

## Thread Snips!

Text and photos by Cindy Scraba

Who knew a pair of snips could become a quilter's best friend when cutting threads? Whether you're snipping threads from embroidery stitching, trimming during appliqué, power piecing or cleaning up a quilt top, a quick snip action is sew easy and safe! Let's compare three brands and their most popular models by Famoré Cutlery™, Karen Kay Buckley™ and Gingher™.

Depending on their intended purposes, consider the overall size (from teeny to medium), type of point (from fine to broad), spring action snip model (versus scissor type) and type of blade (whether it is serrated or not/grade of steel.) There are basic benefits to be realized as well.

### A simple SNIP minimizes repetitive motion to finger joints.

Visualize snipping threads on a newly completed quilt top. It could take an hour or more depending on the piecing method and overall size. The SPRING ACTION mechanism on a pair of snips allows you to float along the top—like a barber clipping hair left- or right-handed!

### The blade type is tailored for function.

A MICRO SERRATED BLADE makes a huge difference for precision snipping. If you already have a pair of serrated scissors for fabric you are familiar with the magic. Plus, the CURVED BLADE deflects any cuts AWAY from your quilt or project. You will discover other uses for curved blades as well. They perform like a pro; however, quilters won't have to pay big bucks for little snips.

### Snip threads without the risk of cutting into fabric.

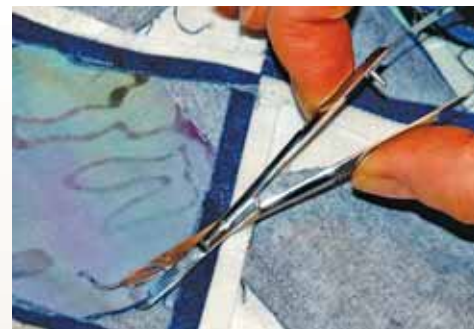
If you've ever accidentally snipped into a quilt block, you won't wish to repeat that experience. Snips are a safety tool for you! Longarmers love them for the same reasons. It's nice to know you can get up close and personal without risk of injury to your precious projects.



L to R Models: Famoré™ 2.5" mini-curved scissors, Karen Kay Buckley™ curved serrated red scissors, Famoré™ 4.5" curved serrated EZ Snips™, Famoré™ 4" micro tip curved scissors, Famoré™ 4" fine point curved scissors



Famoré™ 4.5" EZ Snips™ with "hook" feature for picking out threads and snipping as well; although not a serrated blade on this model.



**Cinderella's Tip #1:** To remove unwanted stitches it's easier to pick from the back as shown. Snip your bobbin thread every three to four stitches in sections; then pull and remove top threads in longer lengths. This method creates a drama and fuzz free zone.

### Save time with every snip!

Normally, when you reach for a pair of regular scissors, it takes an extra second or two to insert fingers into the slots. With snips you SIMPLY SQUEEZE—easy peasey. Keep these buddies next to your sewing machine

and hand projects for piecing, quilting, appliqué, and embroidery. Great time-saving assistants!

### Higher quality of steel increases a tool's longevity.

Not all steel is created equal. I've covered this fact with raw materials concerning thread in previous columns. You get what you pay for. For example, German-grade steel is available in some brands and a bonus since it's hardened from the forging process providing longer lasting sharpness and vital for re-sharpening blades later.

### More tech on steel...

To learn more about how metal is drop-forged for strength, ground and polished for precision, visit manufacturer websites. If there is no mention of this process, your assumption is their blades are not made from steel of this caliber, often sourced from Germany or Japan—a good thing. Assembly of tool components is not as crucial as the country of origin for raw materials; sound familiar?

**Cinderella's Tip #2:** Tools should be kept hidden from others in your household; plus, only select outlets can sharpen serrated blades properly. The good news is you shouldn't need to sharpen them for years if cared for—probably less hassle and expense to replace the snips since their price is so reasonable. All models shown range from \$20 to \$30.

I'm a thread lover, not a hater; however, I admit pesky, stray threads can be evil. Sometimes the simplest tool can be your best friend. If you have any queries, there's more info on "necessary tools" on my web store pages located under Essential Tools.

Happy snipping while stitching!

*Cinderella*

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Gingher™ Snips have a straight blade/non-serrated (with reference to my Tip #2 to keep tools away from "others"—puppy teeth marks are not a standard feature as etched on this case, ahem).

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