

## Quilters Corner

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## Sewing Machine Needle Tips

Did you know that you should change your machine needle every 6-8 hours of sewing? It's true! Changing your needle is one of the best preventative machine maintenance tasks you can do. You want the tip of the needle to be super sharp to go through your fabric without catching the threads. As you stitch, the tip of your needle will get microscopic nicks. The longer you sew on that same old needle, the more your pretty stitches will start to deteriorate. Why spend time sewing crummy stitches?

Don't forget while changing your needle to take off your needle plate and brush your machine's teeth (clean around and in between the feed dogs, etc). If you don't do this, eventually you'll have dense pads of lint collecting and building up and it will effect how your fabric feeds. You should also clean around your bobbin area every time you change your bobbin. Just a quick swipe with a little brush will do the trick.

### **What needle should you use?**

Quilting Needles are made especially for piecing and machine quilting. The special tapered design allows for easier fabric penetration and helps eliminate skipped stitches. If you are having trouble burying your threads while quilting, try a single hole plate. The smaller hole in the plate helps keep the fabric from pulling through to the bobbin and the bobbin thread from pulling to the top.

Topstitch Needles are for heavy or multiple threads. We like them when sewing with Sulky Blendables. The eye is bigger in a Topstitch needle and so is the "scarf" or groove the thread travels along to reach the eye. The bigger eye reduces thread breakage.

Microtex (Sharp) Needles are good for micro fibers, polyester, silk, foils, artificial leather and coated materials. We recommend them when piecing and quilting batiks. We find the thin acute point is also wonderful when sewing with Minkee and similar stretch polyester fabrics.