

# Triangle Quilt Design & Construction Tutorial

By Marianne Jeffrey

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Triangle quilts are truly delightful but many quilters are wary of delving into designing their own. With this tutorial I plan to demystify the triangle quilt design and construction process! I have developed a quick and easy method for constructing triangle quilts and hope this tutorial inspires you to give it a try!

You don't need quilt design software. Included on page 3 of this document is a piece of printable triangle graph paper to get you started.

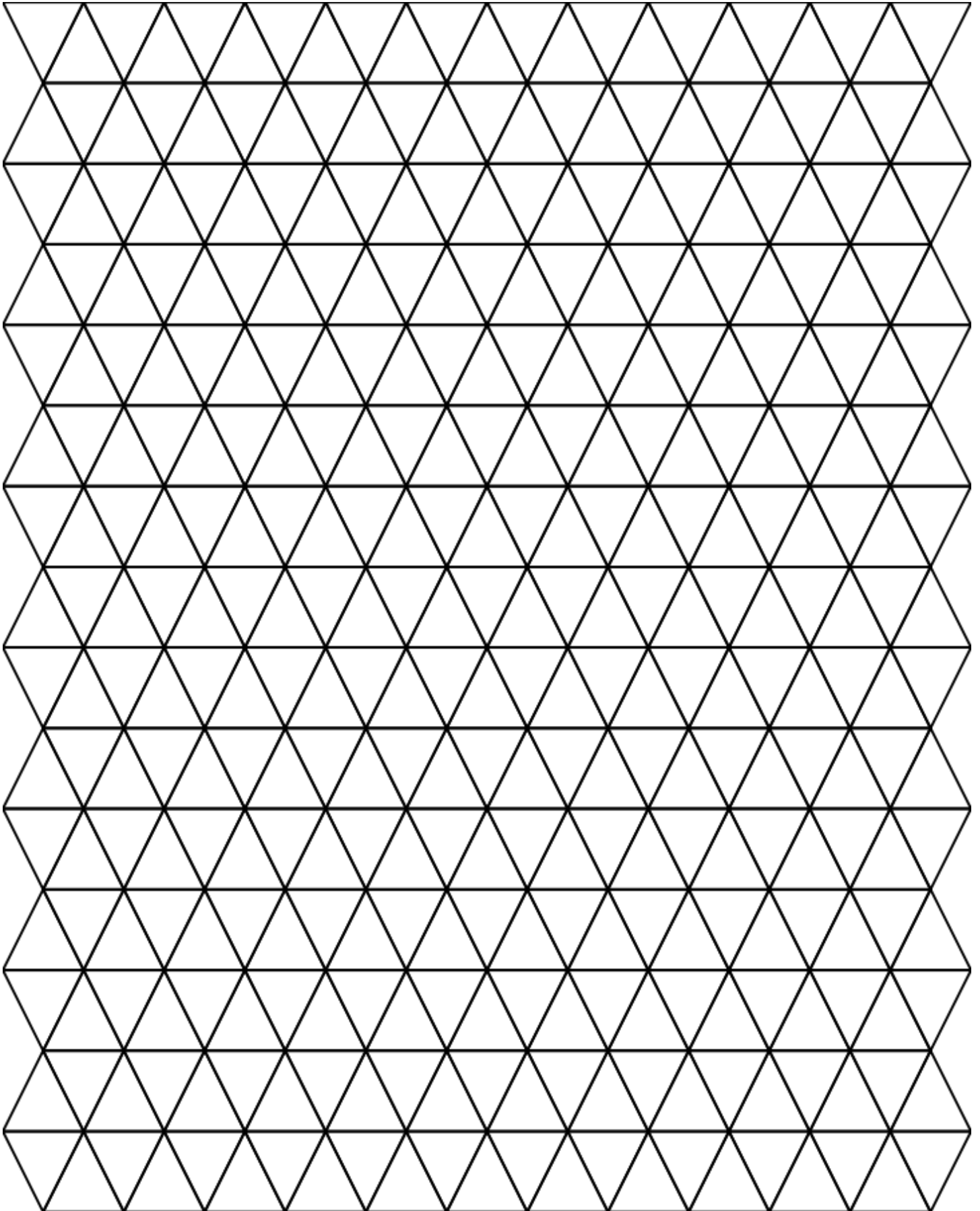
Using my method, the quilt is pieced in rows, which allows you to cut strips rather than triangles for some of the sections that are a block of the same color! That makes the quilts quick and easy to assemble.

**Example: I have marked just some of the strips in this image, they all would have been 3 or more triangles/pieces.**

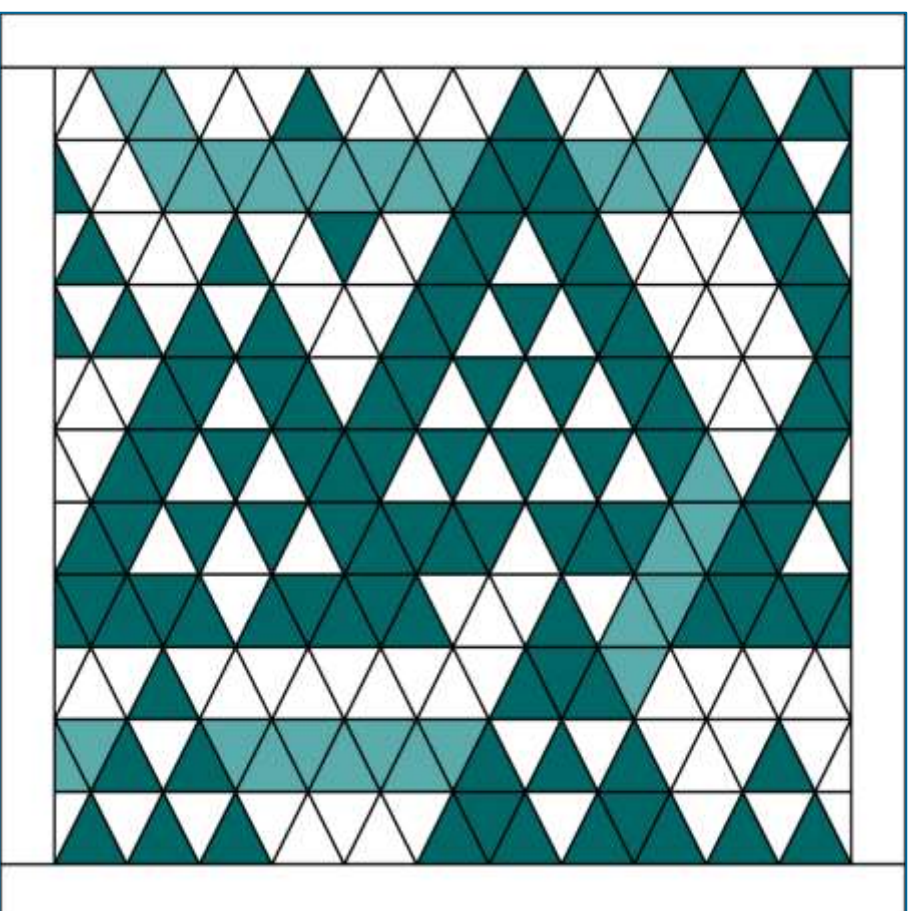
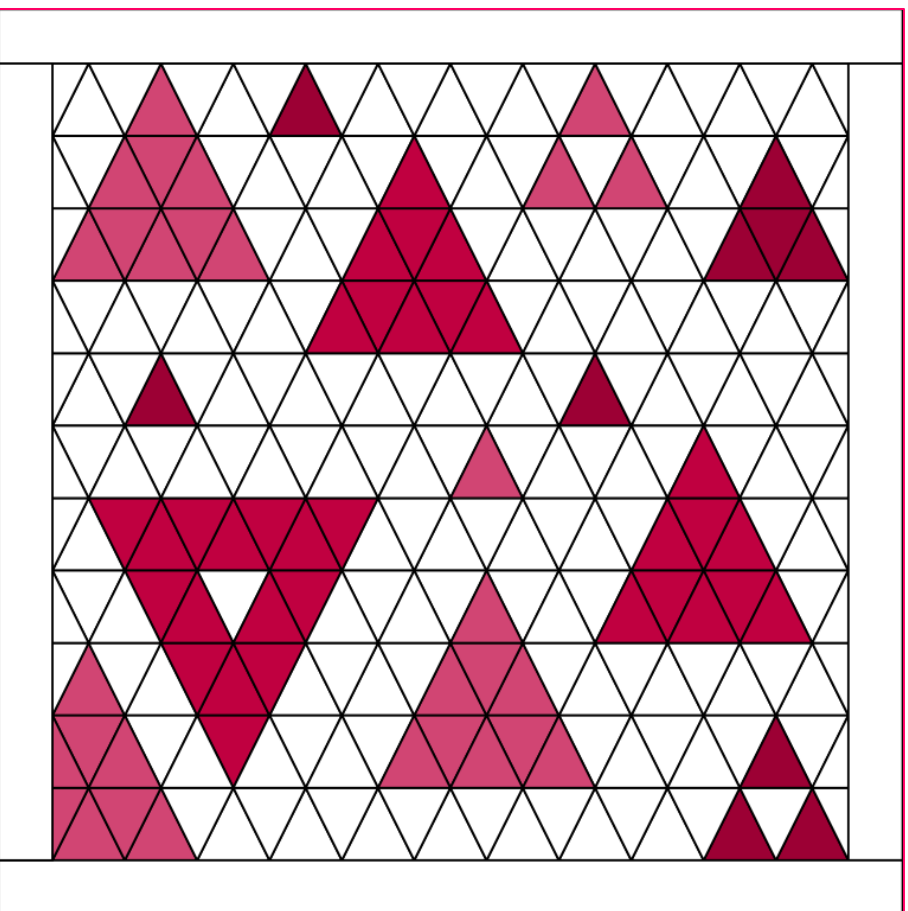




Print page then create an original design by simply coloring triangles:



**A couple of examples to inspire you creatively!**



Once you have your design completed on graph paper, you simply mark how many triangles in a row are the same color.

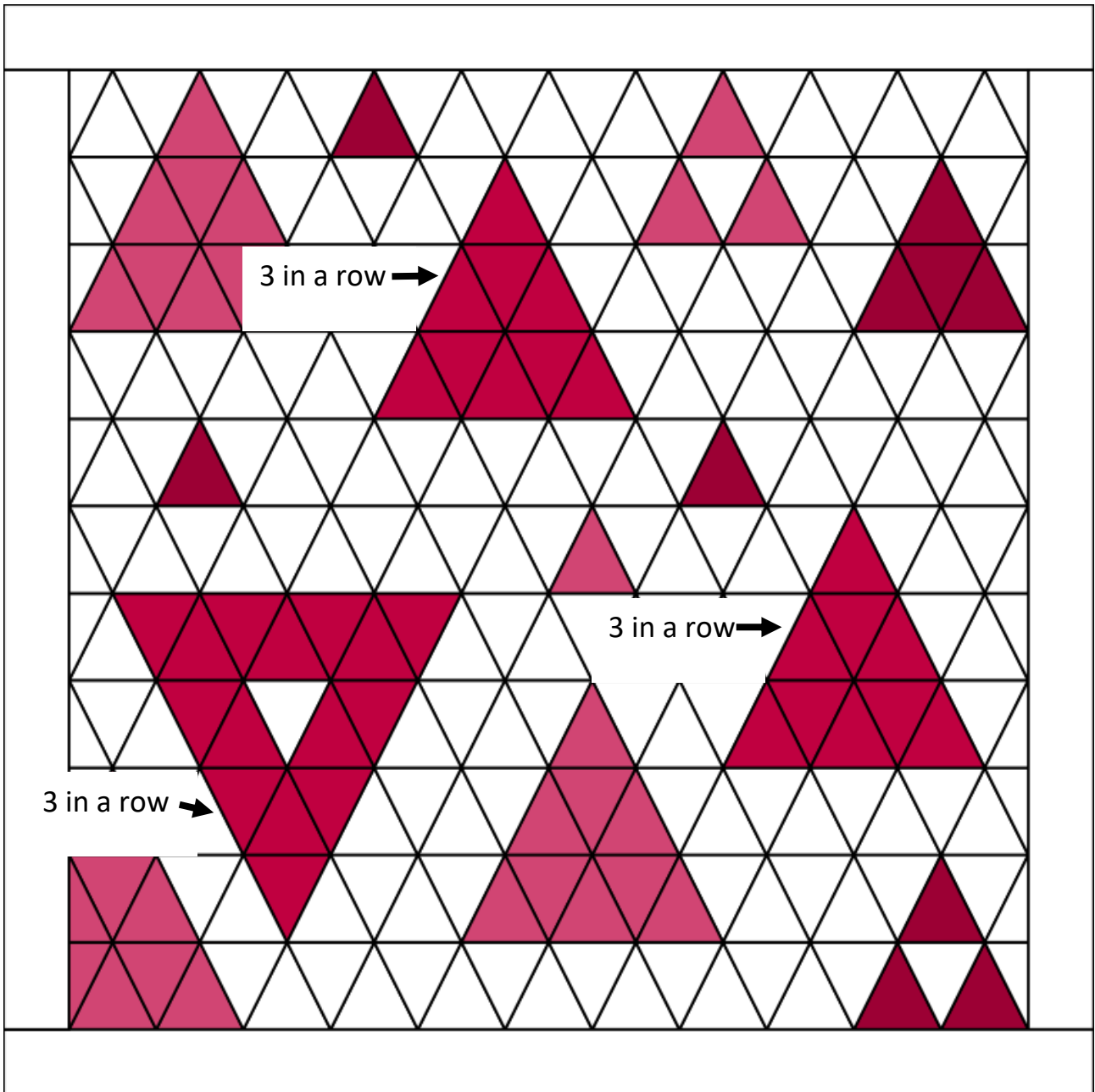
This design analysis and annotation helps you determine how many of each shape you need to cut.



2 white  
triangles  
together





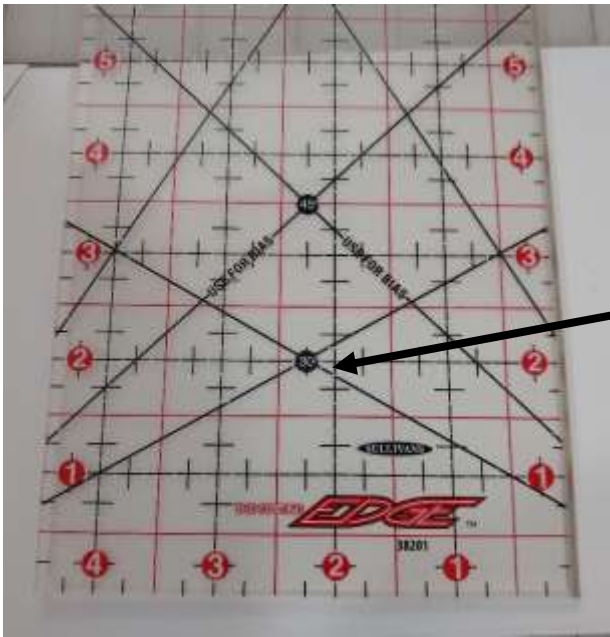


**Example:**

This example shows ALL places that 3 **bright pink** triangles are used for this design. Therefore 3 pieces of fabric that shape/length need to be cut.

Fill in your table accordingly for each color used, ensure you include the background fabric.

Color	# triangles in a row	Pieces to Cut
Bright Pink	3	3

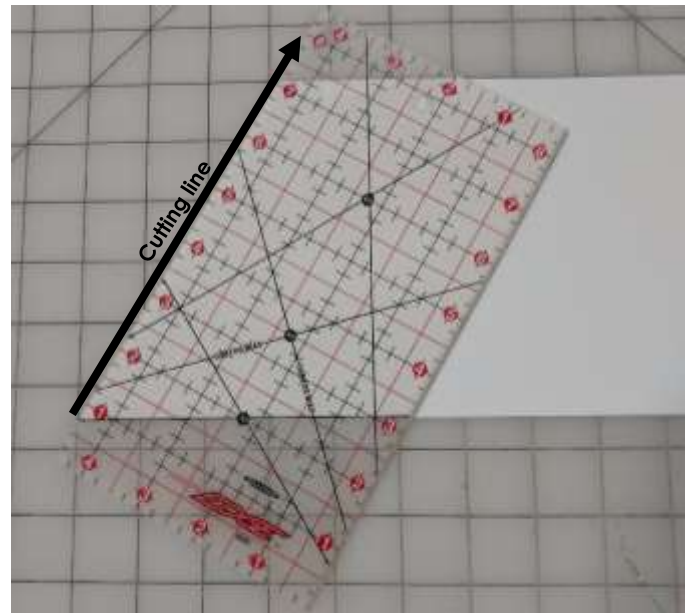


## Creating an equilateral triangle template:

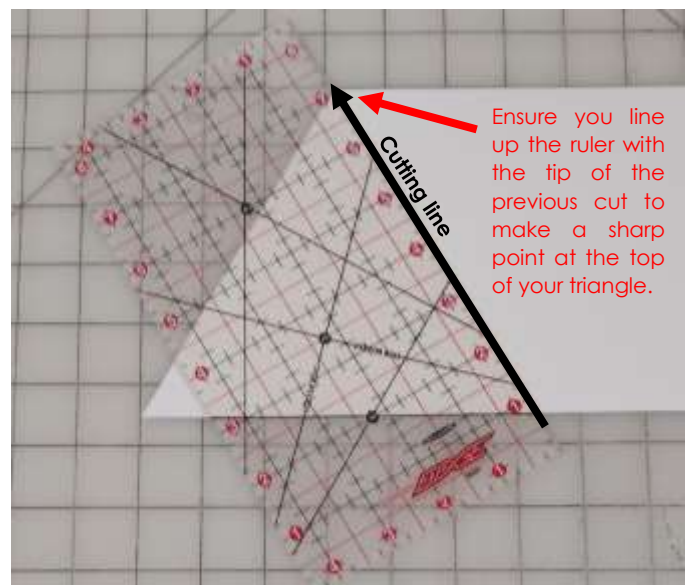
You will need a quilting ruler that has two 30 degree angle lines marked.

Cut a strip of paper the desired triangle height, in my example the triangle height is 5 ¼ inches.

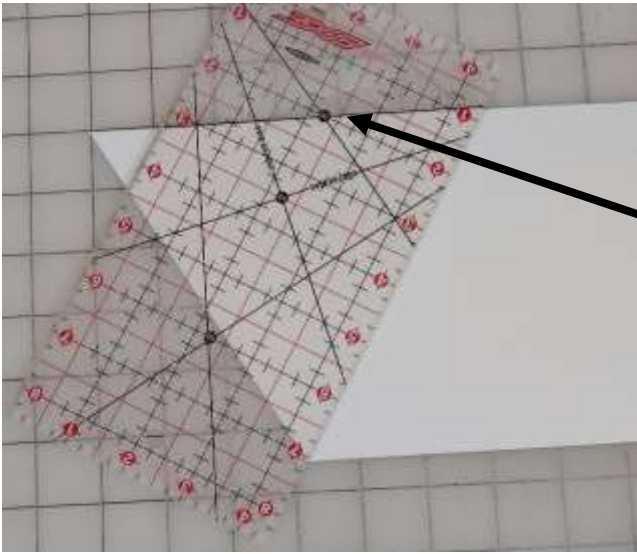
Place the 30\* line along the bottom of your strip of paper and cut away excess paper from the left as shown in this image



Place the **other** 30\* line along the bottom of your strip of paper and cut away excess paper from the right as shown in this image.



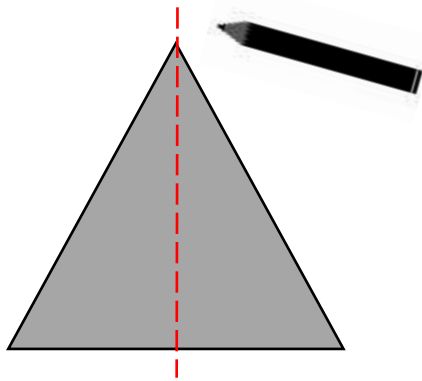
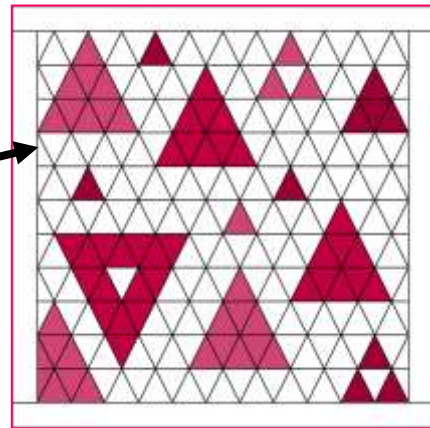




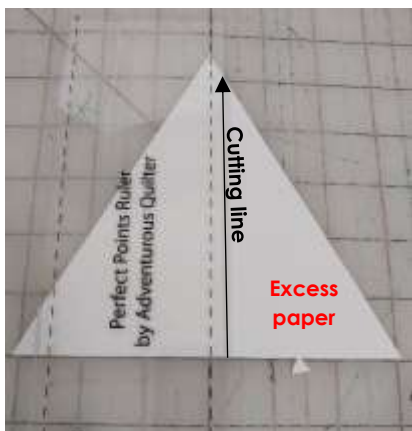
To continue cutting another triangle from your strip simply rotate the ruler so that the 30° line is along the top of your paper strip as shown in this image.

**Tip:** You can layer several strips of paper together to cut multiple triangles at once which you will need for strip template construction later in this tutorial.

Triangle quilts inevitably have 'half triangles' at the edge of each row.



To create a template for the edge 'half triangle' draw a line down the centre of one of the paper triangle templates using a pencil and ruler.

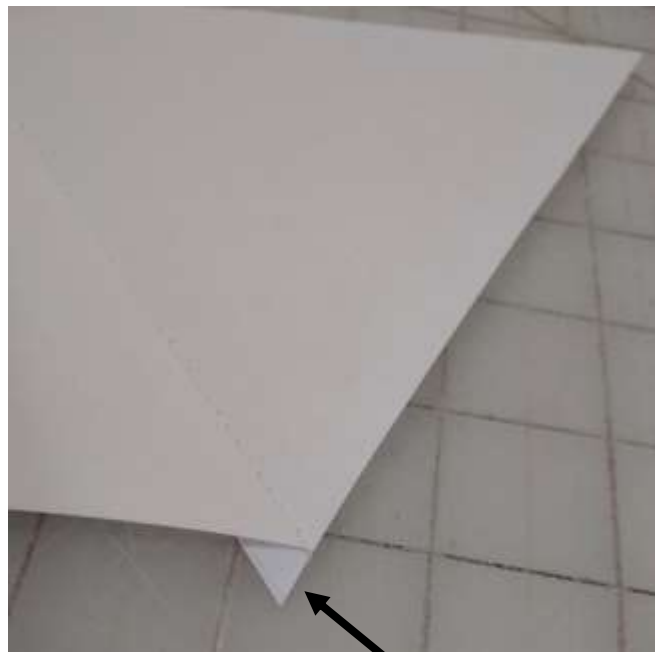


Now use a quilting ruler that has a 1/4 inch line marked and place the 1/4 line on the centre line. Trim away excess paper. This creates a half triangle that includes 1/4" seam allowance

The most important factor to remember when cutting the pieces for your triangle quilt is...

**Triangles and “half triangles” are cut from the full strip width** which is 5 ¼” in my example.

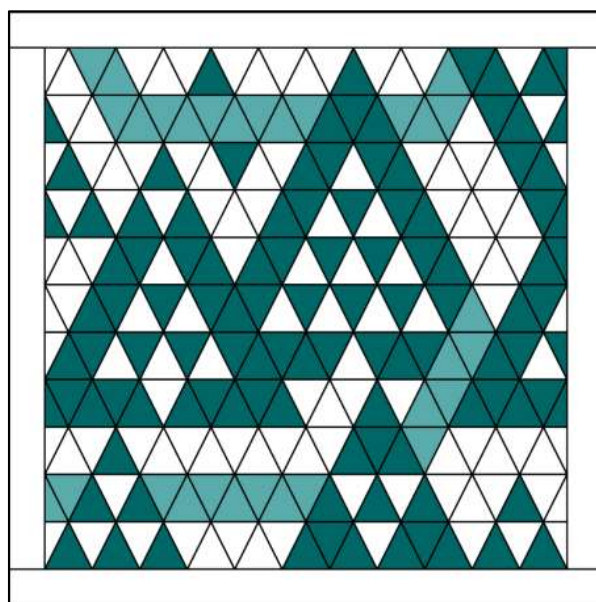
**All other pieces are cut from a strip that is ¼” (seam allowance) narrower than the full strip width!!!!**



Because when you sew two triangles together there will always be a little triangle ¼” wide that is outside your strip width when pressed and can be trimmed away.

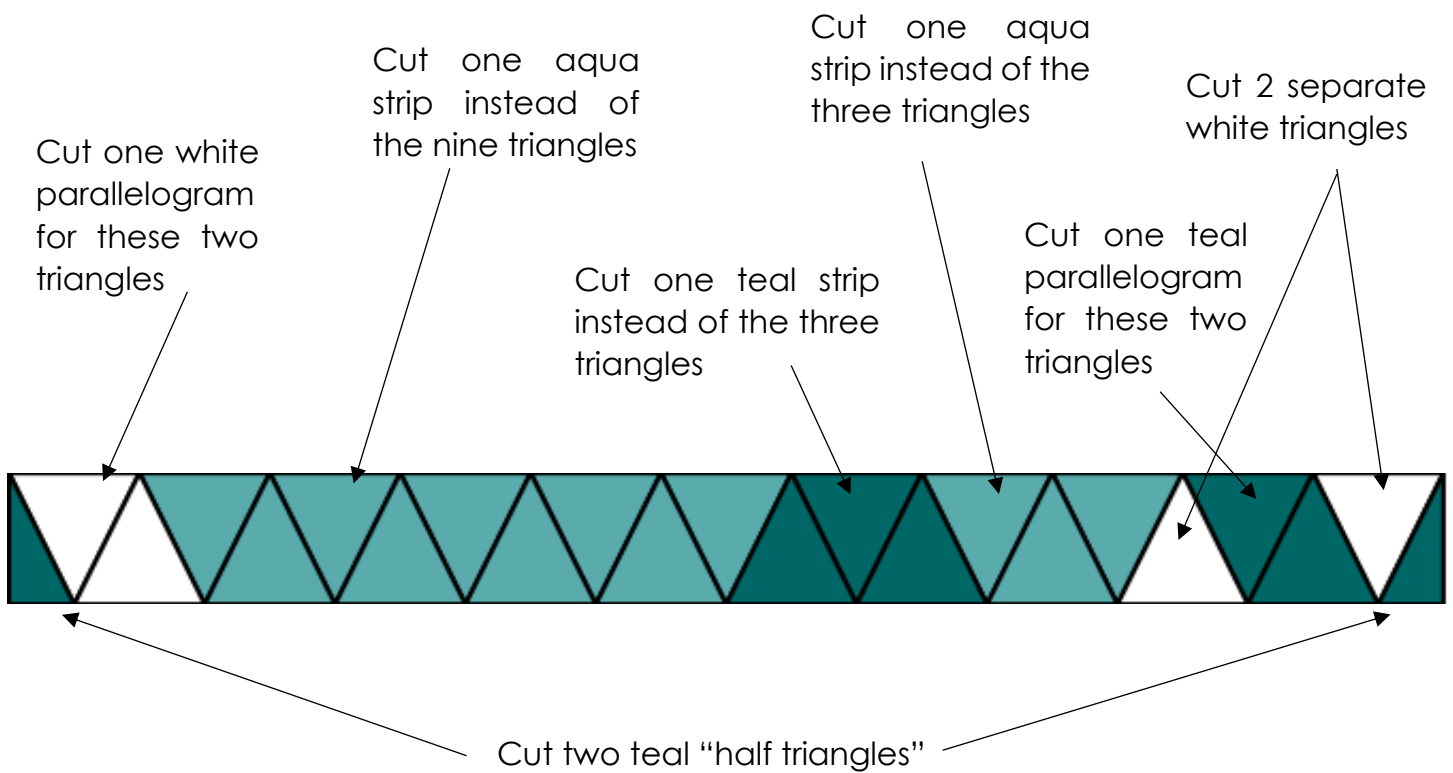
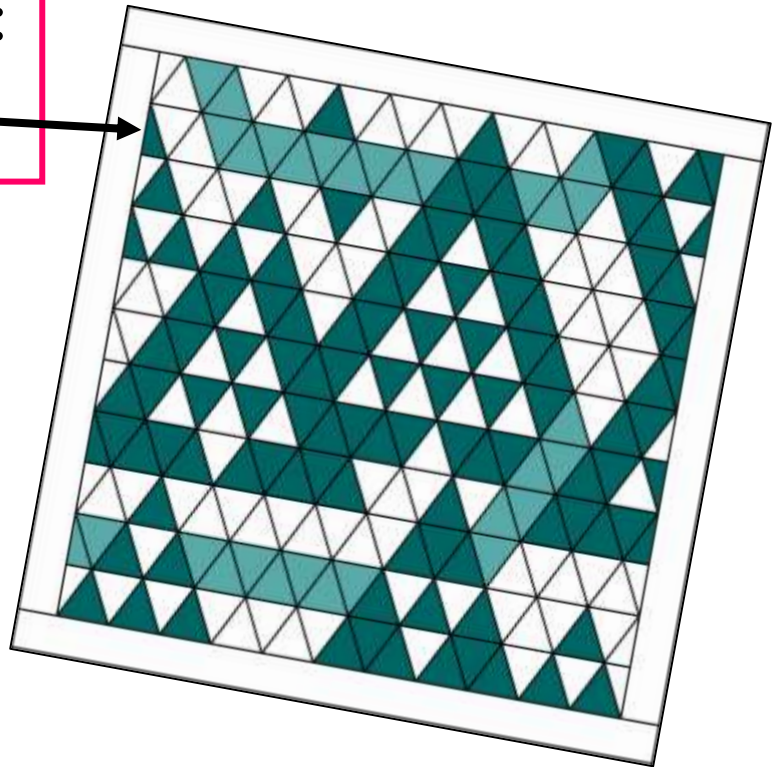
You can of course choose to cut all the triangles needed to create your design. In this example that is 231 triangles and 22 half triangles.

I prefer to spend a little more time to cut the fabric for triangle quilts in strips to minimize time at the construction stage.



In this example row, you will sew 14 less seams to join one row!  
So, imagine how much quicker this quilt will go together if you save time piecing every row!

**Example:**  
**Row 2**



You will save yourself time calculating strip lengths and minimize the potential for cutting errors with easy paper templates???

## Create templates for cutting the strips!

You literally sew paper triangles together!!!!

To make that parallelogram template that is the size of 4 triangles, sew four paper triangles together.

To make that parallelogram template that is the size of 2 triangles, sew two paper triangles together.



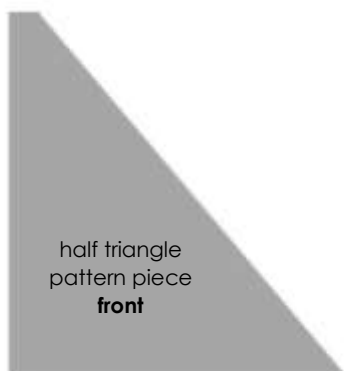
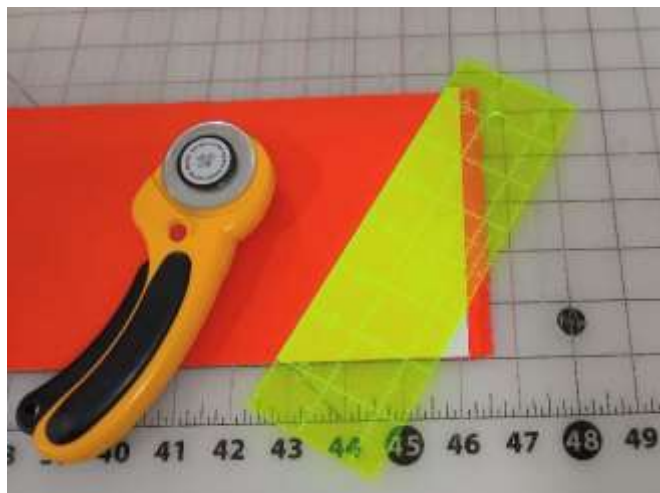
I highly recommend using a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " foot on your sewing machine for triangle quilt construction because it ensures all seams are accurate and increases the likelihood that your points will align perfectly when you sew the rows together!



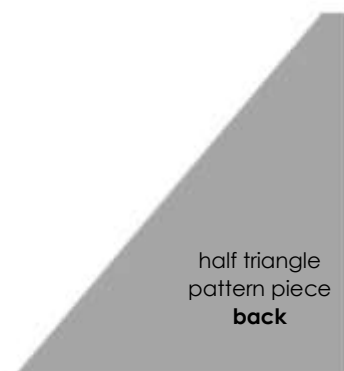
# Use of Cutting Templates

Your paper cutting templates are intended to be used in conjunction with a rotary cutter and quilt ruler to ensure safe accurate cutting.

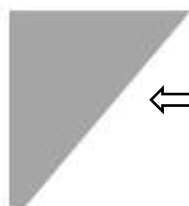
1. Cut your strip the appropriate width.
2. Lay your template on the strip.
3. Line up your ruler with the edge of the template and cut with a rotary cutter.
4. Line up your ruler with the other edge of the template and cut with a rotary cutter.



The paper patterns that are not symmetrical can be used face up or face down depending on where in the design that pattern piece is needed.



Example:  
Row 1  
orange half  
triangle



**Simply turn  
the pattern  
piece over!!!**

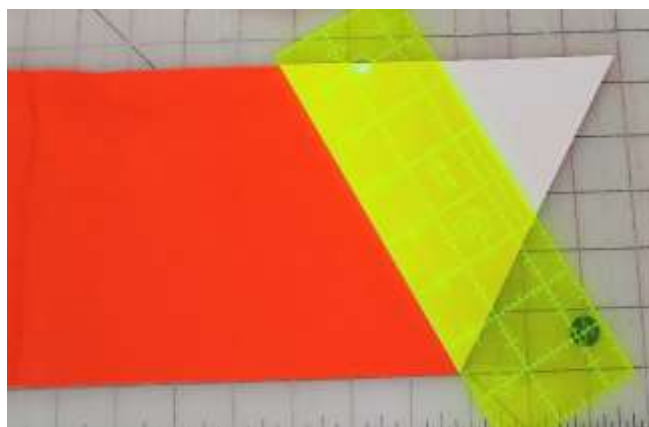
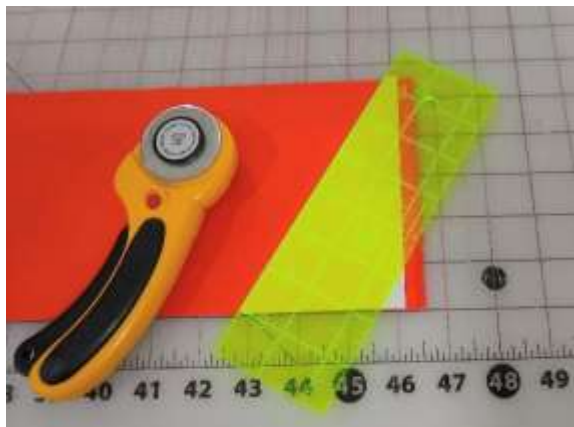


Example:  
Row 3  
green half  
triangle



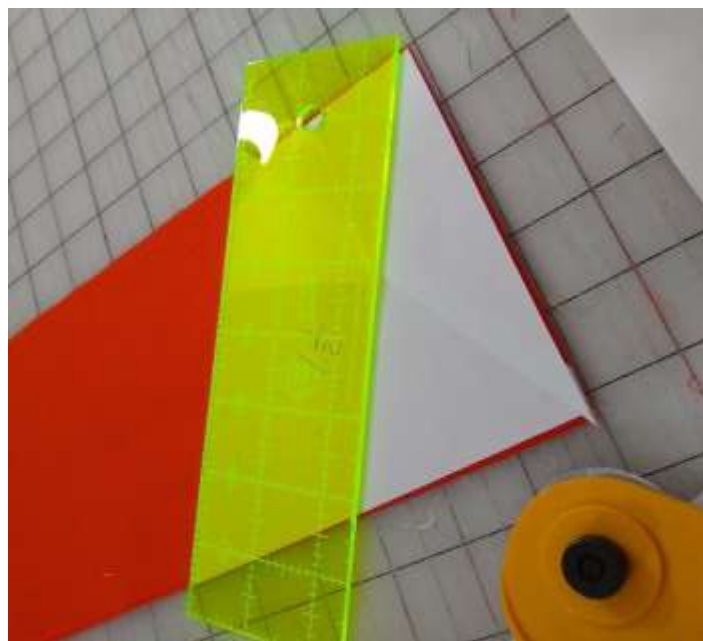
# Remember!!!! (page10)

Triangles and “half triangles” are cut from the full strip width which is 5 ¼” in my example.



All other pieces are cut from a strip that is ¼” (seam allowance) narrower than the full strip width!!!! 5” in my example.

**Strip width is vital to ensure your quilt isn't wonky!**



# Beginners, cut as you layout!



It might help to do this one line at a time and cut as you go, especially if you have a design wall which you can hang the pieces on to begin laying out your quilt design.

You will need your annotated quilt diagram handy. As you methodically work your way across each row, cut the required shape and hang it on your design wall.



## Row 1 cut, then hang horizontally:

- 1 orange 'half triangle'
- 1 white triangle
- 1 orange triangle
- 1 white parallelogram
- 1 blue triangle
- 1 white parallelogram
- 1 pink strip (3 triangle length)
- 1 white parallelogram
- 1 yellow triangle
- 1 white parallelogram
- 1 pale blue triangle
- 1 white parallelogram
- 1 mauve triangle
- 1 green strip (length of 2 ½ triangles)

Continue to cut and hang pieces methodically row by row until your entire quilt is on the design wall.



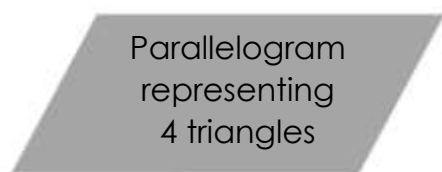
# Quilt Construction

Construct the quilt rows, then join the rows, taking care to align the points.

When adding strips, you will need to ensure you stitch the correct sides of the parallelograms together. Remember when you add strips, they will seem to be perpendicular to the row you have already pieced, until you press it back.



## How to join Parallelograms:

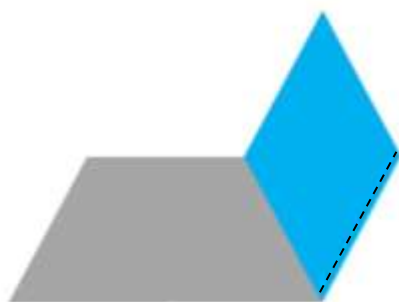


Parallelogram representing 2 triangles



The more you play with equilateral triangles and parallelograms the more confident you will get with the angles & placement!

**YOU CAN DO IT!**



Place the parallelogram representing 2 triangles on top of the strip representing 4 triangles as shown and stitch a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam as shown



Press open and your two parallelograms are now part of a row!

**Remember: I highly recommend using a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " foot on your sewing machine!**



Perfectly aligned points are possible with triangle quilts, check out my Youtube video the points on this quilt:

[https://youtu.be/Ys\\_BchHx-n0](https://youtu.be/Ys_BchHx-n0)

They aligned almost perfectly and this was only my fourth triangle quilt ever! Practice makes perfect!



Here's a Youtube video where I briefly explain this process for making triangle quilts:

<https://youtu.be/Sp2PiTRH1o>



The more you play with equilateral triangles and parallelograms the more confident you will get with aligning the points

**YOU CAN DO IT!**



For more information about my pattern designs go to  
[adventurousquilter.blogspot.com](http://adventurousquilter.blogspot.com)

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