

# Jinny Beyer Perfect Piecer

The Jinny Beyer Perfect Piecer, used by both machine and hand sewers, is a tiara shaped tool I designed primarily for marking seam allowances and the points where seam allowances cross to help sewers know where to start and stop stitching. It includes all the common angles used in patchwork. Holes are pre-punched in this master template at the precise points where the seam allowances will cross and along the quarter inch seam allowance line. Even though the original idea was for the Perfect Piecer to be an aid in marking seam allowances, it can be used for so much more and it is my constant companion when sewing and drafting. I also use it as a ruler, as a straight edge, as a small right triangle, and for mitering borders that are less than 3" wide.

## Marking Seam Allowances

If your templates have an exact quarter inch added and you have cut accurately, then you only need to mark the seam allowance on the piece of fabric that will be *on top* when you stitch. Line up the cut edges and as long as the seam allowance is correctly marked on the top piece, there is no need for a line on the back piece.

There are two ways to use the Perfect Piecer for marking seam allowances. The first is to lay the dotted seam line just outside the edge of the cut shape. Then, using a sharp tailor's chalk or mechanical chalk pencil, draw a line along the edge of the piecer.

The second way to mark a seam allowance is to align the edge of the Perfect Piecer along the edge of the cut shape. Then, using a mechanical chalk pencil or a hard lead mechanical pencil and mark dots on the shape through the holes that run along the quarter-inch mark on the Perfect Piecer.

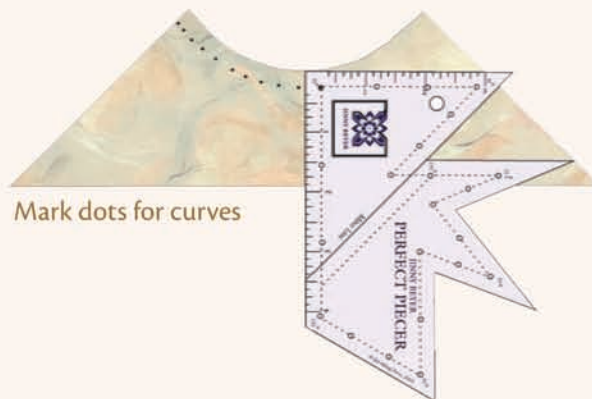


Use the long edge



Use pencil to mark dots through holes

When sewing curves, it is crucial that the seam allowance is exact. Use a series of dots for the sewing line and then sew dot to dot. Place the right angle (90 degree) corner of the Perfect Piecer on the edge of the curved shape, with the edge of the piecer at the edge of the fabric. Mark a dot through the hole at the 90 degree mark. Still keeping the edge of the Perfect Piecer at the edge of the fabric, move by increments along the cut edge of the curve and make a series of dots.

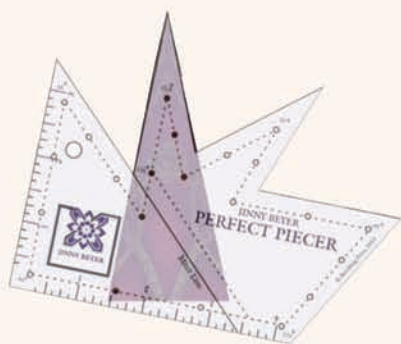


Mark dots for curves

## Marking Angles and Points

Often in patchwork it is necessary to have set-in seams. For these seams, you must begin and end stitching at the places where the seam allowances cross. The most common angles in the shapes used for patchwork designs are 22.5 degrees, 30 degrees, 45 degrees, 60 degrees, 90 degrees, 120 degrees and 135 degrees. All these angles are marked on the Perfect Piecer. Each of the angles has a hole at the exact spot where the seam allowances meet.

Find the angle on the Perfect Piecer that corresponds with the angle on the fabric. Place the tip of a mechanical chalk pencil through the hole and mark a dot on the fabric. Most of the angles are readily apparent because they are on the outside edges of the Perfect Piecer.



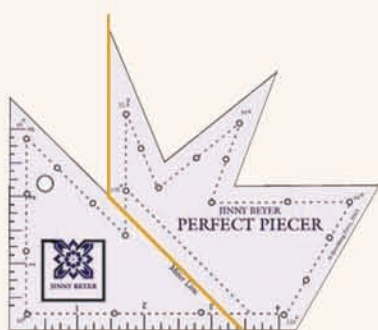
22.5 degree angle



45 degree angle

The 135 degree angle is different, and is at first confusing. This angle runs along the miter line marked on the Perfect Piecer, and then angles up to the 22.5 degree dot. The 135 degree angle is an often used angle since it is one of the angles in a 45 degree diamond. It is also the angle that needs a dot on the mitered edges of a border print.

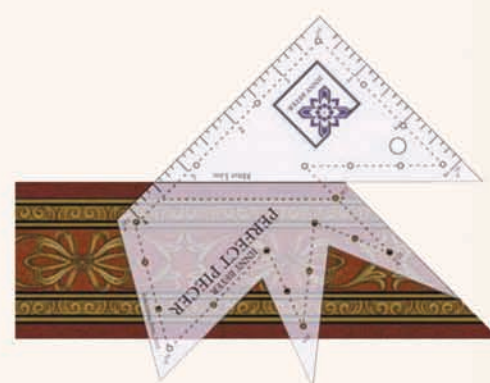
To mark the 135 degree angle, place the miter line along the left side of the angle on the fabric and then move the Perfect Piecer until the edge that goes to the 22.5 degree angle falls along the right side edge of the fabric. The two photos here show this angle. The first shows the angle on a 45 degree diamond and the second shows the angle on a mitered border fabric.



135 degree angle marked in yellow



135 degree angle on a  
45 degree diamond



135 degree angle on a mitered border

## Right Triangles

The Perfect Piecer can be used as a right triangle, whether drafting patterns, cutting miters for borders or marking mirror lines on templates.

To cut a perfect miter on a strip no wider than 3", turn the Perfect Piecer so that the 90 degree angle is facing straight up and the miter line is horizontal. Line the miter line up with the bottom edge of the border strip. Move the Perfect Piecer to the spot where the miter is to be cut and draw along the right hand edge of the Piecer. Cut the miter.

To cut miters on border strips wider than 3", a larger right triangle would work better.



To use the Perfect Piecer as a right triangle for marking mirror lines on triangle templates, use the 90 degree angle. Place the bottom of the Perfect Piecer along the bottom of the template and move the Piecer to the left until the 45 degree angle touches the tip of the triangle. Then draw the miter line down the middle of the template.

