

QUILTING TERMS

Appliqué --a piecing process using small cutouts of fabric which are then sewn onto a background fabric in a decorative design. Typically intricate and curved floral and animal motifs are used.

Backing --the bottom or back layer of a quilt, usually a plain unadorned fabric that has been pieced to the width of the quilt.

Basting --large stitches made to hold fabric layers or seams in place temporarily, before final seams or quilting is done. One may also use safety pins or straight pins to baste.

Batting --the layer of stuffing in the middle of the quilt, giving it warmth and thickness. Can be cotton, polyester, or wool. Known as "wadding" in Great Britain.

Bias --the diagonal of the fabric weave. It stretches.

Binding --a strip of fabric sewn over the edges of the quilt layers to finish the raw edges, add strength, and/or decorate the edge. Can be straight or scalloped. A binding can also be a part of the backing wrapped over to the front.

Block --a square (or other regularly repeated shape) section, which has been pieced into a top to make it a whole.

Border --a frame or edge made of strips of fabric surrounding the quilt blocks. Frames can be used around a center block to set it apart, or around the outer edges of a quilt as a finishing technique.

Calico --any small repeated print design on cotton, usually a floral.

Chain sewing --to feed block pieces into the sewing machine one right after the other, without snipping threads in between each seam. This allows you to sew many pieces without stopping after each one, saving both time and thread.

Charm square --a smallish, unique patch of fabric. Often traded in quantity, allowing the swappers to develop a collection with a wide variety of prints. When made into a quilt top and called a "charm quilt" the idea is to have a scrap-pieced top with no two pieces alike.

Crazy patch --a block assembled from irregular and often scrap pieces, with no set pattern or design overall. Can be made as small blocks and assembled into a larger piece, or sewn as one complete quilt top. A popular pattern in the late 1800's made up with silks and velvets and embellished with much embroidery.

Directional print --fabric with a printed pattern that has a definite "up" and "down", or grain. Care must be taken to match the direction when piecing.

Ease --to make two pieces of different sizes fit together in the same seam. One piece may have to be stretched a little, or bunched up slightly in order to get both pieces the same length.

Echo quilting --to make repeating outlines of the block pattern, radiating out from the design, like ripples in a pond.

Fat quarter --one quarter of a square yard (or meter) of fabric, cut to about 18x22 inches (~50x56 cm), as compared to a regular quarter-yard cut which measures 9x45 inches (~25x112 cm).

Foundation piecing --assembling a block by sewing pieces to a foundation of muslin or plain fabric, adding strength and stability to delicate or stretchy fabrics.

Friendship quilt --a quilt made by friends (who make friendship blocks) as a gift or remembrance to someone who has moved. The blocks may be signed, dated, or contain verses.

Grain --the direction of the fabric, along the warp and weft threads. When aligning templates "with the grain" they need to be parallel to the warp, or length of the yardage.

Lap quilting --a method of completing the finish quilting one block at a time and then assembling the finished quilt from those pre-quilted squares. Squares are

Memory quilt --a quilt pieced from scraps of a loved one's clothing. May be made of children's outgrown baby clothes, or the clothing of a deceased relative or friend. More recently, memory quilts include transferred photographs of the loved one.

Muslin --a plain, un dyed cotton fabric, available bleached or unbleached. A fine quality bleached muslin is used in quilting as a neutral background or as a founda-

One-patch --any quilt pattern that uses a single shaped patch for the pieced top. May be squares, triangles, hexagons, etc. repeated in color patterns or random scraps.

Paper piecing --to use paper templates with the fabric basted onto the paper shape in order to retain accurate piecing. Fabric is folded over the edge of the paper shape, basted into place, and the edges of adjoining pieces whip stitched together by hand. This is typically used when making the hexagonal Grandmother's Flower Garden pattern.

Paper foundation piecing --a method of piecing (particularly for miniatures) where fabric is sewn to a paper foundation with a printed block pattern, in a specific order, to more accurately assemble a complicated design.

Piecing --to assemble quilt blocks from pieces of fabric sewn along their edges to form a whole. Compare with appliqué.

Pin-baste --to use safety pins or straight pins to temporarily hold together the three layers of a quilt in preparation for finish quilting. Beware of rusting pins.

Quilting --in general, the process of making a quilt; in specific, the stitching of patterns into the quilt layers to add strength and decoration to the quilt.

Reverse appliqué --designs made by sewing on a patch to the underside of the block and then cutting away and turning under the edge of the top fabric.

Rotary cutter --looks like a pizza cutter, but with a rolling razor wheel. The modern quilters version of scissors, to be used with a special mat designed for it and a variety of clear rulers and templates to speed the fabric cutting process.

Sampler --a quilt made of different block patterns, usually as an exercise by the maker in piecing techniques. Historically it served as a block library for the quilter to refer to if she left her home or family when she married.

Sashing --strips of fabric sewn between pieced blocks to separate them while joining them together into a top. Can also act as borders.

Scrap quilt --any quilt made with leftover fabrics from other projects, or from salvaged fabric from clothing or other items. Also, a quilt planned to use many fabrics in order to make it look as though pieced from leftovers.

Selvages --the warp (long) edges of the fabric, finished and usually thicker than the rest of the fabric. Cut off when being pieced into a quilt.

Seminole piecing --a method of cutting joined strips of fabric into sections and re-piecing them with either plain contrasting fabric strips in between, or in staggered rows similar to checker boarding. Adapted from the bright patchwork of the Seminole Indians in Florida, this technique is often used in borders and quilted clothing.