



Through THE NEEDLE

BERNINA®

Issue 9

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SPECIAL EDITION:
Keep Quilting
with Alex
Anderson

The power to follow your inspiration.



Quilt by Alex Anderson

**Visit your Bernina Dealer and experience
the new lightweight and powerful activa machines.**

Introducing the new activa I45S and I35S Patchwork Edition. Both are lightweight for easy portability and power-packed to penetrate the heaviest of fabrics. With the attachable accessory case, all of your sewing tools can easily follow you to kitchen to class to garden—wherever your inspiration blooms.

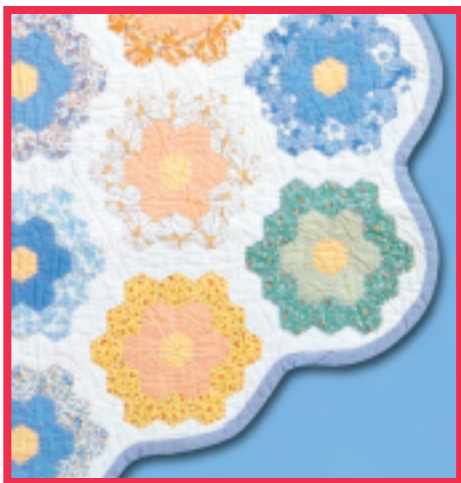
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BERNINA®



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We Are...



JO LEICHTE

Featured Foot, To Steam or Not to Steam?

Currently stitching a collection of purses and totebags, Jo is constantly on the lookout for quick, simple projects to share with beginning seamsters. As Editor for BERNINA® of America, Jo is instrumental in the production of *Through the Needle*.



CHERYL SAVINI

My Favorite Quilting Notions

Cheryl learned to sew at a young age, and began quilting about 12 years ago. As Major Accounts Sales Manager for Quilters Resource, Inc., one of her favorite activities is meeting creative and talented quilters from all over the world.



DIANE GAUDYNSKI

Machine Quilting Pointers

The first quilt that Diane machine quilted was voted a "Viewers' Choice" award in 1989. Since then, her quilts have become more extensively quilted, and have consistently won awards at every show entered. Her style is definitely her own and easily recognizable.



GAYLE HILLERT

*BERNINA® News;
My Grandma's Quilt*

An avid sewer since she was a young girl, Gayle has managed to combine her vocation and her avocation. As Vice President of Education for BERNINA® of America, Inc. she is responsible for training, education and testing functions relating to all BERNINA® products.



ALEX ANDERSON

*Quality Quilts;
Sawtooth Star Quilt*

Alex's personal mission is to share her love of quilting with anyone who will listen by educating and encouraging those interested in quilting. She also enjoys enlightening those who really aren't interested in the craft itself about this art, so carefully handed down from generation to generation.



SUSAN NEILL

*The Intelligent Cat's
Guide to the Care &
Feeding of a Quilting Companion*

Susan is Marketing Director for Benartex fabrics; her diverse background includes over 20 years of advertising, marketing and merchandising experience. She is responsible for the concept and text for Benartex newsletters, flyers, bulletins, website, and advertising copy.



JILL DANKLEFSEN

Labels, Labels, Labels

As an Education Consultant for BERNINA® of America, Jill is the resident master of stitch manipulation. She loves playing with them, changing them, and using them to create textured fabrics for garment and craft projects.



SUSAN BECK

Managing Editor

With a background in Art and Home Economics, Susan is interested in all types of sewing and crafts and has written several sewing books. She loves to be creative on paper as well as in fabric and is the Director of Education for BERNINA® of America, Inc.



SANDRA BETZINA

Wearable Edges

Sandra is the dynamic host of HGTV's *Sew Perfect*, and the author of *Fabric Savvy*, *Fast Fit*, and the *Power Sewing* series of books and videos, as well as the syndicated *Power Sewing* column. She travels all over the United States and Canada as a lecturer, teacher, and guest on television sewing shows.



KAY LYNCH

*Floral Delights Desk
Calendar Cover*

As a Card Production Assistant at OESD, Inc., Kay's job is to assist in the development of designs and embroidery cards for BERNINA® and OESD, and to create projects using the embroidery designs. She has a BS degree in Home Economics Education from Oklahoma State University.



JENNIFER GIGAS

*Designing with the
BERNINA® Quilter*

Jennifer, an Education Consultant for BERNINA® of America, combines serging, sewing, and embroidery in many of her updated interpretations of favorite patterns, many of which incorporate decorative serger techniques in unexpected places.

News

BERNINA®

BY GAYLE HILLERT

Quilt making has a rich and varied history in the United States. When the first settlers could not afford expensive linens and coverlets from England, it is said that they sewed pieces of fabric together to make warm covers for their beds.

Later in US history, tradition has it that quilts were very much a part of the Underground Railroad, acting as a signal to northbound run-away slaves. When a quilt of a particular design was hung on the clothesline, the person escaping to the north and freedom would know that the inhabitants of the house were in sympathy with the cause and would offer food or shelter or both.

Historically, a number of quilts were made to satisfy the requirements of a bride's dowry, and quilting bees were a place for women to meet and share news, advice, recipes and wisdom—joining together to complete the thousands of hand stitches needed for the dowry quilts.

Quilts were also made to tell stories and to preserve tradition. At the end of the 19th century, crazy quilts were sewn and embroidered to showcase a woman's skill with a needle. This was the start of quilting as a leisure art rather than as a necessity. Today's quilters use quilting for creative expression and as an artistic outlet even though the end results are often practical and useful as bed coverings, art, and gifts.

Today, the quilt industry is alive and well with many people deriving fulfillment from the art of making quilts. Although many people still quilt by hand, quilting by machine is becoming more popular. According to the Quilting in America 2003

survey presented by *Quilter's Newsletter Magazine*, the profile of a dedicated quilter is:

- 99% female
- 58 years old
- well-educated with 76% attending college
- 81% have a room dedicated to sewing/quilting activities
- own an average of 2 sewing machines
- purchased an average of 100.7 yards of fabric in the past 12 months
- 84% have a personal computer
- 88% use sewing machine to piece
- 72% use sewing machine to quilt

While dedicated quilters make the industry strong, we also need to welcome and encourage others to start quilting, and keep quilting. Alex Anderson has made this effort a passion in her life and she writes books, lectures, and hosts the popular television show, "Simply Quilts" to appeal to all those "quiltmaker wannabees" and encourage them to start quilting now.

This issue of *Through the Needle* is dedicated to quilters everywhere. If you are a quilter, we appreciate all you do for the sewing industry and we encourage you to pass on your love of sewing and quilting to others. If you admire quilts and have thought about beginning one, there is no time like the present to start quilting. Visit your local BERNINA® dealer, sign up for a class and begin a tradition.



Log onto our website at www.berninausa.com to find out more about BERNINA®'s new consumer show, The Creativity Retreat by BERNINA®. We'd like to have you join us for sewing, serging, embroidery and software classes. Visit our website and register today!



MY Grandma's Quilt

BY GAYLE HILLERT

AN INTERVIEW WITH ALEX ANDERSON



In the past several years, I have had the pleasure of meeting with, traveling with, interviewing, and getting to know and become friends with Alex Anderson. I have visited her wonderful quilt studio and we've shared stories on all types of topics, from identifying industry opportunities to raising children and watching them become individuals.

It is with great delight that I share this interview with Alex with you.

Gayle: Tell me about your creative background and how you started as a quiltermaker.

Alex: I have always had a passion for sewing. I made my first garment in sixth grade. My best friend's mom took me under her wing and taught me to sew. I remember one dress I made that had a little red bolero jacket (now, this dates me) where I cut up red, white and blue fabric, which I pieced together. In high school, my favorite subject was art. When I began college, I was feeling lost until I realized that art was an acceptable major. I guess the stars aligned properly when I found myself one credit short, one month prior to graduation, and I earned the credit by completing a quilt my grandmother started in the 1930's (shown at right). I had planned to be a weaver but after completing Grandma's quilt, my life took a different turn, and the rest is history!

Gayle: When did you first begin writing books and designing fabrics?

Alex: I began writing quilt articles for a variety of publications and have been with C&T Publishing for the last ten years. I have written 9 books for C&T with the best selling book being *Start Quilting*. I design fabric for P&B fabrics and have done that for the last two years. My first line, "Color Bridge", was designed to help quilters combine fabric in their stash with new fabric. The second line, "Redwork Romance", has beautiful reproduction fabric and mock red work designs to either stitch to a quilt top or use "as is". My third line will be coming out in mid-2004—it is a floral with coordinating prints and I am very excited about it!

Gayle: How did you discover BERNINA®? Tell us about your first BERNINA® experience with quilting.

Alex: Well, my friend asked me to check out a BERNINA® for her and I had never heard of the brand before. This was about twenty years ago, and I went to the local quilt shop to try the machine. It was LOVE at first sew! I could not believe how wonderful the machine was and the

features that impressed me most were the ease of use, stitch quality and the Freehand System. I was a stay-at-home Mom with two young kids so I went to my Dad to float a loan. I was immediately a BERNINA® fan and was delighted to join the BERNINA® family.

Gayle: Where do you find your inspiration?

Alex: Inspiration is everywhere. From a moment in nature to a family outing, the most unlikely things can often inspire a new quilt. I love fabric and antique quilts and I visit many quilt stores to find out what is new and fresh in the world of fabric. I pour over historical quilt books, visit museum quilt exhibits, check the Internet for historical quilts, attend quilt shows, and I thoroughly enjoy using traditional patterns with smashing new fabric selections.

Gayle: Do you have a favorite quilt design or pattern?

Alex: I love traditional patterns that lend themselves to a strong graphic statement. When I first began quilting, I was drawn to the woolen Amish quilts—their strong, graphic- pieced tops coupled with soft, sensitive quilting motifs were, and still are, inspiring to me. As I became more confident with piecing, stars caught my attention. The variety of sets and number of patterns are unlimited. The Log Cabin block has been loved and used endlessly, yet each quilt has its own identity based on the fabric selection. Appliqué offers results and opportunities that are not possible with piecing. From cartooned pictorial quilts that tell a story, to classic patterns like the “Rose of Sharon”, appliqué has a very strong place in my heart.

I love the actual process of quilting—traditional quilt motifs breathe life and dimension into quilt tops. Hand or machine quilting is as important as the quilt top and we need to maximize its potential. When I place the small stitches into a quilt top, I totally concentrate on the quilt process as well as the cloth top. These are the quilts that will be handed down to my children and my children's children.

Gayle: What is your favorite quilting technique?

Alex: All the techniques have their own special benefits and I have learned to never say, “I’ll never do that!” I wrote a book on foundation piecing and I had been resistant to try the technique. Through the process of creating quilts for the book, I was humbled by my earlier opinion. This experience has taught me to encourage people to jump out of their comfort zones and try new techniques—the results can be incredible!

Gayle: What is your least favorite technique?

Alex: Ripping out seams!

Gayle: Tell me your favorite quilting story.

Alex: I met a young woman at a show who made her first quilt for her grandmother's 90th birthday out of fabrics that her grandmother owned. Unfortunately, her grandmother died before her birthday. Her grandmother was buried with the quilt but additional wall hangings were made from her grandmother's fabric, and given to grieving family members. The wall hangings offered a way for the family to heal. At another quilt show, I met two ladies in wheel chairs. They both were diagnosed with a terminal illness and were attending the quilt show to teach each other how to live life to its fullest.

The best part of quilting is that when you quilt, your thoughts are interwoven into the fabric. Those thoughts can touch others and can connect people in ways that cannot be explained. Quilting is a lifestyle that knows no racial, political or socio-economic boundaries and those who enter that lifestyle often find their lives changed forever. When making each of my children a graduation quilt, I was able to “let go” and transition into the next phase of their lives.

Gayle: What is your favorite BERNINA® machine to use for quilting today and why?

Alex: I love the 153—it is a classic and I can depend on it...although the *artista* 200E offers wonderful creative possibilities.

Gayle: How do you balance your life, and what is your advice to busy, creative people who are struggling to balance theirs?

Alex: I am fortunate to have a supportive family but it is still a constant struggle to keep things in check. I think it is important to block time out for yourself—possibly draw a line on your calendar and be strict about honoring that time. Also, when day-to-day details pop up, address them immediately, and if there is something undesirable on your list, just do it! Identify a time of day that is best for sewing—this time may change as your life's responsibilities change. For me, it is the pre-dinner hours...after 4:00p.m....that is when you will most likely find me at the machine stitching my heart out with the dog underfoot and the cat asleep next to my machine.

Quality Quilts

BY ALEX ANDERSON

Even the smallest quilt requires time and patience to complete, and every quilter wants to feel that the end result of their effort will be a high quality product. That excellence starts with the selection of the three materials – fabric, batting, and thread – that come together to create the quilt. Understanding the basic properties of these materials will help you understand what works best for you and the projects you select. Feel free to experiment and try new materials, but always remember that you generally get what you pay for, with few exceptions.

Fabric

Always work with the best 100% cotton available—typically found at your local quilt shop. It is important to understand that the quality of 100% cotton fabric varies. One of the many advantages of shopping at an independently owned quilt shop is that the owner is usually a quilter. When buying fabric for the shop, she typically considers characteristics such as colorfastness, durability, and the overall quality of the actual goods. This results in a consistently high level of quality throughout your quilts. What a shame if your fabrics fall apart right before your eyes after many stitches have been lovingly quilted in.

There are different schools of thought as to whether you should prewash, or at least pretreat, your fabric. My philosophy is, at a minimum you should test, but probably prewash. Here are my reasons:

1. When the quilt is laundered, 100% cotton fabrics may shrink, causing puckers and distortion of the shapes creating each block.

2. The darker colors dyes have been known to migrate to the lighter fabrics in quilts. This redefines the expression “heartbreak.” Always prewash darks and lights separately.



3. Fabric is treated with chemicals, and I don't think it is healthy to breathe or handle these chemicals over an extended period of time. I have found myself wheezing when I decided to pass up prewashing.

If you choose not to prewash, test your fabric by cutting a two inch square and putting it in boiling water. See if any color bleeds into the water. If it does, repeat the process. If the fabric continues to discharge color, throw it away (reds and purples are especially suspect). It could ruin your quilt.

Take advantage of the wonderful quilt stores scattered across our planet. It is here that you will find the best products available. Your time and your quilts deserve the highest quality fabrics available.

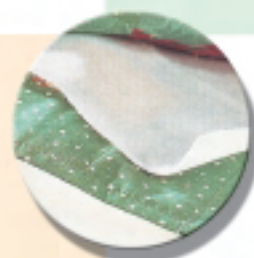
Batting

The number one question I am asked when teaching and lecturing is, “What batting do you use?” Unfortunately, no one batting is the best choice for every project.

Basically, three types of fibers are found in batting: cotton, polyester, and/or wool. Each type is appropriate for different looks and purposes. Here are some of the differences in a nutshell.

COTTON

Most old quilts have 100% cotton batting (with close inspection you might even see cotton seeds). Cotton provides a wonderful appearance, and the quilt will drape beautifully. Cotton also beards less than polyester batting; “bearding” is when the batting fibers migrate through the quilt top so that little “tails” of fuzz on the surface of the quilt. This detracts from the look of the quilt and is an especially important issue when working with dark fabrics and light-colored batting. Always read the instructions on the batting bag, since some cotton battings require prewashing.



Low Loft



Medium Loft



High Loft

100% cotton batting should be more heavily quilted than polyester, which means the lines of quilting should be close together (every 1"-2") or the batting may pull apart inside the quilt.

POLYESTER

There are some wonderful polyester battings on the market, available in three different lofts: low, medium, and high. The "loft" is the thickness of the batt. Low loft is wonderful for a highly pieced quilt or to achieve the flat, "drapey" look that cotton batting generally provides. Medium loft is just a little thicker, adding more body and providing more warmth. High loft is usually reserved for tied quilts. Polyester batting doesn't require the heavy quilting that 100% cotton does; every 2"-3" is fine.

COTTON/POLYESTER

This type of batting is generally made of 80% cotton and 20% polyester. It has the look and feel of cotton, but with very little bearding. Always read the instructions on the batting bag, as some cotton/polyester batting requires prewashing. Cotton/polyester battings only require quilting every 3" or less.

WOOL

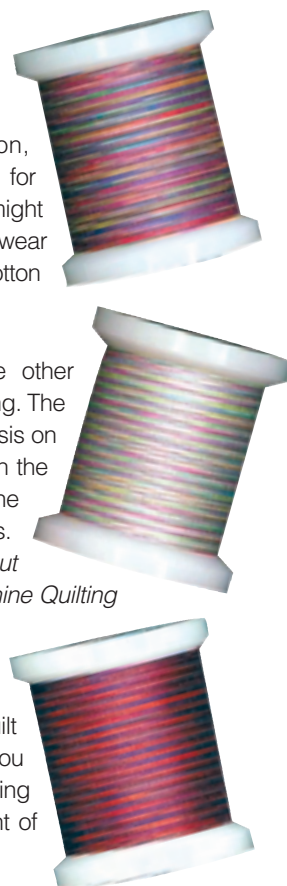
There is nothing as wonderful as quilting with wool batting. If you are hand quilting, your needle will slide through like butter. Unfortunately, wool is very expensive. You might want to try using wool batting sometime, but perhaps not for your first quilt.

Thread

If your quilt fabrics are 100% cotton, I recommend using a 100% cotton thread for piecing and quilting. A polyester thread might cause the cotton yarns of the fabric to wear faster since polyester thread can cut the cotton fibers.

Nylon monofilament and silk thread are other threads that can be used for machine quilting. The monofilament offers a look that puts emphasis on the indentations of the stitching and less on the thread itself. Silk thread allows you to see the subtle, elegant luster of the tiny stitches. *(Editors note: For more information about machine quilting with silk thread, see Machine Quilting Pointers on page 22 of this magazine.)*

If working on your first quilt, you might want to match the color of your thread to the quilt so your stitches blend into the fabric. As you become more confident, try using contrasting thread for stitches that become an element of the overall design.



For more information on quilting materials and supplies, we recommend the following books by Alex Anderson: *Start Quilting, Kids Start Quilting, and Fabric Shopping.*

MAGAZINES FROM AROUND THE WORLD



Creative Expressions

from Australia

Suggested Retail \$6.95



Machine Embroidery

from Australia

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Magic Patch

from France

Suggested Retail \$6.95



Homespun Embroidery

from Australia

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Quilters Love **BERNINA®** Loves Quilters

Why do more quilters prefer BERNINA® sewing machines? There's more than one quilter out there so there's more than one answer. We asked quilting teachers across the country which features they use to turn their quilting ideas into reality. Here's an overview of their favorites.

EASY TO USE

Simple stitch selection by push button or touch screen and easy to change settings, let you spend your time quilting rather than adjusting your machine. And, almost every BERNINA® sewing machine offers Altered Stitch Memory. This means that if you make changes to the stitch settings, the machine will remember them until the power is turned off, even if you move from stitch to stitch to stitch. No more remembering and resetting every time you reselect a stitch!

PRECISION STITCHING

Let the beauty of your quilting show with perfect BERNINA® stitching. There is no coasting after the foot pedal is released, so stitching ends exactly where you want.

CONSISTENT TENSION

Consistent tension for both straight and decorative stitching lets you start sewing immediately with no "fiddling around" or stitch adjustments.

FREE HAND SYSTEM

Lift the presser foot and lower the feed dog with the use of the knee-activated lifter. Works as a "third hand" to help you

maneuver fabric under the needle. Great for turning corners and especially useful for appliqué techniques. Speeds sewing time by 20% so you can create more in less time.

HEAVY DUTY MOTOR

Provides powerful needle penetration for stitching through multiple layers (pieced top, batting, backing, etc.) of a quilt, with no hesitation or false starts.

PRESSER FOOT PRESSURE

Offers the option of reducing the pressure of the presser foot so the quilt can move freely. Can also be adjusted to make it easier for the presser foot to glide over seams and uneven layers.

LARGE SELECTION OF PRESSER FEET

BERNINA® has a variety of presser feet designed to make piecing and patchwork faster and easier. From precision piecing to freemotion stitching, you'll find favorites that make quilting fun!

Patchwork Foot #37: Great for piecing $\frac{1}{4}$ " and $\frac{1}{8}$ " seams. For perfect $\frac{1}{4}$ " seams, position the fabric under the presser foot so

that the fabric edge is aligned with but not visible beyond the right side of the foot. To sew $\frac{1}{8}$ " seams for miniature quilts, position the fabric under the presser foot so that the raw edges align with the inner edge of the toe. The notches on the side of the foot are spaced $\frac{1}{4}$ " apart to take the guesswork out of stopping or turning $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the corner.

Clear Foot #34: This all-purpose foot offers great visibility and an easy way to get a scant $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam. Just align the edge of the fabric with the outer edge of the foot, move the needle position one mark closer to the fabric edge and you're ready to go!

Walking Foot #50: Feeds all layers evenly under the needle without shifting or puckering. Two different soles provide twice the functionality: the open sole is ideal for quilting and gives great visibility when following a quilting design or stitching in the ditch, while the regular sole is great for matching plaids and other applications. Right and left seam guides are included with the Walking Foot, making it the perfect accessory for quilting channels, grids and diamonds without marking. The Walking Foot also has $\frac{1}{4}$ " markings so it's perfect for accurate piecing of precision patchwork.

Straight Stitch Foot #13: One of BERNINA®'s best-kept secrets! It works great for a perfect straight stitch and gives super visibility when following paper piecing stitching lines. Also provides visibility and precision when stitching 1/8" seams for miniature quilts.

Darning Foot #9: Designed for darning, freemotion quilting is a more popular use for this practical foot. It's perfectly round and is a great aid for judging distances when echo or outline quilting.

Embroidery Foot #15: Designed for use with the *artista* embroidery module, this freemotion foot can also be used for stippling and other kinds of freemotion stitching.

Quilting Foot #29/29C: Preferred by many quilters for freemotion quilting, the clear oval base provides excellent visibility and accommodates zigzag stitches (up to 5mm wide using #29 and 9mm wide with #29C). Engineered especially for thin (low-loft) quilt batts.

Freehand Embroidery Foot #24: Similar in design to Darning Foot #9, the Freehand Embroidery Foot has a cut-away front to provide unobstructed visibility of the needle. Foot #24 for newer BERNINA® models has the added benefit of being off-set so quilting is visible not only in front of but behind the needle.

Open Embroidery Foot #20/20C: Designed for satin stitching and other compact stitches; also great for blanket stitch appliqué. By moving the needle position to the far right, you can guide your appliqué piece along the inner right toe for perfect stitch placement. Just reverse the stitch and needle position if you are left-handed.

HELPFUL ACCESSORIES

BERNINA® has several unique accessories to make your quilting tasks easier and your results more professional-looking. Use these along with the appropriate presser feet for the best results.

Straight Stitch Plate: A must-have accessory for quilters. The straight stitch plate gives added support to the fabric, helping straight and freemotion stitches form perfectly. During freemotion quilting the plate helps prevent flagging and poor tension as the quilt is moved in all directions.

Patchwork Seam Guide: For an easy way to keep fabric properly aligned with the edge of Patchwork Foot #37, this guide is just what you need. This adjustable guide attaches to the sewing machine freearm with a set-screw to help you achieve perfect 1/4" patchwork seams.

Acrylic Sewing Table: This extended sewing surfaces fits around the freearm of your machine and offers more support for your projects, helping to avoid distortion of the stitches that may be created by the weight of a quilt. A must-have if your machine sits on a table rather than in a cabinet.

Magnifier: This handy accessory attaches to the front of the machine above the needle area so you can see the stitching area clearly. Comes with three strengths of lenses and also has a handle so magnifiers can be used away from the machine as well.

NEEDLE STOP UP/DOWN

Set the needle to stop in the up or down

position as needed. Leaving it down in the fabric gives more control and keeps your place—great when freemotion stitching! Some BERNINA® machines also have electronic foot controls that you can tap with your heel to take 1/2 stitch at a time for perfect control and stitch placement.

COOL FLUORESCENT LIGHT

This U-shaped bulb brightly lights the entire stitching area. You'll clearly see both your project and the needle, increasing the ease and accuracy of your sewing.

VARIETY OF PRACTICAL & DECORATIVE STITCHES

Along with a beautiful straight stitch, BERNINA® machines have other stitches that quilters love. The Piecing Stitch is a straight stitch with a slightly shortened stitch length, making a more secure line of stitching when piecing patchwork. Blanket Stitches are great for appliqué work, and Feather, Floral, and other decorative stitches for perfect crazy patch embellishment. The ability to adjust any stitch to any width or length provides flexibility and infinite possibilities in every sewing situation.

LONG TERM INVESTMENT

BERNINA® sewing machines are known for their quality, long & useful lives, and excellent resale value. While many BERNINA® owners have difficulty parting with their older BERNINA® machines, those who do trade in or sell their BERNINA®'s find that they have depreciated at a very slow rate. You can sew with it for years and discover that it still has value when purchasing a new member of the BERNINA® family!

MACHINE QUILTERS PREFER:

135S Patchwork Edition



virtuosa 153 Quilter's Edition



virtuosa 153 Alex Anderson Classic Edition



artista 165E



Wearable Edges

Binding Quilted Garment Edges

BY SANDRA BETZINA

Preparing to Bind

Using a separate binding around the edge of a quilted garment such as the jacket shown here not only adds a design feature but cuts down bulk as well. Binding is a good option for unlined and reversible garments in many fabrics, providing a clean finish to the edges while eliminating the bulk of a facing.

Many fabrics are suitable for mitered binding but stable fabrics work best. For a mitered binding, avoid slippery or napped fabrics and knits because they stretch. Other considerations are that the binding fabric press well and not be too bulky. My favorite bindings are silk brocade, plain, striped or checked silk dupioni, and cotton prints with small geometric designs. Woven binding strips should be cut on the bias so that they will go around curves smoothly. If you plan to wash the completed garment, prewash the binding or it will draw up the edges of the finished garment. Silk brocade can be laundered; it gets softer but loses quite a bit of its sheen.

Prepare the garment for binding by completing all the interior construction, such as darts, seams, etc. Then trim the seam allowances along all edges on which binding will be applied. If your quilted fabric is unstable in any area, stabilize it with strips of fusible stay tape aligned with the edge.

Purchase $1\frac{1}{4}$ yards of fabric for the binding; this is enough to allow the cutting of nice long bias strips, and allow you to hide the binding seams in mitered corners or other inconspicuous spots. Measure around the perimeter of the garment to see how much binding will be needed. Add an additional 6" in length for each seam and mitered corner. To determine the width, see the information below. Cut enough long bias strips for your garment, but do not join them yet; I will discuss ways to hide the joining seams later in this article.

HOW WIDE?

The width of the binding strip should be 2 times the desired finished binding width plus 1 inch. For example: to create a 1" finished binding, cut the binding strips 3" wide ($1" \times 2 = 2"$, plus 1" = 3"); for a $\frac{3}{4}"$ binding, cut the strips $2\frac{1}{2}"$ wide ($\frac{3}{4}" \times 2 = 1\frac{1}{2}"$, plus 1" = $2\frac{1}{2}"$). Accurate cutting of strips is important.



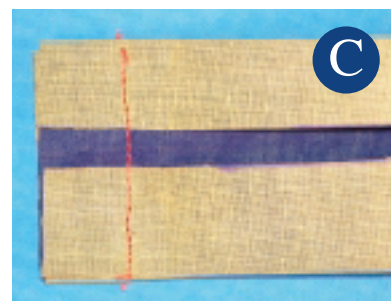
*Kwik • Sew
#3158*

On both long sides of the binding strip, press in $\frac{1}{2}"$. (A) After turning under both long edges, press the strip *almost* in half lengthwise, making one side a scant $\frac{1}{8}"$ wider than the other. (B)



When the binding is topstitched, the wider underside of the binding will be caught in the stitching. Be careful not to stretch the binding as you press.

With the folds of the bias strips pressed in, pin the ends of the first and second binding strips together with a $\frac{1}{2}"$ seam, right sides together. If necessary, re-press side folds so that the width of the strips and the pressed creases line up. Sew seam. (C)

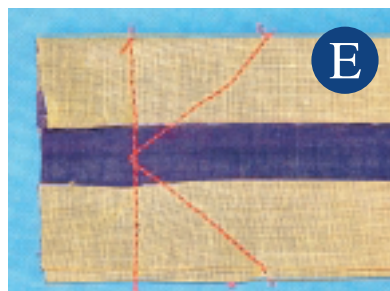


Mitering Corners



Starting at the seamline joining the two bindings, measure the exact width of the finished binding. For example, if your binding is cut 3" wide for a finished binding of 1", measure along the folded edge and mark a line 1"

from the seamline down each side of the binding. (D) Mark a dot on the $\frac{1}{2}$ " pressed fold on each side of the binding. With a ruler, draw a diagonal line from this mark to the fold at the seamline which divides the binding in



half. Draw another diagonal line on the opposite half of the binding. These lines are your sewing lines. With seam bindings together, starting 1" down on the fold on one side of the binding, sew to the point which divides the binding in half, pivot and

then stitch back down the other side to the opposite fold. (E) Trim excess fabric from the miter seams. Turn the miter right side out, using a point turner to get a sharp point. Press flat. (F)

The Binding Process

Begin the binding placement on a corner. I usually start on the corner where the neckline and front edge meet. On one end of the binding, beyond the corner, the binding will go around the curve of the neck. Measure the neckline so that you can curve the neckline binding with the iron before it is applied.

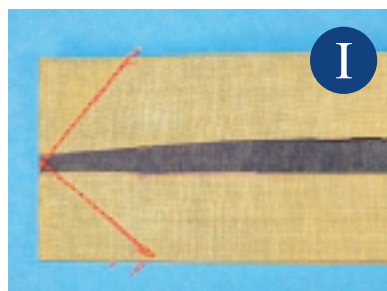
On the ironing surface, spray or steam the binding and shape it with the iron, stretching the outer open edges slightly so that the binding will lie smoothly along the neckline. (G) If your binding is wrinkling during the pressing process, your strip was



not cut along the true bias, or maybe you forgot to cut your strips on the bias at all. Don't give up, just cut another strip – this one on the true bias – long enough to go around the neckline plus extra for joining. To eliminate wrinkling, you must use bias to go around the neckline or on armholes, but if the rest of your strips are cut on straight of grain you can use those for the straight parts of the garment.

Slide the corner of the garment into the binding as far as it will go and still lie smooth. Pin the corner of the binding to the corner of the neckline, then continue pressing and pinning the binding around the neck and down the front. (H)

When you reach the next place where the binding must be mitered to change direction, mark the point of the raw edge of the fabric onto the binding. Fold the binding back on itself with right sides together and folds



matching. Along each outer fold, mark the width of the finished binding (in this case, 1") down from the fold, which marks the corner. Draw diagonal lines from the marks on the outer foldlines to the center crease on the binding. Sew along these

lines, stitching from the outer binding fold up the crease which marks the center of the binding and back down to the mark on the outer fold of the binding on the opposite side. (I)

Continue pinning the binding to the garment, mitering corners as you reach each one. Miter each corner by either adding a new strip with a seam, or by folding back the existing strip to form the miter. If you cannot hide all of your seams in a miter, join the binding at the side seam joint for least visibility. (J)



If your garment has curves rather than corners, shape the curves with the iron before pinning the binding onto the garment. Make sure that all of the pins attaching the trim to the garment go through both sides of the trim. For the most professional results, hand baste the trim all around the edges of the garment. Press well before stitching.

From the right side of the garment, using a walking or non-stick straight stitch presser foot, topstitch the binding in place with a 3.5mm stitch length. If not using a walking foot, use a "taut sewing" technique to keep all three layers the same size and prevent any puckers on the trim. Pull the fabric layers from front and back with equal pressure, but let the machine feed the fabric. A decorative stitch is a terrific option here since it catches both sides of the trim in an attractive manner. To give the edges a crisp flat appearance, cover the area to be pressed with a press cloth, press, then pound edges flat with a tailor's clapper; steam and let dry to retain the flatness.

My Favorite Quilting Notions

BY CHERYL SAVINI
Quilters Resource, Inc.

Many of us don't have nearly as much time to sew as we'd like, so we want to accomplish as much as possible in the time that we do have. Here are some of our favorite quilting notions, all designed to make our sewing easier and more efficient.

1. Nifty Notions Surgical Seam Ripper

Super fine blade to slice through any tangle of threads. Great for ripping zigzag and satin stitches

2. Hedgehog Needle Puller

Excellent for pulling a needle through several stitches, multiple layers, or through heavy fabric.

3. Quilt Sew Easy Discs

Great for manipulating the quilt through the machine when freemotion stitching.

4. Machingers

For more "hands-on" action, these loose fitting gloves offer fingertip control.

5. Nifty Notions Magnetic Pin Dispenser

One of the few straight pin dispensers that actually work. You don't get too many pins at once when you shake it.

6. Regular or Pocket Size Color Wheel

Indispensable for choosing fabric colors and mixing hues. Great for the quilter or any sewer.

7. Teflon Pressing Sheet

Terrific for ironing appliques. Will not stick to the fabric as the cloth pressing sheets do.

8. Quilter's Fuel Mug

Of course every quilter needs a break now and then to refuel and rejuvenate. Fill this Quilter's Fuel Mug with your favorite hot beverage and relax!



BERNINA® Featured FOOT

Patchwork Foot #37

This nifty little foot is perfect for piecing and patchwork, providing a guide for precise $\frac{1}{4}$ " and $\frac{1}{8}$ " seaming.

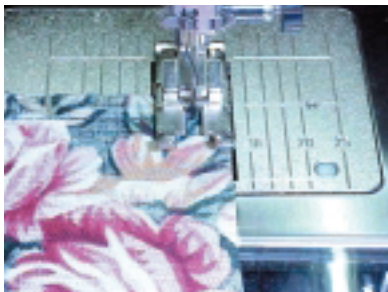
Patchwork Foot #37 is a straight stitch foot, with a narrow opening for the needle to sew through. This provides maximum support for the fabric, preventing distortion and producing an excellent stitch. Use a Straight Stitch Plate in combination with Patchwork Foot #37 for additional fabric support.



For perfect $\frac{1}{4}$ " seams, align the raw edges of the seam with the edge of the foot, indicated by the black arrow, making sure that none of the fabric is peeking out from under the side of the foot. In addition, the raw edge will align with the $\frac{1}{4}$ " mark at the very front of the stitch plate, indicated by the red arrow. *Note: These markings are also on the left side of the foot and stitch plate.*

CORRECT CORNERS

Notice the etched lines on each side of the foot? These indicate the needle position, $\frac{1}{4}$ " in front of the needle, and $\frac{1}{4}$ " behind the needle, indicators that are essential for turning perfect corners. Engage the Needle Down function. Stitch toward the corner, stopping when the forward edge of the fabric is aligned with the marks $\frac{1}{4}$ "

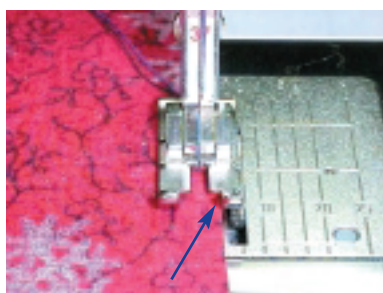


in front of the needle. Leaving the needle down in the fabric, raise the presser foot (use the Free Hand System if available), and pivot the fabric a quarter turn counterclockwise – the new edge is perfectly aligned for $\frac{1}{4}$ " seaming.



MINI-SEAMS

For miniature piecing, dollmaking, or fine fabrics, Foot #37 has a $\frac{1}{8}$ " guide along the inner edge of each toe, indicated by the blue arrow.



Noted teacher and owner of Quilt Quarters Quilt Shop in Indianapolis, IN, Kaye England loves Patchwork Foot #37!



Here's why I love the #37 foot so much! If you sew with your fabric under the foot, with the edge of the feed dog visible, you will get a clean $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam without any headaches. I also love that I can see where I start and stop at the $\frac{1}{4}$ " marks, especially when sewing on bindings. I know that some people use the walking foot for this, but I find that my BERNINA® sewing machine feeds so smoothly that I don't need to use a walking foot to keep the layers even. I also use the inside $\frac{1}{8}$ " markings when I want to stitch down stems and other linear elements, or just sew a smaller seam when needed.

I always use Patchwork Foot #37 when piecing – partnered with a BERNINA® sewing machine, this foot gives the piecer a perfect $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam, providing the "driver" is "steering" the edges under the foot correctly.

The Intelligent Cat's Guide to the Care & Feeding of a Quilting Companion



TI GRISE
Anne Boucher, Chester, NH

Quilters make excellent companions. They are kind, generous and intelligent. If you are patient and persevere, they can even be trained to carry out your instructions. In this article, our special feline correspondents have compiled an easy guide on the care and feeding of these interesting creatures.

The Quilting Cat's were submitted by members of Mr. B's Preview Pack Club.

BY SUSAN NEILL



EMMA VIOLET
Roberta Williams, Milwaukee, WI

Two Know Your Quilter

After you've had your quilter for a while, you will begin to recognize behaviors that may seem odd. Although each quilter has her own peculiarities, the species has certain traits in common. The guide below is a quick way to help determine what your quilter is trying to tell you:

Glazed Look. This wide-eyed look often occurs when a) too many hours have passed working on one project or b) the quilt is not working out as planned. The best antidote is distraction. Throw up a hairball or two. This will get your quilter's mind on something else.



TAZ
Yvonne Hamilton, Washington

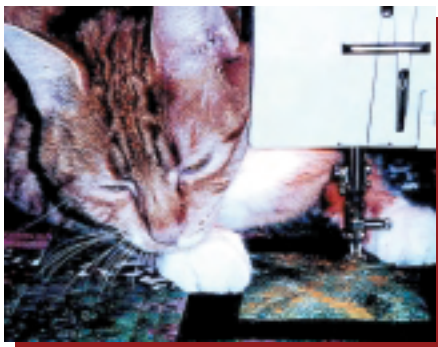
One Provide the Right Space

Quilters need loads of space to root around in their fabric stash. Hopefully your home environment includes a room with an abundance of shelves, closets and boxes. The rooting and sorting process may take a while. Wait patiently while they sort their colors. It will save time in the future. A word of warning: don't let them take over the entire area! Immediately establish a space of your own and make it clear that it is yours. (Claws help.)



CARAMANIAN
The Carmanian Family, Pearl City, IL

Frantic Searching. This behavior usually occurs when a) the requisite piece of blue fabric cannot be found or b) the quilter believes that there is no fabric in the entire house that could possibly suit her project. This is usually a prelude to a car trip to the quilt shop, and you will not be invited. This is not a good thing. Distractions are once again recommended. If it is possible to put your paw on the required fabric, do so immediately. You will probably be rewarded with a belly rub.



PEANUT

Maurine B. Roy, Edmonds, WA

should always be on hand. It comes in many varieties and brings immediate satisfaction. They call it "chocolate."

Hunger Pangs.

In the brief time that quilters are not stitching, they may get hungry. They are easily satisfied, and you may find them on the internet exchanging recipes. Crockpots, microwaves and other time-saving devices are highly recommended. In cases of emergency, there is one staple that

but basically harmless disorder occurs when the quilter cannot pull herself away from the sewing machine. It becomes especially dangerous when it occurs around your dinnertime and your cries for service are being ignored. There are various ways to solve the problem. Use some of the distractions listed previously, or drape yourself over the sewing machine, thereby impeding progress. The quilter will then have to stop and pay attention to your reasonable demands. It is important to show who is in charge.

Three Let your Opinion be Known

It is highly recommended that you provide your quilter with a little re-assurance now and then. This can be done in a number of ways. If you approve of the project, let her know. Take a catnap in the center of the quilt. Insist



OMAR

Sally Schlein, Bethesda, MD

on a front row vantage point during the quilting process (on top of the sewing table will do). Play with the batting. Then purr. Loudly. Your quilter will soon get the message.

Reprinted with permission of The Fat Quarterly.

Constant Rearranging. Your quilter has an inborn desire to create, and it should be encouraged. If, however, she or he spends an inordinate amount of time arranging or re-arranging fabrics on the design wall, your quilter should be stopped until she or he calms down and is once again breathing normally. Knock over a pincushion (or two), a scissors, or a cup of coffee. Make noise. Chase strings. As a last resort, rearrange all her fabric squares yourself. All of these actions will re-focus your quilter and help to make the project move ahead at a reasonable speed.

Pedal Foot. Quilters often use machines to finish their projects. Because these sewing machines are now so easy to use, it is not uncommon to find an occasional case of pedal foot. This annoying



**Read a Victorian
Quilt Mystery!**



**See How Balis
are Made!**



**Learn a
new Block!**

Gallie Bovee—if you had been a member of Mr. B's Preview Pack Club this year, these are just a few of the features you would have enjoyed! What's the Preview Pack Club? A great fabric and news club! Our Members receive four information-packed *Fat Quarterly* newsletters a year, along with 25-50 four-inch swatches of a brand-new Benartex fabric collection. We offer challenges, articles, patterns and news about designers and shows—all for just \$18.00 a year, or \$30.00 for two years. It's a wonderful value! No wonder our members have joined year after year!



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P.S. It's a great gift idea, too! We'll even enclose a gift card if you want us to.

BY KAY LYNCH



The Floral Delights by Hatched in Africa embroidery collection is available in the following formats:

- CD-ROM (CD contains the formats: .ART, .PES, .PCS, .DST, .HUS, .JEF, .SEW, .XXX, enhanced for the *artista* 200E)
- 165E-185E *artista* card
- Babylock/Brother/Deco and compatibles
- Janome 10000 card

Floral Delights

DESK CALENDAR COVER

Featuring Embroidery Collection 781, Floral Delights by Hatched in Africa

Write and doodle on your calendar to your heart's content. When finished, tidy up by simply flipping the calendar over and creating a pretty desktop!

SUPPLIES:

- Floral Delights embroidery collection
- Embroidery machine
- Sewing machine
- 12 hoop-sized pieces of fabric for embroidery
- Isacord polyester embroidery thread
- OESD bobbin thread
- Organ Embroidery needles
- OESD Ultra Clean & Tear stabilizer
- Temporary spray adhesive
- Two 45" x 1½" strips of light fabric
- Two 45" x 1½" strips of medium fabric
- Two 45" x 1½" strips of dark fabric
- Two 5" fabric squares
- 4" x 24" strip of fabric
- 18" x 24" batting
- 18" x 24" backing fabric
- Mettler Metrosene polyester thread
- 17" x 22" desk calendar

EMBROIDERY DIRECTIONS:

Bond two layers of Ultra Clean & Tear Stabilizer together with temporary spray adhesive. Spray the top of the layers with additional adhesive and adhere to the wrong side of one of the hoop-sized pieces of embroidery fabric. Hoop the three layers as one piece and attach the hoop to the machine. Embroider the chosen design.

Remove the hoop from the machine, and the fabric from the hoop. Clip the thread tails and gently remove excess stabilizer from the back of the project. Trim the embroidered fabric to a 5" x 5" square.

Embroider a total of twelve designs on 12 squares.

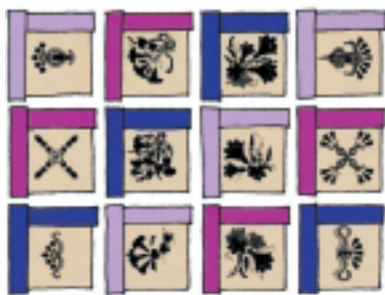
PIECING INSTRUCTIONS:

(Use 1/4" seams throughout.)

Arrange the embroidered blocks on a flat surface as desired—4 blocks across and 3 blocks down.

Cut framing strips slightly longer than needed. Stitch as directed below. Press seams toward strips, then trim ends even with block sides.

Step 1: Stitch indicated strip to the top of each block, then stitch another to the left side of each block:



Column 1: Top Block – light strips
Middle Block – medium strips
Bottom Block – dark strips

Column 2: Top Block – medium strips
Middle Block – dark strips
Bottom Block – light strips

Column 3: Top Block – dark strips
Middle Block – light strips
Bottom Block – medium strips

Column 4: Top Block – light strips
Middle Block – medium strips
Bottom Block – dark strips



Step 2: Stitch indicated strip to the lower edge of each column:

Column 1: Light strip
Column 2: Medium strip
Column 3: Dark strip
Column 4: Light strip

Step 3: Stitch indicated strips to right edges of Column 4:

Top Row: Medium strip

Middle Row: Dark strip

Bottom Row: Light strip



Step 4: Stitch blocks in each column together.

Step 5: Stitch columns together.



Step 6: Fold each of the two 5" x 5" block in half diagonally. Baste folded square to the right side of each lower corner as shown.

Step 7: Fold the 4" x 24" rectangle in half and baste to the right side of the top edge. Trim ends even with patchwork.

Step 8: Trim batting and backing pieces to the exact size of the embroidered piece.

Step 9: Place the backing and the embroidered and pieced rectangle right sides together. Place the batting on the wrong side of the pieced front.

Step 10: Stitch around all four sides leaving a 4"-5" opening in one side for turning. Trim corners and turn right side out. Slipstitch opening closed by hand.

Step 11: Flip the corner squares and the top strip to the back of the piece. Stitch-in-the-ditch and/or stipple quilt around the designs through all layers as desired. Take care not to catch the top flap or the corner pieces in quilting stitches.

Step 12: Insert the calendar into the corner and upper flaps.



BY ALEX ANDERSON

Sawtooth Star Quilt



Finished Size: 42" x 52"

*This project featured in
the Keep Quilting
With Alex
Anderson
Program, sponsored
by BERNINA®*

Keep Quilting

Now that you've finished your first quilt, it's time to make another! For your next quilting adventure, I chose to design a Sawtooth Star quilt. This block has always been among my top favorite picks. I have made more of these blocks than one would think humanly possible and I still never tire of it. In addition to being beautiful, it is a classic

pattern with many lessons to be learned. I know this block will become a favorite for you, too.

The Sawtooth Star block is a combination of two shapes, squares and triangles. The fabric combination selected for the kit breathes new life into this historic pattern. Of course, if you want to pick your own fabrics and give it your own look, that's great, too! Its possibilities are endless, just like the number of stars in the sky!

Fabric Requirements

- Stars - $\frac{1}{4}$ yard each of four blue prints
- Background - $\frac{1}{4}$ yard each of three yellow prints
- Sashing - 1 yard of blue print
- Cornerstones - $\frac{1}{4}$ yard
- Outer Border - $1\frac{1}{4}$ yards floral
- Backing - $2\frac{1}{2}$ yards
- Binding - $\frac{1}{2}$ yard
- Batting - 46" x 56" piece of low-loft batting

Cutting

- Blocks (for one block—total of twelve are needed)
 - One $4\frac{1}{2}$ " x $4\frac{1}{2}$ " center square
 - Four $2\frac{1}{2}$ " x $2\frac{1}{2}$ " background squares for corners
 - Four flying geese units (see right for cutting and piecing directions)
- Sashing
 - Thirty-one $8\frac{1}{2}$ " x $2\frac{1}{2}$ " strips
- Cornerstones
 - Twenty $2\frac{1}{2}$ " x $2\frac{1}{2}$ " squares
- Outer Border
 - Two $42\frac{1}{2}$ " x $5\frac{1}{4}$ " strips
 - Two 42 " x $5\frac{1}{4}$ " strips
- Backing
 - Cut the backing fabric into two pieces across the width of the fabric. Turn each piece sideways and trim the selvage off of one edge of each. Seam the two pieces together along the cut edges. Press the seam open and position the backing with the seam going horizontally across the center of the quilt. Trim the backing to about 46" x 56". This will allow for any shifting of the layers during the quilting process.
- Binding
 - $2\frac{1}{2}$ " wide bias strips, pieced to make one 220" binding strip

Patchwork Seaming

Blocks are $8\frac{1}{2}$ " before being sewn to the sashing; 8" finished.

All seam allowances are $\frac{1}{4}$ " sewn with Patchwork Foot #37. Guide the edge of the foot along the raw edge of the fabric with the needle in the center position. Press all seam allowances to the side toward the darker fabric. All seam allowances should be pressed before stitching additional seams across them.

Flying Geese Units



In quilting terms, the triangle units of the sawtooth star are called "flying geese". These units can be constructed many different ways. We have provided three options and each technique has its own advantages. Play and see which one you like the best.

Method 1: Traditional Rotary Cut Method



A - Cut one $5\frac{1}{4}$ " square from a background fabric. Sub-cut on both diagonals as shown to form four triangles.



B - Cut four $2\frac{7}{8}$ " squares from a star fabric. Sub-cut on one diagonal on each square as shown to form two triangles.

Stitch one triangle B to one side of triangle A; press seam to the

side. Stitch the other triangle B of the same star fabric to the opposite side of triangle A as shown.

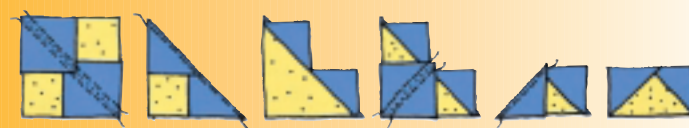


Method 2: Secret Star Method



Cut four $2\frac{7}{8}$ " x $2\frac{7}{8}$ " squares of the star fabric and one $5\frac{1}{4}$ " x $5\frac{1}{4}$ " squares of background fabric.

Draw a diagonal line on the wrong side of the small squares. Place two of these squares on top of a background square as shown with right sides together. Stitch $\frac{1}{4}$ " on each side of the drawn line. Cut on the drawn line between the two lines of stitching. Press. Place a small square on the stitched piece as shown. Stitch $\frac{1}{4}$ " on each side of the drawn line. Cut on the drawn line between the two lines of stitching. Press.



Method 3: Corner Square Method



Cut four rectangles, $2\frac{1}{2}$ " x $4\frac{1}{2}$ " each from the background fabric and eight $2\frac{1}{2}$ " x $2\frac{1}{2}$ " squares from the star fabric.

Place one square right sides together on each of the upper corners of one rectangle. Stitch on the diagonal of the squares as shown. Trim $\frac{1}{4}$ " above the stitching line; press.



Block Piecing

Stitch each block using three rows as shown, matching seamlines:



Row 1: Corner + Flying Geese Unit + Corner.
Press seams toward corner squares.



Row 2: Flying Geese Unit + Center Square + Star Points. Press seams toward center square.



Row 3: Corner + Flying Geese Unit + Corner.
Press seams toward corner squares.

Setting

Stitch four rows using three blocks and four pieces of vertical sashing for each row as shown:



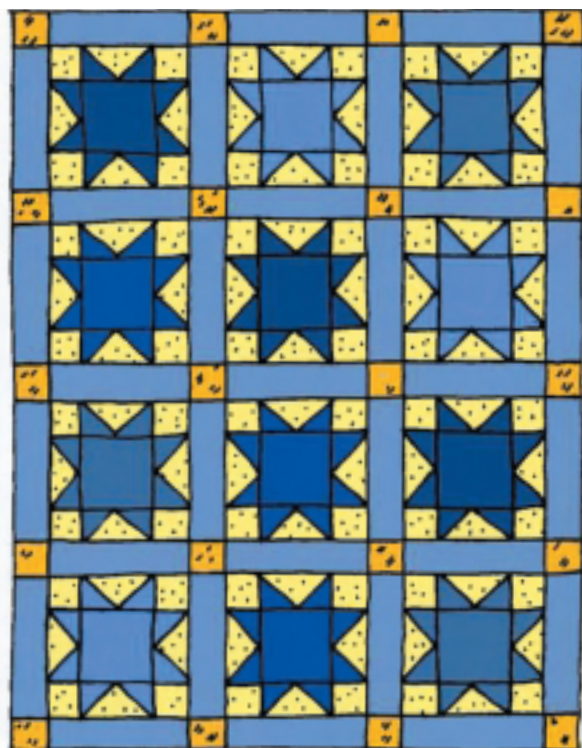
Press seams toward sashing.

Stitch five horizontal rows of sashing with cornerstones as shown:

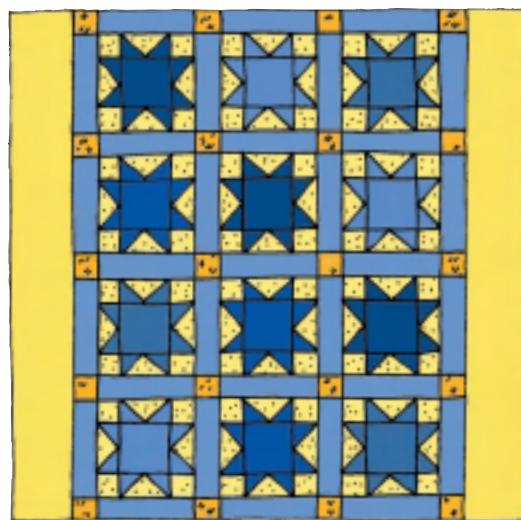


Press seams toward sashing, away from cornerstones.

Stitch the four rows together with the sashing as shown:

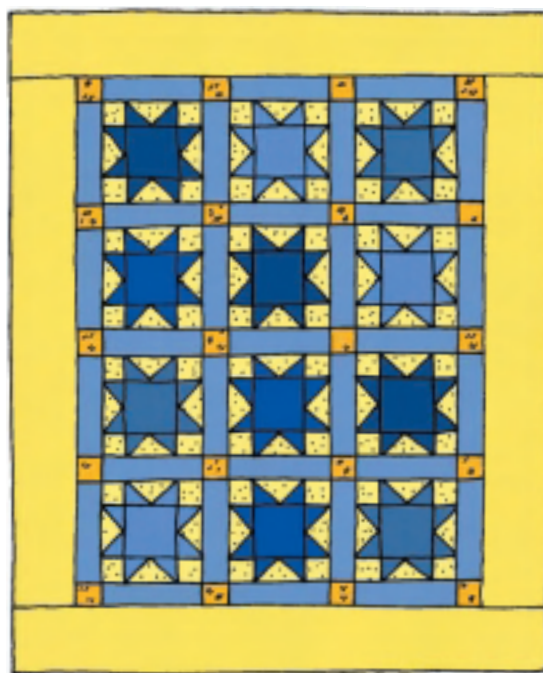


Add borders to the right and left as shown:



Press seams toward borders.

Add borders to upper and lower edges as shown:



Press seams toward borders.

Layering

Place the backing right side down and smooth it out, stretching it slightly without distorting it. There should be no bubbles or ripples. Secure it in place with masking tape (if working on a table) or t-pins (if working on a carpeted floor).

Place the batting on top of the backing and smooth out the wrinkles. Smooth the pieced quilt top onto the batting right side up.

If hand quilting, baste the layers together using a hand sewing needle and thread. For machine quilting, use safety pins or temporary spray adhesive.

Quilting

I have three simple philosophies that apply to quilting:

- More is better.
- Treat the pieced surface as one.
- Quilt the entire surface of the quilt with the same density of stitching. Star quilts have a lot of activity in them so a simple grid pattern will suffice. If you have a heavily pieced surface with many exciting fabric combinations, an intricate quilting design will not show; however, the total amount of quilting will!

In this Startooth Star quilt, the pieced blocks and sashing are treated as one area and stitched with an overall grid design, sewn on the diagonal. The wide outer borders have an interlocking curved design.

Thread the machine with cotton thread in the needle and bobbin. Attach Walking Foot #50 to the machine and attach a seam guide to the back of the foot, placing it 1½" from the needle.

Starting at the upper left cornerstone, mark a diagonal line from the upper left corner of the quilt down to the lower right, through the cornerstones. Stitch along this line to begin the quilting process. For the next line, align the quilting guide on the stitched diagonal line. Sew, keeping the guide on the previously stitched line as you sew parallel to the first stitching. Repeat until all lines in this direction are complete. (See Diagram 1)

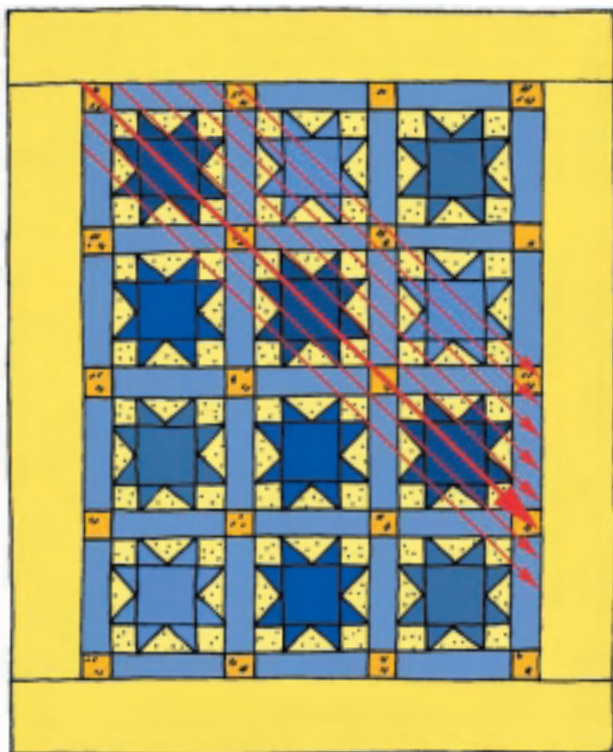


Diagram 1

Mark a second diagonal line, this one from the upper right corner down to the lower left. Stitch as above, creating a "diamond" grid over the surface of your quilt. (See Diagram 2)

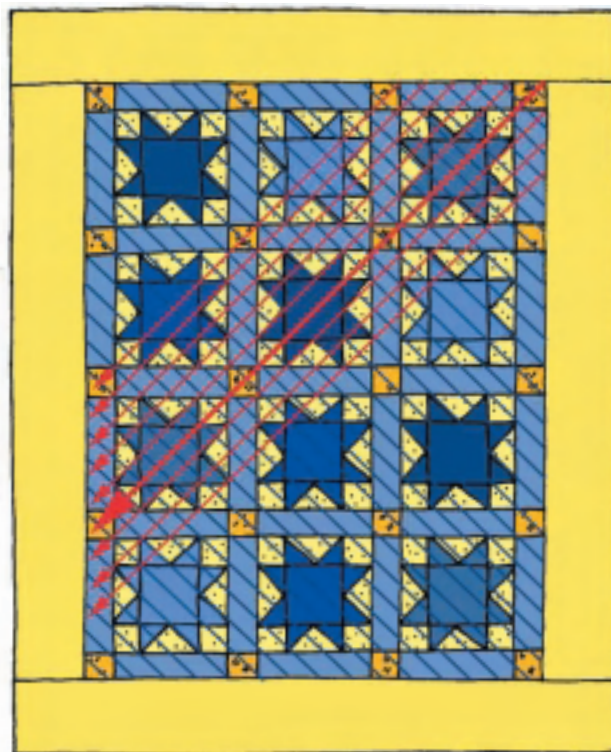


Diagram 2

Binding

Starting at the center of one side, pin binding to the right side of the quilt, matching raw edges and leaving a 6" tail at the beginning. Miter corners following the directions below:

- End stitching ¼" from the next side of the quilt; backstitch to secure seam (See Diagram 3)
- Fold bias strip away from the quilt as shown (See Diagram 4), then fold it back on itself to form a fold at the corner (See Diagram 5)
- Resume stitching, backstitching at beginning of seam
- Continue sewing binding to edges of quilt, stopping about 6" from the starting point
- Fold under raw edge of beginning of bias; insert other end into the fold, cutting away excess binding; resume stitching, overlapping beginning stitches about ½"
- Turn binding to back of quilt; pin in place; fold corners to form miters on the back of the quilt
- Stitch in the ditch from the front of the quilt; the stitching should catch binding at the back

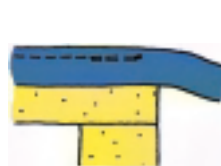


Diagram 3



Diagram 4



Diagram 5

Machine Quilting

POINTERS

BY DIANE GAUDYNSKI

Silk Stitching

I quilt primarily with silk thread. It takes a little getting used to, but I have found it gives me so much freedom in my free motion work, especially in traditional designs, that it is worth the extra effort. I am able to stitch over previously quilted lines and use them to "get to the next line" or area. This



Abundance by Diane Gaudynski

back-tracking or double-stitching is something I do all the time, especially in feathers done the traditional way without a space between each one. The doubled line of stitching is almost undetectable.

Silk thread doesn't overpower the quilt and make it look "thread-y". This is not for you if you want the thread work to be part of the design or embellishment. I like it for my traditional designs as it gives me the same freedom and "look" that invisible nylon monofilament does, but with silk one can see the tiny stitches and they have a subtle, elegant luster that I really like. I have started playing with colors more now too, and don't try to perfectly match the thread to the fabric.

Silk is a natural fiber, but unlike the dress silk fabrics from 100 years ago that were treated with lead and consequently deteriorated in quilts, this silk is strong and probably just as durable as any of the other natural fibers used in quilting. I use my *Basic and Signature Collections* of #100 silk thread from YLI. Along with the silk thread, I use a fine weight bobbin thread, #50 Aurifil Cotton Mako or Bottom Line polyester by Superior Threads. My machines all love these threads and hum away happily when I use them.

Machine Quilting Tips

- You may need to loosen the top tension a bit to get a nice stitch. Do some sample quilting first on exactly the same layers as are in your quilt.
- Silk thread may be used in the bobbin, but a very fine cotton or polyester bobbin thread that is similar to the silk in weight works fine too. The texture of the cotton "grabs" the silk and keeps tension more even. When I do use silk in the bobbin, I find that I have to tighten the bobbin tension until it doesn't drop when I hold the bobbin case by the thread, and then tweak the top tension until I get the perfect stitch. It is such a fine thread that it slides right through the bobbin case if it is not tightened a bit. Tighten a little and check, then tighten more if needed.
- A fine, sharp needle works best – size #70/10 or #60/8.
- More stitches per inch (small stitches) look better than fewer stitches per inch (large stitches).
- Space lines of quilting closer when using fine silk thread.
- For walking foot quilting such as an all-over grid, use a smaller stitch length and keep the grid lines close together – 1" or so apart.
- Clean the bobbin area of lint and build-up of debris every time you fill the bobbin, and oil the entire area frequently so the machine runs smoothly and does not sound unduly noisy.
- Clean the take-up lever, tension disks, and thread guides frequently. Run some thicker cotton thread through, and use a small brush to remove any lint build-up.
- Use a cone thread holder for the best thread set-up and even tension.
- Vary the colors of silk thread to create depth and texture.
- Try a slightly lighter or deeper thread rather than matching the fabric exactly – you might find that you prefer this look.
- Silk thread quilts up differently than the way it looks when held to the fabric swatch, so be sure to do some test quilting before you buy enough thread for an entire project.

DIANE GAUDYNSKI SIGNATURE COLLECTION

It's here! The new *Diane Gaudynski Signature Collection* of #100 YLI silk thread on 1000 yd. cones! Go to www.ylicorp.com/gaudynski.htm and see the colors and packaging. Ask for it at your local quilt shop. You are getting much more thread for the money than buying the small spools, plus it will be all the same dye lot, and you won't keep running back to the store for more. Ask me how I know about that! I have chosen some very neutral threads that blend extremely well with a variety of colors. I have used #254 on browns, rusts, deep reds, greens, even violets and it looks wonderful. Because of this very fine thread's ability to "melt" into the fabric, your designs can be quilted extremely closely yet still be seen as distinct designs without the thread taking over. Once you try silk for fine heirloom quilting or very close artistic thread painting, you won't want to go back to other threads. Be sure to clean your machine regularly so it doesn't build up any wax on the thread pathway.

Abundance, above, is a nice example of this thread and how it looks in machine quilting.



Micro Stippling



There has been discussion of "What is micro stippling?" among some quilters who are doing very tiny stippling. I've never really called mine "micro," but the lines are closely spaced, about $\frac{1}{8}$ " apart, still far enough apart to allow some of the quilt to puff up a bit to create texture and dimension. Any closer and the stitching looks like nothing but random needle holes. I think the

most important thing is that the stitches are even and the spaces between shapes are even as well. This creates a wonderful texture, similar in effect to hand stippling, which is, of course, what I had in mind.

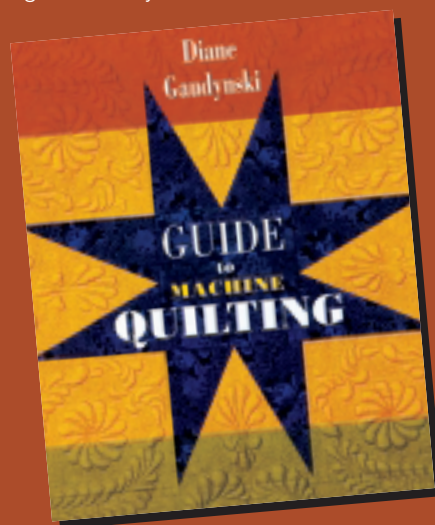
Tip: After about 20 minutes of stippling I make myself stop and take a break or it suddenly goes downhill fast. Get up and walk around – do something else for a while that gets the blood circulating.

Handwork

Sometimes, no matter how hard you try, there are problems in your finished quilt – accept that although we are *machine quilters* and our tool is a sewing machine, we are operating the machine *by hand*. It is not supposed to be perfect; indeed, it cannot be perfect! The little imperfections and not-quite-perfect areas are what make the quilt something that is handmade by a real person and is as individual as you are. In this era of computers and technology, it is nice to see things that reflect our heritage and are obviously made by a real quilter, a real person. Try to be as good as you can, but accept the fact that there are indeed limitations.

GUIDE TO MACHINE QUILTING

I have loved quilts all of my life, and began machine quilting in 1988 after hand quilting for several years and then hearing a lecture by Harriet Hargrave. After seeing Debra Wagner's "Floral Urns," the first BERNINA® Award winner at Paducah, I realized what was possible on a home sewing machine. I am self-taught and my new book, **Guide to Machine Quilting**, has been published by AQS. In it I share my techniques and what I have learned about quilting with all of you.



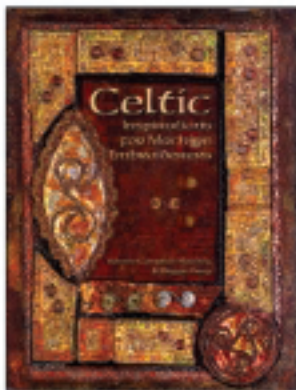
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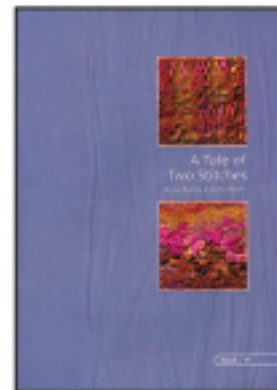
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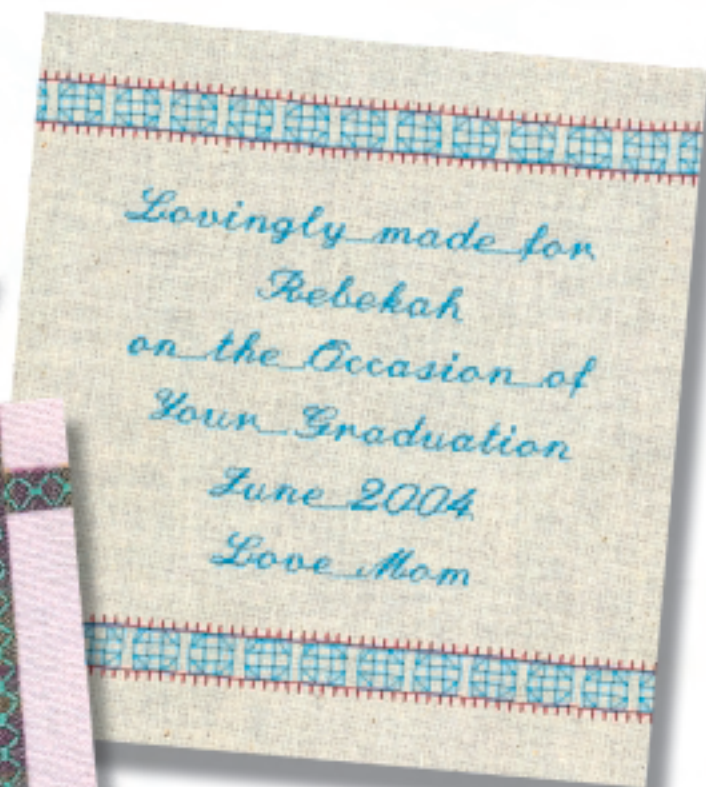
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Labels, Labels, Labels



BY JILL DANKLEFSON

The final step in completing a quilt is often considered the most important, particularly by those who have inherited or otherwise acquired a quilt without one!

Labeling the quilt not only documents your work, but also provides future generations with

information about the quilt, the person(s) that made it, as well as the person or occasion for which it was made. Make your quilt labels as simple or as complex as you want, but be sure to include at least your name and the year. It's easy to create personalized quilt labels using the memory features and functions of your sewing machine.

- Begin by selecting your favorite lettering style – block, double block, or italic
- Access your machine's memory – this is the area that allows you to combine stitches
- Enter lines of text into memory; some machines have "interrupters" that instruct the machine to stop so fabric can be repositioned; others may require programming each line into a separate memory bank. (See box below.)
- Attach Clear Foot #34/34C to the machine; the clear sole of this foot provides excellent visibility, while the markings make it easy to position and align text. Insert a new needle into the machine, and thread with desired decorative thread.



Memory Sub-Dividers:

Some BERNINA® models – such as the **artista** 165, 185, and 200 – allow several lines of text to be programmed together in the same memory bank, while others may only accommodate one line at a time. When dividing text, use the appropriate subdividers as described below.



COMBINATION SUB-DIVIDER 1

(1530, 1630, **artista** 165-200)

With this function, you can divide a single memory bank into several smaller, unconnected parts. The machine will stop stitching each time it reaches a sub-divider; to stitch the next unit, move the cursor past the "wall". For the quilt labels described in this article, separate each line of text with a Combination Sub-Divider.



COMBINATION SUB-DIVIDER 2

(In addition, **artista** 200 has this feature)

With this function, not only can you divide a single file folder into several smaller units, but the **artista** automatically scrolls to the next section for you. This is a great feature to have when stitching single lines of text.

General Directions:

- Stitching on waste fabric (muslin or other plain material), sew the lines of text so that they are left-justified. Measure the length of each line, then determine the exact center of each one.



- Mark the center of the quilt label fabric as shown, then use this line to determine the starting point for each line of text. Use a water-soluble marking pen to mark these points.

- Stitch the lines of text, beginning each one at the appropriate starting point. Stitch rows of text approximately one presser foot width apart.

- After all the text is sewn, decorate the label with your favorite stitches and/or trims. Below are details of the two labels shown:

GRADUATION LABEL

- Stitch 658 – blue – quilt block
- Stitch 329 – red – blanket stitch



HEART LABEL

- Stitch 302 used to couch ribbon



TIP – when using decorative ribbons, pre-shrink them by steaming them well with an iron.



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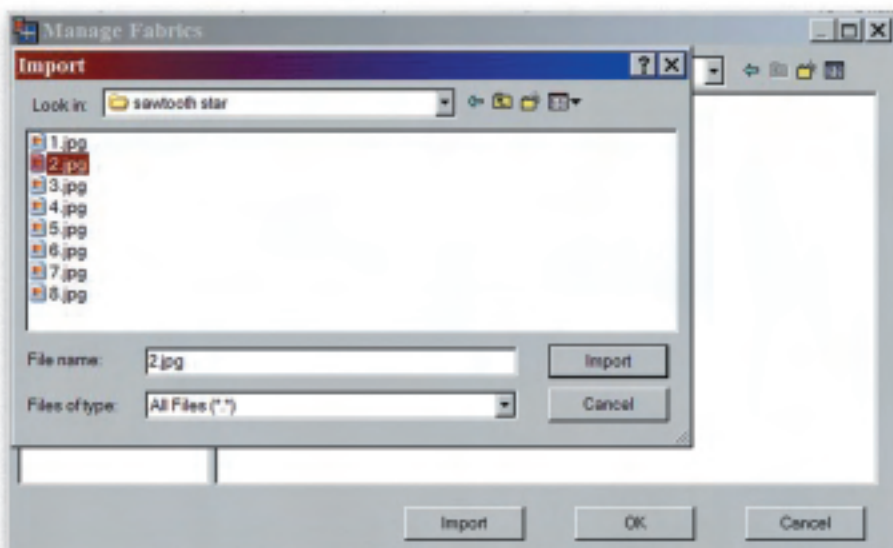
Designing with the BERNINA® Quilter

BY JENNIFER GIGAS

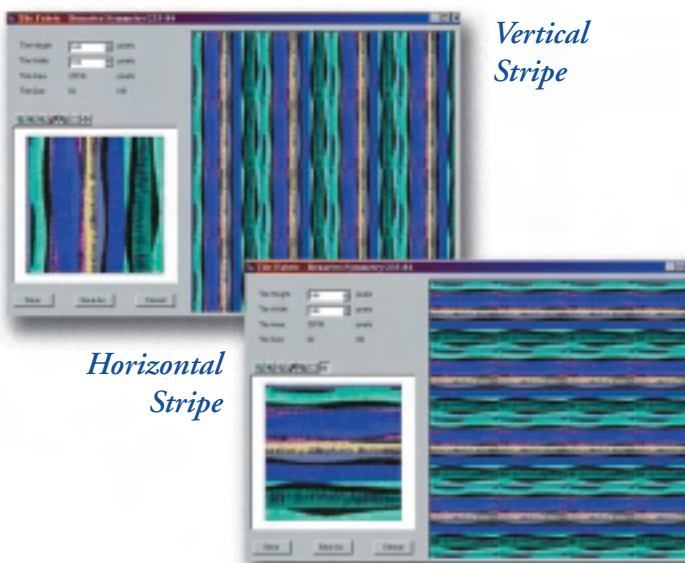
Take advantage of the BERNINA® Quilter program to design home accessories that coordinate with your decor as the project shown here coordinates with the Sawtooth Star Quilt on page 18. The table runner above is simply a “little” quilt planned in the BERNINA® Quilter Program to preview color and block placement. This is such a wonderful way to introduce interest and a touch of elegance into your dining room; you’ll want to stitch one for every special occasion.

To view your virtual projects as close to reality as possible, begin by scanning the fabrics you will be using. Set the scan at 256 colors, 100% and 72dpi; this will give you a small file that will display well on the computer screen without taking up too much disc space or memory. *Hint: Create a folder with the name of your project; store all related files, such as the fabric*

scans and BERNINA® Quilter design files in this folder. Crop the scanned image, keeping only the area needed for an adequate representation of the fabric. To import your fabric into the Quilter program, select File>Manage Fabric. Click Import. Enter the location of the saved fabric files in the Look in box; be sure All Files appears in Files of Type box. Select the first file; click Import. Repeat until each fabric has been added to the Quilter fabric library.



To lay out a directional fabric such as a stripe, utilize the Tile Fabric option. Select the fabric from the library. Double click on the small fabric swatch to open the Tile Fabric dialog box. Rotate the stripe; adjust the tiling using the Move/Edit Selection tool. Click Save As; name the new fabric file and save.



*Vertical
Stripe*

*Horizontal
Stripe*

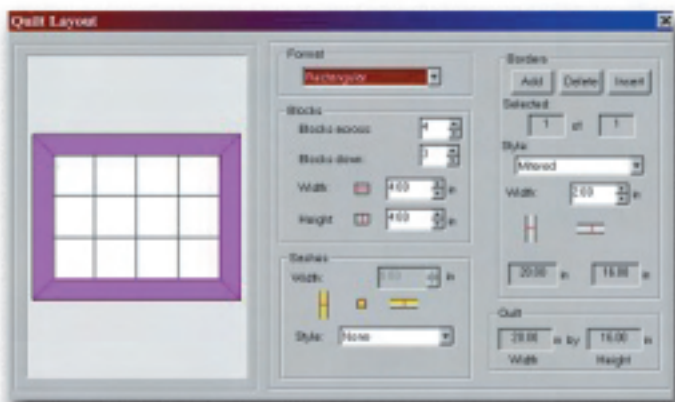
To prepare for a project such as the table runner pattern, determine its approximate finished size. Divide this measurement by the number of blocks that will be used, in this case 3. Subtract 2" from this measurement. The resulting measurement will be the starting block size in the layout for the runner. As borders and sashing strips are added to the layout, adjust the block measurement to keep the finished size of the runner the proper size for the table.

For this project, quilting designs from the Holice Turnbow Stencil Quilt Designs folder were imported, then positioned and scaled appropriately. Once the designs were scaled, then each design was selected and returned to the embroidery window, then saved for export to the sewing machine or Personal Design Card. Remember to print a template for proper positioning of the design on the project.

You can also enhance your table setting with custom made placemats to coordinate with a table runner. Determine finished placemat size and divide by the number of pieced blocks that will be used. A grid of 3 blocks down by 4 blocks across is a good starting place for many placemat designs.

Hint: Each block on the grid does not have to be assigned a block pattern; it can also be filled with a single fabric.

After all your table accessories are planned, print all necessary information to complete the project.



Don't forget to add yardage for napkins to the calculated yardage chart to complete the table setting.

Directions for making the table runner and the placemat can be found at www.berninausa.com

*All that's left to do
now is plan the
menu!*



To Steam or Not To Steam *Ironing for*

Quilters

BY JO LEICHTE

Ask any group of quilters whether one should use steam when pressing patchwork and you're likely to start a very spirited discussion between two very opinionated teams/groups – the “steamers” and the “dry ironers”.

There's one point on which both camps agree: one should “press” – lift and lower the iron – rather than “iron” – lower the iron and move it from side to side and front to back. Ironing can easily distort the fabric, causing pieces to be askew and out of square. How awful to take one's time piecing a perfect block only to have it mangled by ironing instead of pressing!

Many quilters also agree that stitches should be “set” before opening or turning seam allowances. To set stitches, press (remember the up and down motion?) seams as sewn; this encourages the thread in the stitches to meld with the fabric, producing better-looking seamlines.

TO STEAM OR NOT TO STEAM?

Some quilters insist that using steam during any part of the piecing process can lead to distorted blocks and thus to out-of-kilter quilts. Others like the flat, sharp seams that steam produces. Still others recommend using no steam for piecing, but use steam to block each completed unit of the quilt. And then there are those who don't use any steam at all. Or who use steam only to block completed tops prior to assembling the layers for quilting. Our recommendation? Try each method, then decide which is right for you.

THE PRESSING PROCESS

What actually happens when fabric is pressed or ironed? There are two processes at work here – first, relaxing the fibers, and second, “freezing” them into a new position.

The steam penetrates the fibers of the fabric and thread, relaxing them and making them more malleable than usual. The heat of the iron – assisted by the heat of the ironing system board – helps the steam penetrate. Take care when pressing fabrics and garments – the damp fibers are often more prone to damage than when dry.

At the same time that the heat and steam are relaxing the fibers, we use the iron to move them into the desired position – pressing seams open or to one side, pressing a crease into a pair of trousers, etc. The heat of the table helps evaporate the water in the fabric, while the suction board pulls the dampness from the fabric. When the fabric is dry, the fibers are “set” into position and the fabric will retain its new shape.

BLOCKING

An ironing system – complete with steam station and heated, suction-equipped board – is a great addition to any quilter's studio. Whether or not one uses the steam for pressing seam allowances, the combination of powerful steam, heated surface, and suction table makes blocking quilt squares as well as entire quilts an easy process.



Blocking quilt squares or blocks is an important step in the quilting process if you want flat, squared quilts. Follow the steps below to complete the blocking process using an ironing system.

Create a blocking surface. Use 100% cotton muslin and a permanent ink marker to draw a square

the desired size of the square to be blocked. This should be measured precisely and is the size of the finished block plus seam allowances.

Place the muslin on the ironing table. Position the block over the drawn square. Using the steam iron, heavily steam the block without touching the iron to the fabric. Using quilter's pins, pin the edges of the block along the drawn edges on the muslin, taking care not to distort the edges of the block. Pins should be spaced about 1-2" apart.

Activate the suction feature of the ironing table to speed the drying of the fabric. Do not remove the pins or lift the block from the ironing table until it is completely dry.

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