

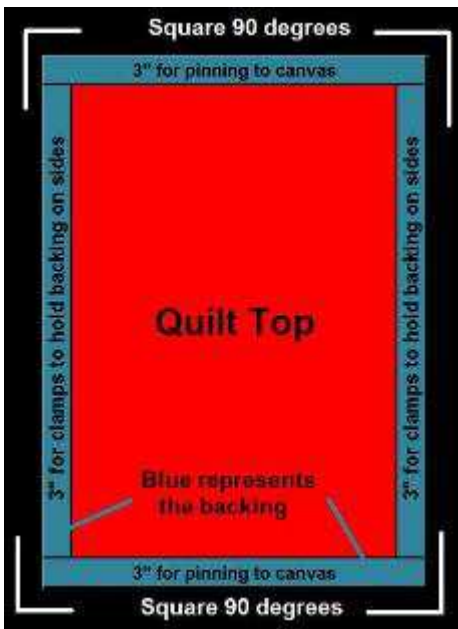
## Preparing your Project for Quilting

I can help you finish your quilts by machine quilting the top (in either a custom style or an edge to edge design) and then, if you want, bind your quilt so it is ready to use. I can provide the backing fabric for your quilt project (have a look at the range of backing fabrics on offer by clicking on this link). I can also supply the batting for your quilt project (have a look at the range of batting on offer by clicking on this link).

You can of course supply your quilt top with your own batting and backing fabric. Either way I am happy to provide a quilting service to suit your requirements. All quilts will be individually quoted once sighted (I cannot provide a price without seeing the quilt).

With or without you supplying batting or backing fabrics there are some basic quilt preparation tasks that you should follow to ensure your quilt can be successfully quilted. These tasks not only make life easier for the operator of the machine, but can often save you money too (as you will be charged extra for "preparation time" prior to the quilt being loaded onto the machine).

**1. Ensure that your backing is big enough** - I recommend that your backing is at least 8cm (or 3 inches) bigger around all the sides of the quilt top. Note: This means 3" on top, 3" on bottom, 3" on each side. This is needed for pinning to the canvases at the top and bottom & to allow room for the clamps on the sides that hold the backing in place under the quilt top and batting and to ensure that there will be enough backing when the quilting gets to the end.



If the backing fabric is the same size as the quilt top then you should add a piece of similar or complimentary fabric horizontally and vertically offset through the middle of the piece of backing material rather than adding the extra fabric around the outside edge of the backing to increase its size. The reason being that the quilt top creeps down and across to the right during the quilting process and you end up with the extra strip being on the edge of the quilt where it is more noticeable and can cause the bindings to appear more bulky.

Similarly it is not possible to centre a quilt top onto a piece of backing fabric as the quilt top creeps down and to the side during the quilting process.

If you do not have enough backing fabric I will phone you to discuss what other options you may have.

**2. Make sure that your backing is square and sits flat** - no puckers if you have joined pieces; the sides are straight and the selvedge's have been cut off.

Basically try and put as much care into the backing as the top - you will be disappointed if the top looks great but the backing lets the quilt down.

**3. Ensure that your batting (wadding) is large enough** as above it should be 8cm (or 3 inches) bigger around all the sides of the quilt top. Also if you have to join the batting make sure it doesn't

leave a seam which will be felt through the quilting - just butt the edges together and either hand or machine the pieces together. If in doubt, consult with your quilter about the best option for your quilt.

**4.** Longarm quilters are busy people - and time is money so there a number of tips you can do you minimise your cost and maximise your end result:

- a) **Trim or remove any loose threads** so that they do not get sewn into the quilt
- b) **DO NOT supply your quilt top already basted** to the backing and batting as I cannot put your quilt onto the longarm machine like this, I will have to un-pick it and that will be an extra charge
- c) **Beware of sewing any raised embellishments** onto your quilt top such as buttons, beads, sequins etc. This will incur a time and \$ cost impact as it is harder to sew around them and they do run the risk of being damaged by the machine, as well as limiting the type of quilting patterns that can be used.
- d) **Ensure that your quilt top (and backing fabric if supplied) is ironed** before you send it to me. Make sure the seams are ironed flat and the way they are supposed to go. Then fold it gently before packing it to send to me. If the quilt comes to me badly creased this will impact the final quality of the quilt so I would have to iron it before quilting (this would be an extra charge).
- e) **Make sure all borders are correctly attached** (aligned and of correct length). Poorly attached borders will create a "wavy" border making it difficult to keep the quilt square and prevent tucks from occurring.

**5.** Before you supply your quilt top to me for quilting there are a few things you need to consider:

- a) What sort of quilting designs do you want on your quilt top?
- b) Does the quilt have a top (which way is up)? Please mark the top of your quilt if it is not obvious. Use a safety pin or a bit of fabric loosely stitched on or near the top.
- c) What is the purpose of the quilt (eg wall hanging, bed quilt, cot quilt, competition quilt etc)?
- d) What sort of things do you (or the recipient if it is a present) like (hearts, flowers, straight lines, busy things, etc)
- e) What colour threads do you like? Do you like the look of blending threads or contrasting threads?
- f) What sort of money do you want to spend - generally speaking the more "thinking" the quilter has to do and the more intricate the overall design, the more the quilting will cost.

Remember, if you say "Quilt what you think is best" then you will get what the quilter interprets your quilt top needs. I will guide you with some ideas and suggestions of what can be achieved but it helps if you have thought of what sort of effect you are looking for when I ring you to discuss your quilt and give you the quote. For a more detailed discussion on this subject refer to my separate article called *"Choosing the best Quilting Design for your Quilt"*.

**6. Ensure your quilt is adequately packed for shipping.** I recommend that you place your quilt in a plastic bag (in case the packaging gets wet) and then in a shipping box to protect your quilt. If your quilt is just sent in a plastic courier satchel it may get ripped in transit and damage your quilt.

Please ensure that you have included a completed booking sheet with your quilt (click on this link to print out a booking sheet). That way I can contact you to discuss and quote your job and to deliver your quilt back to the correct address.

These are a few suggestions for preparing your quilt top. If you have any questions you are welcome to contact me.