

## Educational Tidbit for September 2024

### HOW TO ACCOMPLISH ERROR-FREE BINDING STRIP JOINTS

Welcome back to Educational Tidbits. Can you believe it is September 2024 already? This month we got a Monday holiday for Labor Day, then Patriot Day (remembering 9/11), and the Autumnal equinox (9/22), marking the beginning of Autumn in week four. I am looking forward those potentially cooler days.

Have you ever experienced sewing binding strips together in the wrong direction when chain piece sewing them end to end? Usually, one only becomes aware of any backwards sewing errors when you take the long continuous strip to the ironing board to begin pressing. This generally happens to me if I am using a solid fabric as my binding and/or I get interrupted some place in the chain piece sewing process. It is no fun! So how do we avoid this problem? I have some pictures to help illustrate my solution.

As I have discussed in earlier tidbits, I use 2-1/2 inch by WOF for binding strips. I do my best to keep all the strips running in the same direction based on the selvages. I lay out the fabric strips with the selvage containing the fabric color legend to the left and the other selvage to the right. Sometimes the right one has white on it, or it has holes and fringe the same color as the fabric.

First, lay out all the cut strips in this parallel configuration, right side up.



Next take the left end of the second strip and using at least 2 pins, pin strip 2 to the right end of the strip 1, placing the fabrics right sides together in this cross configuration.



In the same way, take the left end of strip 3 and pin it to the right end of strip 2.



Again, in the same way, take the left end of strip 4 and pin it to the right end of strip 3.



Finally, repeating the same way, take the left end of strip 5 and pin it to the right end of strip 4. Carry on in this way using all of your strips.



Mark a 45 degree diagonal line on each of the pinned unions from top left to bottom right. I really like the Leonis air erasable pens for marking my fabric. However, I do not mark light binding strips as the marks can show through in the final resultant binding. Use a pressed fold or use diagonal tape to sew the diagonal seams without marking on the fabric. Picture examples of diagonal tape use follow later.



Take the entire strip set to the sewing machine and chain piece all 4 unions, one after another, stitch on the drawn diagonal lines, and remove pins as you sew. Chain piece and do not cut the thread between the sewn joints.

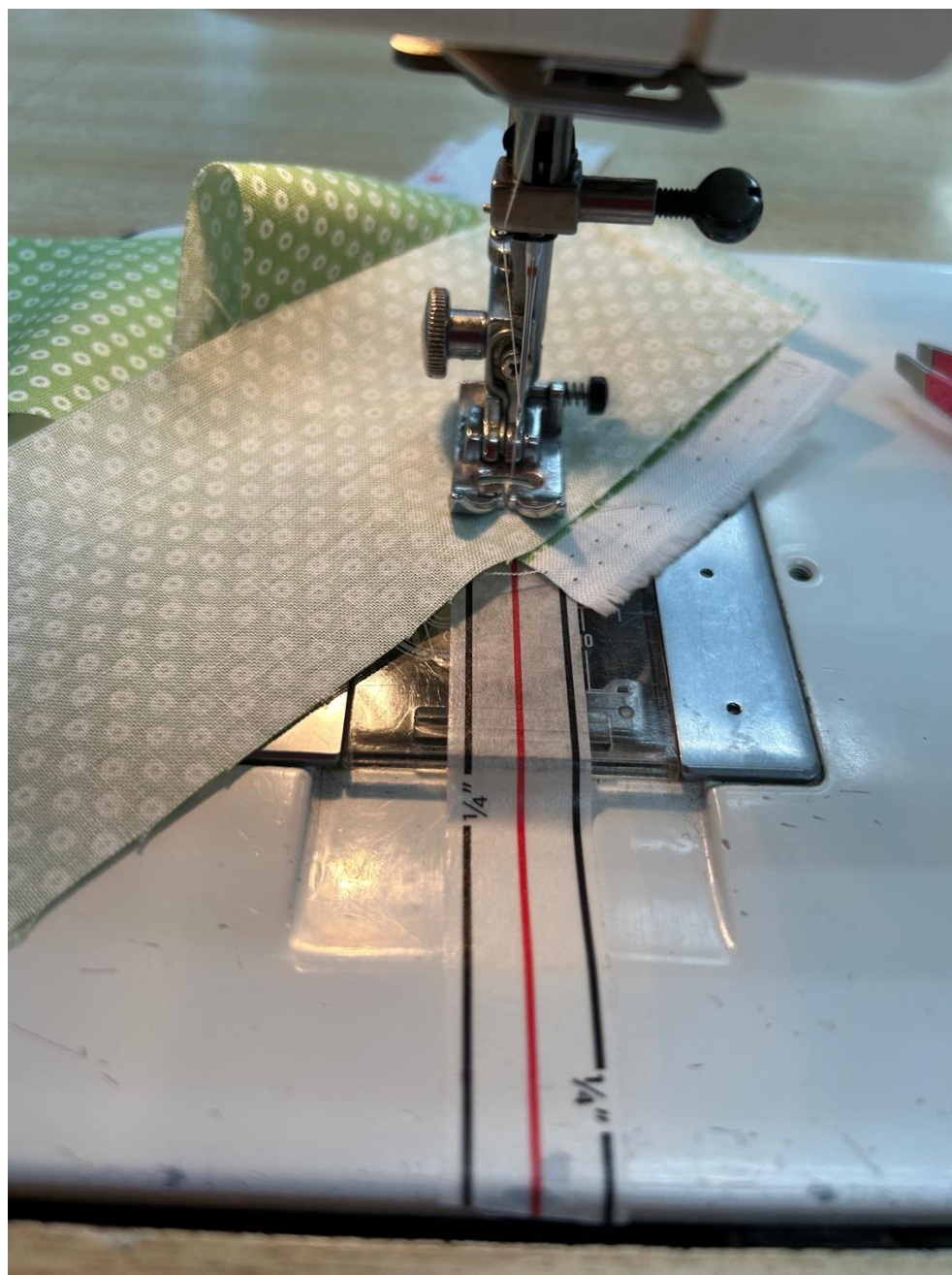
Clip chain pieced connecting threads and open up each strip set to double check that you have sewn correctly. If all is well, trim each seam to  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch and take the entire long strip to the ironing board and press each seam open. Then fold the entire long strip in half horizontally, wrong sides together, and press from one end to the other to create one long 1-1/4 inch pressed binding strip.

As you press the binding, roll up the pressed binding on a cardboard tube to keep the binding well pressed and in an organized fashion until it can be sewn on to the complete your quilt. You can use the cardboard roller from a roll of paper products or create your own tube from a piece of paper or card stock.

Here is a picture of the air erasable pen and a roll of the diagonal tape I use. To find the diagonal tape that worked for me, I purchased this from Fat Quarter Shop. I had ordered some from Amazon, but the tape had such a horrid smell, I could not use it. The off gas made my eyes water and cough. Lesson learned: Make sure to get a good quality diagonal tape, it will be very close to your face.



To use the diagonal tape, tape it down from the needle out toward you, with the red line lined up straight with the needle. As you begin to sew, line up the top of the diagonal at the needle and the end closest to you at the red line on the tape. As you stitch, keep the end closest to you running up along the red line toward the needle.



Here is an example of joining white 2 ½ inch strips without marking on the fabric. These will be used in an inner border, but it uses the same principle as joining binding strips. This sewing machine desk has a black line drawn up to the needle and works the same as the red line on the diagonal tape. As you sew, keep that crossed area on the red line (black line shown here) and you will achieve your 45 degree seam joint without marking on the fabric.



Well, that is it for now. We have been in the process of getting our manor updated with new bathrooms and air conditioning. We have been living in hotel and in borrowed digs. I have continued to sew during this process to keep me sane, unless I am already insane, but how would I know the difference? I am so very thankful for the large tables at the CH4 quilt room. I am using them to trim quilt tops and layout blocks to make quilt tops. Also, the wonderful steam machine iron in that room has made my sewing life easier.

I hope you and your family have a great September. Please let me know if you have an idea for a future tidbit, or something you would like me to research for a future tidbit. Send your idea to my email address found in the Members Only section of the Crazy Quilters web site. Blessings to you and your family. I hope to be back in my own home soon and in October, I plan to have a new tidbit for you on chain piecing half square triangles using the accordion method.

Happy quilting!