# YQG 2019 Mystery Quilt – Clue 2

You should now have 60 or 90 large colored squares and the same number of background squares, depending on whether you're making the smaller (60) or the larger (90) size. We are now going to make half-square triangles from these.

Take a large colored square and a large background square. Place right sides together with the light background fabric on top. With a pencil or chalk marker, draw a light line diagonally across the top square. If you have trouble with the fabric shifting as you draw the line, you can place the square on a piece of fine sandpaper or other grippy surface. It's a good idea to pin the two squares together on either side of the line to avoid shifting as you sew. Sew ¼" on each side of the drawn line, then cut down the line between the seams, getting two sets of two triangles sewn along the long side.
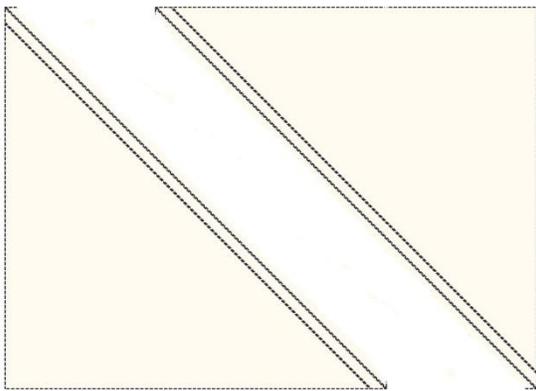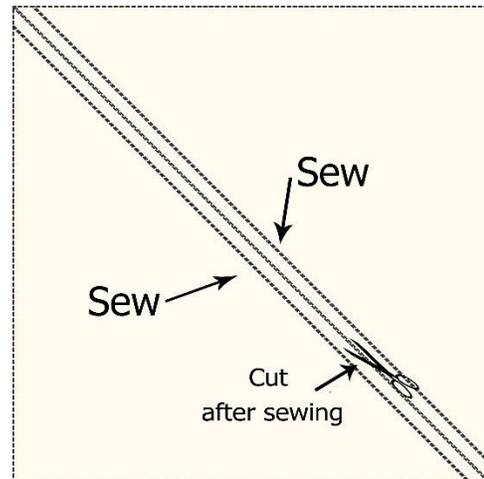
Open the two triangles and press toward the darker side. Repeat with the rest of the squares. You should now have 120 (smaller size) or 180 (larger size) half-square triangles, 12 for each of your fat quarter fabrics.

They ~~should~~ will be more than 4.5" square. If they are not precisely 4.5" square, trim them so that the seam runs diagonally from one corner to the opposite corner and they measure 4.5"X4.5".

Put these aside until Clue 4.

A digression on piecing half-square triangles. Sewing two squares together on either side of a diagonal line from one corner to another is a good way to get half-square triangles. One of the advantages of this method is that you are not sewing along an edge that's already been cut along a bias. Sewing along a bias-cut edge is a dangerous way to join triangles because of the risk of stretching the bias edge. This way you are sewing first, although admittedly on a bias line, and then cutting.

But the difficulty is that we are aiming to get a square with the two triangles as pieces of that square. Normally that square is supposed to be a certain size and the trouble with this method is that we are taking a good ½" inch on the diagonal out of the picture and into a seam allowance and so we have to compensate for that. Adding ½" to each side of the starting squares is not enough because of the diagonal slant of the sewing lines. If you run through the geometry of the situation, you will find that you need to add approximately 7/8" to each side of the starting squares. In many ways, it makes sense to add a full 1" and then trim the result down to the desired size, always making sure that the diagonal seam runs from one corner of the trimmed block to the opposite corner.