LOQG Quilting Tips, Tricks, & Techniques

1st Edition
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Members of the Lake Oconee Quilt Guild contributed to this publication. It is best viewed online because of the links to related resources. It can also be printed to read. The document is designed to be updated annually or more often as necessary.

Table of Contents

Topic	Page #
Applique & Paper Piecing	
Foundation Paper for Paper Piecing	6
Fusibles for Applique	6
Silicon Mat to Position Applique Fabric Pieces	7
Tablet Device as a Light Box	7
Template Plastic	8
Binding	
Bias Binding from a Fat Quarter	8
Binding with Faux Piping	9
Binding with Piping	9
Continuous Bias Binding	9
Cutting	
Add-a-Quarter Ruler for Trimming Fabric when Paper Piecing	9
Cutting Templates	10
Rotating Cutting Mat	10
Fabric Stabilizers & Solutions	

Fabric Stabilizer and Stiffener Solutions 11

Fabric Stabilizer Using Hotfix Adhesive 11

Spray Bottle with Fine Mist 12

Maintenance

Mini Cutting Mats 12

Needle Nose Pliers for Pulling up the Bottom Thread when Machine Quilting 12

Reminder for Cleaning a Bobbin Case or Sewing Machine Needle 12

Reminder for Replacing a Rotary Cutter Blade 13

Organization

Empty Spools & a Lazy Susan as Handy Sewing Items Tricks 13

Fabric Organization Strategies 13

Patterns & Files

Free PDF Files for Harry Potter, Minecraft, and Pokémon Quilts 13

Sewing

4-at-a-Time Flying Geese Units 13

8-at-a-Time Triangle Squares 14

Bernina Sewing Tutorials 14

Fons & Porter 25 Sew Easy Lessons eBook 14

Mitered Border Corners 14

Pool Noodles for Basting Your Quilt 15

Printable Fabric Sheets 15

Quilt Blocks with Y-Seams 15

Super Sliders for Free Motion Quilting 16

Storage

Clamps for Sandwiching a Quilt 16

Needle & Pin Holder from a Picture Frame 16

Quilt Display 17

Recycle & Reuse 17

Tools

Block Loc Half Square Ruler for Squaring Up Blocks 17

Fabric Color Catcher 17

Fabric Pen Style Marking Chalk 18

Fabric Pencil 18

Heat Erasable Pens 18

Kay Buckley Applique Aids 19

Needle Puller Trick for Hand Quilters 19

Needle Threaders 19

Quick Quarter/Quarter Inch Rules for Triangles from Squares 20

Ruler Suction Grip Holder 20

Ruler Weight 20

Sewing Clips 21

Small Iron Solutions 21

Specialty Rulers for Creating Quilt Squares with Odd Angled Pieces 22

Taylor’s Clapper 22

Washable Glue Stick 23

Water Erasable Fabric Pens 23

Wool Pressing Mat 23

Workplace Cleaning & Organization

Blood Stain from Fabric Removal Solution 24

Iron Cleaning Solutions 24

Lint Roller as a Quick Sewing Room Cleaner 24

Applique & Paper Piecing

Foundation Paper

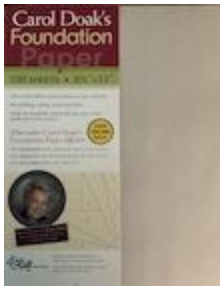

Image 1- Carol Doak's Foundation Paper - Image Source: Jeanne Sewell
Use foundation paper to print your pattern for paper piecing quilt blocks. There are several choices including plain newsprint, June Taylor Perfect Piecing, Simple Foundations Translucent Vellum Paper, It's Sew Emma Foundation Paper by Lori Holt, and Carol Doak's Foundation Paper. To learn more, view the YouTube video, Choosing Paper for Foundation Paper Piecing at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w9fdL7CDmQo

Fusibles for Applique



Image 2 - HeatNBond Lite - Image Source Jeanne Sewell
Fusibles are useful for applique. There are several fusible products available. One example is the image above - sewable HeatnBond Lite. Other products include Soft Fuse, Steam-A-Seam 2, Flexi Fuse, and Wonder Under by Pellon. The Learning Center hosted by Pat Sloan has some helpful information on fusibles at https://quiltinggallery.com/2012/05/03/an-overview-on-fusibles/

Silicon Mat to Position Applique Fabric Pieces



Image 3 - Silicon Mat - Image Source: Jeanne Sewell
Silicon mats make applique fabric piece placement easy. They are available as a cooking silicone mat and as fusing mats for applique.

Clear silicone cooking mats are available from a variety of vendors and can be purchased online from Amazon. You will need a printed pattern of the applique, a light source, and your fusible applique fabric pieces. Place the printed pattern on the light source and cover with the silicone

mat. You will be able to see the printed pattern to place your fabric pieces. Use the printed pattern to place the fusible applique pieces. Press the applique pieces together and then remove from the mat.

Fuse/fusing mats are specifically targeted for applique; however, they may be more expensive than silicone cooking mats.

To learn more view the YouTube video, Sew Sweet Pea Mat - How to Use an Applique Mat at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0KmnD8rQJM

Tablet Device as a Light Box

Where do I place the fabric? Use a light box to see through the back side of the design on the paper pattern. You can easily place your fabric pieces correctly. There are several ways to create your own light box online.

Create a Lightbox Using a Tablet Device

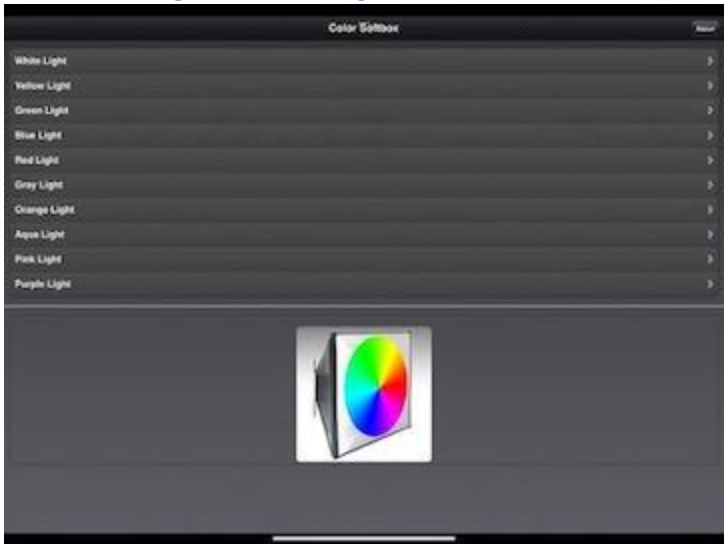

Image 4 - Soft Box Color App on the iPad - Image Source: Jeanne Sewell

Download the free app, Soft Box Color, from the device app store. Open the app and select White Light. (Optional) You may want to place a piece of thin plexiglass over the tablet as protection.

Next, place your fabric on the tablet, then place the pattern on top. Cut the fabric 1/2 inch or larger than the pattern. The lightbox is useful for paper piecing patterns and applique. Learn more at the YouTube video, How to Use Your Tablet as a Light box, at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nx0Fj583LIs

Template Plastic



Image 5 - Karen Kay Buckley's Perfect Heat Resistant Plastic - Image Source: Jeanne Sewell

The Karen Kay Buckley's Perfect Heat Resistant Template Plastic is helpful for prepared edge applique. The advantages of the template plastic include, it is:

- Writable on both sides by drawing/tracing by hand, using a mechanical pencil
- Printable using a copy machine
- Heat resistant using a iron with medium dry heat

You can cut out your templates with scissors. To learn more, view the YouTube video, Karen Kay Buckley's Perfect Heat Resistant Template Plastic, at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ox9B_OCLhc0&t=17s

Binding

Bias Binding from a Fat Quarter



Image 6 - Folded Fat Quarter for Bias Cutting - Image Source: Jeanne Sewell

Did you know that you can get over 4 yards of bias binding from a fat quarter of fabric? One very easy way is by folding and then cutting (you choose the width of the binding) and then sewing the pieces together. There are a number of YouTube videos (for example Kimberbell Designs at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3Q3rXvfSh0) which demonstrate this very easy way to create bias bindings from a fat quarter of fabric.

Binding with Faux Piping

If you want to add a decorative faux piping to accent your quilt, cut two strips of fabric. Cut the binding strip 1 ½" wide. Cut the strip for the accent piping 1 ¾" wide. Join each of the strips using a diagonal seam. Sew the binding strip to the accent strip using ¼" seam. Press the seam toward the binding strip right sides together and the raw edges aligned. To learn how to use this technique, view the YouTube video, Binding with Faux Piping at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKsuy90N9kk

Binding with Piping

If you want to add a decorative piping to accent your quilt, select the size of piping you want to use. Since some piping may shrink, test it with your iron using hot steam. Cut the accent piping strip on the bias using your preferred technique. Place the piping in the center of the accent strip, fold the strip in half wrong sides together and raw edges together. Sew along the edge of the piping using a piping foot or a zipper foot. Sew the fabric covered piping to the folded binding strip. Sew binding strip to the fabric along the seam that you used to add the piping. To learn more how to use this technique, view the YouTube video, Binding with Piping with Karen Charles at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pdjNWvcT0LY

Continuous Bias Binding

One technique when making continuous binding is to cut a large square of fabric. Afterwards, cut the square in half, mark half then sew them together, then continue lines on the other half to make a tube. Once the tube is sewn, slide the tube over a cutting mat and slice into strips. To learn more about this technique, view the McCall's Quilting YouTube video, How to Make Continuous Bias Quilt Binding at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EN6snRR76IQ&t=108s

Cutting

Add-a-Quarter Inch Ruler for Trimmin Fabric when Paper-Piecing



Image 7 - Add-a-Quarter Ruler - Image Source: Jeanne Sewell

The add-a-quarter ruler makes it easy to trim fabric when paper-piecing. The ruler comes in two sizes, six-inch and twelve-inch. You will also need a rotary cutter and card stock. Alternatives for card stock include tear outs that come with magazines and template plastic. To learn more, view the YouTube video, Paper Piecing – How to Use the Add-a-Quarter Ruler, at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3A_KnbKbtxo.

Cutting Templates



Image 8 - Martelli Templates - Image Source: Jeanne Sewell

If you cut a lot of scraps into squares, Martelli makes a set of templates that make cutting faster, easier, as well as more accurate. You can cut up to 8 layers at one time…just layer your fabric, place a template on top, and cut all 4 sides by turning the template. The template has a special no-slip material to lock the layers together. The templates come in a set, 2.5", 3.5", 4.5" and 5.5". To learn more, view the YouTube video, Martelli Minute - 2"-5" Small Square Template Set, at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pdWny3t9MqI&t=1s . Check out all of the Martelli products at http://www.martellinotions.com.

A similar product is the TRC Engraving & Graphics Square Quilt Template set of 1.5", 2", and 3" squares.

Rotating Cutting Mat

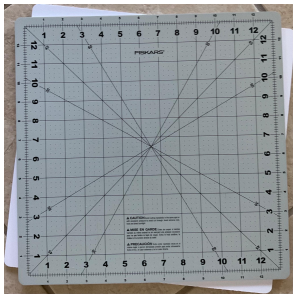

Image 9 - Fiskars Rotating Mat - Image Source: Jeanne Sewell

Rotating cutting mats provide a cutting surface that allows you to cut quilt fabric for piecing without moving around the table or adjusting the position of your fabric. There are several products available including the Fiskars 14x14 Inch self healing rotating cutting mat show in the image above, Madam Sew Self Healing 12x12 cutting mat, Calibre Art 14x14 self healing cutting mat, Skyhawk 14x14 Self Healing cutting mat, Omnigrid 8" rotating cutting mat, the Martelli 16" cutting mat (an accessory used with the Martelli Round-About Turn Table), and the WORKLION 14x14 self healing cutting round turntable.

Fabric Stabilizer's & Solutions

Combination of Freezer Paper and Spray Starch to Stabilize Fabric Applique Pieces

You can use a combination of freezer paper and spray starch to stabilize for finished edge applique pieces. Cut out the applique piece with freezer paper. Cut the fabric used for the applique piece about 1/4" larger than the applique. Iron the freezer paper onto the fabric with the shiny side down on the underside of the fabric. Spray the edges of the fabric with spray starch. Turn the edge of the fabric over the edge of the freezer paper and iron in place. Remove the freezer paper before applying the applique to the fabric. To learn more, view the YouTube video, Turn Under Machine Applique with Freezer Paper at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FYv-AiAhQJ0

Fabric Stabilizer Using Hotfix Adhesive

Hotfix Adhesive is a permanent iron-on adhesive useful with appliques. Fuse it to the fabric by ironing it on front and back. Once it is fused you can cut the applique pieces using a die cutter such as a Cricut or Accuquilt. Peel off the paper backing to fuse the applique in place.

You can also print your pattern on a sheet of Hotfix Adhesive using an inkjet printer. Afterwards, fuse the adhesive to the fabric by ironing it on front and back. Peel off the paper backing to fuse the applique in place. To learn more, view the YouTube video, Hotfix Adhesive How to Use at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r3LgOiA1xoQ .

Fabric Stabilizer and Stiffener Solutions

Fabric stabilizer and stiffeners are useful when cutting and piecing.

- **Canned Spray Fabric Stiffeners**

  A canned spray starch like Faultless stiffens fabric for cutting and ironing after piecing. An alternative spray stiffener is Magic Sizing.

- **Combination of Freezer Paper with Spray Starch**

  A combination of freezer paper and spray starch is useful with applique. Cut the freezer paper the size of the applique piece. Cut the fabric ¼" larger. Press the freezer paper in the center. Then, spray the spray starch into a small bowl of cap of the can. Use a small paint brush on the fabric edges. Fold and iron in place. To learn more go to Hyacinth Quilt Designs at http://hyacinthquiltdesigns.blogspot.com/2013/10/applique-with-freezer-paper-and-starch.html

- **Quilter's Moonshine**

  You can also make your own DIY spray starch using the Quilter's Moonshine recipe below.

  Mix the following together in a container that hold more than 1 gallon. Then pour the desired amount into an empty spray bottle.

  1 gallon distilled water
  1/2 cup liquid starch (like Sta-Flo or Niagara)

1 cup vodka (the cheaper the better)
(optional) 4 tsp Febreze – of your preferred scent

- **Terial Magic Spray Bottle Fabric Stabilizer**
  Terial Magic is a spray bottle fabric stabilizer. Once the fabric is completely coated with Terial Magic, hang it to dry. Afterwards, iron the stabilized fabric and it becomes like paper useful for raw and finished edge applique. To learn more, view the YouTube video, How to Use Terial Magic with Mister Domestic | Fat Quarter Shop at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TqOL5NcX0ow

Spray Bottle with a Fine Mist



Have you had problems with globs of water from a regular spray bottle? Consider using the Hair Mister Spray Bottle that gives a very fine mist. You can make the spray almost continuous. The spray bottle works well with Best Press. Hair Mister Spray Bottle Continuous Pressurized 360 Fine Mist Water Sprayers Clear 300ml 10oz is available from Amazon at https://tinyurl.com/3tbe95dh

Image 10 - Hair Mister Spray Bottle - Image Source - Jeanne Sewell

Maintenance

Mini Cutting Mats

Don't throw away a cracked, bent, or worn cutting mat. Instead, use tin snips or utility knife to trim the best portion into a square slightly larger than your favorite block size. The next time you're squaring up blocks, place the trimmed mat square on top of your full size cutting mat. The mini mat will rotate easily as you trim your blocks, eliminating the need to move the fabric or yourself around the cutting table.

Needle Nose Pliers for Pullingl Up the Bottom Thread When Machine Quilting

Use needle nose pliers to assist pulling bottom thread up. Hold the top thread with either fingers or the pliers so bottom thread comes up. Then use the pliers to put the threads under the foot. A good pair of quilter's tweezers works as well.

Reminder for Cleaning a Bobbin Case or Sewing Machine Needle

To create a reminder when you last cleaned the bobbin case or replaced the needle, write the information on a small piece of masking tape and stick it on the sewing machine at eye level.

Reminder for Replacing a Rotary Cutter Blade Trick

To create a reminder to replace the blade in the rotary cutter, write the date on a small piece of masking tape and attach it to the body of the rotary cutter.

Organization

Empty Spools and a Lazy Susan as Handy Sewing Items Tricks

Use large empty spools as holders for brushes to clean your sewing machine. Use a Lazy Susan to place by your machine for items you use often.

Fabric Organization Strategies

There are many ways to keep fabric organized. A few examples follow below.

- **Plastic shelves/drawers** - store fabric that is cut into various sizes & store in plastic shelves/drawers, as examples: strip drawers and square drawers.
- **Large clamps** keep fabric on the table when pinning a quilt. Needle nose pliers to straighten stitch pins.
- **Binder clips** - put scissors or tweezer in handle hole. Attach magnet to binder clip to hold seam rippers, etc.
- **Bag from sheets made of cotton fabric** - to use as a thread catcher for sergers.
- **Door Stoppers** - use 2 door stoppers at back of machine to elevate and slant the sewing machine.

Patterns and Files

Free PDF files for Harry Potter, Minecraft and Pokémon Quilts

The Seriously I Think It Needs Stitches website by Kelli Fannin Quilt Designs has Sewalongs, tutorials, and patterns. The Sewalong site at https://www.kellifanninquilts.com/p/sewalongs.html has free pdf files for Harry Potter, Minecraft and Pokémon quilts.

Sewing

4-at-a-Time Flying Geese Units

You can make 4 flying geese units at a time accurately using a Fons & Porter technique. Cut 4 squares of fabric that are 7/8" larger than the finished unit size. In addition, cut a larger square that is 1 ¼" larger than the finished unit width. On the smaller squares mark a line from corner to corner, then mark the sewing line ¼" on either side of the center line. Position 2 of the small squares on opposite corners of the larger square so that the sewing lines match up (note that they will slightly overlap in the middle). Sew on the marked sewing lines. Cut the square in half on

the center marked line. Press the seams toward the smaller triangles using spray starch to flatten the seam. Next add the last small square on the corner of the larger triangle unit. Sew on the marked seam lines. Cut the units in half on the marked center line. Press using spray starch to flatten the seams. You will end up with 4 flying geese units. To learn how to use this technique, view the Fons & Porter YouTube video, Sew Easy: Quick-Pieced Flying-Geese Units, at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HKnwiaNHx_I

8-at-a-Time Triangle Squares

You can make 8 triangle squares at a time, accurately using a Fons & Porter technique. Cut 2 squares twice the size of the finished triangle square plus 1 ¾". Use a quarter inch seam marker or draw a line from corner to corner and then mark ¼" line on either side. Sew on the ¼" lines. Cut into 4 squares and then cut the squares into triangles. To learn how to use this technique, view the Fons & Porter YouTube video. Sew Easy: 8-at-a-time Triangle Squares, at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vb6vxkkWC-c

Bernina Sewing Tutorials

Bernina WeAllSew provides tutorials that are especially helpful to those new to sewing and/or novice quilters. The tutorials and links are listed below:

- Basic Sewing Tools for Beginners - https://tinyurl.com/2p93epbh
- Basic Sewing Techniques for Beginners - https://tinyurl.com/2p87bk5v
- Sewing Needle Guide: What to Use and Why - https://tinyurl.com/2p989v29
- Basic Sewing Projects for Beginners - https://tinyurl.com/2p8cpnas
- How to Make a Quilt: Project for Beginners - https://tinyurl.com/2p8bjjav
- How to Quilt with Triangles Beginner's Series - https://tinyurl.com/26fph4t3
- Applique and Ruching for Beginners - https://tinyurl.com/42m4z8vd
- How to Get Started with Free Motion Quilting - https://tinyurl.com/2nnpc9rt
- Rulerwork for Beginner Series - https://tinyurl.com/25ebym9f

Fons & Porter Free 25 Sew Easy Lessons eBook

Fons & Porter offers a free eBook with 25 techniques for quilting. You can download the eBook from https://www.quiltingdaily.com/free-fons-porters-sew-easy-lessons-ebook/ after completing a form with your email address and preferences for quilting. If you want to view an associated YouTube video, search YouTube with the title of the Fons & Porter technique.

Mitered Corner Borders

You may want to add one or more borders with mitered corners to your quilt or quilt block. A couple of strategies follow below.

- Cut the border longer than the block so that you can miter the corners. Fold the border in half and mark the center. Fold the block in half and mark its center. Match the center of the border strip with the center of the block. Sew the two fabrics right sides together, starting and stopping ¼" from the block edge. Add the other three pieces of border using the same technique. Once all 4 pieces of border are added, your next step is to miter each of the corners. Fold the block in half diagonally, with the "flaps" of the borders together. Mark the seam line diagonally on the border. Sew the two strips together starting where

you stopped the seam when you added the borders. Cut ¼" inch outside the seam, open up the block and press. Use the same technique on the other three corners. To learn more how to use this technique, view the YouTube video, Sew Easy: Mitered Corners at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mmPamKC5e8s

- On the right side of the quilt, overlap the corner as usual, being careful not to stretch the bias fabric at the corner. PRESS (not iron) the corner in place. Tape blue painter's tape to secure position of the corner overlap, then gingerly finger-press (no rubbing allowed) it into a firm seal. Turn to wrong side, extend overlapped tails and sew right at the crease created while avoiding sewing the tape. Remove the tape and see the great mitered corner you've just made.

Pool Noodles for Basting Your Quilt

You will need 4 pool noodles, tape or pins, and a can of spray baste. You can use a dining room table for this technique. Watch The Sewing Channel YouTube video, How to Baste a Quilt the Easy Way ~ Pool Noodle Quilt Basting Technique, at https://youtu.be/I0j7u8bGW7A

Printable Fabric Sheets



Image 11 - June Taylor Sew-In Colorfast Fabric Sheets - Image Source: Jeanne Sewell

Printable Fabric Sheets are useful when you want to create a custom quilt label and/or want to make a memory quilt with photos. Several products are available including June Tailor Colorfast White Printer Paper, June Taylor Sew-In Colorfast Fabric Sheets for Ink Jet Printers, and Lansing Photo Fabric Computer Crafting At Home 100% Cotton Poplin Sheets. To learn more read Quilting Daily, 21 Tips for Printing on Fabric at https://www.quiltingdaily.com/21-tips-photos-to-fabric-lessons-quiltmaker/

Quilt Blocks with Y-Seams

Quilt blocks with Y-seams can be tricky. Strategies for successfully creating blocks with Y-seams include:

- Terrye Finch's YouTube video Y-Seams Made Easy with Kaye Wood's Techniques at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0lz-zlCZY_Y
- Clare Rowley's YouTube Video Y Seam Trick – Kaye wood Slumber Party – Episode 7 at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7Z5tLee66c
- Fat Quarter Shop YouTube video featuring Edyta Sitar from Laundry Basket quilts, *How to Sew a Basic Y-Seam in a Quilt Block* at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-DBztmnqK-M

Super Sliders for Free Motion Machine Quilting

Super Sliders help move your fabric along more smoothly as you free motion quilt. They can help you produce more even stitches and make the experience easier on your hands, arms, and shoulders. They are also likely to reduce frustration and insanity in the quilting population. In a pinch (as in no stores open during COVID-19 days), you can make one yourself from parchment paper.

Storage

Clamps for Quilt Sandwich Pinning



Image 12 - Spring Clamp - Image Source: Geri Wires

First identify the thickness of the table you plan to use to sandwich the quilt. Then select the pertinent clamp. Two examples are:

- Coghlan's Tablecloth Clamps from Cabelas.com https://www.cabelas.com/shop/en/coghlans-tablecloth-clamps
- Quick release clamps such as a spring clamp pictured above available from Home Depot. https://www.homedepot.com/s/spring%2520clamp?NCNI-5

Needle and Pin Holder



Image 13 - Needle and Pin Holder - Image Source: Paula Tanner

Cut a small piece of cardboard to fit into the back of an empty picture frame with a fold out stand – without glass. Center several layers of batting just shy of the frame's opening. Cut a decorative piece of fabric to cover the batting and wrap around the backside cardboard. Tape the fabric edges to the backside of the cardboard. Put the back of the frame back in place. You can find the online tutorial at https://lovegrowswild.com/2013/04/how-to-make-a-picture-frame-pin-cushion/.

Quilt Display

Purchase a neutral bedspread or coverlet and bed skirt for your bed so you can use a throw quilt as a topper. This allows you to enjoy quilts that otherwise wouldn't fit on the bed and you can change the quilt with the seasons.

Recycle and Reuse

Get creative and reuse items you might have at home. Examples are to use:

- **Nutter Butter Family Size Peanut Butter cookie trays** to store threads in order of color. The cookie trays also make good drawer dividers. They are stackable and lightweight.
- **Family size Honey Nut Cheerios cereal boxes**. Cut the front and back sides to sort and carry individual blocks for quilts to and from cutting, sewing and pressing. This keeps blocks and their individual pieces flat until they are joined into a quilt top. This also allows you to stack and store them.
- **Large Coffee Mate red plastic or Maxwell House coffee gold plastic snap-off lids** to hold safety pins while pinning your quilt sandwich. The lids slide smoothly on the surface of the quilt top and make grasping the pins easy.
- **Kentucky Fried Chicken slaw and potato sealable take-out containers** to store straight pins, buttons, and other small items. The see-through containers are sturdy for use.
- **Chick-fil-a plastic take out containers** are also see-through containers and sturdy to carry small threads, notions, seam ripper, snips, etc.
- **Small plastic snap-on lids f**rom various spray products to hold spools of thread when hand sewing. You can pull off lengths of thread easily as the spool spins inside the lid.
- **Recycled plastic boxes** that produce, like lettuce & strawberries, come in. They make excellent containers for small cut pieces and/or small blocks.
- **Small jars** can be recycled for 2 1/2" light and dark fabric squares.
- **Artist brushes** to clean your sewing machine
- **Bags from Quilt in a Day** to hold projects

Tools

Block Loc Half Square Triangle Ruler for Squaring Up Blocks

Use the Block Loc Square Triangle Ruler to square up half square triangle blocks. Makes piecing the quilt easier since blocks are a uniform size. Ruler comes in several sizes; a larger size works for smaller size blocks & thus is more useful than a smaller ruler. To learn more about the ruler, view the YouTube video, Bloc Loc Half Square Triangle Ruler How To Video by Block Loc Rulers at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gUqbjcV36IE

Fabric Color Catcher



Image 14 - Shout Color Catcher - Image Source: Jeanne Sewell

A color catcher is helpful when washing a quilt for the first time. The sheets catch the excess dye in fabrics to prevent color runs.

Fabric Pen Style Marking Chalk



Image 15 - Clover Chaco Liner Pen - Image Source: Geri Wires

Chalk markers use a powdered chalk to draw very thin lines on fabric. The chalk is dispensed from a tiny roller. The markers are refillable. The Clover CHACO Liner Pen shown in the image above is an example. Similar products include Madam Sew Chalk Fabric Marker and Abric Chalk Markers for Quilting. The Abric chalk markers come in a set of three colors, white, pink, and yellow. The white marker is great for marking dark fabrics and is easily removed with a damp cloth. It is available for Amazon for about $10.

Fabric Pencil



Image 16 - Sewline Fabric Pencil - Image Source: Geri Wires

Use the Sewline Fabric pencil to draw a fine line on paper or fabric. It is a ceramic pencil that comes in five colors: black, green, pink, yellow, and white. The pen comes with a tube of refills and is about $11 on Amazon. The white marker is great for those blacks and dark fabrics. Erase it with the built-in eraser or sponge off with water. To learn more, watch the YouTube video, Sewline Fabric Pencil at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dxdVu2sYzBY

Heat Erasable Fabric Pens

Use heat erasable fabric marking pens to temporarily mark fabric when sewing. Madam Sew Heat erasable marking pens (3 colors plus white) are available in quilt shops and online with *Madam Sew* at https://madamsew.com/products/heat-erasable-fabric-marking-gel-pens

Some quilters use the Frixion pen by Pilot. After quilting, use a iron with steam to "erase" the ink lines.



Image 17 - Frixon Clicker Pen - Image Source: Geri Wires

Pilot Pen makes a heat-ersable pen called Frixon Clicker. The heat from your iron will erase markings. Be careful and don't confuse it with a regular ball point pen. Put a small ribbon on the Frixon pen to identify it as "erasable". Be sure to read the following articles before you decide to use the Frixion pen.

- Jenny K Lyon - Frixion Pen at https://www.quiltingdaily.com/21-tips-photos-to-fabric-lessons-quiltmaker/
- Julie Cefalu, The Crafty Quilter, Are Frixion Pens Safe to Use on Quilts at https://thecraftyquilter.com/2019/05/are-frixion-pens-safe-to-use-on-quilts-2/

Karen Kay Buckley Applique' Aids

Perfect circles, large circles, ovals, leaves and stems templates are great tools for making perfect turned edge shapes. The Karen Kay Buckley Perfect scissors with a protective cover have a sharpen-capable blade and one serrated blade which grabs and holds onto the fabric for a perfect cut.

Needle Puller Trick for Hand Quilters

If you are a hand quilter, using a needle puller (red plastic gadget) helps you pull your needle through thick areas (seams). You can purchase a needle puller from quilt shops as well as Amazon. To learn more about how to use a needle puller tool, go to the Sew Sweetness How to Use the Bohin Needle Puller at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JvpAHHLNamI

Consider using a small flexible mat to pull needles (smaller but similar to that used to open jars). See example in photo below.

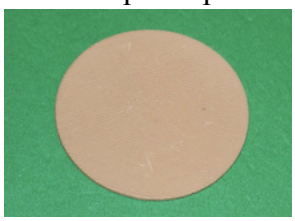

Image 18 - Flexible Mat - Image Source: Paula Tanner

Needle Threaders

Use the Bohin automatic needle threader to make it easy to thread small and larger needles. Learn more at the YouTube video, How to Use the Bohin Easy Needle Threader, at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XZpRd5xGpyc

Use a Clover craft yarn needle threader to thread needles with twisted fibers such as yarn.

Quick Quarter/Quarter Inch Ruler for Triangles from Squares



Image 19 - Quick Quarter Rulers - Image Source: Jeanne Sewell

Quick quarter inch rulers are helpful when making triangle pieces such as Make 8-at-a-time Quick Triangle Squares. The image above displays the Omni quarter ruler. Similar products include Fons & Porter Quarter Inch Seam Markers and Quilter's Quick Quarter. To use the ruler, place the center line diagonally on the square you want to divide into triangles. Mark and sew the seam lines. Afterwards, cut the triangles apart at the center of the two seam lines.

Ruler Suction Grip Holder

Use a suction cup ruler grip to keep the ruler from slipping when cutting. The ruler grip is available from a variety of vendors at quilt stores and online at Amazon.
https://www.amazon.com/quilting-ruler-handle/s?k=quilting+ruler+handle

Ruler Weight

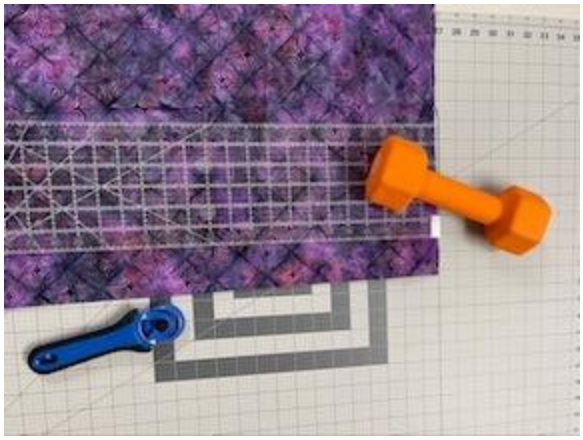

Image 20 - Ruler Weight - Image Source: Geri Wires

When using a long, 24" ruler for cutting yardage place a hand weight (seen in the image above) at the far end of the ruler once you have your ruler in place. Place your hand on the ruler end closest to you. The weight will prevent the ruler from slipping as you make the long cut.

Sewing Clips



Image 21 - Sewing Clips - Image Source: Jeanne Sewell
Sewing clips can replace the use of straight pins when working on a quilt. They are especially helpful when matching seams on a quilt block or adding a binding to the quilt.

Small Iron Solutions

Sometimes you need a small iron, especially when paper-piecing. There are several options.

- **Small Iron**



Image 22 - Steamfast Mini-Iron - Image Source: Geri Wires
For example, the Steamfast mini-iron is a solution. Some quilters prefer to use it without water because it may leak. Another solutions include the IIMII Mini Travel Steam Iron, the Mini Heat Press Iron, and the Dyno Merchandise Handy Press Mini-iron.

- **Mini-iron with Small Iron Tip**



Image 23 - CNI Mini-Iron - Image Source: Carol McRae
Mini-irons are popular with quilters who do paper-piecing. There are several products available, for example, Clover makes a mini-iron with interchangeable ironing tips. The EXSI Rigid Mini-iron and the CNI mini-iron are two other products with small hot ironing tips.

Specialty Rulers for Creating Quilt Squares with Odd Angled Pieces

If you want to create a quilt square with pieces that have angles other than square or half square, consider using an appropriate specialty ruler. Specialty rulers are available from a number of sources. Examples include:

- Creative grids "kitty corner" rulers at https://tinyurl.com/3mx4nv7d . Learn how to use the ruler from the YouTube The Whimsical Workshop video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1OVue3zV9k
- Deb Tucker's rulers at http://tinyurl.com/ym7k77fc

Tailor's Clapper



Image 24 - Tailor's Clapper - Image Source: Jeanne Sewell

A tailor's clapper is great for getting nice, flat, crisp seams and quilt blocks. It is made of wood that will absorb steam and moisture away from your fabric while trapping in heat, thus resulting in a great looking block! For more information go to the Suzy Quilts blog, 8 Things You Never Knew About The TAILOR's CLAPPER at https://suzyquilts.com/tailors-clapper/

The wood for the tailor's clapper needs to be a hardwood such as maple, tulipwood, etc. Do you woodwork or know someone that does? A link for making your own is How to Make a Tailor's Clapper by Instructables Workshop at https://www.instructables.com/How-to-Make-a-Tailors-Clapper/

If you or a friend isn't handy working with wood, consider making a simple clapper using about 12inches of a 2x4 (see image below). Check the scrap bin at Lowes or Home Depot for odd sizes. All you need do is sand it really well. The simple homemade clapper does a good job at keeping seams flat.



Image 25 - Homemade Tailor's Clapper - Image Source: Jeanne Sewell

Washable Glue Stick



Image 26 - Washable Glue Stick - Image Source: Jeanne Sewell
A glue stick that is washable is useful with applique and paper-piecing. Use the glue stick to place the applique piece on the background. You can also use it to position the first fabric when paper-piecing a quilt block.

Water Erasable Fabric Pens

Use a water erasable pen to mark quilt lines or placement of appliques. The water erasable fabric pens are available from quilt shops and Amazon at http://tinyurl.com/25ya97zh

Wool Pressing Mat



Image 27 - Wool Pressing Mat - Image Source: Jeanne Sewell
A wool pressing mat allows you to press seams on quilt blocks flat. The mat is lightweight and portable. It is available from a variety of manufacturers and comes in several sizes.

Workspace Cleaning & Organizing

Blood Stain Removal From Fabric Solution

Stick your finger when quilting? Blood stains can be quickly removed with “your” saliva.

Iron Cleaning Solutions

There are a couple of solutions for cleaning your iron.

- **Faultless Hot Iron Cleaner**



Image 28 - Faultless Hot Iron Cleaner - Image Source: Geri wires

Sometimes a dryer sheet doesn't get your iron clean enough. Then it's time for some heavy duty cleaning. Faultless makes a handy 2-pack of Hot Iron Cleaner for about $5 (Amazon). Just squeeze the tube contents on a rag or towel and run your iron over it. After the soleplate is clean, wipe the iron soleplate on a clean part of the towel to remove any remaining cleaner.If your steam holes are clogged, use a Q-tip to remove any residue.

- ***Used* Dryer Sheet with Parchment Paper**

  Place a ***used*** dryer sheet on a piece of parchment paper about 4 times larger than the sheet. Iron the dryer sheet and watch as magic happens. Crumple up the dryer sheet carefully and rub the edge of the iron's face or stubborn spots for a really clean job. Don't try it with a new dryer sheet because it will be really messy.

Lint Roller as a Quick Sewing Room Clean Up

Use a lint roller for quick cleanup of threads on sewing room floor or loose threads after ripping threads from fabric (Also works well for dusting lamp shades).

Notes