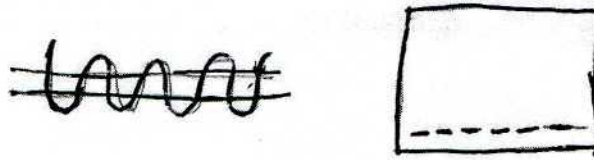


## Hand Piecing 101

<http://www.illuminatedspaces.com/ithreads/>

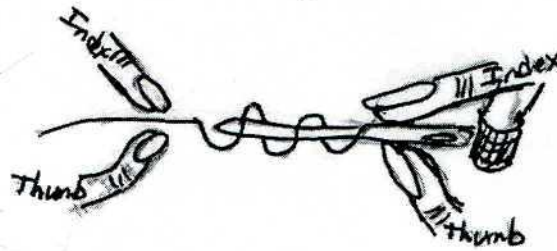
Quilting by Hand by Jinny Beyer, Breckling Press ISBN: 0-9721-2182-X

**Running Stitch** is the basic hand piecing and hand quilting stitch though it is performed differently for quilting. In this class it will only be used for sewing 2 pieces of cloth together.



To perform the stitch, you move the needle, front to back and back to front through the 2 payers of fabric. Load 3-5 stitches onto the needle at a time, then pull the needle through until the thread is snug but not tight. You don't want the stitches to buckle or have a wavy appearance. Then position the needle for the next set of stitches by placing the pointed tip of the needle half a stitch before the point where the thread comes up from the back of the fabric, so that you are taking a small back stitch at the beginning of each run of stitches. This makes a more sturdy seam.

Holding the Needle: Grandmas method for doing the running stitch for hand piecing was to hold the needle with the right (or left) thumb on the middle of the needle on the side of the fabric that is toward the sewer and the index finger on the middle of the needle on the side of the fabric that is away from the sewer. The thimble (properly on the second finger) is pressing against the eye end of the needle. This is sort of like holding a pencil. The opposite thumb and index finger are manipulating the fabric back and forth onto the pointed end of the needle to load the stitches. Using this method the needle only moves slightly back and forth, it is the other hand that is moving the fabric onto the needle. This feels really akward at first but should become comfortable with practice. Your hands have to learn the new motion. This method allows you to work for a longer period before you hands tire.



### Crossing Seams

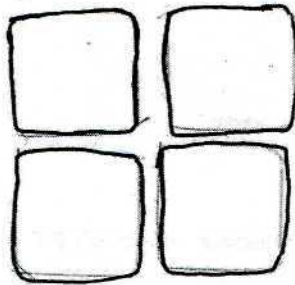
Lay the fabric with seam allowances pulled to opposite sides and the seam butted together. When you pull the entire seam allowance to one side it creates a ridge so by pulling the seam allowances in opposite directions you have 2 ridges that you can fit together at exactly the point where the seam stitching is and you can pin it in place.



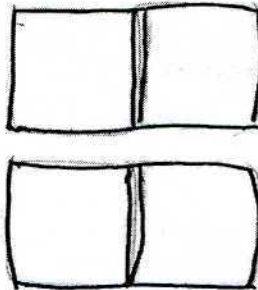
When your running stitch reaches the seam, take a small stitch going down one side of the seam and coming up on the far side of the stitch. Your goal is to put the stitch through the seam itself. This will allow both seam allowances to continue to be free and not sewn down in either direction.

#### 4 Patch Pincushion

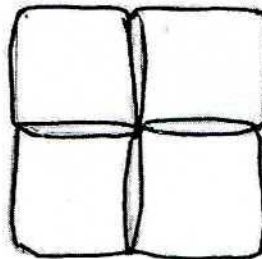
1 Lay out the 4 2.5 inch squares of fabric for the top



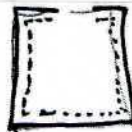
2. Sew 2 patches together (with right sides together). A  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch seam allowance is usual but as long as it is the same measurement throughout the piece, it does not have to be exact.



3. Sew the two rows together.



4. Lay the 4 patch on top of the backing fabric (4.5 inches square) with right sides together and sew around all 4 sides, leaving a small opening for stuffing. Clip all 4 corners being careful not to clip any of the stitches, turn right side out.



5. Stuff with batting, cotton, coarse sand, old socks, nylons, etc. Tuck in the seam allowance and close the opening with a whip stitch on the edge.

6. Sew a button through the point where all four squares intersect and going all the way through to the back of the pillow and the pin cushion is complete.

