

Quilting

One of the best tools to have for quilting is a Dual-Feed foot, or Walking Foot. You would need to get one that is designed to fit your particular sewing machine, as the various brands differ, even from one machine to another in the same brand. It has a 'feed dog' on the underside of the foot, and therefore moves your fabric through the machine evenly, preventing wrinkling and bunching up at the end of the seam. When you sew with a regular foot, the fabric on top 'slides' slightly on the bottom fabric, creating puckers or bunching at the end of your seam, especially with batting in the middle of your quilt sandwich.

Please note that there are as many styles of quilting as there are quilters! Try this one, and if it works for you, great! If not, explore to find a method that is comfortable for you.

1. Spread the quilt out on your large table, the edges may hang off a little, but that's OK. Next you want to smooth out the quilt. You can do this by holding on to the side edges of the quilt, and gently tug it sideways to even it out. Then do the same on the top and bottom. You also want to make sure it's not crooked, so that when you pin it, it stays straight.
2. Next, pin parallel to the border, about 1" away on both sides of the border seam, and at intervals of 3" to 5". Even though the 'books' say to start from the inside out, I do it backwards, and start on the borders, and work my way in. When I have done it from the inside out, it tends to bunch around the edges, and never works out right for me.
3. After you're done pinning, sew stitch-in-the-ditch* along the seam between the border and the blocks. For beginners, a straight stitch would be a god start. With more practice, you may also use a 'buttonhole' quilting stitch, or any other decorative stitch you would like.
4. Smooth out the quilt again to even it out. Then put pins throughout the quilt, again at intervals of 3" to 5". Where you put them will be determined by how you're going to quilt it:
 - If you're doing **stitch-in-the-ditch***, pin parallel to the seams, as in step 2. You can also do a serpentine stitch along the seam, which doesn't have to be as exact!
 - If you're doing meandering stitches in the middle of the sashing, pin on the seams along the edges of the squares.
 - If you're doing meandering or decorative stitches in the middle of the squares, pin on the seams along the edges of the squares.
 - If you're doing stitches *parallel* to the seams, but not *on* them, pin as in step 2, but about 2" away from the seams. Sew with the edge of the presser foot following parallel to the seam. There is an attachment for wider widths available. You would need one that goes with your brand of sewing machine.

- If you're doing machine or hand 'tying', pin on the seams along the edges of the squares, but not at the corners. For machine 'tying', use a plain zigzag stitch with the feed dog down.
 - You can also use a decorative stitch (with normal feed dog setting), and only stitch one repeat of that stitch. Many newer sewing machines have a button to push that will allow only one repeat of a stitch.
5. Quilt the quilt in any fashion you desire. The quilting can be as open or as dense as you desire. Use straight or decorative stitches as desired! Ask for help if you need it!

***Stitch-in-the-ditch:** topstitch right on top of the seam lines. It can be challenging, but if you take it slow and consistent, it does work very nicely.

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