

## **Nano Strip Piecing Method by Jean M. Sredl**

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There are many methods for this type of narrow strip piecing. Kathleen Loomis and Ricky Tims are two examples amongst others. My method is a combination of steps from many other quilters with my own technique mixed in. It works consistently for me and gets great results. There are two variations I use, straight and wonky

Fabric choice: For best results choose a tightly woven fabric such as batik for strips. The base fabric should be many values darker than the strip fabric. Please Note the seams will show through if you use dark strips on a light fabric. It is possible to line the fabric but the amount of work is not worth the results. (Ask me how I know)

Supplies:

Background fabric/s

Strip fabrics

Spray starch

Rotary cutter, long ruler and mat

Thread that matches strip fabric

Sewing machine with edge stitching foot & variable needle positions (helpful but optional)

Light tear-away stabilizer

Fine gauge pins if desired

Fabric Preparation

Heavily starch both your background and strip fabrics. I usually use 3 coats

Decide the width of your strips – cut strips fabric into 3/8 inch width to minimize fabric

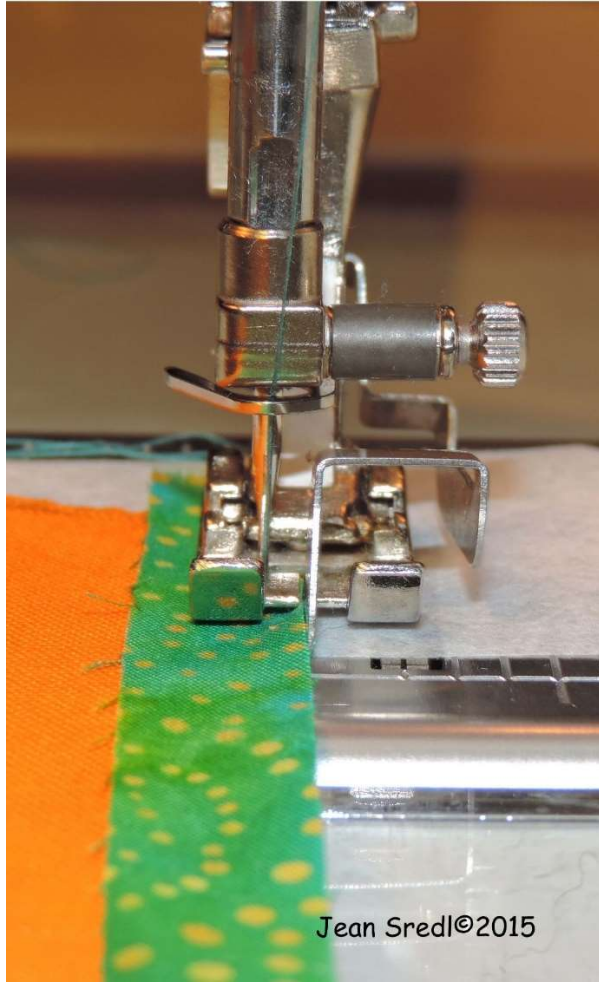
Cut strips along weft or width of fabric to avoid stretching

Precut strips. It takes a lot of strips!

Mark the top bottom/front of your background piece (or you'll mix it up)

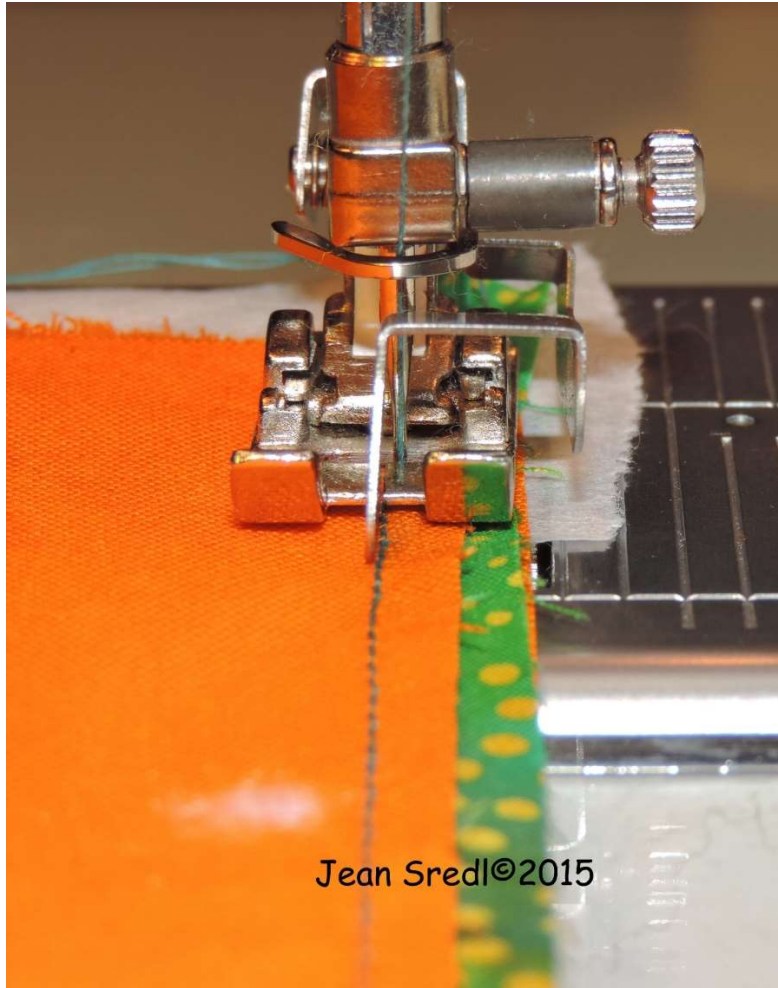
Precise Method Assembly

1. Begin cutting your background fabric 1 ½ inches from the bottom end for horizontal strips or side end for vertical strips. Cut one at a time
2. With a piece of stabilizer under your fabric, right sides together set your needle position to 3/16 between ¼ & 1/8. I use .5 width. You can pin if desired (Fig 1)



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3. Set against edge or presser foot and sew slowly on the right side for an exact seam allowance. Sew with a short stitch length.
4. Do not take your eyes off the seam or it will wobble
5. Carefully press seams away from you. All seams must be in the same direction
6. Turn over pieced strip and place right sides together onto background fabric. Make sure the face up and top to bottom directions are correct.
7. Place the blade of the edge stitching foot tightly against the left side of your stitching line. This is why thread should match your strips. You will not be able to easily see the thread if it matches the background. Move your needle position to the desired width. I use .4 to get a strip width of less than 1/16 of an inch (Fig 2).



8. Again carefully press seams in the same direction. Check the front to be certain you have pressed evenly for a consistent width of strip. Sometimes pressing can even out a wonky seam. Your strip should be about 3-4 thread widths wide.
9. Repeat cutting, piecing and pressing. Careful pressing of all seam allowances in the same direction is the key for a flat quilt top. I vary the width of strips and background fabric cuts for a nicer organic look. Or you can try to cut exactly the same width strips for a grid look.

**Variations:**

Try cross cutting and piecing at perpendicular, angle or on the true bias for a unique look.

Use a standard foot and eyeball each seam for a wonky look. Just a tiny difference in seam allowance width shows up from the front. I love the look Or ask "What if?"

## **Wonky Method**

Use a standard or quarter inch foot and eyeball both seam allowances varying the widths & stitch fast. This causes lots of wobbling for a great finished look. Keep the cut strips and background fabric square.

## **Quilting:**

Add a thin batting if desired and backing fabric and quilt in parallel lines in the background fabric. Leave as is or use as a background for other art quilting techniques

## **Matchstick quilting:**

Yes you can use a walking foot but try the same technique and set your edge stitching foot against the previous quilting line. The initial quilting line must be absolutely squared off, or each additional line will increase the error.

Here are examples of quilts using this technique.



Midnight Rain – Art Quilt Elements



Suffer the Little Children  
SAQA – Guns: Loaded  
Conversations



Thunderstorm on the Illinois  
Prairie SAQA multi-regional  
Deeply Rooted



Prairie Burr Oak II – sold  
Rosemont Horizon Chicago



Autumn Aspens – Quilting  
Arts Magazine



Mushroom Frittata – SAQA  
Food for Thought



The Last Trees – Taiwan  
International Quilt Exhibition