



FAQs



Whether you are new to quilting, or trying a different kind of batting for the first time, you may have questions about which products to choose and what to expect. Here are questions that we are often asked.

Which is the best batting for me? The answer to this question is determined by your end goals for the quilt itself. What you choose for a baby quilt may be quite different than your choice for a competitive show entry.

The following factors should be considered:

- *Fiber Content* – Do I want natural or synthetic fibers?
- *Loft* – Do I want the quilt to be flat or puffy?
- *Drape* – Do I need structure for a wall hanging or soft drape for a garment?
- *Resilience* – Does this batting show creases or spring back to its original shape quickly?
- *Washability* – Will it be a wall decoration or a much loved and washed baby quilt?
- *Shrinkage* – Do I prefer a flat contemporary look or a slightly puckered vintage appearance?
- *Ease of needling* – Will I be hand or machine quilting?

Other factors to consider include the desired warmth, weight and color of the batting.

Hobbs provides a variety of battings so that quilters have options when choosing which product best meets their goals for each project. Personal preference is a very important factor when choosing the texture desired for your work. It is recommended that you keep a notebook that includes information about each quilt that you create. Most quilters have a personal favorite when it comes to batting. Your personal favorite will become clear over time as you use and wash your family quilts.

What is scrim? Scrim is a very thin layer of stabilizer that is needle punched into the batting during manufacturing. It provides extra strength and durability and allows the quilting lines to be placed at greater distances.

Why would I choose bleached batting? Bleached batting is a wonderful choice for quilts that are primarily white. The lighter color of the batting helps retain the brightness of the white background pieces. An ecru batting will certainly be acceptable, but it does soften the clarity of a true white.

Why would I choose black batting?

Quilters often prefer black batting when creating dark quilts in an effort to avoid

light colored lint showing on the surface of the quilt. Although this lint fiber washes away or can be easily removed with a lint roller, it is a time saver to simply use a batting that is similar in color value to the quilt top itself. Quilts created with fabrics that have black, navy, or dark brown backgrounds, or quilts that are predominantly made with darker earth colors are ideal for this type of batting.

What batting should I use in my T-Shirt quilt?

Any of our battings work well for T-Shirt quilts. Many people choose Heirloom® 80/20 for ease of use and excellent durability over time. Another great choice is Thermore®. This 100% polyester batting provides stability, low loft, and very little extra weight. T-Shirts quilts tend to be quite heavy even before adding the back and batting. Thermore® also allows a greater quilting distance for those who do not choose to quilt over the top of the printed designs on the T-Shirts themselves.

What batting should I use in my flannel quilt?

Many quilters prefer to use Hobbs wool batting in flannel quilts. The wool is very light weight but provides a cozy, puffy feel due to its loft and resilience. The combination of wool and flannel makes a very warm, cuddly quilt. Some quilters prefer the flatter texture that can be found when using 100% cotton or Thermore®. Again, the choice comes down to the final look and feel desired. Any of the Hobbs battings will work successfully with flannel.

What batting should I use in my baby quilt?

Again, personal preference comes into play here. Some prefer natural fibers and stick with cotton, wool or silk. Others prefer the washability and loft choices provided by Poly-Down® or Thermore®. Many quilters find that Heirloom® 80/20 blend is a great choice because it provides the look and feel of a vintage cotton quilt. The small bit of polyester in the blend provides a little extra loft as well as extra strength for frequent washing. Tuscany silk or wool make lovely baby quilts, but do require a gentle touch when washing.

What batting should I use behind [Redwork embroidery](#)?

Thermore® is often recommended by teachers as a stabilizer behind Redwork embroidery. Cut the batting piece the same size as the fabric square. Doing the embroidery through this extra layer provides additional definition and interest to the needlework as well as providing an easier spot to hide thread tails while stitching. Leave the Thermore® in place when piecing the squares, and layer the top over the preferred batting for the final quilting process.

How do I wash my quilt? All quilts, old or new, should be washed with care. It is recommended to wash by hand or in a washer on the gentle cycle using cool water. Be especially cautious with front loading washers as the intense spin cycle on these machines can be very hard on quilts. Drying should be done on the very lowest heat setting or on air dry. If no shrinkage is desired, laying the quilt out to air dry is recommended. Extreme heat and agitation should be avoided for any quilt, but particularly for quilts with silk and wool battings. Over drying is detrimental to the long term strength and colorfastness of any quilt and should be avoided.

Vintage quilts require a more delicate process of gently soaking in a bathtub of cool water on top of a large sheet. Fill the tub, soak, and drain the water. Repeat until the water runs clear. Allow the final rinse water to drain away and use the sheet to carry the wet quilt to be laid out to air dry on a flat surface. The sheet helps to safeguard the quilt during transport. Without it the weight of the wet quilt can cause thread breakage or tearing of fragile fabrics.

Should I prewash my batting? Hobbs Bonded Fibers does not recommend prewashing the battings. They are designed to be used directly from the package. If prewashing is desired, the batting should be soaked in the bathtub, not a machine washer as the spin on the new washers have been known to damage batting as well. Be sure to handle gently to prevent tearing while wet.

How do I remove any creases or wrinkles caused by packaging?

You can place the batting in the drier for 5 to 10 minutes with a damp washcloth to remove creases or wrinkles.

What is the lightest batting? For those that prefer natural fibers, the Tuscany silk and the wool battings are the top choice. Both are very lightweight. The difference is in the loft. Hobbs wool has a puffiness that shows off the quilting designs and silk has the slightly puckered, flat look of a traditional quilt after washing. For those that prefer a synthetic fiber both the Poly-Down® and Thermore® are light in weight. Again, the loft is the difference. Thermore® will be a lower loft texture more similar to cotton, and Poly-Down® will have a puffy look that accentuates the quilt designs.

What is the warmest batting? The warmth of a quilt is affected by the fibers used and by the amount of quilting in the quilt. Larger air pockets provide more storage for warm air. Therefore, a quilt that is extremely closely quilted will not provide as much warmth as one that is quilted 2-4" apart. Silk and wool are both considered to be warm fibers. Natural fibers are more breathable and allow moisture to evaporate while holding warmth in the air pockets. Polyester also retains a great deal of warmth. Poly-Down® is very popular for colder climates.

What is the thinnest batting? Thermore® is a very thin, flat, lightweight batting in the polyester group. Hobbs Tuscany Silk and our 100% cotton are natural fibers that are also very low loft and have a flat appearance.

What is the loftiest batting? Wool is our loftiest natural fiber. Poly-Down® has a loft of about ¼". Cloud Loft® is an extra puffy batting in the polyester group.

What batting should I use for garments? Tuscany Silk and Thermore® are the most common choices for clothing. Both have a nice drape and a low loft that does not add bulk to the wearer.

What is the best batting for hand quilting? The top choices for hand quilters are usually the wool or the silk depending on the loft preferred. For those that prefer polyester, the Poly-Down® and Thermore® are both very easy to needle. Again, the difference lies in the loft. Wool and Poly-Down® will provide more loft. Silk and Thermore® will provide the flat traditional look of cotton, but will needle much more easily than cotton.

How do I fuse your Heirloom® Fusible batting? Layer your quilt top, batting

and backing. To fuse all three layers of your quilt at once, set iron on a wool or cotton setting with steam. Simply press quilt from the center to the outer edges. Be sure to keep your iron moving, pressing approximately 2-3 seconds in each area. This is only a temporary fuse. If you make a mistake or have a crease, simply lift the fabric and reapply the iron to fuse again. Once you have covered the entire surface area of your quilt, allow the quilt to cool. You may then begin quilting. It is possible to fuse one side at a time if desired. Use a silicone mat or other protective surface to prevent the exposed side of the batting from fusing to the ironing board cover.

What is bearding?

Bearding refers to the migration of batting fibers through the fabric of the quilt. It appears as small wispy bits of the batting fiber working out of the fabric piece. The primary culprit in this situation is low quality or loosely woven fabrics. It is important to purchase high quality fabric for the back of the quilt as well as the front. After so many hours spent creating a lovely quilt top, it is not wise to choose bargain bin fabric for the backing. Hobbs Bonded Fibers uses a patented Triple Pass resin bonding process to reduce the risk of bearding in quilts. Gentle treatment during washing and taking care not to overdry the quilt can also help prevent any future bearding issues with the quilt.

What are “pokies”?

This term usually refers to small bits of batting fibers appearing on the back of the quilt during the quilting process. This is most common with cotton or cotton blend battings and the bits on the back will wash away during laundering. Occasionally seen during the long arm quilting process, it is most often a result of an oversized needle or a needle that has a slight burr that is not visible to the eye. Changing the machine needle will usually correct the issue. Thread choice can also be a factor. Cotton is a dry fiber and occasionally cotton threads will pull at the cotton batting fibers during the quilting process. Changing to a polyester thread can alleviate the problem. Using high quality thread is very important to successful machine quilting. Lower quality threads generate a great deal of lint and break easily at the high speeds used in machine stitching.

Which batting do show quilters use?

Show quilters have a variety of needs depending on the type of quilt being created. Some prefer a very flat, sturdy surface for quilting and some prefer extra loft to show off the design work. Many of the competitive quilts seen currently use Hobbs Tuscany wool to provide the loft. It is very common to see double batts in the competitive quilts. Some use two layers of wool, or layer a piece of wool over either 80/20 or cotton. Some prefer a double layer of Heirloom[®] 80/20. Others may layer Poly-Down[®] over Heirloom[®] 80/20. The Tuscany Cotton Wool blend is also a nice choice that provides both strength and loft. It is recommended that quilters experiment with all the battings and combinations to find the look that gives the desired effect and allows both the piecing and the quilting designs to show off to greatest advantage.