

# CHAIN PIECING AND NESTING

FIG. 1

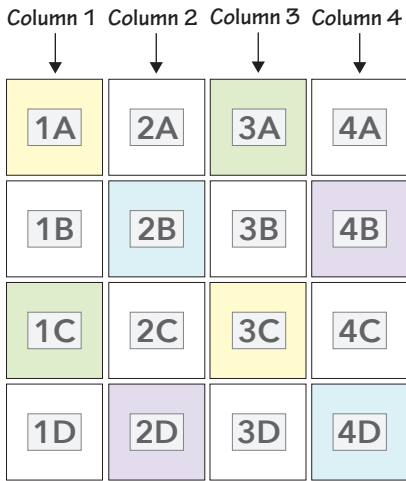


FIG. 1

Lay out your squares in a position that makes you happy...there are no rules. If it's a small project, you can lay your pieces out on a tray or table. If it's a large quilt, go ahead and lay them out on the floor. Label each piece, in columns, with small stickers... 1A, 1B, 1C etc. Use as many numbers and letters as necessary, depending on the amount of columns and rows. Snap a picture with your phone once you're happy with the positioning. This will provide a reference if the pieces get mixed up.

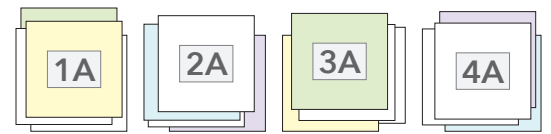
TIP:

Position stickers right side up and somewhat centered on the square of fabric. If your fabric has a directional print, orienting your stickers right side up will remind you which direction to position your squares for sewing. Centering the stickers ensures you won't sew through them.

FIG. 2

Prepare for sewing by stacking your columns in chronological order, with 'A' being on top.

FIG. 2



## JOIN YOUR COLUMNS while CHAIN PIECING

FIG. 3

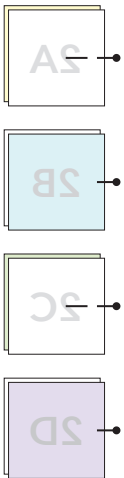


FIG. 4

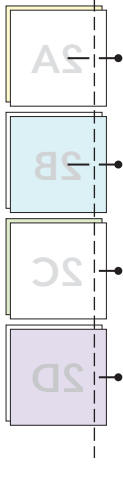
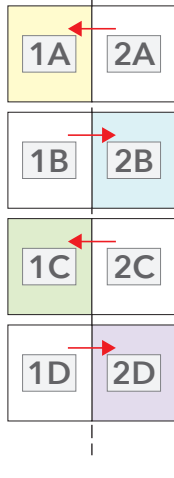


FIG. 5



Following the instructions below and using the illustrations as your guide, start with the first two columns. Set the other columns aside for now.

FIG. 3

Join the **A** squares together, the **B** squares together etc, as follows: Take **1A** and **2A** off the pile. Flip **2A** over on top of **1A**, right sides together, aligning all edges. Pin, as shown, on the right side of the squares. This is a good reminder when you move to the sewing machine because this is the side you'll stitch. If squares get turned around, you'll have a reminder which edge to sew. Repeat with **1B** and **2B**, **1C** and **2C** and so on, until all of the 'letters' in both columns are pinned. Re-stack the column chronologically with **1A-2A** on top. Take the pinned stack to the sewing machine.

FIG. 4

Stitch the top pair (**1A** and **2A**) along the pinned edge, using 1/4" seam allowance. Backstitch at the beginning and the end. When you get to the end, **DO NOT** remove the squares from the sewing machine and **DO NOT** clip the thread. Position the next pair of squares (**1B** and **2B**) directly in front of the pair you just sewed. Continue to sew, adding pairs in numerical order as you go, until the whole column is stitched together in a chain. This is chain stitching. Clip the thread after the last pair is stitched. Remove from the sewing machine. Your pairs are still attached in a chain.

FIG. 5

Press seams in the direction of the arrows, as illustrated, alternating the direction of the press with each pair. Take care not to press over the stickers. Once you have a few rows sewn together, stickers can be removed. Keep the **1A** sticker attached to help you remember the orientation of the quilt.

FIG. 6

Repeat from Figure 3, joining **3A** to the **1A** pair, **3B** to the **1B** pair, etc. Use the illustration as your guide.

FIG. 7

Press in the direction of the arrows. Notice each horizontal row continues to be pressed in the same direction.

FIG. 6

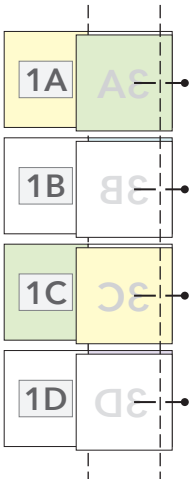


FIG. 7

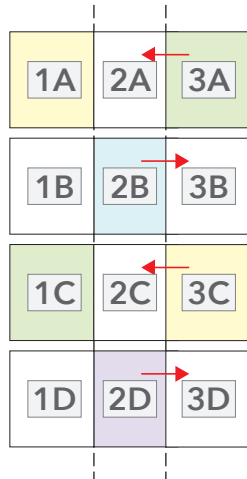


FIG. 8

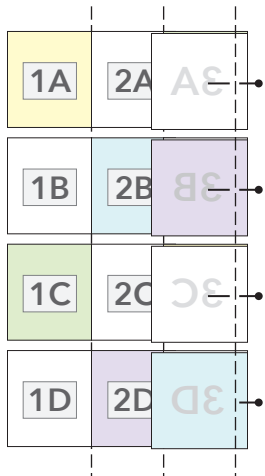


FIG. 9

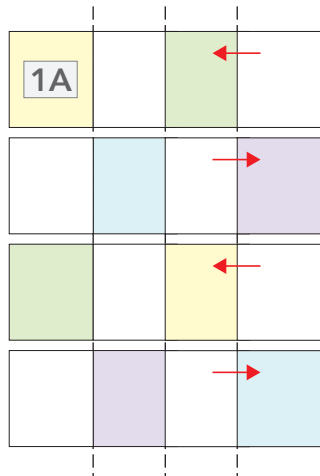


FIG. 8 Repeat until all of your columns are joined in the same manner.

FIG. 9 Two easy ways to remember the pressing direction:  
 1. Odd rows press left and even rows press right.  
 2. All pairs in each horizontal row are pressed in the same direction, so all 'A' blocks in one direction and so on.

TIP: It's likely your quilt has more squares than is illustrated in this sample. Once you have about four columns joined, you can remove the stickers. Leave the sticker on the top left square as a reminder of the orientation of your quilt.

Your columns are complete and your rows are joined by a thread.

**JOIN YOUR ROWS while NESTING**

Nesting seams has two benefits...

1. Reduces bulk where seam allowances meet
2. Enables aligned squares where the points meet.

FIG. 10

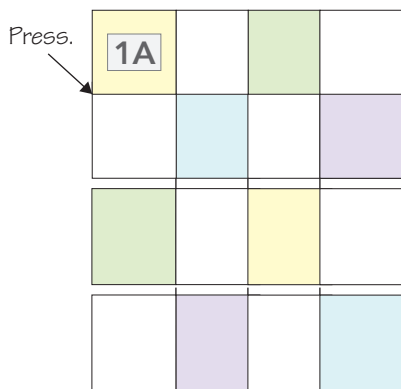
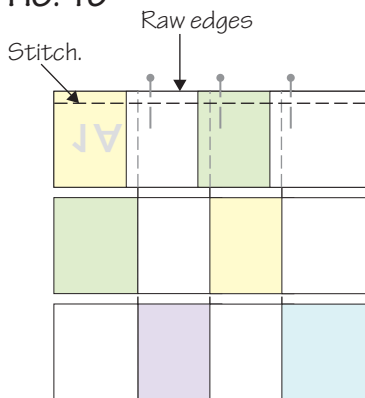


FIG. 10 Lay out your quilt on a flat surface, right side up. Fold the top row over and align with the second row, right sides together and top raw edges aligned. Notice how your seam allowances meet and face opposite directions. Gently pinch the two seams until you feel them settle against each other. This is nesting. As you sew, you'll want to ensure the seam allowances remain facing in opposite directions. Pin at regular intervals ensuring raw edges remain even and nested seams remain aligned. Stitch the row, stopping as necessary to readjust the positioning where the nested seams meet. Make sure your needle is in the 'needle down' position so your fabric stays in place as you readjust. Backstitch at the beginning and end of each row. Press open in the direction of choice.

FIG. 11

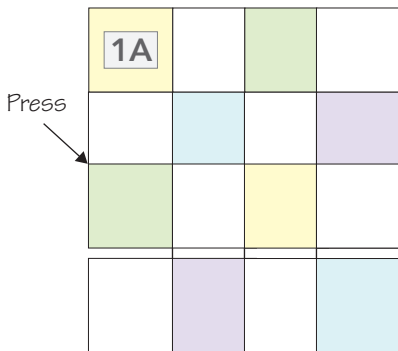
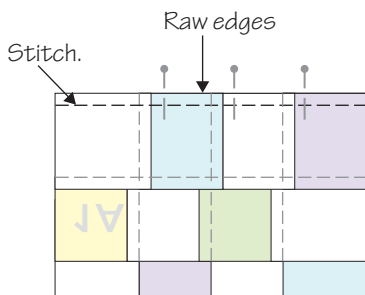


FIG. 11 Continue to join your rows as described in Figure 10 until all rows are stitched together. Press well.

TIP: Once you become more familiar with the technique, you may choose to apply stickers to the top row only. All your columns will be stacked so you might not feel it's necessary to label each square.