

Errata for  
**Easy Precision Piecing**  
**#11273**

*All Versions*

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The author has corrected her instructions for starching a single piece of fabric and yardage. The corrected pages are included below.

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## Starch Alternative

A lightweight starch alternative applied to seams before pressing makes the seams lie flat like magic, making it easy to sew and rotary cut large and small units alike. I prefer Easy Press Fabric Treatment by Acorn Precision Piecing Products (page 46) for pressing yardage and applying directly to seams.



Starter Kit with Easy Press Fabric Treatment, Seam Align Glue and an Easy Press Pen.

### Starch Alternative Applicator

Use a starch alternative applicator pen or paintbrush to apply starch alternative to the seams. My preference is the Easy Press Pen.

## Pencils

Mechanical pencils come in a variety of styles and sizes. I use 0.5 mm and 0.7 mm HB for marking on light fabric. When marking on dark fabric, I use an extrafine white chalk pencil. I prefer Bohin or Fons & Porter white chalk pencils.

## Pins

Glass or small head silk pins that are 0.4 mm or 0.5 mm in diameter and just over 1½" long work best for precision patchwork. I rarely use pins but sometimes they are needed. *One word of caution:* Be sure to purchase heat-resistant glass head pins. Plastic head pins will melt under the heat of the iron.

## Double-Sided Tape

Use double-sided tape to hold patchwork securely to the mat when trimming small units. I prefer Sookwang brand, as it holds well and is acid-free.

## Tear-Perfect Maker Tape

Tear-Perfect Maker Tape (by C&T Publishing) is great on the back of rulers to keep them from slipping and to use as a cutting guide.

## Stickers

I use heat-resistant, residue-free, acid-free stickers, no larger than ½" in diameter, to keep blocks organized during piecing. I prefer Trend Enterprises stickers ([trendenterprises.com](http://trendenterprises.com)). Any small size, color, or pattern will work. Always test stickers before you use them!

## Lingerie Bag

For drying precuts in the dryer, see *How to Prewash Fabric* (page 24).

## See-Through Stabilizer

A see-through, nonwoven stabilizer is attached at the top of a Quilt Block Base. When a Quilt Block Builder is slipped under the stabilizer, the block can be seen through the stabilizer. Fabrics placed on top of the stabilizer will not slide around (see *Quilt Block Bases*, page 8). I prefer to use Fun-Dation (by HTC), available in 8½" × 11" sheets and by the yard.

## Batting

With so many different battings available on the market it can be challenging to decide which to use and why. I have narrowed my choices to three that I go back to time and time again. For a nice flat look with very little loft, I use Quilters Dream Cotton Select. For a little more loft, I use Warm and Natural (by The Warm Company). For higher loft, I prefer Hobbs Heirloom Premium 80/20 Cotton Blend.

## Plastic Storage Bins

Use clear plastic storage bins for holding notions, accessories, quilts in progress, storing strips of various sizes and yardage. I prefer clear Sterilite bins available in a variety of sizes (see *Storage Bins*, page 29).

filling the machine with water; add a small amount of mild detergent and allow it to dissolve.

**3.** Open the fabrics and place them in the machine one piece at a time and allow them to go through the entire wash cycle.

**4.** Remove the fabrics from the washing machine one piece at a time.

**5.** Untwist, trim the frayed threads to no longer than 1", and place the fabrics in the dryer.

**6.** Dry on a delicate setting.

**7.** Once the fabrics are just dry, remove them from the dryer and lay flat.

**TIP** ▶ When drying fabric, check them after about 15 minutes in the dryer to see how dry they are. If they're still damp, continue drying and check again in 5 minutes. Do not over-dry, as wrinkles and creases will set into the fibers and be extremely difficult to remove.



## PRECISION PIECING KEY:

# Fabric Prep Is the First Step in Precision Piecing

Stable fabric is key to precise cutting—a prerequisite for precise piecing. Using a starch alternative and pressing adds body to the fabric and stabilizes it so there is less

stretching, which results in more accurate rotary cutting and piecing. To avoid stretching fabric dampened with a starch alternative, use a light touch with the iron.

## STARCHING AND PRESSING

I prefer to use Easy Press Fabric Treatment (page 17) to add body to fabric after washing and drying. I am sensitive to scents and love the fact that Easy Press is unscented.

*Note:* I recommend cutting fabric into manageable sizes for starching and pressing. For suggested sizes, see Cutting and Folding for Starching and Storage (page 28).

### **TIP** ▶ Why Using Corn-Based Starch Is a Bad Idea

I live deep in the country, and just as I do not feed birds seeds that undesirable critters may be interested in, I do not serve up a batch of corn-based starched fabrics to bugs such as silverfish. Silverfish eat natural fibers, such as cotton, and love cornstarch. A starch alternative may be a little more expensive than homemade and some regular corn-based starches on the market, but I prefer to spend a bit more money and enjoy the peace of mind.

## Layering for Starching and Pressing

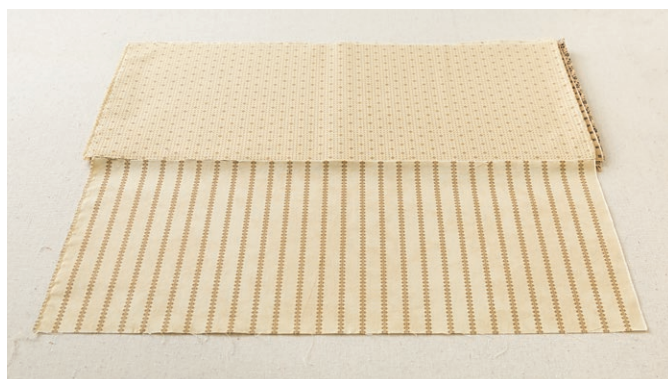
*Note:* If you have the option on the nozzle of the starch alternative for either spray or stream, select spray.

**1.** Separate the lights from darks, and stack the fabrics right side up on your pressing surface.



Stack fabric for starching and pressing.

**2.** Working with one stack, take the top fabric off the stack and place it parallel to the other fabrics.



Start with the top piece of fabric.

Slightly overlap the top edge of the fabric piece about  $\frac{1}{8}$ ". This way your ironing surface will not get soaked with the starch alternative along the top edge of the fabric between the two stacks.

**3.** Hold the spray bottle about 8" from the fabric and liberally spray with starch alternative so the surface is mostly covered but not soaked. You will notice that the fabric draws in once sprayed, but do not worry.



Sprayed fabric draws in.

**4.** Take the next piece off the stack and center it on top of the piece just sprayed.

**5.** Place your hands together in the center, palms down, using a patting motion and working with the left hand to the left and right hand to the right, gently pat the fabric from the center to the edges smoothing out the fabric below.

**6.** After the fabric is smooth, spray the top piece.

**7.** Repeat Steps 3–6 until all the fabrics are sprayed.

**8.** Turn the stack over so they are now wrong side up. Pat again from the center to the edges, so the fabrics are nice and flat.

*Remember:* The pursuit of quality takes a little more time; however, the results are well worth the effort.

## Pressing Damp Fabric

Press with a dry iron on cotton setting. No steam. (See Precision Piecing Key: Use a Dry Iron, page 13.)

**1.** Place the iron on the top fabric in the top right corner, let it sit in one place for about 3 seconds, pick the iron up and move to the next spot, slightly overlapping the previous. Set it in the new place for about 3 seconds, move to the next spot, and so on. Work from the top right corner toward the bottom, then back to the top from right to left, then left to right, repeating until the top fabric is dry.



Pressing damp fabric

**2.** Test for dryness with your opposite hand. After the fabric is completely dry, begin to *gently and slowly* slide the iron up and down from right to left. This motion will remove any impressions left on the fabric from the iron.

**3.** After the top fabric is dry and impressions removed, peel the fabric from the stack and set it aside on a flat surface.

**4.** Begin pressing the next fabric, repeating Steps 1–3. Continue in this manner until the entire stack is starched and pressed.

While fabric is damp, the iron must be picked up and set down. Do not slide the iron on the fabric when it is wet, as this will cause stretching and distortion. The heat from the iron penetrates through the top layer to the fabric below; thus, when the top fabric is dry and removed, the next fabric is already drying, making it easier to press

- Stacking and starching gives the product time to soak through and bond with the fibers, resulting in a nice crisp press that only needs to be done once.
- When starching one fabric at a time, spray the right side of the fabric. Turn the fabric wrong side up. Wait about 15 seconds before starting to press. This will give the starch time to soak through the fabric and result in a nicer press.

If you notice burn marks on your fabric, lower the heat on your iron.

### **TIP** ▶ Starching Yardage

Liberal spray the entire surface of the fabric. Hang to dry, then add a light spray of starch alternative and press.