

# MACHINE QUILTING 101

## Supply List (4 pages) (revised 1/19/24)

Instructor: Helene Knott 503 888-9784 [helene.m.knott@gmail.com](mailto:helene.m.knott@gmail.com)

Website: [www.heleneknott.com](http://www.heleneknott.com)

In this class we will cover the basics of machine quilting including tools, materials, techniques and how to apply a particular quilting designs onto your quilt. You will work with a variety of designs and techniques on a medium-sized sampler, it's best to learn and perfect your skills on a smaller piece before tackling larger projects. Once you are comfortable with the techniques and what your machine is capable of, you can work your way up to larger quilts which require quite a bit more of management to control the layers of fabric and batting. The class includes a wealth of tricks and tips to make quilting your own quilt more enjoyable and efficient.

**Please be courteous to others by arriving for class with the correct supplies. Contact me at 503-888-9784 or [helene.m.knott@gmail.com](mailto:helene.m.knott@gmail.com) if you have any questions.**

**A Note to Students:** Many students do not realize that once the teacher is paid, the shop offering a class makes little if any income on the class itself. The shop is relying on product sales to continue offering quality classes to you. Therefore, I urge you to patronize this shop when buying your supplies for this class as much as possible. Keep quilt classes alive by supporting your local quilt shop.  
Thank you, Helene

**NOTE: If your supply list does not include instructions for piecing and layering your sampler top, please contact teacher for instructions.**

### TOOLS/MATERIALS:

- **Sewing Machine:** A good basic home machine in good running condition. A Singer Featherweight is not a good choice for machine quilting for a number of reasons. Please bring your **owner's manual** if you have one and are not familiar with all the functions of your machine **as well as the utility tools kit** (small screwdrivers, brushes, etc) as you may need to perform some minor maintenance on your machine during class.
- **Sewing Machine Accessories:** You need to bring a free motion or darning/embroidery foot for free motion quilting (this is absolutely necessary). **Make sure you have the right foot, I have seen a number of students sold the wrong foot for this by sewing machine shops!** You will also need a walking foot (this one is not absolutely crucial but will give you better results than trying to sew in the ditch with a free motion foot). It's also a good idea to fill and bring extra bobbins so you don't have to interrupt your flow to wind bobbin thread. **Please remember to bring the foot pedal and power cord for your machine!** It seems silly to have to remind students but these items get left behind at home more frequently than you would imagine.
- **Sewing Machine Needles:** Bring a package each of quilting, top-stitching needles in sizes 11, (or 12) and 14; Microtex/Sharps needles in size 12 can be helpful as well.
- **Pieced Top and Backing:** See accompanying instructions for making your top. Use solids or textures that read as a solid to better see your stitches. The backing should measure 2" larger all around than the top. 1 yard of fabric will be sufficient for the backing; avoid the white-on-white or cream-on-cream prints as they can be 'sticky' against the bed of your machine. **Please come to class with your top already pieced, layered & pinned or spray basted, we will not have the time to do this in class.** **NOTE:** one of the problems often experienced in machine quilting is puckering and tucks on the backside of the quilt. Choosing a backing fabric that is slightly heavier than the top may help alleviate this problem.
- **Batting:** Choose thin even batting **100% cotton**, polyester batting is bulkier than cotton and may impede your movements. Batting should measure at least 1" larger all around than your top.

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- **Stitching Test Square:** This is simply a square about 12"x 12" of the same batting as your quilt, layered between two pieces of fabric. You will use this for practicing and to run a test for stitch length and tension before stitching on your quilt; you may want to prepare more than one.
- **Safety Pins:** You will need about 30 of them in sizes 1 or 2 to pin your layers. **NOTE: Please layer and pin your quilt before coming to class as this will save valuable time for quilting. Instructions for doing this properly are at the end of this supply list. If you prefer, you may use a basting spray instead of pinning.**
- **Regular Straight Pins**
- **Thread:** 100% cotton **good quality** thread (50 wt) in a color that contrasts nicely with your fabric so that you can see your stitches. Do not bring hand-quilting, polyester or rayon thread.
- **Freezer Paper:** Available at many quilt shops and most supermarkets; you will need about 1 yard.
- **Tracing Paper or 'Golden Threads' Quilting paper:** Golden Threads is available at quilt shops and tracing paper at art supply/craft stores. If buying tracing paper, choose a brand such as Strathmore that is very thin and transparent. Do not buy vellum or dressmakers' tracing paper.
- **Quilter's marking pen:** the blue (rinse-away) type.
- **Template Plastic:** A small sheet will do.
- **Masking or Blue Painter's Tape (1" wide):** Available at Fred Meyer or paint supply stores. If buying blue painter's tape make sure you get medium adhesion, not low adhesion.
- **Quilters' and/or Mechanical Pencil:** A quilters' mechanical pencil with white lead for med/dark fabric and a graphite mechanical pencil for light fabric.
- **Scissors:** A pair of scissors to cut paper and plastic templates with.
- **Thread snips:** The small spring loaded tweezers type with curved blades is the best.
- **Machine Quilting Gloves:** Help you grip the quilt more effectively and give you greater control of your stitching, 'Machingers' are my favorite.
- **Seam Ripper**
- **A Small Hand Sewing or Quilting Needle (optional):** For tucking your thread ends in.
- **Pens and/or Pencils:** To draw on your template materials (freezer/tracing paper and cardboard or plastic).
- **12" Ruler**
- **Paper:** a few sheets of 8½" x 11" paper to do some practice drawings on
- Class handout/pattern packet: \$4.00 for copy fees payable to instructor at the class.
- **OWNERS MANUAL:** Bring it if you have one. The class is intense and we have a lot of ground to cover. Much time can be lost trying to figure out how to set up or install accessories on your machine if you are not familiar with various operations. Though I am knowledgeable about some machines, no two brands are alike and I'm not a machine wizard.



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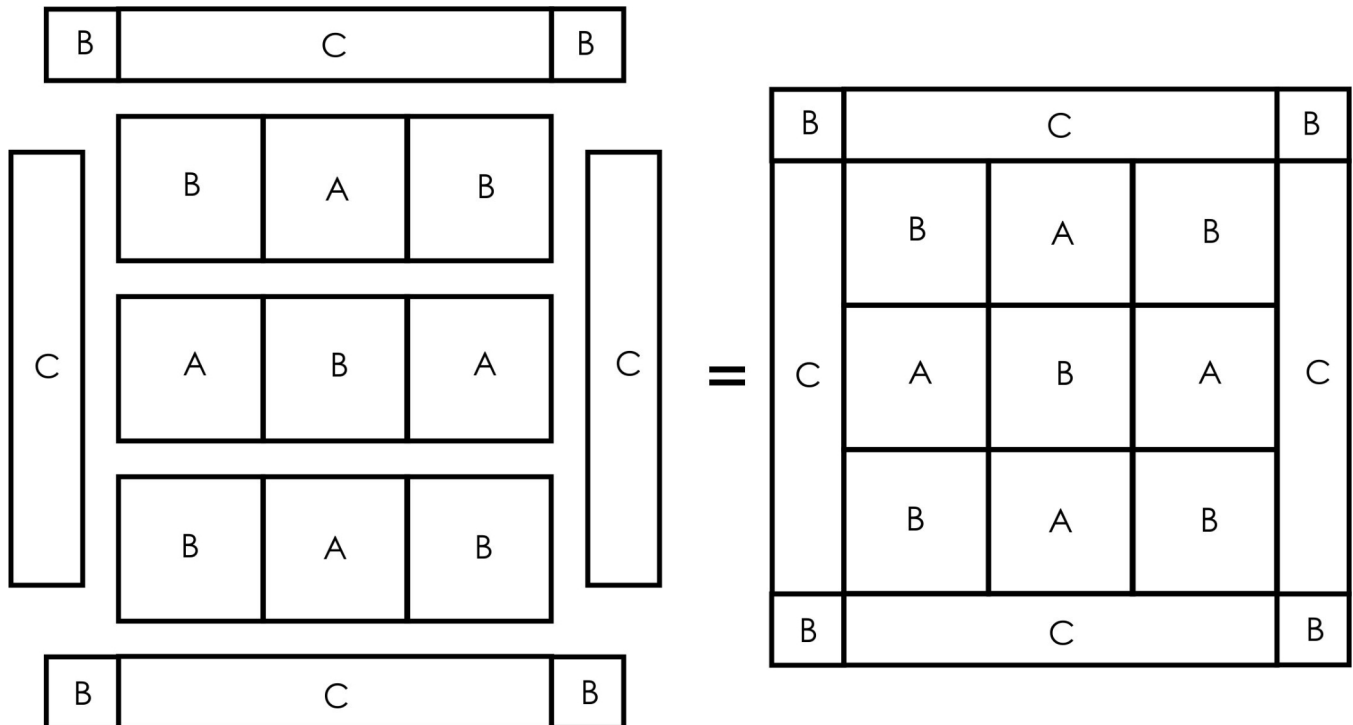
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## Machine Quilting Practice Sampler

In this class we will be experimenting with different machine quilting designs and techniques. The following pattern is designed to provide various areas to experiment with these techniques. For the best results, choose solids or textures that read as a solid. This is a practice project and will not likely be something you will wish to display on your wall. Use good quality fabric; cheap bargain fabric will yield poor results.

To make your top, you will need  $\frac{1}{3}$  yard of fabric 'A',  $\frac{1}{2}$  yard of fabric 'B', and  $\frac{2}{3}$  yard of fabric 'C'. Cut four  $8\frac{1}{2}$ "squares of fabric 'A', five  $8\frac{1}{2}$ "squares of fabric 'B', four  $4\frac{1}{2}$ "squares of fabric 'B' and four  $4\frac{1}{2}$ "x  $24\frac{1}{2}$ "strips of fabric 'C'. Sew them together as shown in the diagram to make your top, **press seams to one side – this is important**. For the best effect choose solids or textured fabrics that read as a solid in three different colors so that your quilting stitches show well. Use basic good quality sturdy cotton (particularly for the backing), thin fabrics shift more during machine quilting and have a tendency to ripple and pucker. Finished top measures 32"x 32" so you will need 1 yard of fabric for the backing and a 34"x 34" piece of thin, even batting.

**Important:** Press all seams to one side.



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## Layering & Pinning a Quilt

Choose a fabric for your quilt back that is the same weight or slightly heavier than your top. This will make your back more stable than the top and reduce the puckers and tucks that can occur on the backside of the quilt while you are machine quilting. TIP: Avoid the tone on tone fabrics that have motifs printed on the surface with matte paint, these tend to 'stick' to the machine bed surface making it hard to maneuver the quilt during stitching.

Iron the top and the back before layering to remove any wrinkles or creases, steam iron if necessary to get it nice and flat. Piece the back if necessary making sure the lengthwise grain (parallel to the selvedge) runs in the same direction on all the pieces. Remove the selvedges before piecing and press the seams open to minimize bulk.

Secure the back (wrong side up) to a work surface such as a table or floor with tape or clamps stretching the back just enough to ensure it lies flat and even without over-stretching it. When the quilt back is secured, check the batting and pick off any dark threads that may be clinging to it as they can show through to the top or back if you used light colored fabric. Spread the batting over the quilt back and smooth it out carefully. Do not stretch it artificially tight or it may contract after your quilt is pinned and create puckers in your quilting. If the batting has any areas that 'balloon' up, pat them down gently to flatten them. If the quilt is large, pin the batting to the backing along the edges in several places along the edges. After the batting is in place, position the top (right side up) in the center of the batting. Smooth it out carefully as you did with the batting making sure the blocks, sashing and borders are well aligned and straight; this may require a bit of adjustment, tugging and scooting the fabric as needed to make the seams as straight as possible.

Pin the top in a grid pattern with safety pins spacing them about 5"-6" apart in each direction. If the quilt is large and has been spread on the floor, start pinning along the center horizon and work up and down in rows towards the top and bottom. Don't forget to pin the edges too. If the quilt is smaller and has been clamped to a table, it may be easier to start along one edge working your way up the quilt. Note: If layering on a table that is not large enough to secure the entire quilt at once, you may work on sections at a time, securing, layering and pinning one area before shifting and securing the next area. Take extra care when shifting and securing if working in sections as there is a greater chance of developing slackness in the quilt back during these shifts and you must be careful to secure the next area with as much consistency as the first. **DO NOT STITCH OR SEW THE EDGES OR ANY OTHER PART OF YOUR QUILT AT THIS TIME.** If you have an excessive amount of batting and backing extending beyond the edges of your top, trim it down to a couple of inches; ideally, you want your backing and batting to be just a little larger than your top so that you don't run out of backing as you approach the edges of your top.

**If you prefer to use a basting spray in lieu of pinning that is fine but remember that basting adhesives will gum up your needles faster than regular pinning and there are other issues such as over-spray and getting your quilt straight on the batting/backing with no 'bubbles'. Follow the manufacturer's directions on the canister for the best results.**