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## A Lazy Quilter's Trick to Better Points

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My quilty friends and guild members are, no doubt, laughing their thread-covered asses off reading the title of this post. *Lauren?! I hear them say? Old Noodle-Needle, writing a post about piecing accuracy? HA!* I have good instincts as a quilter, okay? I have an eye for fabrics and colors, and I love playing with scale and dreaming up creative ways to quilt my projects. I just mostly suck at the execution. I TRY to cut accurately, but my rulers tend to slip and slide more than the average bear's. I TRY for the perfect 1/4" seam, but it turns out that there is a break in the space/time continuum right where my presser foot goes. And like a lot of other modern quilters, I have kids; this means that I have memorized the saying, "The perfect is the enemy of the good," and I've broadly interpreted that to go with the good enough.

You likely already know the well-circulated tricks to more accurate piecing ([glue basting](#), [positioning pins](#), and the like). The little hack I've learned is nowhere as universally applicable or as good as these techniques, if you're already using them. But it takes literally no time at all and is better than the default setting. So in order to be useful, your project must involve the following:

- One piece with points at the seam line
- One solid piece to attach to it

The pattern I used for this technique was Jaybird's "Night Sky" quilt. This block has a *ton* of diamonds and triangles, and there are lots of opportunities for points to go wonky. After I pieced together the star itself, each block had a strip of background fabric as the border. Make the seam allowance too wide, and it would cut the corner off the star:

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Fabric intersection to the *outside* of where the two seams meet; points cut off. Boo.

Make it too narrow, and the star points would be too short (or at inconsistent lengths):

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Fabric intersection to the *inside* of the seam; points not long enough. Hiss.

So what should we do here? Here's what I have done in the past, which is likely what a lot of new quilters do: slap the solid strip on top of the pieced strip, run it through the machine at 1/4", and pray for the best! It's easy, right? You just send that puppy on through at full speed, and if you've done your work right and crossed your fingers and eyeballs it should all turn out beautifully. But when you're Lauren Lang, or someone else with my degree of Lauren Luck™, your points will look like crap. Why? *Because you can't see what you're doing.*

**So here's what you need to do when you're creating points:** turn your fabric over. Put the solid fabric on the back as you're stitching. Doing this will allow you to see and *very slightly* adjust your seam line so that you can hit your fabric "intersections" at just the right spot. Behold:

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You will, lazy bones, have to feed your open seams carefully through the machine so as not to stitch them down the wrong way, but it's a small price to pay for better points overall. And you don't even need any glue or pins, which is a huge time-saver. Happy stitching!

**i** It might be that you read this and determine that the last three minutes has been a complete waste of your time. Doesn't everyone already sew like this ANYWAY? The answer is no. In fact, most of the time people like myself are taught that it doesn't matter which side of the fabric is up, and so we probably choose the path of least resistance [don't sew right over open seams] when making the decision. And even if we don't and it's completely arbitrary, there's still statistically 50% of us who are sewing seam-side down.

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*Michele Evans*

May 21, 2015 at 9:19 pm (6 years ago)

i think that I could learn a lot from you and enjoy every bit of it!! Your writing style is quirky, honest and entertaining!! All I have to figure out is how to follow you!!

*admin*

May 21, 2015 at 10:20 pm (6 years ago)

Thanks, Michele! I'm rightsidestogether on FB and IG — those are the best ways to stay up to date on the most recent posts.