

Lesson 1: Quilt purpose plus design/pattern, fabric and thread selection

Decide purpose and size of quilt

- A throw is a nice beginner project with no size constraints!
- If a wall hanging, think about how will it be hung on the wall - rod through sleeve on back or special hanger that grips the hanging (you don't want any of the design to be hidden by the grippers).
- If making a bed quilt, think about how much overhang you need on the sides to cover the mattress and if the quilt will fit under the pillows or if extra length is needed to cover/tuck under the pillows.

You need a quilt design/pattern

- Simple is best for your first few quilts as this is the time to practice your ¼" seam allowance, matching seams (pins anyone?), chain piecing, rotary cutting accuracy.
- It's probably best to choose a pattern where individual large blocks have only a few pieces or a pattern with simple same size squares or rectangles (disappearing 9-patch, Yellow Brick Road, etc.) **PIX**
- If you are making a bed quilt and it has a centered design, such as a medallion, make sure it will center nicely on the bed top. **PIX**

Not all fabric is equal!

- Buy 100% cotton fabric! Buying from a quilt store, while pricey, has the benefit of higher thread count which means less shrinkage, less thread raveling, smoother surface finish ("hand") -- and supports small businesses.
- If you buy from a big box store like JoAnn or Hobby Lobby, run your hand across the surface. If it feels rough then the thread count is probably low corresponding with the lower price. They all carry higher priced lines and if possible, stick to these.

Choosing fabric that supports design/pattern

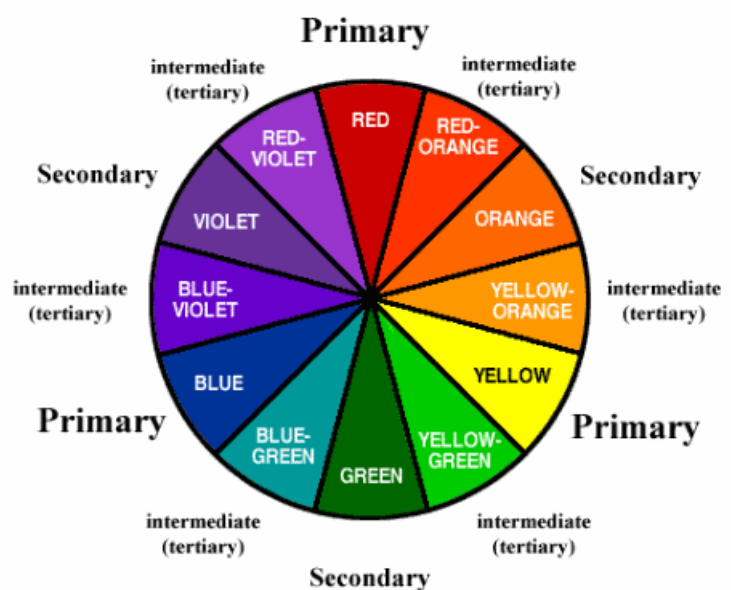
- For your first quilts, fabric selection can be overwhelming - but here's a tip. Buy what YOU love! If you gravitate to bright **colors**, then look at vibrant fabric. If you like calm, go for small prints and solids/tonals, and stay away from bold prints. If you love what you are working on it will be much more enjoyable and satisfying. Save the quilt for your niece/nephew in their school colors if you find orange and maroon or purple and gold a shocking color combination - you won't enjoy the process. **PIX**
- Look at your pattern carefully and consider **scale**. If you have small blocks then solids, tonals, small scale prints are more appropriate. A big flower design will be lost in a quilt with 3" squares. Conversely, big blocks are perfect for showcasing that large geometric print you covet. **PIX**

- A pleasing quilt with movement to please the eye, has more to do with **value** than scale or color. You need dark, light, and medium values. It is easy to be overwhelmed when picking out your fabric with so many choices, and we tend to have an inherent favorite, like buying all medium colors or all dark colors. **PIX**
- A note of caution: beware of stripes, diagonals, or any directional fabric for your first quilts. While these are lovely and fun, save these for later in your quilting adventure as they definitely add a layer of complexity in cutting and piecing. **PIX**
- At the store, lay all the fabrics together that you are thinking about buying and stand back from fabric and see what it looks like from a distance. Fabric that plays well together up close may look entirely different from a distance. A small-scale print, or even a large-scale print, may read as a dark or light when viewed from afar.
 - Use your phone camera when auditioning fabric – this really works to give you an idea how fabric works together - the camera has no bias! Value becomes clearer, and turning the camera to greyscale will really help alert you that all the fabrics “run together” or one is shocking in its dominance. Note please that a little yellow goes a long way as the human eye gravitates to yellow.
 - At home, a design wall is invaluable. For some reason, what is viewed from on high (you standing and quilt on floor) looks entirely different from you looking directly at the quilt in front of you. You can hang a flannel backed tablecloth on a wall using painter’s tape, thumbtacks, or a curtain rod for an inexpensive version.
- Scrappy quilts sound simple for color selection, but most quilters have a plan to make a scrappy quilt look “nice” – very seldom is a scrappy quilt not planned as to colors used and fabric placement, even if the plan is simply to put two lights with two darks for each four-patch block. **PIX**

Help from color-wheel

If really stuck and you don’t want to use the colors shown in the pattern you have chosen, look at a color wheel for inspiration.

This color wheel shows the primary colors as red, blue, and yellow – what some of us learned in elementary school. There are countless books, articles, and classes on using the color wheel. Just Google!



Quick tip for selecting fabrics for a quilt: Pick out a focal or “zinger” fabric. Then use the colors in that fabric for selecting the other fabrics making sure you have at least one dark, one medium, and one light. Pay attention to the color registration on the focal fabric in matching colors, especially to determine if it is based on white or beige. **PIX**

Choosing binding fabric

- The binding should usually coordinate with both the quilt front and back. If you want it to blend with the quilt top, use the same fabric for the binding as the final border, if there is one. **PIX**
- When choosing a binding color for a wall hanging, choose one that “stops the eye.” It is best not to use the same color binding as the wall on which it is intended to hang.

Thread choices

When piecing, use a neutral color such as gray or beige so that you don't have to switch thread often with fabric color changes. Use a very thin thread as it does take up space in the seam. This is especially important when making the “flying geese” block using the method in which you sew a square to a rectangle and then fold the square back to the edges. There are many threads on the market – a good one is Aurifil 30.

The great debate: Pre-washing vs. Not

This seems like a personal choice but there are things to consider:

- Unwashed fabric in your finished quilt may shrink after being washed causing the quilt to have a “crinkly” or antique look.
- You can wash or not, but the rule is to never mix washed and unwashed in the same quilt top – because of varying rates of shrinkage.
- If the quilt is being made for a baby or person with allergies, pre-washing is prudent. This removes allergens resulting from the production process and while fabric is in storage.
- It is probably best to prewash batik fabrics – the way batiks are made sometimes leaves a lot of ink/paint on the fabric surface.
- Be suspicious of red or very dark fabrics – cut off a small piece and boil in pan on stove top to see if it bleeds color in the water.
- To pre-wash your fabric, use hot or warm water with a gentle agitation. Either line dry or remove from dryer when damp and hang to finish drying. All wrinkles should be ironed out, and folded if adding to your stash. I try to pin a small piece of paper to my stashed fabric indicating piece size and either washed/unwashed.
- To clean up the “stringy” edge, cut off with a rotary cutter, or trim with pinking shears, or cut a 45-degree angle off each corner. SUE, WHAT DOES THIS DO?

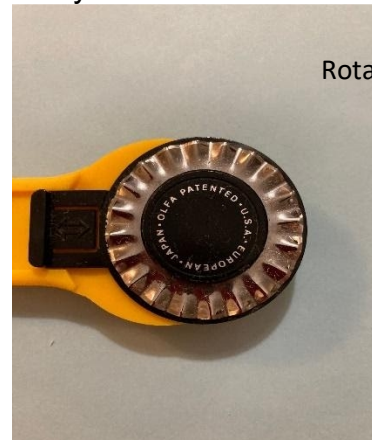


Cutting Fabric: Scissors/ripping fabric/rotary cutter?



Have one great pair of fabric scissors that no one else in your family knows where you keep them; use snippers for clip Snippers ds to save time and your hands.

Use a pinking rotary blade when cutting curves or on the inside of an item you will need to turn to right side – when using a pinking blade you do not need to clip the curves:



Rotary pinking blade

Some people like to rip their fabric as it saves time and keeps the edges on the grain; ripping is a good way to tear off from a larger piece what you need for borders; this works best with high quality quilting fabric but does not always work on less high-quality fabric; be prepared to deal with a lot of strings!

Using rulers vs. mat markings

- ***This is very important for accuracy*** – line up fabric using the markings on your mat but cut fabric using the markings on your actual ruler – mats are for convenience in cutting, not measuring.
- When you start a project that cutting takes place over several sessions, be sure at the second cutting time that you use the same ruler (some of us have rulers from several manufacturers – you won't have to figure out how to read the new ruler on the second cutting time).
- If you have a lot of cutting, mark your ruler settings with painter's tape so you don't have to find your markings every time you pick up the ruler.

Quilt Life Cycle in Four Short Lessons

Assembling the Quilt Top

Goal:

- ▶ Very flat, very square pieced top
- ▶ *Horizontal and vertical lines are straight*
- ▶ Intersections match evenly, if they are supposed to match



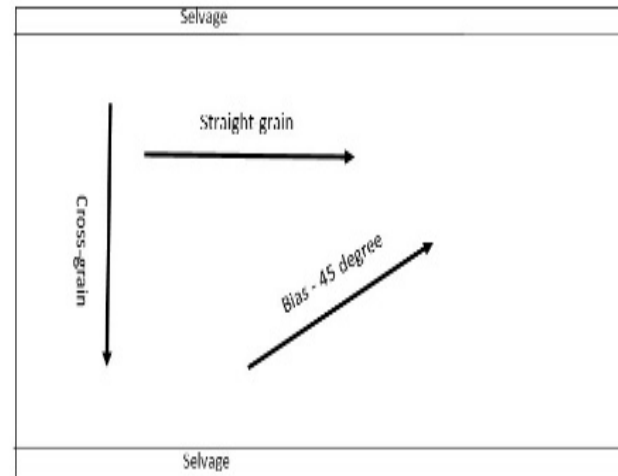
How to get there:

- ▶ Cutting accurately
- ▶ Pressing well
- ▶ Sewing well

Always be mindful that fabric is stretchy!

Getting to goal:

- ▶ Cutting accurately
 - ▶ *Use the ruler markings, not the mat markings*
 - ▶ Know your fabric grains
 - ▶ Label the fabric stacks as you work
 - ▶ Work around folds in strip pre-cuts, very hard to get out since pre-cuts are seldom prewashed
 - ▶ *Consider whether to cut all pieces at once or save some for later*



Midnight Quilter - 5 Cutting Hacks for Quilters

Getting to goal:

- ▶ Pressing well
 - ▶ Consider when to use steam vs. dry
 - ▶ Consider fabric grains when pressing
 - ▶ *Press to the dark is an easy trick in patchwork sewing to end up with “nested” seams when sewing*
 - ▶ Consider when to use starch
 - ▶ Be careful of tucks along seams - this will cause problems with the next step - quilting



Sewing well:

- ▶ Set up your sewing machine
 - ▶ Know your machine - may have sewing patchwork settings
 - ▶ Know how sewing machines generally work
 - ▶ Bottom layer being pushed by feed-dogs; top layer being pushed by needle; bottom layer goes under the needle faster than top layer
 - ▶ You can use this fact to help you if your bottom piece is *slightly* longer than your top piece
 - ▶ *Use stylus to hold small pieces being combined under the needle so that your seam does not drift*
 - ▶ Hold sewing up to the light to find any dark fabric or threads showing on the light fabrics



Make a test block:

- ▶ Take time to make a test block
- ▶ *Check to see if you are sewing to the correct size*
- ▶ May have to figure the block size out if pattern does not state “block will be X inches square”
- ▶ You can use the test block in your quilt, of course, but also you can save it to test your quilting setup which will be covered in the next lesson - three.

Sewing well continued:

- ▶ Achieving that vaulted $\frac{1}{4}$ inch seam (most patchwork patterns require this)
 - ▶ Plan what method you will use to achieve the $\frac{1}{4}$ inch seam
 - ▶ Consider if your machine may have settings for this
 - ▶ Use markings on your machine's throat plate
 - ▶ Affix index cards, painter's tape, other items to create a guide to hold fabric against
 - ▶ Buy special foot that has a metal guild
 - ▶ ***Test your sewing of a $\frac{1}{4}$ inch seam***



BFF - Your seam ripper:

- ▶ *Accept the fact that your seam ripper is an integral part of sewing - you will never regret improving a seam by ripping it out and redoing.*

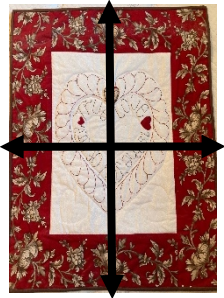


Square up each block:

- ▶ *Square up each block after you have sewn a few* - good way to know if your sewing is causing your block size to “drift away.”

Attaching borders:

- ▶ Measure quilt middle section to determine length of borders
 - ▶ Measure across the quilt middle horizontally and vertically
 - ▶ If you cut your borders when you cut other pieces, measure the border pieces again to be sure they match the measurements of the quilt middles
 - ▶ Attach the borders using pins to fit the border to the quilt center
 - ▶ **Warning: do not lay a strip of fabric along the quilt side and then cut it - this sometimes causes “ruffling” of the border**



Donna Jordan - Jordan Fabrics

Squaring the quilt top:

- ▶ Check to *be sure your quilt top is square*
 - ▶ Using the largest square ruler you have put it on each corner and trim any excess fabric off
 - ▶ Using the longest ruler you have, trim the sides to match the corner
 - ▶ Stay stitch the quilt top



Making the backing fabric:

- ▶ Technically, this is not part of assembling the top, but you have to have a backing for the next step of quilting your work
 - ▶ If not using a wide enough piece of fabric for the backing, piece a backing that will extend at least four inches beyond the quilt top
 - ▶ *Increase the seam width to one-half inch so that when pressed open the seam will not make a ridge on the back of the quilt - this is more important if you plan to use a very thin batting*

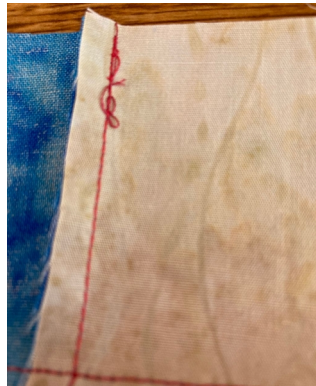
One more step before quilting:

- ▶ Press both the top and backing very well before moving to the next step -

QUILTING!

Good habits:

- ▶ Read pattern completely before cutting
- ▶ Label pieces as you cut
- ▶ Square up each round of the block
- ▶ *Always, always pull up the bottom thread to the top - put both threads under the presser foot*
- ▶ Take your foot off the foot pedal to avoid unnecessary stitching or when adjusting fabric under the needle



2019 Quilt Show Judge's Comments:

- ▶ More consistency needed in knife-edge piecing
- ▶ Visible piecing threads distracting
- ▶ *Long seams and edges need to be straight*
- ▶ Sashing should be straight and consistent width and line up across the top
- ▶ Square quilt at each stage of construction



Good luck in your quilting projects!



FINISHING THE QUILT

Just a few more steps to finish a beautiful quilt!



BINDING THE QUILT

Last opportunity to enhance the quilt design

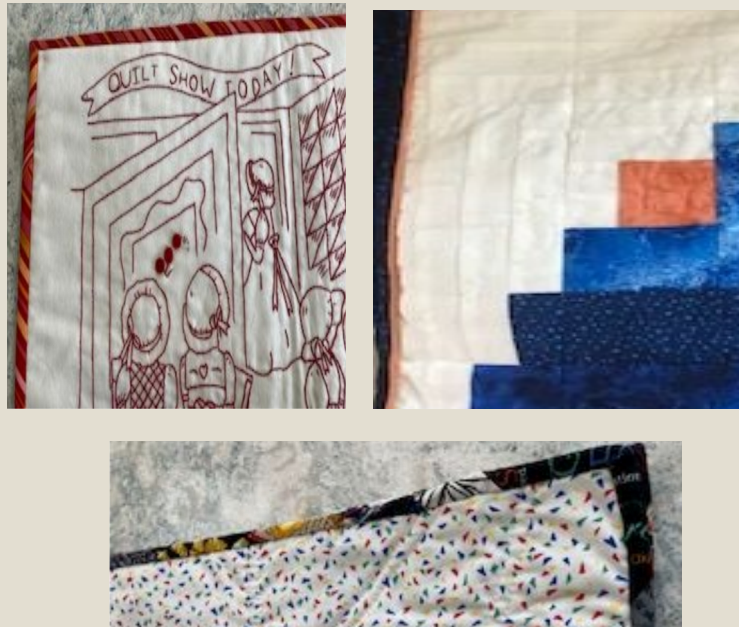
1st step: square the quilt

- Quilting step may have distorted the quilt dimensions
- Use a square ruler on each corner to trim them square
- Use a long ruler to trim sides straight
 - Be careful to keep borders same size around the quilt
 - Lay quilt on carpet; steam edges; pin to carpet so it is square; let it dry
 - Ask more experienced quilter for help with this step



2nd step: design the binding

Striped binding, binding with flange, scrappy binding



Make a durable binding

- Cut strips of fabric
- Best to cut on the bias for durability
- Cut strips 2.25 inches; binding will be same with on front and back of quilt which pleases quilt show judges now
- Some quilters use 2.5 inch strips – slightly easier to stitch down
- When stitching down on back of quilt, pull tightly so binding is full of batting

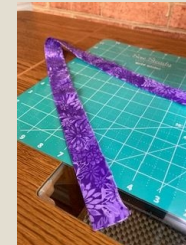
3rd step: measuring/sewing binding

Measure the perimeter of the quilt, add about 12 inches for turning corners

Sew binding strips together

Lay binding around quilt to be sure no seams will fall on corner

Pictures to show sewing binding strips together



3rd step cont'd: sewing binding to the quilt

Use walking or dual-feed foot

Start mid-point of right side of quilt

Sew to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of corner

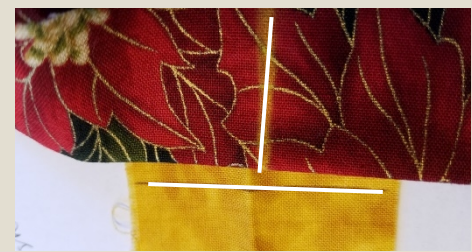
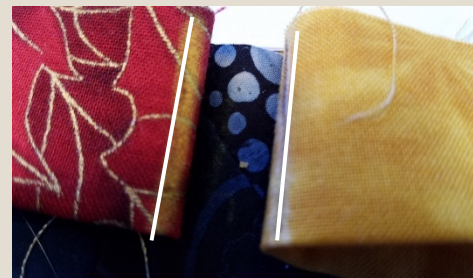
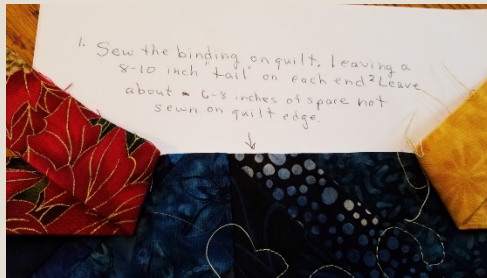
Fold binding to side of quilt at 45 degree angle

Fold binding back on itself and continue sewing (this is making the mitered corner)

Pictures to demonstrate



3rd step cont'd: closing binding seamlessly



3rd step cont'd: sewing binding to back of quilt



- See mitered corners
- Trim corners at 45 degree angle to reduce bulk
- Strips around corner should meet precisely
- Sew binding down with small, evenly spaced stitches



Yay! The little quilt with purple binding just needs a label!



LABELING THE QUILT

This is indeed the last step!

Why should we label quilts?

Give information to recipient about the particular quilt

Give historical record of quilts made in this time and place

An act of “closure” on the quilt project

Label information

Quilter who made the top of the quilt and who quilted the quilt, if not the same person

Date when the quilt was made

Where the quilt was made and,

Any other pertinent information.

Label examples



This label does not mention what Sue did in making the quilt; the label may be interpreted that she did no work on the quilt; when she actually completed the quilt by quilting, binding and labeling it.



This label contains the information usually put in a label, quilt title, quilter's name, date made, location and other information necessary to "understand" the quilt.

However, for durability, it would be a better label if it had been sewn to the quilt rather than only glued (quilter used purchased pre-glued fabric sheet to make label).

“Excellent” label example



This is a label that gives the *title/why the quilt was made*, the *quilter's name who made the top*, the *quilter's name who did the quilting* and the *location of the quilter*.

Although, not shown here, the label has been made from fabric used in making the front and even has a button embellishment. It is a nice touch to be hand-written as others can see the quilter's handwriting.

Good habits to develop

- It may seem more difficult, but develop the habit making your binding strips on the bias grain, as that is the best for binding durability.
- Make your binding as soon as you finish piecing your top so you don't use up the fabric on another quilt before you are ready to bind it! (Ask some of us how we know this!)
- Use your walking foot or even-feed foot to apply bindings; you will never mind the time it takes to put the foot on as your binding will not be puckered.
- Save your binding scraps to make a scrappy binding at some future date; this works if you often make your binding strips the same width.

Comments from 2019 Quilt Show Judge

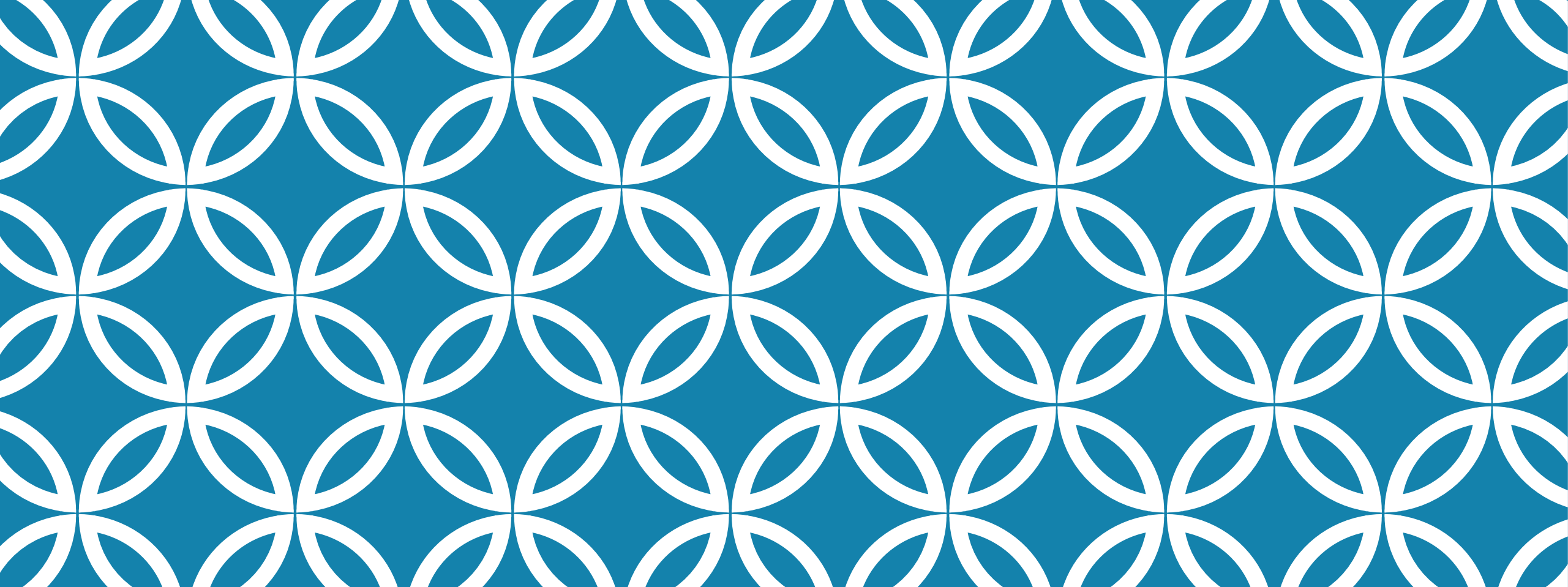
- Binding should not cut off points of piecework or encroach on border quilting
- Corners should be mitered, not rounded
- Miters of binding should align with miters of borders
- Binding should be consistent width on the front and back of the quilt and filled completely with batting
- Binding stitches should be tighter and closer on back of quilt and not come through to front of quilt
- Flange should be consistent width
- More care needed in applying split binding
- Facing fabric should not show on front

- Label application on back of quilt should not cause distortion on quilt top

We are finished the Basic Quilting Course!

Check the written Lessons 1-4 for books, internet tutorials, our guild website for more information.

Do not hesitate to ask more experienced quilters to help you; those of us who have been quilting a long time enjoy helping newer quilters!



QUILTING

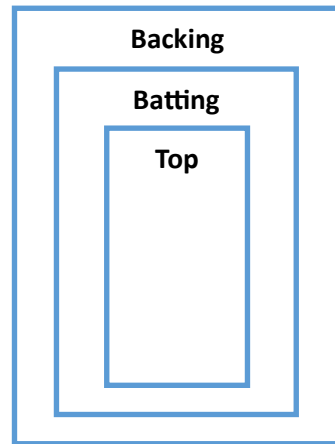
A quilt is not a quilt until it's quilted!

THREE LAYERS MAKE A QUILT

Top

Batting

Backing



Top should be flat and square

Choose batting that supports quilt's purpose

Choose busy fabric for backing that hides quilting stitches

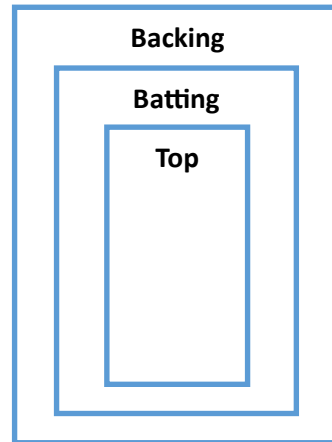
Press all three layers neatly

Lumps may show on quilt if not neatly pressed

SIZE OF THREE LAYERS

Batting 4 inches beyond the top

Backing 4 inches beyond the backing



A PESKY PROBLEM

Getting the layers to stay together during quilting!

Goal: getting three layers to stay together *without wrinkling or puckering* during quilting

Many ways to do this:

- Basting stitches
- Pins
- Sprays



Work on a flat, non-wobbly surface for layering

MARKING TOP FOR QUILTING

Best advice here is BE CAREFUL!

- Many ways to mark top
 - Wash away markers
 - Iron away markers
 - Creaser tools
- Be sure that the marks will come out of your quilt *permanently*
- Iron away markers will come back in cold settings
- Learning to use rulers for marking avoids any problems

SETTING UP MACHINE

- Choose needle that works with thread choice
- Choose needle that will pierce all three layers
- Choose stitch length to use

MAKING QUILTING SAMPLE

Make a small sample of all three layers of your quilt

Quilt a small part of the sample

Most important step here:

- Check tension of threads on top and backing

Keep quilting small sections of the sample until you are satisfied

You will not regret any time spent on this step!

WHAT DESIGN TO USE

Personal choice but design should enhance quilt top

These two designs very easy for beginners



Stitch-in-the ditch



Close to the seam

Any design takes practice
You will get better results with experience

TWO MORE BEGINNER CHOICES



Cross-hatch



Parallel lines

Sue's comments on this slide

Parallel lines are very popular in modern design quilts – most sewing machines have a guide for making straight lines

ONE LAST CHOICE

A LITTLE HARDER TO MASTER



Stippling

Stippling looks best if
stitches don't cross over
each other

QUILTING TIPS

Practice quilting on a purchased panel

Use walking foot or dual feed foot so that all three layers pass under the needle at the same time

Always pull bobbin thread to the top

Begin by stitching top to the batting and backing using a large grid

MORE QUILTING TIPS

Check to be sure your horizontal and vertical lines are straight

Consider where to place quilting on borders – remember you will need $\frac{1}{4}$ inch for binding

Quilting should fill a patch-work block but not creep over the edge (unless using an overall design)

Don't be lazy or time-crunched on quilting step – put in enough quilting that quilt will stay square

Even if batting package says 10 inches OK for quilting use a “hand-width” standard for quilting

GOOD HABITS TO DEVELOP

Any problems, start trouble-shooting by replacing needle and rethreading machine

Always, always pull bobbin thread to top

When practical, start and stop quilting on edge of batting that extends beyond edge

Bury thread ends as you go – you will be very glad you did when you finish quilting!

2019 QUILT SHOW JUDGE COMMENTS

Remove markings for quilting before entering for judging

Quilting should be in scale to overall size of piece

Different quilting and/or thread choice would enhance the attractiveness of the quilt top

Quilting should stay within the intended design areas; also it should fill the designated space

Strive for consistent stitch length in machine quilting; care needed in changing direction of quilting

More precision needed in starts and stops of machine quilting; starts and stops should be secure

More consistency in machine tension needs to be achieved

Additional quilting would add to the stability and durability of the quilt

MORE JUDGE COMMENTS

Some skipped stitches noted in quilting

More care needed in repeating shapes of the quilting motifs

More consistency needed in spacing of parallel lines

More consistency in machine retracing of quilting lines

Additional quilting could minimize surface distortion

Quilting has caused puckers on borders



THE END!

Happy Quilting!

Ask any Star Quilter Guild member for help – we all like to share our knowledge!

Flowers, Flowers, Flowers



April showers bring May flowers

Sue Berry

- 3-D Items



Judi Byrd

- Hand-embroidery



Judi Byrd

EMBELLISHING QUILTS

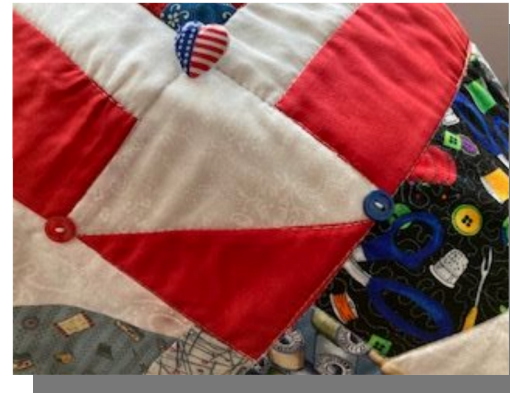
Embellishing means to *enhance* an item

Embellishments not only enhance:

May be used to cover piecing mistakes,
stains, tears



Sue Berry's
Round Robin



Why would a quilter want to use hand-embroidery?

- Combining hand embroidered blocks with patchwork makes a beautiful quilt
- Easy to embroider a small item than create applique piece(s)
- On a baby quilt, embroidery is safe for eyes on animals, buttons on snowmen, etc.



Sue Berry



Sue Berry

Use “common-sense” when NOT to use
3-D embellishments:

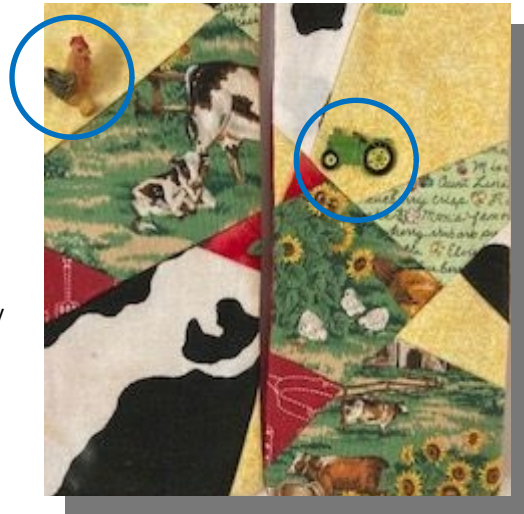
- Baby/toddler quilts
- Frequently washed quilts
- Couch quilts (cuddling up to watch Netflix, etc.)



Be careful not to drift off good design to "tackiness"

Buttons, Beads, and Bangles:

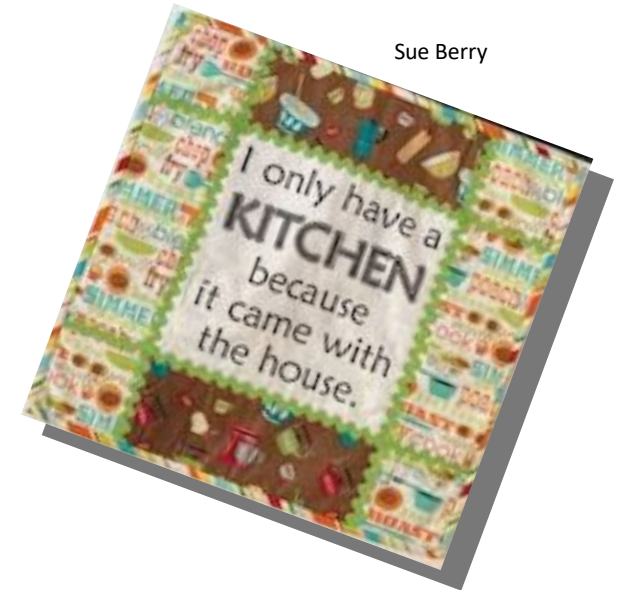
- Execute attachment at a high level to avoid “home-made” look (different from “*hand-made*”)
- Use quilting thread to sew on for sturdiness
- Use flat buttons, two-hole buttons (match thread)
- Use rick-rack sparingly



Sue Berry



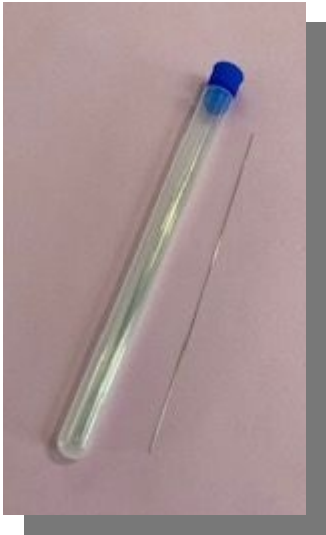
Judi Byrd



Sue Berry

Beads:

- Use very thin needle to attach beads
- On a row of beads, attach each bead so the string of beads do not “droop”
- Also, secure each bead on a long row so if thread breaks all the beads don’t come off



Judi Byrd



Judi Byrd



Judi Byrd

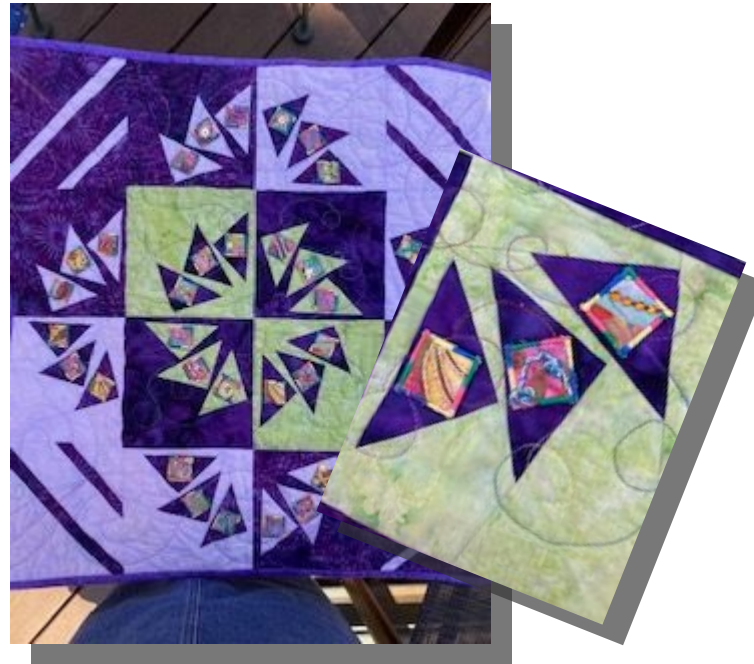
Bangles:

Sue Berry



Fringes, pearl rope, and earrings used as bangles

Donna Kittelson



Hand-made "inchies" used

Donna Kittelson



Fringes, sparkles. And photocopies of money used

Another Two:

Sue Berry



Earrings used



Sue Berry's
Round Robin



Sparkly fabric used

Folded fabric items:

If you can imagine it, you can make it with fabric



Fabric tulips
from Guild's
last Spring
Social.



Sue Berry



Judi Byrd

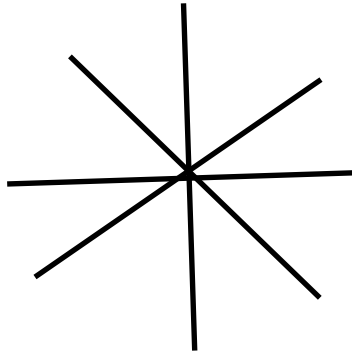
Yo-Yos –
A simple
flower.

From Kelly Zuber:



When we meet again in person, I will demonstrate in a mini-lesson prior to the regular meeting some of these folded fabric flowers.

Easy way to make a rose:



Make a spoke stitch/
wagon wheel stitch
using thread

Judi Byrd



Use thread/ribbon to weave
over and under the spoke

Now for some fun!

A gallery of flowered quilts from guild members

Fun begins!

Judy Coffman



Judy Coffman



Gisela O'Connor



Fun continued:

Gisela O'Connor



Judy Coffman



Sue Berry



Fun continued:

Susan Kraterfield



Susan Kraterfield



Susan Kraterfield



Fun continued:

Susan Kraterfield



Susan Kraterfield



Susan Kraterfield



Fun continued:

Bonnie Scott



Bonnie Scott



Bonnie Scott



Fun continued:

Cathy Russell



Cathy Russell



Fun continued:

Bonnie Scott



Bonnie Scott



Final fun!

Karen McMillan



Elsie Bailey



Ann Ware



Final note: Always ask for help from other guild members; we love to share what we have learned. If you have the time, participate in a small group of other quilters who meet regularly – a lot of information is shared when quilters meet. Or, start your own group!



Judy McWhorter



Donna Kittelson



HAND-EMBROIDERY ON QUILTS

Tools for hand-embroidery:

Embroidery needles

Threads

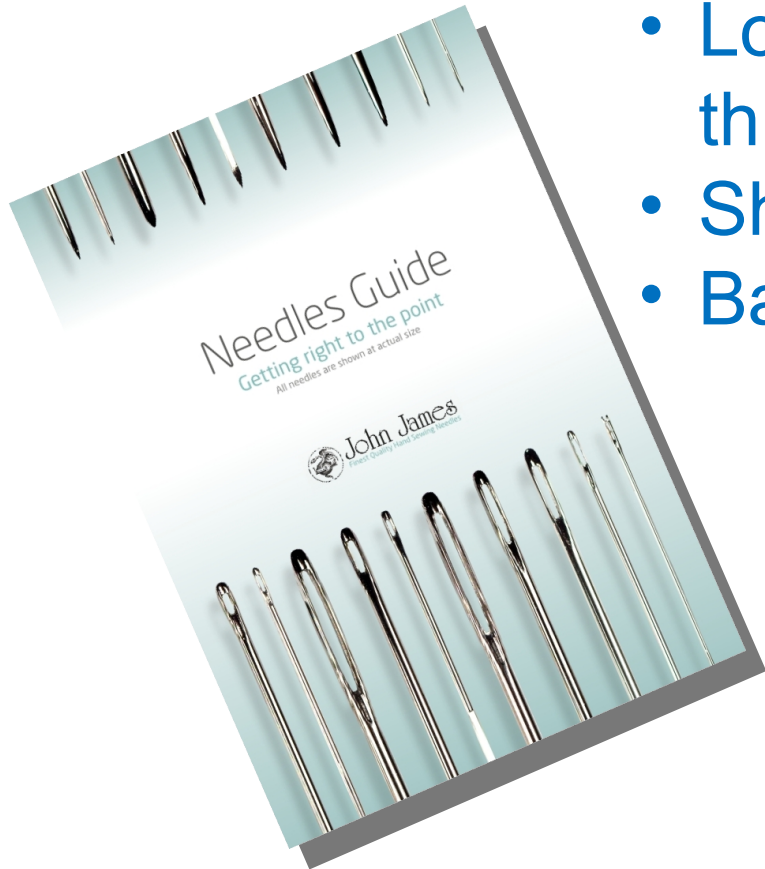
Small scissors

Hoops (maybe)

Tip: When pressing embroidery, always use a soft surface like a bath towel so that the stitches are not flattened (use a hard surface for patchwork).

Embroidery needles:

- Large eye so threads fray less easily
- Longer, straight shaft needed for wrapping threads evenly around it
- Sharp point for most fabrics
- Ball-point for certain fabrics



Moderately priced,
good needles.



Higher priced, recommended by
Kelly Zuber during April's
Applique program.

Needles:

Tip: Thread your needle from the spool or keep track of which end of thread came off spool or out of thread package first; insert this end through needle first; helps keep thread from tangling and fraying as thread is traveling through needle and fabric with nap of thread.

Tip: Switch to a shorter needle when shorter stitches needed; e.g., when embroidering into a deep curve or embroidering letters.

Tip: Needles tend to bend with the heat of your hand; thread several and rotate when new thread needed; switch needles before bending starts.

Tip: Just as when using your sewing machine, change your needles after using for “a while.” You want to maintain a sharp point to pierce the fabric.

Embroidery threads:

- Thin threads make thin stitches
- Using six-strands current trend to make “chunky” look



Many brands,
six strands that can
be separated



Perle Cotton
size 12 = 2 stands
size 8 = 3 strands
size 5 = 5 strands



Sulky
size 12 = 2 stands



Judi Byrd

Ribbon used as
embroidery thread.

Thread tips:

Tip: Never have a mess again! Use the arrows!



Tip: After cutting off strands from six-strand package, separate the number of threads to use; smooth each one along its length; then combine and smooth again.

Tip: It is very tempting to put a knot in the end of the thread to begin embroidering but the best practice is to weave the end into the first few stitches you make; on the back, of course! Knots have a tendency to work their way to the front.



Tip: Only cut off 9-12 inches of thread to use; longer lengths will start to fray as they travel through the fabric time and again.

Scissors:



Good scissors for embroidery front; design helps not cut into embroidery.



Great scissors from Kay Buckley that have little teeth to grab hold of the thread or fabric; also recommended by Kelly Zuber during April's Applique program.

Preparing the embroidery material:

- Find the center of your fabric; draw the picture/words you will embroider; *use a marking tool that you know you can erase later!*
- Make a backing piece of material, such as very thin piece of cotton, for example, batiste or handkerchief fabric; attach with safety pins or basting stitches (*using a backing fabric keeps your stitches from showing through the first fabric*).

Tip: If you are using one color thread for embroidering, use the same color marker.

Hoop or not to hoop, that is the question:

- Personal choice
- Hoop keeps the embroidery fabric taut while you are embroidering
- Some prefer using their non-needle hand/fingers to do this



Tip: If you use a hoop, take it off after every work session to avoid stretching your fabric.

Embroidery stitches - there are many, many stitches



Note: For further information, check the internet, particularly YouTube. You will reach information overload in about an hour!

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Embroidery stitches we will cover:



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Running stitch, back stitch and stem stitch:

- Each of these stitches is made by bringing the thread to the front of your work and then pushing needle into a pre-defined place
 - Running stitch – stitches are evening spaced



Tip: Learn to sew your stitches on the front of your work, rather than “stabbing” one stitch at a time (pushing needle to the back of your work on every stitch); sewing the stitches on the front of your work makes the stitching more even.

Back stitch – used for outlining shapes

- Stitch is placed at the end of the previous stitch



Stem stitch – best for curvy lines

- The stitch is placed under the previous stitch about $\frac{1}{4}$ from the end of the previous stitch



Satin stitch – used to fill shapes:

- Stitches are placed next to each other
- Outline the shape with running or back stitches before starting satin stitches



Tip: After putting in all the stitches on a shape run your needle under all of them to make them lie together more evenly.

French knot stitch – used for flower centers and filling shapes:

- Made by bringing thread to the front of work, wrapping thread around needle and then pushing needle to the back side of work
- Wrap thread around part of the needle shaft that is the same diameter
- *French knots are a time when you most likely will "stab" your stitches rather than sew them*



Tip: Don't use same hole for inserting as you did for coming to front – stitch will pull out.

Daisy stitch:



- pulling thread to the front, making a “tear-drop” loop with the thread (best to hold loop in place), pushing the needle to the back at the bottom of the loop

Tip: Don't use same hole for inserting as you did for coming to front – stitch will pull out.



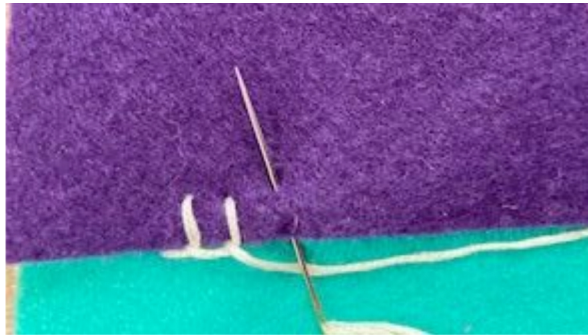
- bringing thread to the front at the inside top of the loop



- Then, pushing needle to the back at the outside edge of the top of the loop



Blanket stitch - used for edging or to make “fence-like” stitches on front of work (*many variations of intermingled stitch heights and spacing widths*):



For edging, hold thread in place at the side of the work, push needle to back of work at the height place of the first stitch and then bring to top at the edge of the work; hold thread along edge and place second stitch.



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- *For the front of your work*, bring thread to front at the height place of the first stitch and then insert needle at bottom of stitch, keeping thread under the needle, begin second stitch as described above.

Kit to practice embroidery and applique:

- Pick up at Spring Social Part 2 and guild yard sale along with a cupcake from the Hospitality Team
- Saturday, May 8 or rain date, May 15
- Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church (where guild meetings are held)
- Beginning 9:00am to 1:00pm
- Kit contains:
 - Front and back for mug rug
 - Stabilizer to make rug more sturdy
 - Embroidery needle
 - Embroidery threads
 - Shapes to add to rug
 - Beads to enhance the shapes
- Have fun!

