

Is your sawtooth border too long?

The biggest mistake made when piecing together a sawtooth border is incorrectly aligning the triangles when sewing them together, which more often than not will result in a border that is narrower and longer than what is called for.

I have found for myself that after I sew a few of these sets together, I get a feel for lining up the triangles in the right way and do not have to mark and pin each one. However, I highly recommend going through the following steps for yourself with a piece of scrap fabric....

Cut a square, then cut it into quarters.

On the wrong side of the triangles, draw the 1/4" seam lines.

To correctly sew these together....

1. Place two triangles together as they will be sewn. Insert the tip of a pin at the intersection of the 1/4" lines on the top triangle, then insert it at the intersection of the 1/4" lines on the bottom triangle. **(photo 1)**
2. Sew along the drawn 1/4" line. Open up the seam and press.
3. Notice how the triangle appears to be offset. **(photo 2)** **THIS IS THE CORRECT ALIGNMENT.** Although this may look wrong, what you are doing is aligning the two tips of the triangles as they should be, making the resulting triangles the correct size. This is evidenced by the fact that it measures the correct width of the unfinished border (in this case 2").

To see the difference, sew two triangles together like this....

1. Line up the 1/4" line on the top triangle so that it intersects the edge of the bottom triangle. **(photo 3)**
2. Sew along the drawn 1/4" line. Open up the seam and press.
3. Notice how the triangles are aligned at the top and the bottom. **(photo 4)** **THIS IS THE INCORRECT ALIGNMENT.** The actual tips of the triangles (as indicated by the intersecting lines you drew on the wrong side) are not matched up, which in turn will cause the triangles to finish at an incorrect size. You can see this by the fact that it does not finish at the correct width (in this case 2").

To emphasize this, note where the red lines (my indication of the remaining 1/4" seams) intersect in each photo, and you will see how quickly a border sewn incorrectly can grow.

CORRECT
ALIGNMENT

photo 1

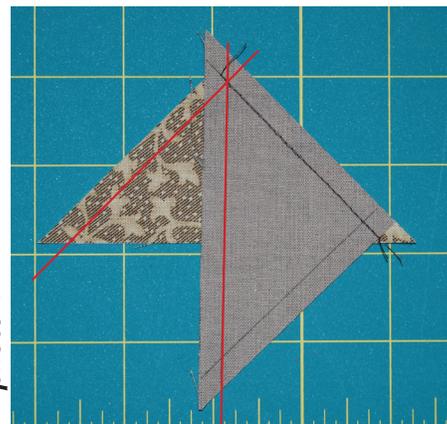
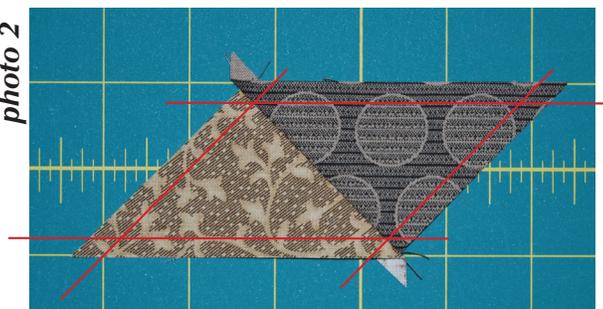


photo 2



INCORRECT
ALIGNMENT

photo 3

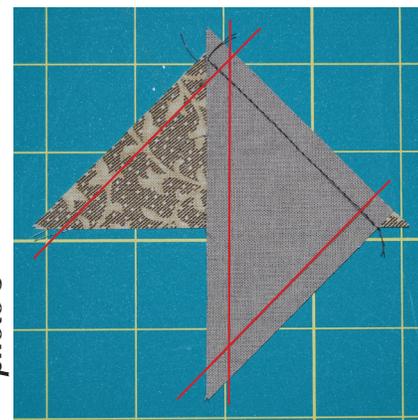


photo 4

