



Machine Quilting Preparation

Please follow these helpful hints to help make your quilt a beautiful creation:

- **Consider how you want to quilt your quilt.** There are many free-motion design books and some pantograph patterns available for your use. Quilting should be balanced throughout the quilt – not tightly quilted in some areas and loosely quilted in others, so the quilt will lie flat.
- **Consider if you need to practice first.** If so, bring a practice piece with zippers attached or one is available for a small charge.
- **Select thread** of choice.
 - Polyester thread is strongest and has the least breakage. Thread on a cone works best, but thread on a spool will work as well.
 - The thinner the thread, the less it will show up (and therefore hide mistakes!). Monofilament thread works well too.
 - If you're going to use the same thread on top as in the bobbin, consider bringing two spools so you don't need to unthread the machine to wind another bobbin
 - Superior Threads are available for purchase – Bottom Line for bobbin thread; So Fine – polyester; King Tut - cotton.
- **Inspect your quilt top!** Make sure there are no holes in your seams and that seams lie flat. Trim all threads.
- **Measure your quilt top, batting and backing,** make note of these measurements. Measure quilt top lengthwise and widthwise in 3 places and average these measurements.
- **Select batting and square it up.** Batting must be at least **6 inches longer and wider** than your quilt top. If a packaged batting, open it up and let it relax before squaring it up.
- **Wash your backing** (if you are pre-washing)
- **Iron** your quilt top and backing.
- **Cut and square up your backing. Remove all selvages.** Backing must be at least **6-8 inches longer and wider** than your quilt top. If you need to piece the backing, consider piecing on a diagonal, which will help keep the tension on your backing even when rolled. Iron seams open.
- **Decide which way the quilt will be loaded on the machine.** (Quilts are usually loaded the long way to minimize the number of times you need to advance the quilt. Keep in mind this will affect the way the pantograph goes, so make sure your pantograph can go either way.)
- **Fold the top and backing** accordion style (individually) so that the folds are parallel to the direction the quilt will be loaded on the machine and hang over coat hangers padded with batting.
- **Attach zippers** to the correct sides, following the zipper instructions to carefully center the zippers and not stretch the backing or top. *Remember to attach zippers with **wrong side of backing fabric up.*** Check twice to ensure the top and backing go the direction you want them to go.