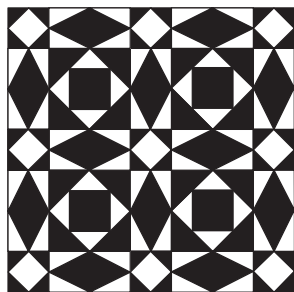# TRIMplate® Piecing for Storm at Sea/Snail's Trail

The goal of this workshop is for you to learn my unique piecing method by making one of the "Storm at Sea" projects pictured on the following pages. This technique does not use templates or paper foundation piecing. Instead, my TRIMplate® rulers are used to trim oversize pieces after sewing.

The two TRIMplates needed for class are pictured at right: The **8-6-4 Diamond** (left) and the **6" SIS TRIMplate** (right).

I will bring TRIMplates for each student to use in class. You do not need to purchase them. They will be available after class if you want to buy them.
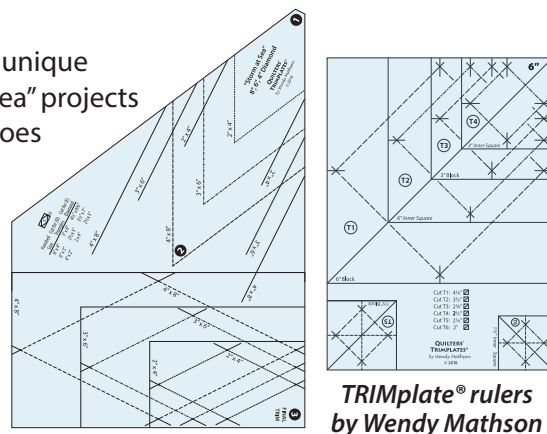
TRIMplate® rulers by Wendy Mathson

Preparation before class:

1. Decide which project you wish to make, "Easy" or "Advanced". *Both versions are made with the same three blocks illustrated at right: Diamond, Big SIS and Little SIS. ("SIS" stands for "Squares-in-Squares"). The Advanced project includes Snail's Trail blocks. As indicated in the diagram, Snail's Trail is a variation of the Big SIS block.*

2. Choose your fabrics, following the fabric selection guidelines. If you need help, you can scan or photograph your fabrics and email me for advice. (At least 3 days before class, please!)

3. Following the cutting chart for your chosen pattern, cut and organize your fabric pieces. NOTE: Cutting should not take long, since only a few pieces need to be cut accurately.

4. Try to be ready to sew at the beginning of class. It is helpful to have a rotary cutting station near your sewing machine.

Diamond   Big SIS   Little SIS

Big SIS variation for Snail's Trail
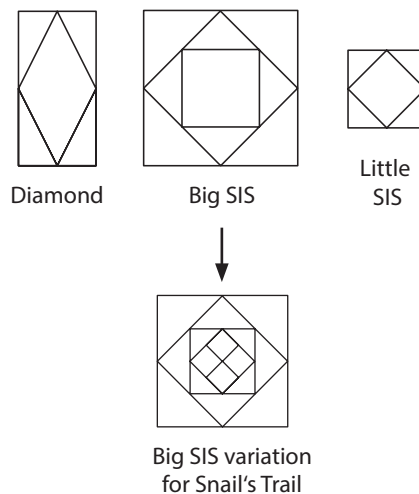
Checklist - What you will need in class:

☐ Fabric: All the pieces you have cut *plus all your leftovers and any extra fabric!*

☐ 7 sturdy paper plates for organizing fabric pieces

☐ Rotary cutter with new blade (45 mm recommended)

☐ Cutting mat at least 8" square. A turn-table mat is nice.

☐ Rulers that you like to use for cutting rectangles and squares from strips

☐ Sewing machine with a new 80/12 needle. (I prefer Topstitch needles for piecing). **Don't forget your foot pedal and cord!**

☐ Quarter-inch foot – OR – the ability to move your needle position for a scant quarter-inch seam. For this class, you cannot rely on tape or markings on the bed of the machine.

☐ Good quality, neutral color piecing thread, plus a filled bobbin. (I prefer 50 weight thread for piecing.)

☐ Basic sewing supplies such as thread snips, fabric scissors, fine pins, seam ripper, snacks

Optional:

- *A New Light on Storm at Sea Quilts* book by Wendy Mathson. Available as a soft-cover book or ebook from **ctpub.com** (C & T Publishing)

- Open-toe appliqué foot for your machine

- Quilter's stiletto

- Extension table for your machine : This is optional, but highly recommended

Need more help? If you have read this supply list and have questions, please email me for assistance:

wjmathson@gmail.com

Most students will be able to complete at least 9 pieced units in class. These can be sewn together into one 12" block as shown at right. You will have enough cut fabric pieces cut to make more blocks for a project at least 21" square, as show in the quilt photos.
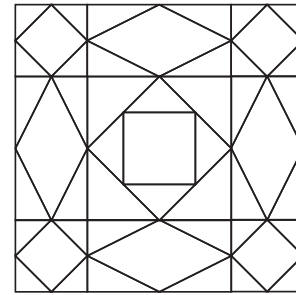
How to Read the Cutting Charts

This symbol ⊡ means to subcut a square once on the diagonal. For example, in the top row of the "Easy" chart, cut 8 squares, 3½" from Light fabrics, then cut in half on the diagonal to make 16 T2 triangles.

An asterisk (*) means those pieces need to be cut accurately. The other pieces do NOT need to be exact, so you can cut them quickly. Unlike most other patterns, cutting squares into triangles does not need to be exact. You can stack and cut several at a time.

We will be cutting inner squares for Little SIS blocks in class, using a TRIMplate. Just bring extra fabric, or cut approximate 2¾" squares.

Organizing Your Cut Pieces:

The paper plates on your supply list are for organizing your cut pieces. Label the plates according to the cutting chart for your project: **D, E, T1**, etc.

As you cut (or subcut) your pieces, place them on the appropriate plate. Plates then can be stacked and stored in a large zip-lock bag.
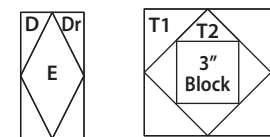
EASY Project - Light & Medium Scraps plus one Accent Fabric

This is a good choice if you are a beginning piecer, or if your fabric selection is limited. (Or maybe you just prefer to work with scraps.) Using a variety of fabrics makes it easy to add on if you decide to enlarge your project with more blocks later.

Fabric Selection

Choose a variety of very light and very dark scraps. The darks can be all one color family as shown here, or you can use a variety of very dark colors.

- Your Accent fabric should be Light to Medium in value. The color can be orange, yellow, pink – whatever you like. Just be sure it stands out against your Darks. (Stand back and squint to evaluate.)
- Directional fabrics are okay to use in this Easy project.

EASY	Diamond Block		Little SIS Block		Big SIS Block		
Cut pieces this size →	2½" x 5"	3½" x 7"	2¾"	Approx. 2¾"	4¼"	3½"	3½"
Subcut where indicated	▭	▭	◺		◺	◺	▢
Organize pieces →	D & Dr	E	T3	3" Inner Square	T1	T2	3" Block
Lights	20			8		8	
Darks		*12	18		8		*4
Accent	4			1			

* Cut these pieces accurately.

Diamond (D / Dr / E)

Big SIS (T1 / T2 / 3" Block)

3" Inner Square / T3 — Little SIS

ADVANCED Project - 4 fabrics

This project uses Snail's Trail blocks, which take a bit more piecing and attention to detail. Remember, a Snail's Trail is simply a variation of the Big SIS block.

You will have several options for arranging your 25 blocks, as shown in the black and white sketches below.

Fabric Selection

You need a **Light**, **Medium, Dark**, and **Accent**.

- Choose Light and Medium fabrics in the same color family so they blend together.   *Notice how my Medium (gold) is a brighter, more intense version of my Light (yellow).*
- Both Light and Medium should contrast with your Dark fabric.
- Compare your Dark and Accent fabrics in low light, or stand back and squint. If you can't distinguish between these two, you need something lighter or brighter for your Accent.
- With this project I recommend you **do not** use directional fabrics, such as stripes or plaids.

○ Light

○ Medium

● Dark

○ Accent
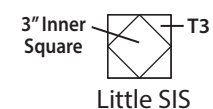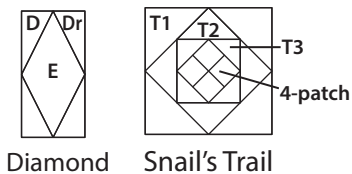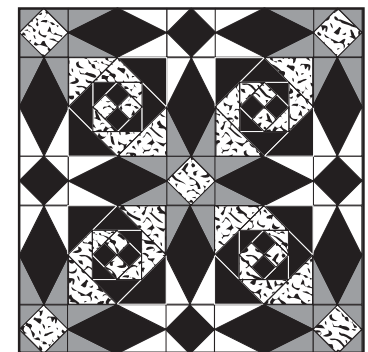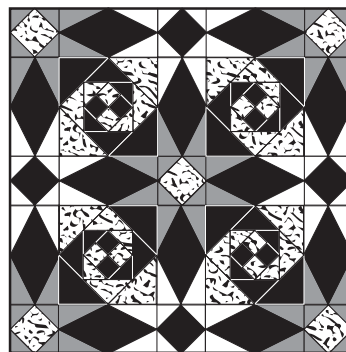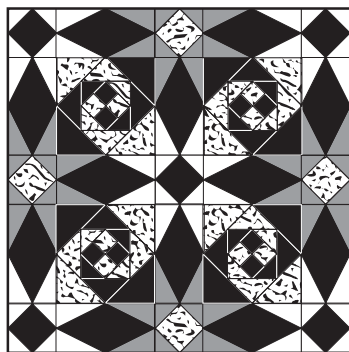
	Diamond Block		Little SIS Block		Snail's Trail Block			
ADVANCED Cut pieces this size → Subcut where indicated Organize pieces →	2½" x 5" ▭ **D & Dr**	3½" x 7" ▭ **E**	2¾" ◸ **T3**	Approx. 2¾" ◸ **3" Inner Square**	4¼" ◸ **T1**	3½" ◸ **T2**	2¾" ◸ **T3**	3½" □ **4-patch**
1/4 yard — Light	12		10					
3/8 yard — Medium				5	4	4	4	2
5/8 yard — Dark		*12		5	4	4	4	2
1/4 yard — Accent	12		10					

* Cut these pieces accurately.

Diamond (D / Dr / E)

Snail's Trail (T1 / T2 / T3 / 4-patch)

3" Inner Square — T3

Little SIS