

Pfaff Pfeatured Pfoot #1
1/4" Foot, in several styles

As quilters, we're always looking for the elusive perfect 1/4" seam allowance – the success of our piecing hinges on everything being sewn accurately. Fortunately for us, Pfaff offers a variety of feet to help us meet our goal! Let's see what's available:

FIRST OFF, WHAT EXACTLY DOES "A 1/4" FOOT" MEAN?

Below is a picture of a typical 1/4" foot from Pfaff. Three things to note:

1/ All 1/4" feet are designed to be used with straight stitch only and the needle in the centre position. The only exception is the Perfect 1/4" Foot, which is discussed later in this article. If your machine has a "Stitch Width Safety" feature, now is the time to use it!

2/ The shape of the foot:

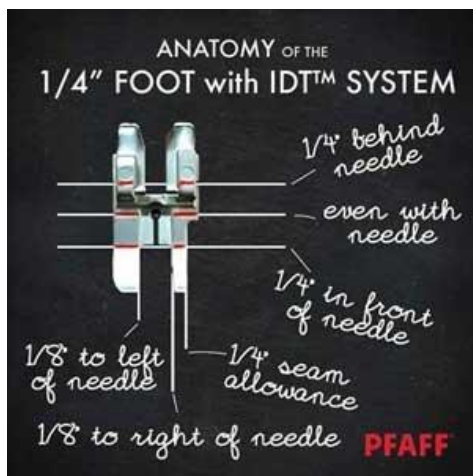
It's asymmetrical. The right side of the foot has a "shoulder" at the back (if you run this edge along the edge of your fabric, it will give you a 3/8" seam allowance (not shown on the diagram below). The toe of the foot below the shoulder gives you a 1/4" seam allowance if you use the right side of the toe OR an 1/8" seam allowance if you use the left side.

The left side of the foot is straight, with no shoulder, to prevent catching seam allowances while sewing. The outside edge of this side of the foot will NOT give you a 1/4" seam allowance, but the inside of the toe will give you an 1/8" seam allowance to the left of the needle.

The back of the foot has a split in it to let you attach your IDT even-feed system. This is a good thing!

3/ The markings on the foot: The red lines, from back to front, indicate the following:

- a) 1/4" behind the needle drop. This is very useful when you need to start sewing 1/4" from the edge of your piece (eg when sewing a set-in square, like a bag bottom);
- b) needle drop. This helps you position your piece exactly where you need to be;
- c) 1/4" in front of the needle drop. This lets you stop 1/4" before the edge of your fabric (eg when attaching binding).



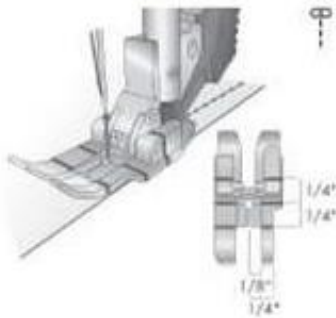
SECONDLY, WHAT STYLES OF 1/4" FOOT ARE AVAILABLE? AND WHY ARE THERE SO MANY?

First, let's look at the metal versions:

1/ The Naked 1/4" Quilting Foot



This foot is just like the one in the diagram above. It has no guide on the right side of the toe. Use the edge of the toe as your placement guide. Remember, it is asymmetrical, so it will not give you a 1/4" seam allowance to the left of the needle.



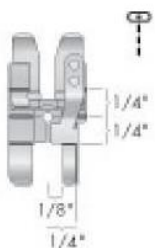
2. 1/4" Quilting Foot with Right Guide



This foot is the Naked 1/4" foot with a metal guide attached to the right toe. Use the guide as a fence for your fabric. Be careful, though – if you push the fabric too far and crowd the guide, your seam allowance may end up too wide, thus defeating the purpose of the 1/4" foot.

This foot is also great for topstitching 1/4" away from a finished edge or seam line in quilts, home dec projects, or garments.

Note: When using any foot with a right guide, it is recommended that you don't lift your presser foot to the extra-high position. This can cause the needle screw to hit the guide and inadvertently push the foot off.

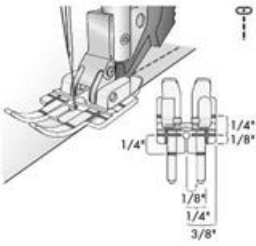


3. Clear 1/4" Quilting Foot



This foot is great for piecing 1/4", 1/8", and 3/8" seams where greater visibility is desired.

Note that the clear foot is symmetrical – it has a shoulder on both the right and left sides of the foot. This allows you to sew 1/4" seams (use the outer edge of the toe), 1/8" seams (use the inner edge of the toe), and 3/8" seams (use the outer edge of the back of the foot) to both the right and left sides of the needle drop. This is especially useful when sewing half- and quarter-square triangles – you can sew on either side of your drawn line, and there's no guide to drag on the fabric.

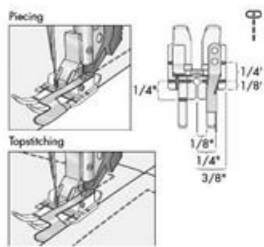


4. Clear 1/4" Quilting Foot with Right Guide.



This is the Clear 1/4" Quilting Foot with – guess what – a guide attached. The guide lets you achieve a 1/4" seam allowance easily, but it interferes with the 3/8" seam allowance and any sewing to the left of the needle.

As with the metal foot with guide, this foot also is great for topstitching 1/4" from a finished edge or seam line in quilts, home dec projects, and garments.



Note: When using any foot with a right guide, it is recommended that you don't lift your presser foot to the extra-high position. This can cause the needle screw to hit the guide and inadvertently push the foot off.

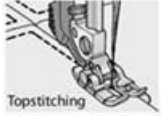
5. Perfect 1/4" Foot



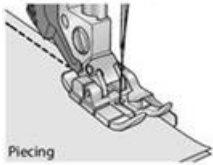
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B C D E G J K
for IDT™ system

This foot is metal, very similar to the 1/4" Quilting Foot with Guide, but with one very important difference: It has an oval opening for the needle, allowing you to adjust slightly your needle position to accommodate different thicknesses of thread, different fabric weights, fence crowding, etc, to achieve a perfect or scant 1/4" seam allowance.

When the needle is in centre position and the fabric is aligned next to the guide, you will get a scant 1/4" seam; if you want a perfect 1/4", move your needle a little to the left. The oval opening allows you to make minor adjustments to the needle position, up to 3 clicks left or right (NO MORE!).



Topstitching



Piecing

Do not use a single-hole needle plate with the Perfect 1/4" Foot! And remember not to use the extra-high presser foot lift when the Perfect 1/4" Foot is attached.

As with the other 1/4" feet with right guides, this foot is excellent for topstitching, too.

