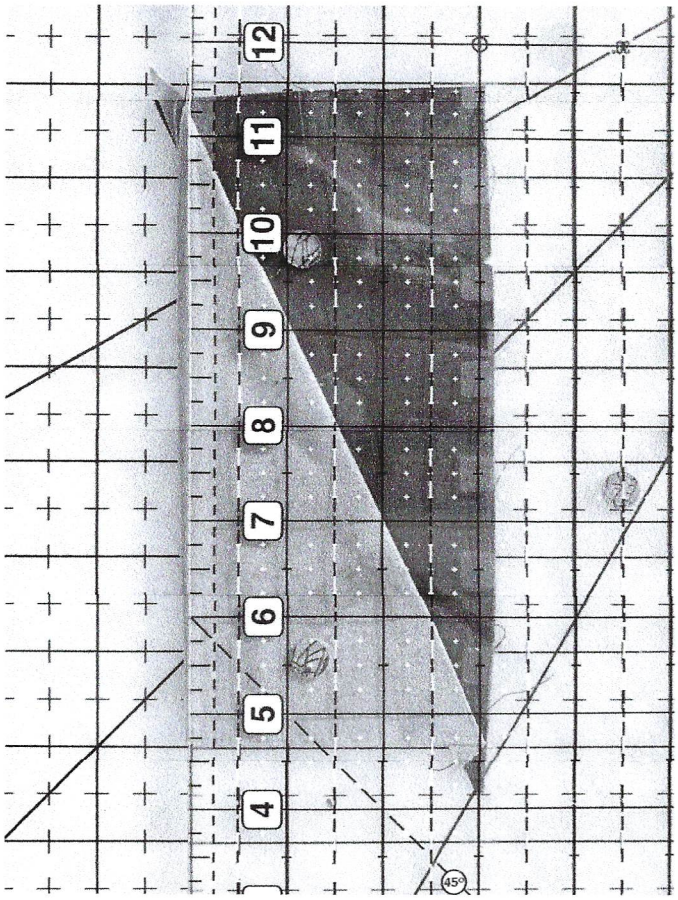
3) Sew a 1/4" seam on both sides of the line.

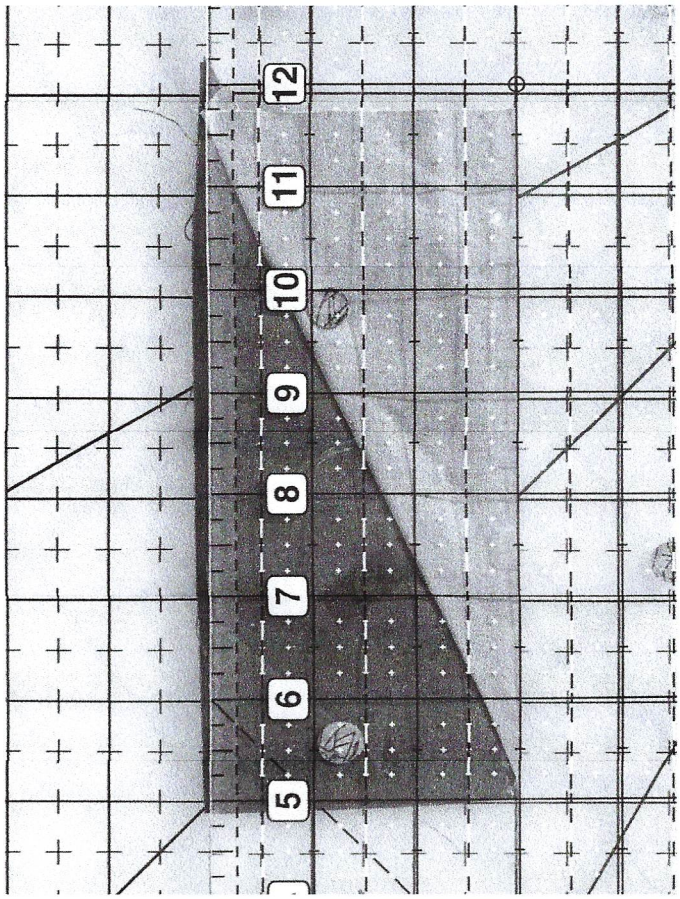
4) Cut along the line, then open, press, and trim! Ta da, two HRTs.

Trimming

This is where HRTs trip a lot of people up - including me in the past! This might sound complicated or hard to follow at first, but the key is to practice practice! Grab some scraps and give it a try.

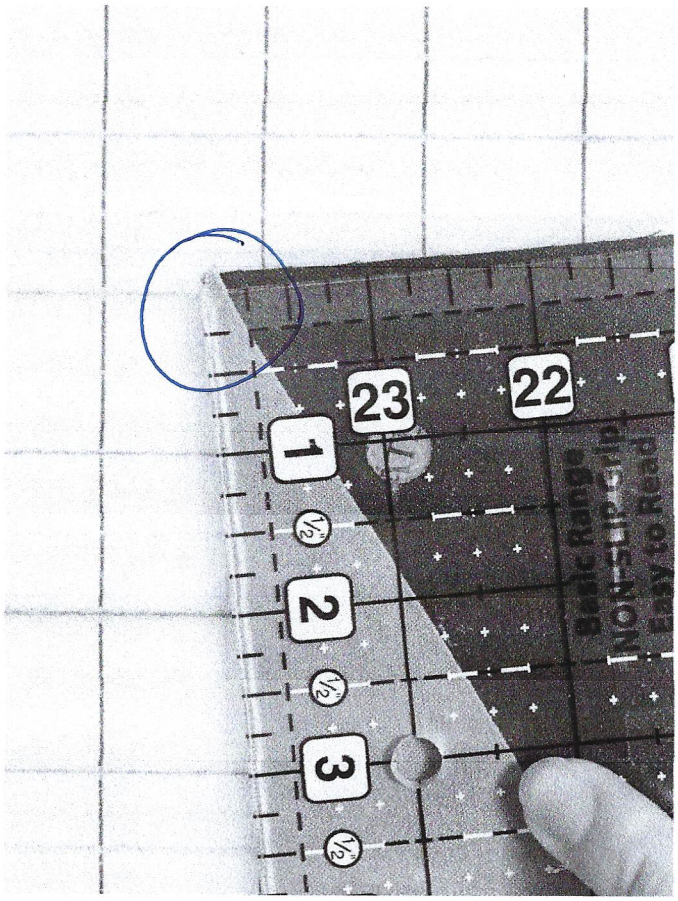
1) Lay out your HRT vertically. Center it on a line on your cutting mat so that half of it is on one side of a line and half of it is on the other. Trim your vertical sides so that the width of the HRT is your desired width. In this example, I wanted a 3" width.

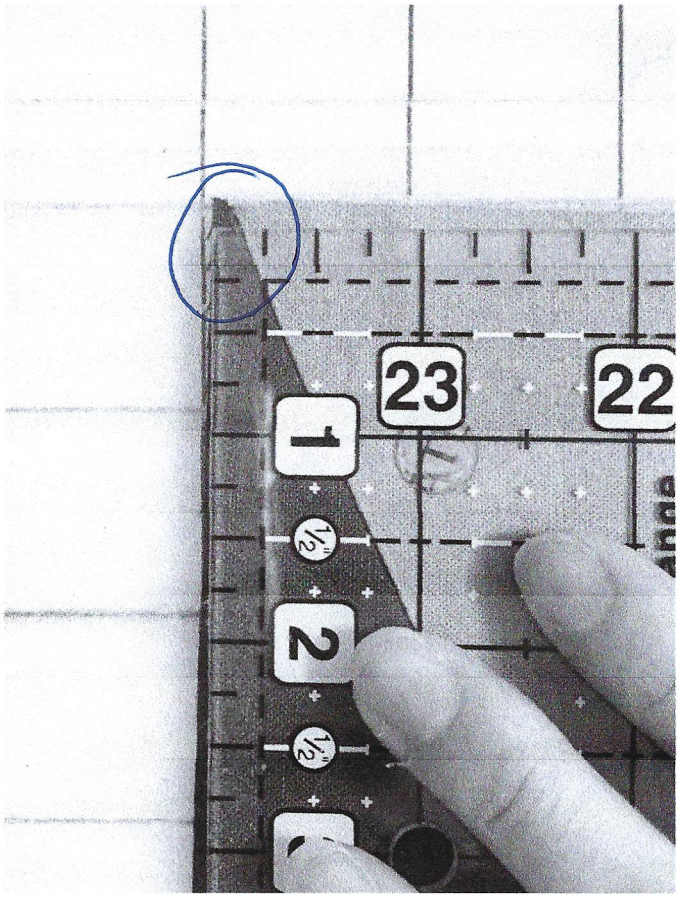




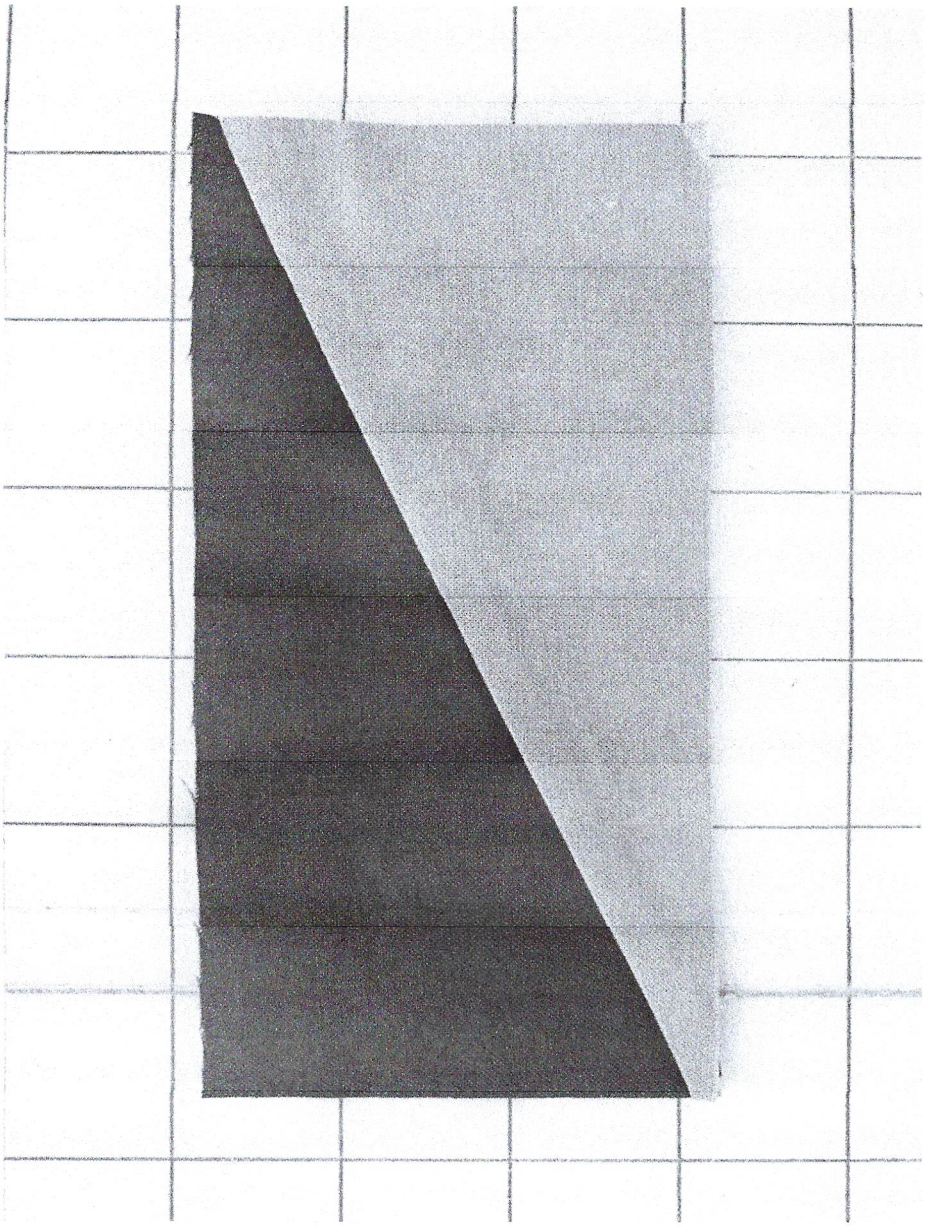
2) Here's the crucial part! Look closely at your ruler, and see if there is a square or guide that shows a 1/4" square in the corner of the ruler. If not, you can create one yourself but running tape along the 1/4" mark on each side of the corner, creating a square where they intersect. Line up that square with the seam between the two fabrics on your HRT, and trim! In the picture below, I've added a red corner to highlight where the square that I'm lining my seam up to is. This is important because it will allow you to have perfect points- the corner of the square represents where your seam allowance will fall when you are sewing.

Do this on both sides of your rectangle! You *may* need to fudge this a bit - sometimes they don't line up perfectly with your desired length. The goal is to wind up with a block that is as close to your desired size with seams as close to the 1/4" squares as possible. This is why practice is important - you'll get a feel for how to adjust when you need to!





Tada! A perfectly trimmed HRT.



Math!

HRTs can be divided into two groups: those with a 2:1 ratio (meaning the finished length is twice as long as the finished width), and all other sizes! You can make a HRT with almost any proportion you want, but the catch is that there's going to be some guess work.

For 2:1 HRTs, the equation for the starting rectangle size is:

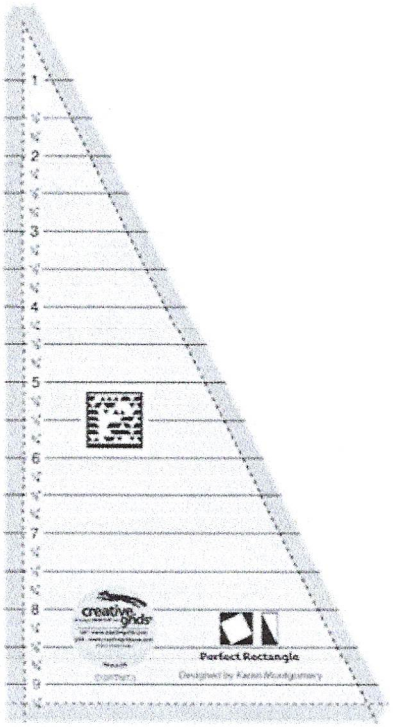
2:1 HRT Equation

Length = finished size + 2"
Width = finished size + 1"

For other proportions, there's isn't a guaranteed equation because there can be so much variance in the angles. However, in my experience, starting with this equation will usually get you pretty close. If you're trying to develop a specific HRT size with a ratio that isn't 2:1, make a test block using this formula. Then, adjust the measurements as needed!

Alternatively, you can make your own templates for specific HRT measurements using this tutorial. *If you're going to be making a lot of HRTs, this is a great way to go!*

Rulers

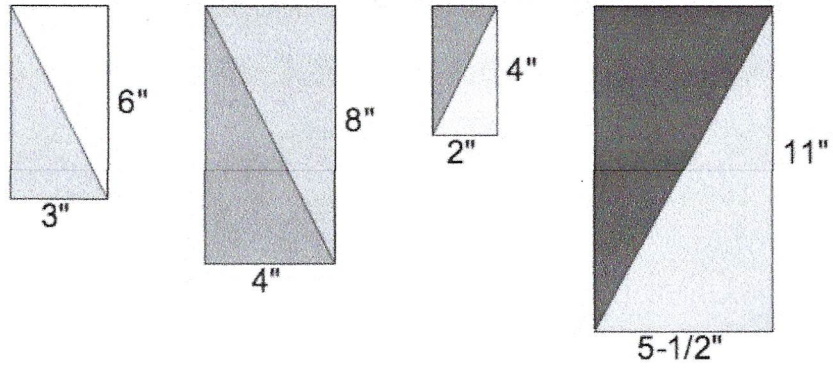


Rulers can be a great way to avoid some of the challenges of HRTs. This ruler allows you to make many different sizes of 2:1 HRTs, and because of the rounded edges you don't need to fiddle with lining the points up perfectly to get a 1/4" seam allowance.

From: www.bonjourquilts.com

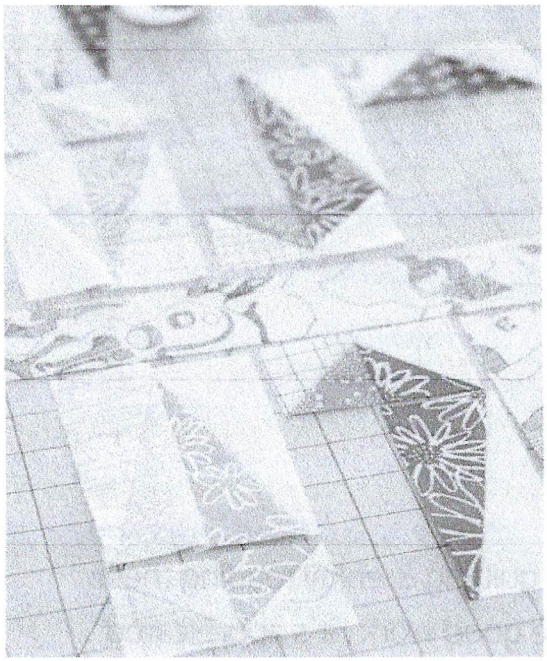
Half Rectangle Triangle Calculator

A note on calculating the starting size of your rectangles for your half rectangle triangles.
HRTs with a side ratio of 1:2 are not only easier to trim, they are also easier to calculate starting rectangle sizes for.

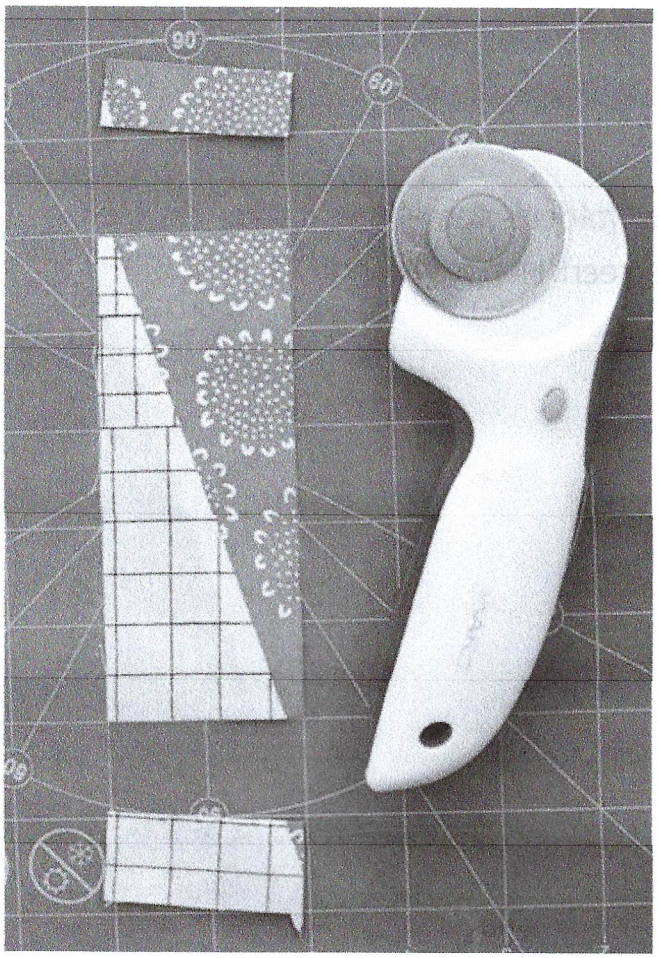


Above: finished HRT blocks with ratios of 1:2

The dimensions of the oversized starting rectangles are:
(Finished Width + 1″) by (Finished Length + 2″).
So if you want a half rectangle triangle that is 2″ x 4″ when it is sewn into a quilt, you will need two starting rectangles that are (2 + 1) by (4 +2) or 3″ x 6″. Easy peasy. Thank you, half rectangle triangle calculator.



When making non-1:2 HRTs, you'll need to make a guess as to the size of the starting rectangles and go from there. I usually apply the same formula (add 1″ to the finished width and 2″ to the finished length) and make a test block.



Then it's just a matter of testing and adjusting. If the block is too long when you trim, reduce the length and try again. This was exactly how I tested for the starting rectangles for my 1-1/2″ x 4-1/2″ (finished) block.

Alright, if you're still reading then you'tr definitely ready to get out there and sew up some half rectangle triangle quilt patterns. As well as the patterns in my shop, I also have a free scrappy half rectangle triangle quilt pattern over in this post here, if you're interested.

Hopefully this post has helped start you on a half rectangle triangle journey.

Happy sewing!

Kirsty