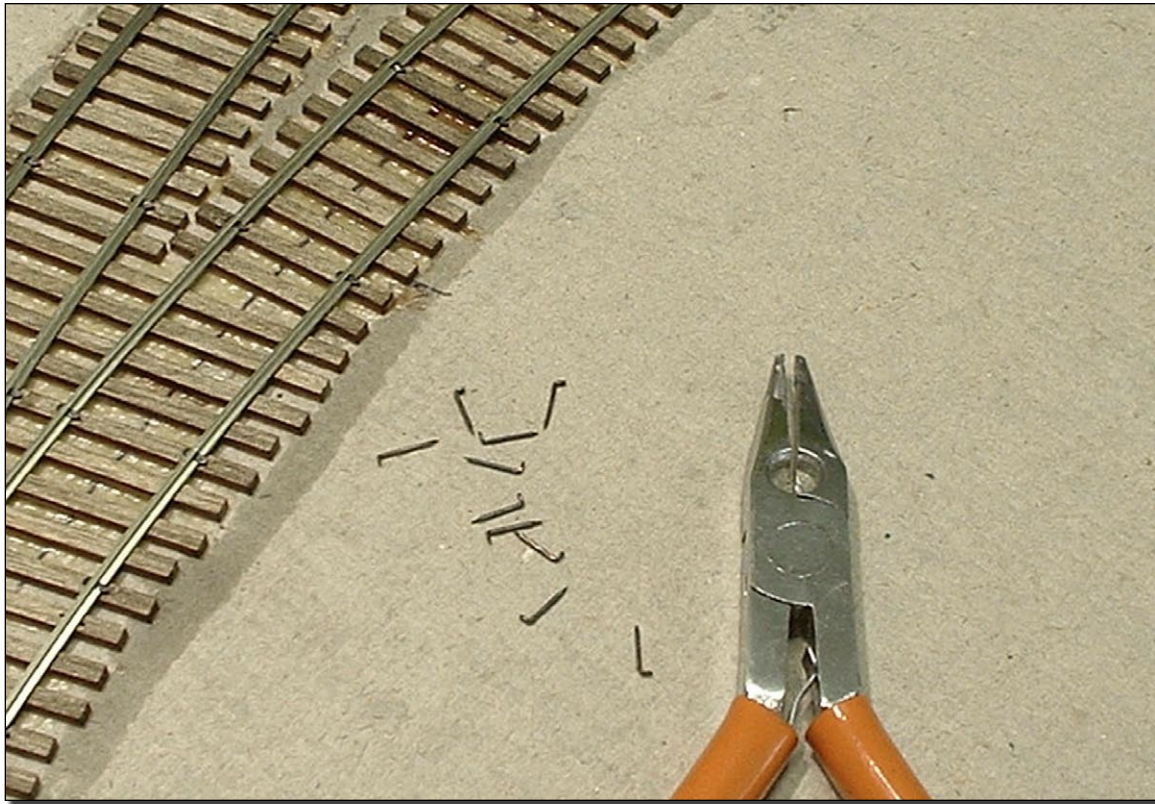


# USERS' GUIDE

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Zen And The Art of Spiking (AN02)



## **Shove 'em in – Zen And The Art Of Spiking**

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After shoving in tens of thousands of spikes over the years a routine has evolved that is giving me good results, and I thought I would share it here. I prefer to spike “two at a time” as opposed to placing one spike, and then moving on to the next.

The techniques shown here are ideal for ties that have been pre-drilled such as our TwistTies product. TwistTies ensure the proper placement of the spike lessening the chance of moving the rail out of gauge while spiking. However pre-drilled spike holes are not required and these techniques can be used for any standard wood ties.

Larger, printable versions of the images in this manual are supplied with the documentation CD that is included with any track construction tools that you purchase from Fast Tracks. Look for the Documentation Images link on the CD menu.

The latest version of this guide is always available for download from the Fast Tracks website at [www.fast-tracks.net/documents.php](http://www.fast-tracks.net/documents.php).

This document was last updated on August 20, 2005.

## What You Will Need

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In addition to rail you will need the following items:

- Spiking pliers
- Spikes
- No hammer is required

To make the spiking easier and safer I have made some special modifications to my spiking pliers that I detail in an issue of the Fast Tracks newsletter titled “Building Your Own Spike Friendly Pliers”. You may want to consider making these changes as well.

A copy of this newsletter is permanently posted in the newsletter section of the Fast Tracks discussion forums at [www.fast-tracks.net/forums](http://www.fast-tracks.net/forums).

## STEP 1 - Preparing The Ties

**Image 1**

Start a spike by partially inserting it about half way into the tie. I try to keep the spike slightly angled back and rotated to allow the head of the spike to clear the head of the rail.



**Image 2**

Changing the position of the pliers, push down on top of the spike until it is almost all the way in, but avoid fully inserting the spike. Don't worry if the rail moves a bit, we will fix that later.



**Image 3**

Repeat this process for the opposite spike. Again, rotate the head of the spike a bit to clear the head of the rail.



**Image 4**

Return to the first spike and rotate the head of the spike perpendicular to the rail.



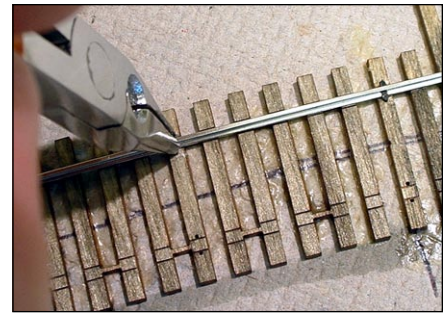
**Image 5**

Now, rotate the second spike perpendicular to the rail. This will move the rail into the center of the engraved lines (if you are using TwistTies. If not, confirm the track gauge with a, well... track gauge)



**Image 6**

Now while straddling the rail with the pliers, firmly shove both spikes into the tie with the nose of the pliers.



That's it! This pair of spikes are complete and you are ready to move onto the next pair!



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