

# Anjeanette Klinder

Contemporary Quilting and Designs

[About me](#)

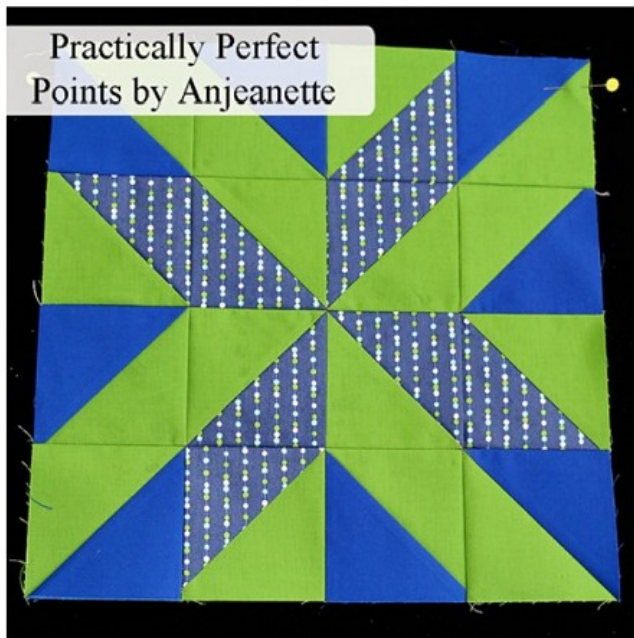
[Errata](#)



## A little tutorial on making practically perfect points in quilt blocks

🕒 March 4, 2014 📌 [back to basics](#), [Quilting basics](#), [Tutorial](#)

Ok so there is no doubt, I love making pretty points when sewing my blocks together. I LOVE to match up my seams as nicely as I can. It makes me all excited when I do this and then look at the nice points and matched seams.



When I say this and then explain how I do this, you may think I'm a little OCD or particular. But really, nothing can be further from the truth. IRL you would not find me OCD at all. But for some reason, it makes my insides all a flutter when I make a nice point and match my seams.

It isn't that I've always been able to do this. And frankly, I don't always succeed. But when I do, my heart goes pitter pat and the butterflies make me a little dizzy with happiness.

When I was a little girl, my quilting mostly consisted of making plain patchwork and then tying them off. No "quilting" per se. I also did more clothing construction than quilt making. So my sewing start is that of a different nature than just starting out quilting in the sense that I do now.



 [Anjeanette Klinder](#)

[A Varsity Panel Quilt](#)

[Sweet Baby Boy Building Blocks quilt](#)

[Turnabout Patchwork Book Cross Block Mini Quilt](#)

[Triskeles Quilt with In Bloom Fabric from Riley Blake](#)

[Riley Blake has Liberty Quilting Cottons and I got to play with them.](#)

[Crisscross Quilt Tutorial for The Hand Picked Collection from Riley Blake](#)

[Hey Mister! A quilt for Henry](#)

[Way Up North Mini Quilt](#)

[Utility-Style Quilts for Everyday Living Blog Tour and Book Giveaway!](#)

[Bountiful Holiday Blog Hop](#)

Search ...

I know when I first really took a real dive into quilting as I do now, my seams were not perfectly matched and my points were poo. I mean real poo. And don't get me wrong, sometimes they are still real poo. And that makes me unhappy. I don't like poo. I like pretty, heart fluttering, practically perfect points.

Anyway, I thought I'd share some of my tips that I've learned along the way. I didn't have someone show these to me. They are just things that I trial and error have taught me. Maybe you already know how to do this. Maybe your seams and points are already perfect. Maybe you have another method that works better for you. That's ok. Let's call this "The Anjeanette way of putting seams together and matching points." Ok? There are a whole lotta words about to happen with some pictures thrown in. I suggest reading through it all once before you try it, because peppered throughout is a lot of back story to why I do it the way I do.

So lets start with a row of four half square triangles put together. I'm working on my block for this week's [Layer Cake Sampler Quilt Along](#) that my sweet friend [Amanda of Material Girl](#) is hosting. I thought I'd take pictures along the way to share. Your blocks may look different but this is the basic method I use each time I am sewing blocks and even quilt tops together. Just adjust for your specific pattern. I do this before I press my seams for each row.

A few things first:

**Starch, steam or sizing.** I like to starch/steam or use sizing (whatever your preference is here) BEFORE I cut my fabric out. If I starch before, I can usually successfully starch during the construction as well. If I don't starch before, and I decide to starch during the construction, I find that sometimes it can really mess with my sizing and that just isn't fun when you end up with different sized blocks. Staying consistent during the entire process, makes a huge difference in my accuracy. \*I'm going to say this again and again.

**Rulers, Mats and Rotary Cutters.** I use the same ruler, mats and rotary cutter for the whole process. If I'm going to change anything, I change it before I start, if I can help it. If you use the marking on your cutting mats, they may be marked differently on different mats and that can account for a difference in your sewing. Rulers and rotary cutters are the same way. Of course, sometimes you just have to change out your blade during the process. It happens, but I'd rather do that before I start, if possible.

**Needle Down.** I think this and the automatic cutting feature on my machine are worth their weight in gold. I always use needle down. If I have to stop for any reason, I think it keeps my fabric from moving around. Love this feature. If you don't have it, and I didn't for over 10 years of sewing, just try to leave your needle down if you stop during your sewing while the fabric is still under the presser foot and you are still working on that seam. I used to use my wheel on the right of my machine more than anything else before I got my current machine with the needle down feature.

**1/4" foot.** If you have a 1/4" foot, use it. If you don't, learn how to get that accurate 1/4" seam. There are lots of tutorials on how to do this.

**Seam Ripper.** Become best friends with your seam ripper. If you don't like it, find one you do like. Scratch that, find one you love. I believe that your seam ripper should be your best friend. You should not hate it, you should really love it. There are all kinds of really cool seam rippers on the market. If I have just sewn something and I see a big mistake, I don't understand pressing on. It isn't going to get better as you go. If it is something that will be taken care of in the seam allowance, or if it is close, I may leave it. But if you have just stitched something wrong, say your end is totally wonky, it isn't going to get better. Actually, it could end up messing up your whole block or quilt. What a waste, when undoing a few stitches or a row of stitches just may save the whole thing.

**Skinny/Thin Pins** This one is one that really drives me crazy. I use the thinnest pins I can find. I have found that using the flower head pins you usually find in shops that are designated for quilting, to be really thick. I think shoving something big like that into my fabric can distort the fabric and therefore make my sewing off. Who wants that? Yes, the thinner pins do give and bend more, but they seem to work better for me. I love my thin pins. I

Charm Leaf Tutorial



My favorite way to stitch EPP together



Oakshott Placemat Tutorial



Practically Perfect Points Tutorial



even have gotten to know the “quirks” of some of them. I have one that the blue bead head was put on crooked. Every time I use it, it makes me smile. I love my pins.

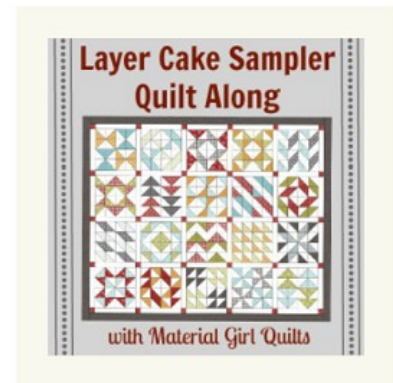
Ok now let's evaluate our rows.

The first thing I do is I take two rows that I'm going to sew together. I look at them along the line I am going to sew them together. I look at how many points they each have and place a priority on each intersection. Based on the priorities, I will put the row with the most priorities on top. For example, sometimes there are less points on one row, sometimes there are the same number. I look at how many of the points have just a single HST and how many have two. The more fabrics at each intersection, the bulkier it is going to be. I think about how I want to press my fabric to make each seam lay the nicest. My first preference would be to nestle my seams. That means to press the seams of one row to one side and the next row to the opposite side. For example, the top row would all have the seams pressed to the right, and the next row all to the left. That is the easiest. When the seams of each row come together, they nestle nicely and almost lock into place. It is the most simple for me to match up this way. Sometimes this just doesn't make sense. Sometimes you have two HST blocks that come together at the same intersection in one row, for example. This is four fabrics that are going to compete at the intersection from just that one row. In this instance, I would opt to press that seam of that row, open on both rows.

I go about looking at all the intersections of all my rows and decide how to press them. Then I press based on what I've decided about my intersections and priorities. Don't push your iron back and forth or you will get a mess under it. If you didn't use starch before you started cutting your blocks, I would not use it now. Usually I am pressing my seams in alternating directions for each row for less bulky seams, and pressing open large/bulky seams. I press my rows first with the right side facing up on the pressing board. I gently press the seam the direction I want it to go. Remember not to push the fabric because you don't want to distort it.

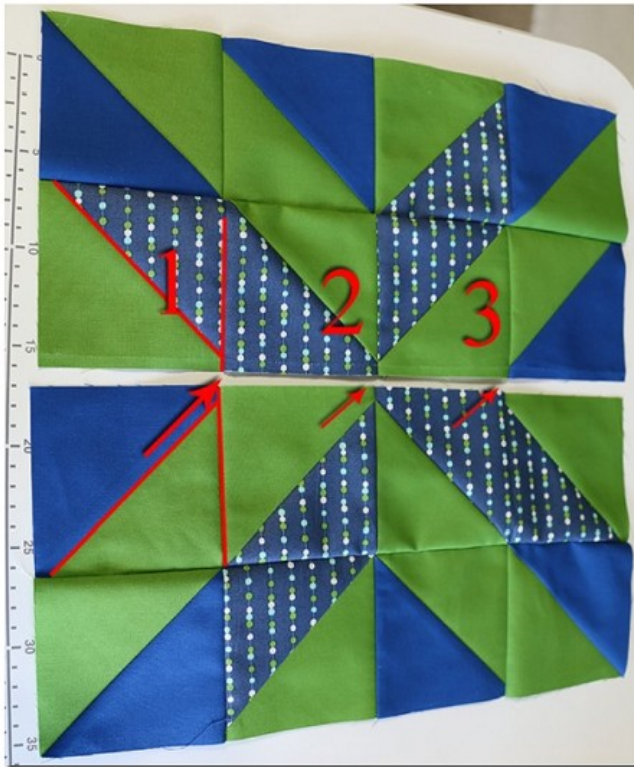
I go back to my sewing machine and I determine how many points are in each row. I'm talking about where the rows are going to be sewn together now. I like to put the intersections that are going to need the most care, on top when sewing so that I can make sure they are being sewn the best way possible.

For these rows, I've determined there are 3 intersections on the top and bottom row. I've put a red 1, 2, and 3 in the picture to signify each intersection. Pretty simple as there were four squares making this row. Of these three intersections the set up for this block has both rows with the first intersection with one HST coming together on the left side of both HST. These HSTs will go in the same direction when they are stitched together. The second intersection both layers have two HST coming together at the intersection. The third intersection is a reverse of the first. Based on my quick review of my priorities for seams, I've determined it doesn't matter which of these goes on top as they are all the same. Had I had some solid squares for example, in one of the rows instead of HST, that would make me put that row on the bottom.

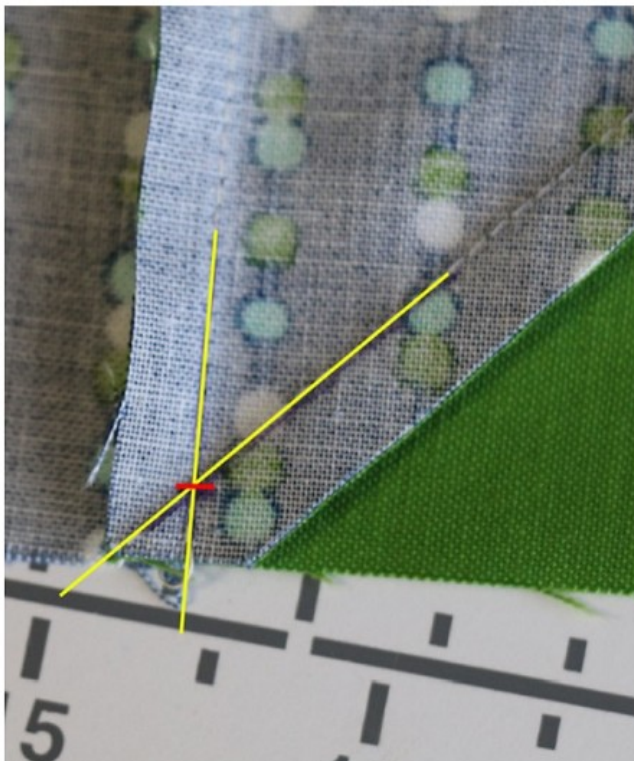


Cutting Corners with Riley Blake Designs

Follow me on [bloglovin'](#)



Now that you are this far, let's start to sew these two perfectly paired rows together. Wait! Not so fast. There are a few things you want to remember as you sew. You can play around with this part until it works best for you, but as a general rule, I always sew about two threads to the right of the points. When you open up your two or more layers of fabric, you are adding a little bit of bulk to your seam. If you sew directly on the top of your points, they are going to get sucked into the depths of your seam. I like to lay out my rows to be sewn and make sure I can see the tips of the points. If I can't, I will mark the point with something like a disappearing FriXion pen at the very tip so that I know where they are as I am sewing. Also, remember to watch your fabric feeding into the sewing machine. You want to make sure both layers of the fabric are aligned at the edge. If the bottom layer moves, you are going to have a wavy seam.



To match your rows: Take a pin and run it through the very tip of the left point on the first seam intersection. Quickly flip the row over and look from the right side to make sure you did indeed get the tip of the point.



With right sides of the rows together, run the pin through the very tip of the coordinating point from the other row, and push the pin all the way in. Just straight in.



It is a place holder right now, just keeping your points together not keeping the rows securely together. Also, your fabric should be lining up at about the same place on the top. If it isn't, you either made a cutting or a sewing error. At this point, they should be lining up pretty well i.e.  $> 1/8$  of an inch or less difference here.

Take a pin and do the same thing on the the third intersection. Look on the other side or right side of the fabric to make sure the pin is at the tip of the point.



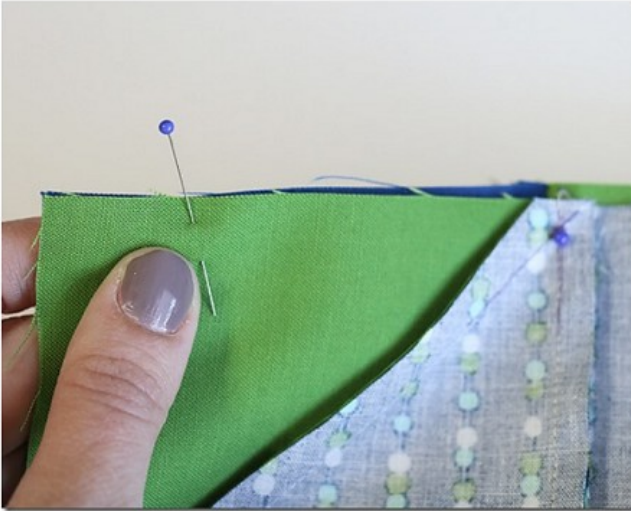
Now run the pin through the tip of the other row.



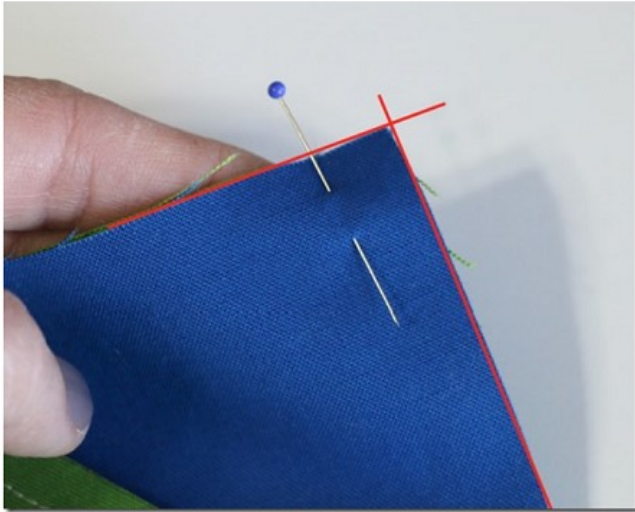


*If any of your intersection only have one side with a point and the other coordinating seam with no points, I first run the pin through the tip of the top point and then just pin the seam intersection to match the seams , making sure the top of the fabric from both rows are level with each other. If your seams are pressed alternately, you can nestle them together tightly and just pin them together. If your seams were open, you are going to want to make sure the pin goes directly through both the seams. I usually pin before the intersection and sometimes after depending. But always before.*

Now take your left ends of the rows. Making sure the outside edges match up, pin both layers together. Since this is where you are going to start to sew, place the pin down about an inch instead of at the very end.

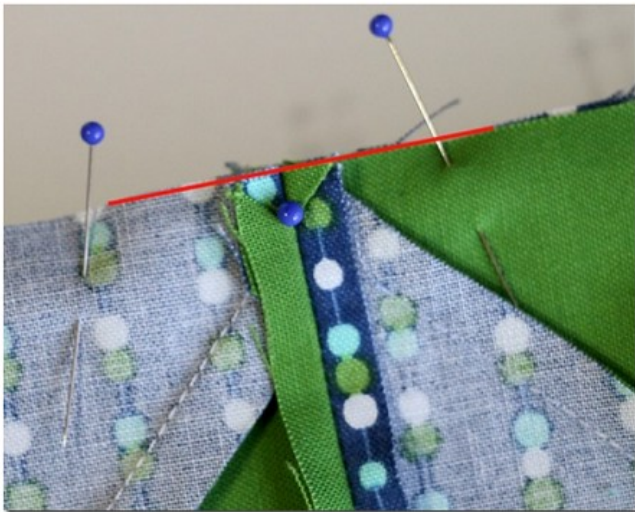


On your right end of the rows, match the outside edges and pin both layers together at the end.



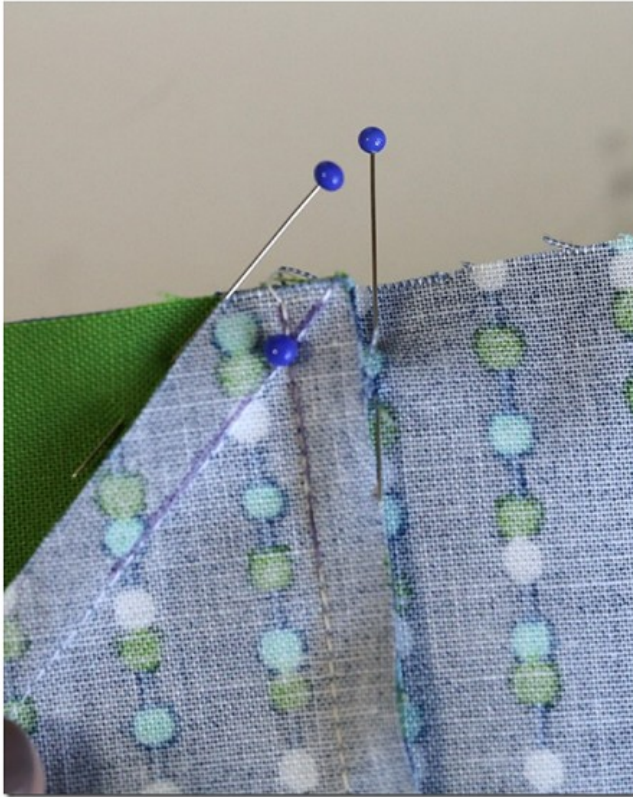
I always match my intersections first then my ends. These are the important things that are going to make the block or quilt off. Between the intersections and ends you can ease in a tiny bit of variance by pulling the fabric taught as you sew.

Now that you have these parts pinned, you will want to secure the intersections. We only pushed a pin straight through and there is nothing really keeping it there. Making sure the pin is running straight in, I put a pin to both the right and left side of the intersection. As long as you weren't moving your fabric around when you were putting the pins in, this should be good.





This is how I pin to both sides of a pressed open seam.



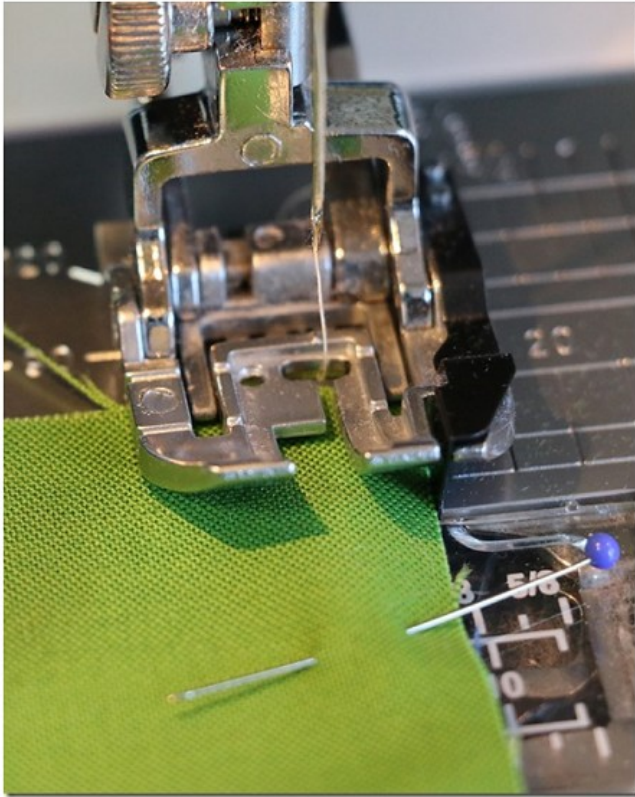
This is how I pin both sides of a point intersection of seams that are pressed alternately. I decided to pin on the left side along the HST line but you could run your pin straight if that works for you. Both ways though, I'm pinning fairly close to the intersection.

I don't just shove a pin into the intersection points, fold it back and push it back out the bottom. Instead push a pin straight through and then stabilize on both sides because when you put a pin into two layers of fabric, you kind of bend the fabric around the pin to get the pin to run in the top and out again at the bottom of the pin. This almost always screws up my points by moving the bottom layer of fabric out of line. Hopefully the pictures will help clarify what I'm talking about here.

You can choose to pin between the blocks too. As a general rule, if the size of the squares are more than say 4 or 5 inches wide, I would secure a pin in the middle. You could also just move from intersection to intersection and hold the fabric taught while you sew. The thing you want to watch is that both layers of the fabric on the right side, going into the machine, are matched up at the right side all the way to the next intersection.

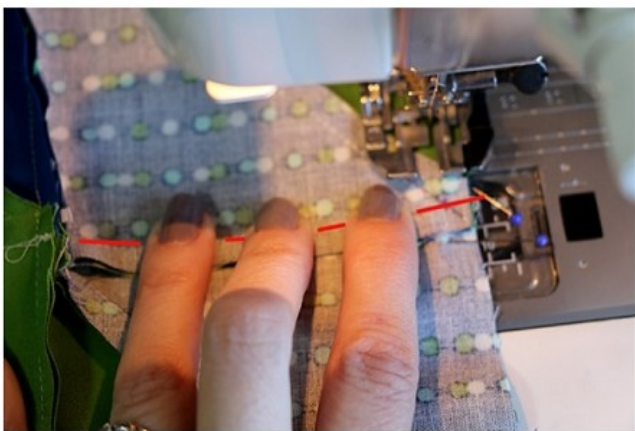
That seems like a whole lotta words just to describe how to get your rows ready to sew. It only takes a minute at most to do all of this. And in my opinion, it makes all the difference in the world.

NOW we can start to sew. I always like to start each row by lifting the presser foot, placing the fabric down and then lowering the foot onto the fabric.

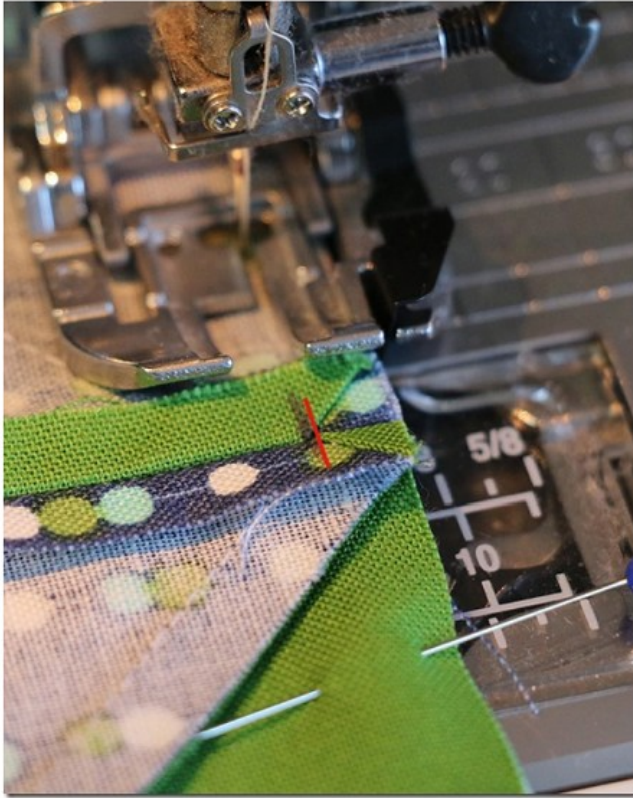


I do this even if I am chain stitching instead of just feeding the next row right into the lowered foot. Sometimes feeding the fabric through a lowered foot will move one of the layers just enough that it makes the ends out of alignment. Just raise and lower your foot before starting to sew. As you sew, take the pins out just before you get to them. I prefer not to sew over them, but I sometimes do if I am sewing very slowly. With these thin pins that can bend them. So 99% of the time, I take my pins out just before they get to the presser foot.

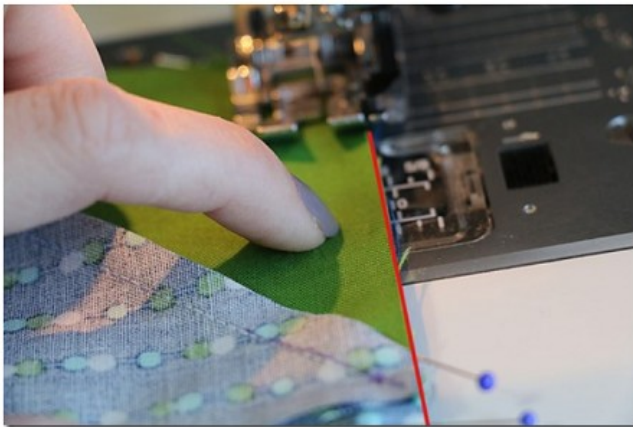
As you are sewing the rows together also think about the way the seams coming under the presser foot are pressed. If they are pressed in alternating ways, I hold my fingers right on the seam and make sure I can feel both the seams nestled tightly as I proceed to sew the rows. I'm not pressing down enough to hold the fabric from moving. But I am using the seams being locked and guiding it together with my fingers. If you are joining two seams that have been pressed open, you can still feel if the seams are matching up. Also, you don't want your bottom seam to flip in the opposite direction of the way you have pressed. Holding your fingers over the intersecting seams just helps ensure your seams stay pressed the correct way as you are sewing your rows together.



As you get to a point or intersection, make sure to sew to the right of the point. This is where it is helpful to have a pen marking to make sure you know exactly where the tip is. Sew about two threads over to the right of the pen marking.



As you are sewing the entire length of the seam, make sure the right side of the fabric is moving at the same point under the presser foot.



If you sew a wavy line now, you are going to get a wavy seam. Oftentimes, you will end up with a bubble or nipple at your intersections. This is because when you got to the bulk of the intersection, you let the fabric drift away from your 1/4" mark too much to the left.

Take it slow. If you have issues with a bulky intersection, it may help to sew to the intersection from one direction and then turn the whole piece around and sew the rest from the other direction and through the intersection.

When you have stitched the whole row together, open it up and see what your intersections look like.



Make sure your points are present (not cut off) and your intersections are matching up nicely. If they are not, do not press your seam. This is the part where you want to bring in your best friend the seam ripper out. I'm not kidding. If you only have one intersection or point that is off, you can just unstash about 1/2" before and 1/2" after the intersection. If your whole row is off, take the whole row out and try it again. The good news is that if you have done all I have spelled out, you are usually only going to have one place where the alignment is off. Unstitch that one intersection enough that you can make any adjustment needed, pin it again the way I've described, taking note of how it was off before and making an adjustment to correct that, and sew that seam once again.

If your points and intersections are all nice and pretty, this is the part where you can shout your "Hallelujahs" and press the seam.

If I have stitched together a bunch of points and bulky intersections, I am going to press my seams open. This is a matter of preference. You are going to have people that swear by another way. This is what works for me. Remember that while you are pressing the seams open, you don't want to make the rest of your seams all folded and wonky. You want them to stay where they are so that they lay nicely while you quilt your quilt. This kind of reminds me of how I learned to cross stitch. My Mom always said the back should be as pretty and orderly as the front.

Since I learned to sew clothing first, I always set my seams by pressing them closed first.

I am going to press my seams open since they were kinda bulky. I don't want to burn my fingers and have found the wood piece that accompanied my Dresden plate template works well for pressing seams open.



It has a point that helps me open them up and then I use it in front of the iron in place of

my fingers. Also, because it is wood it doesn't melt and it doesn't conduct the heat of the iron onto my fingers. When I am pressing my seams open, I use the front part of my iron down the length of the seam. Once I have gone down the length, then I use the whole iron to press it straight down. I will press the length of all my seams for the block then turn it over and give it one more press from the top.



Sometimes when I am pressing heavy seams open or to the side, they don't want to play nice. At that point I may use some starch to coerce them to do what I want. I would not use anything like this at this point if I did not use it before cutting my fabric though because of the sizing issues I've encountered in the past. Sometimes I will press up to a bulky point, turn the block around and press from the other direction to the same bulky point to get the final press.

Now let's admire your block. If you matched the ends of each row before you stitched them, you shouldn't have any trimming aside from threads at this point. Make sure that your block is indeed the size it should be at this point. It is silly to combine blocks of different sizes at this point if you want your quilt to behave nicely. If they are off or different sizes now, they are going to make your quilt off.



I absolutely believe that if you are careful to cut your initial squares or shapes, you sew carefully and you square up your blocks after each block is made, it makes putting the blocks together a breeze. You know they are going to match up nicely.

Let's admire our points. Practically Perfect. I call this good enough.



Practically Perfect! I'm happy with this.



Score! Perfect!



And all together the block is practically perfect. I call these pretty points.



I put my blocks together into a quilt top the same way I've described for putting a single block together.

I hope this helps. Again, this is what works for me. Please feel free to tell me if you found something that works better for you. I'm always open to learning or trying something new. This did contain a lot of detail and tons of words. But it really is just keeping most of these things in your mind as you sew. The pinning takes seconds and it all adds up to a better end result. It isn't hard and it doesn't take long, and the pay off is practically perfect.

← I'm participating in a Layer Cake Sampler Quilt Along, join in too!  
Oakshott Tote for Sew Mama Sew →

### 23 thoughts on "A little tutorial on making practically perfect points in quilt blocks"



March 4, 2014 at 1:18 pm

Thanks for such a fantastic and helpful post. I have no excuse for poo points now!

Catherine @  
Knotted  
Cotton



March 4, 2014 at 1:51 pm

Yay for not poo points! Glad you liked the post. Thanks for taking the time to leave a comment too! No poo for you.

★  
Anjeanette



Katy(LethargicLass)

March 4, 2014 at 5:31 pm

That was amazingly and helpfully thorough! I love hearing how different people do things as sometimes a little twerk to my own style makes all the difference!



★  
Anjeanette

March 4, 2014 at 6:11 pm

Sweet! I'm glad you thought it was helpful! Thanks for taking the time to leave a comment. I often wonder anyone finds these things helpful. I LOVE learning from others too.

Pingback: [Tutorial: Pretty points pieced block | Quilting | CraftGossip.com](#)



Regina

March 5, 2014 at 3:04 am

😊 I love how you describe things! Many of these are things I have thought about in my head, but never so clearly! Nicely done!



★  
Anjeanette

March 6, 2014 at 5:03 pm

Aaah, I was just thinking about the process and thought I'd share. Thanks Regina!



Jessie Aller

March 5, 2014 at 5:44 am

So much fun to read! I love process posts. Thanks Anjeanette!



★  
Anjeanette

March 6, 2014 at 5:02 pm

Glad you liked it Jessie!



Amanda

March 5, 2014 at 3:19 pm

Wonderful post Anjeanette! And I agree, I'm not a fan of poo either 😊



★  
Anjeanette

March 6, 2014 at 5:01 pm

No one likes poo points;) )





Claudia W.  
Small

March 8, 2014 at 2:06 am

I have been cussing and pulling my hair out, pledging never to sew again because of my seams. I was told to use starch which I dutifully did until I realized after cutting all my pieces, they were off. I couldn't figure it out until I realized I was starching AFTER I'd cut the fabric, right before I sewed the pieces together. Nothing ever lined up, everything was wonky, and I was so disappointed! This is something I've needed for a long time. Thank you so much for this excellent, descriptive tutorial!



★  
Anjeanette

March 10, 2014 at 6:42 pm

It took me a while to figure that one out. The starch or even steam can make the fabric shrink. I just make sure not to starch or steam unless I started with it before I cut my fabric. So glad this helped.

Pingback: [Layer Cake Sampler QAL Week 5 {Blocks 9 & 10} | Material Girl Quilts](#)



Becky

March 22, 2014 at 12:27 pm

I love this tutorial. I am giving this a try as I always sew my points first and then the rest of the block. I am trying your method and hope it works. Loving the Layer Cake Sampler as I am getting lots of practice is sewing these points! Great Job!!



★  
Anjeanette

March 27, 2014 at 12:20 am

Yay! I am so glad you liked it Becky. Yes, the Layer Cake Sampler is a good excuse to practice all these points. I can't wait to have my quilt top all together!



Carole M

May 2, 2014 at 1:49 pm

I know this post was like 2 months ago, but can you tell me more about starching your fabric before you start? Do you just spray it all down and iron it before starting cutting? It keeps it from warping?



★  
Anjeanette

May 2, 2014 at 6:33 pm

Yes, I like to spray a light layer on all the fabric first. I like starch like faultless because I can pick it up almost anywhere. But I also play with other kinds. I think my iron gets less gunky with faultless. But I've heard great things about other brands too like Mary Ellen's. I press it after starch. The starch usually shrinks it just a bit. Then I cut. I would never starch after I've cut...until I get to the end. If it is all put together and I haven't starched yet, I'm ok to starch then.

Does that help?



May 3, 2014 at 8:41 am

So much detail! Thanks for showing us how you make your Practically Perfect Points!

Mara



May 7, 2014 at 8:19 am

Wow, I've bookmarked this to refer to later! I have a thing for pins too, and I appreciate this post.

Lizzie

Pingback: [My favorite way to stitch EPP together | Anjeanette Klinder](#)



August 3, 2014 at 7:37 pm

This is awesome. I've been looking for help on how to press bulky intersections where an odd number of seams come together. I like your descriptions and photos. Any plans to illustrate pressing patterns on other blocks? I can always send a photo on the one that I've been struggling with. 😊

Barbara



August 8, 2014 at 1:54 am

Yes, of course, send me a picture and I'll give my suggestions.



Anjeanette

*Comments are closed.*

Search ...

### Archives

- February 2019
- January 2019
- November 2018
- October 2018
- July 2018
- December 2017
- November 2017
- September 2017

### Recent Posts

- [A Varsity Panel Quilt](#)
- [Sweet Baby Boy Building Blocks quilt](#)
- [Turnabout Patchwork Book Cross Block Mini Quilt](#)
- [Triskeles Quilt with In Bloom Fabric from Riley Blake](#)
- [Riley Blake has Liberty Quilting Cottons and I got to play with them.](#)

### Categories

### Recent Comments

- [Varsity – Soccer Game Quilt – Riley Blake Designs](#) on [A Varsity Panel Quilt](#)
- [Sweet Baby Boy – Building Blocks Quilt – Riley Blake Designs](#) on [Sweet Baby Boy Building Blocks quilt](#)
- [Lisa](#) on [Sweet Baby Boy Building Blocks quilt](#)
- [Rochelle Summers](#) on [Turnabout Patchwork Book Cross Block Mini Quilt](#)
- [v dale](#) on [Turnabout Patchwork Book Cross Block Mini Quilt](#)

August 2017  
April 2017  
March 2017  
July 2016  
June 2016  
April 2016  
February 2016  
September 2015  
August 2015  
June 2015  
January 2015  
October 2014  
September 2014  
July 2014  
June 2014  
May 2014  
April 2014  
March 2014  
February 2014  
December 2013  
November 2013  
October 2013  
September 2013  
August 2013  
July 2013  
June 2013  
May 2013  
April 2013  
March 2013  
February 2013  
January 2013  
December 2012  
November 2012  
October 2012  
September 2012  
August 2012  
July 2012  
June 2012  
April 2012  
March 2012  
February 2012  
January 2012  
October 2011  
September 2011  
June 2011  
May 2011  
April 2011  
March 2011

back to basics  
Betz White  
birthday party  
Bloghop  
Crochet  
EPP  
Felt  
Food by Anjeanette  
freezer paper stencil  
fussy cutting  
JafTex  
mini quilt  
Oakshott  
Quilting basics  
Riley Blake Designs  
Sew Mama Sew  
traditions  
Tutorial  
Uncategorized

## Meta

Log in  
Entries [RSS](#)  
Comments [RSS](#)  
[WordPress.org](#)

## Anjeanette Klinder

A Varsity Panel Quilt *Anjeanette*  
Sweet Baby Boy Building Blocks quilt *Anjeanette*  
Turnabout Patchwork Book  
Cross Block Mini Quilt *Anjeanette*  
Triskeles Quilt with In Bloom  
Fabric from Riley Blake *Anjeanette*  
Riley Blake has Liberty Quilting Cottons and I got to play with them. *Anjeanette*  
Crisscross Quilt Tutorial for The Hand Picked Collection from Riley Blake *Anjeanette*  
Hey Mister! A quilt for Henry *Anjeanette*  
Way Up North Mini Quilt *Anjeanette*  
Utility-Style Quilts for Everyday Living Blog Tour and Book Giveaway! *Anjeanette*  
Bountiful Holiday Blog Hop *Anjeanette*

February 2011

January 2011

December 2010

Proudly powered by WordPress