

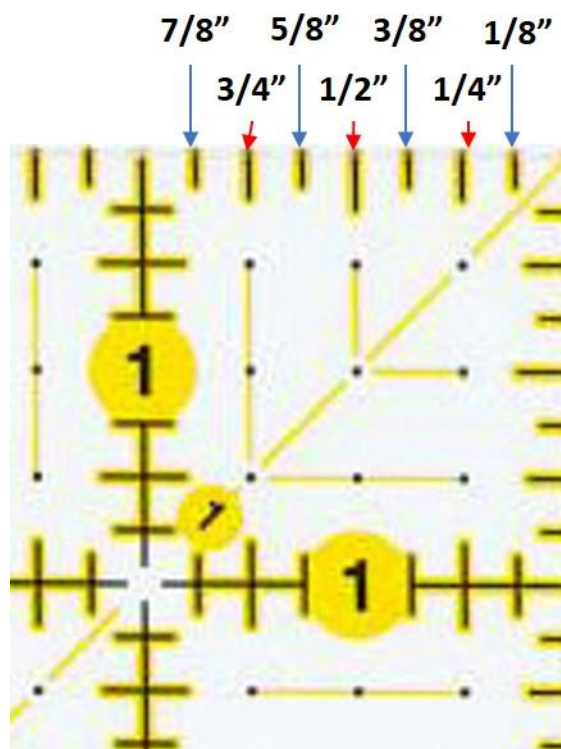


## Understanding Measurements & Seam Allowances in Patchwork & Quilting

### Measurements:

Most of the equipment (mats & rulers) used for measuring and cutting fabric in P&Q is in inches.

One inch is divided into 8 parts. These are called eighths and are represented on mats and rulers by small and large lines.



Imperial (Fraction)	Imperial (Decimal)	Metric
1/8"	0.125"	3mm
2/8" = 1/4"	0.25"	6mm
3/8"	0.375"	9mm
4/8" = 1/2"	0.5"	1.27cm
5/8"	0.625"	1.58cm
6/8" = 3/4"	0.75"	1.9cm
7/8"	0.875"	2.2cm
8/8" = 1"	1.0"	2.5cm

### Seam Allowances:

The most common seam allowance used in P&Q is  $\frac{1}{4}$ ". This can be achieved by :

1. using a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " foot attachment. Some  $\frac{1}{4}$ " feet will have a guide at the side (Fig 1) (keep the raw edge of the fabric butted up to the inner edge of the  $\frac{1}{4}$ " guide) but some won't (Fig 2). In this instance keep the raw edge of the fabric aligned with the edge of the  $\frac{1}{4}$ " foot (Fig 3).



Fig 1



Fig 2



Fig 3

2. moving your needle incrementally to the right until it is  $\frac{1}{4}$ " away from the edge of a standard presser foot (keep the raw edge of the fabric aligned with the right hand edge of the presser foot Fig 4).

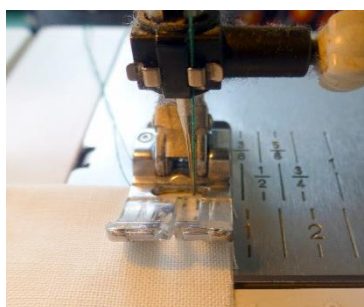


Fig 4

3. affixing tape to your accessories tray ensuring the right hand edge of the tape is aligned exactly  $\frac{1}{4}$ " to the right of the needle position (Fig 5) (keep the raw edge of the fabric aligned with the right hand edge of the tape as you feed the fabric up to the presser foot)

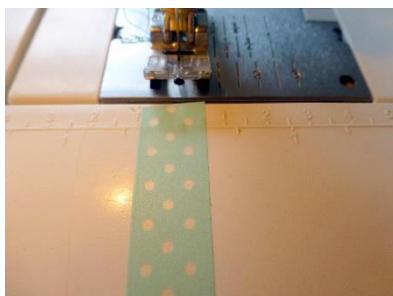


Fig 5

Whatever  $\frac{1}{4}$ " guide you choose to use, the closer it is to the needle, the more accuracy and control you will have.

*\*the measurements marked on the needle plate (also called foot plate or throat plate Fig 6) usually start at 3/8" so for bigger seam allowances, keep the raw edge of your fabric aligned with these markings to achieve your seam allowance.*



Fig 6

### **Scant 1/4" Seam Allowance:**

However, you may also see written in patterns the use of a **SCANT 1/4"** seam allowance. A scant 1/4" seam allowance is 1mm (or a needle's width) smaller than a standard 1/4" seam allowance. This is needed to achieve accurate sizing of pieces and blocks in patchwork.

As scant 1/4" feet aren't available, the most accurate way to achieve a scant 1/4" seam allowance is to incrementally move your needle to the right until you achieve a scant 1/4" measurement from the edge of the presser foot.

If you are unable to do this on your machine, you will either have to **not allow** the fabric to touch the 1/4" guide when using the 1/4" foot in 1. above (tricky!) or draw a 2<sup>nd</sup> line on the tape on the accessories tray that is 1mm from the edge of the tape (Fig 7).

