

An Accurate 1/4" Seam

It's Sew Accurate!

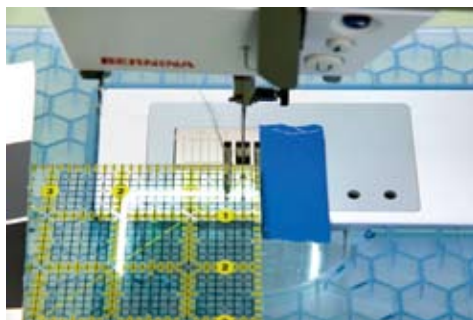
Sewing with a consistent 1/4" seam allowance is important in most quilting projects, and there's more to it than just using a 1/4" (patchwork) foot on your sewing machine, or sewing 1/4" from the raw edges of your patches. Even if you have a 1/4" foot, your seam allowances may vary. Also, when patches are opened and pressed, a bit of fabric is "lost" in the seam, which can leave you with sewn units that are slightly too small unless you take this into account when stitching. Even slight differences can significantly affect your results in a project with many seams.

To establish or check your 1/4" seam allowance:

- Use a fine, low-lint thread in both the top of your sewing machine and the bobbin (and use the same thread throughout your project).



- Mark 1/4" from the center of the machine needle by placing layered masking tape, adhesive moleskin, or another seam guide on the machine bed.



- Sew together 2 patches each 1 1/2" wide, using the tape as your guide.



- Press the seam flat to "set" the stitching.



- Open patches and press.



- Measure the sewn unit. It should be exactly 2 1/2" wide from raw edge to raw edge. If unit is wider than 2 1/2", move tape a bit further away from needle and try again. If unit is narrower than 2 1/2", move tape a bit closer to needle and try again. Repeat the test until you are consistently sewing an accurate 1/4" seam.

