



SEW-lutions Guidelines

Your Guide
to
Successful
Sewing

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Modern-day quilters enjoy a variety of products to speed the creative process and improve their finished products.

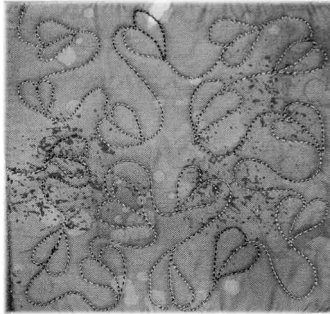


Photo courtesy of Sulky

Spray Adhesives

As an alternative to pinning, spray-on adhesives help quilters keep fabrics, templates and stencils in place. Depending on the product and the task, the adhesive may be repositionable, temporary or permanent (when set). Always follow the manufacturer's health and safety instructions.

Repositionable adhesive functions much like a "sticky-note" paper product. The sprayed item can then be positioned repeatedly without leaving residue on the adjoining surfaces. Use it to position paper templates, hold stencils in place or arrange appliqué shapes in preparation for stitching.

Temporary spray adhesive is specially formulated to dissipate over a short time period (note the time in the instructions), or it can be removed by laundering. This product can be used to "baste" the layers of a quilt together if the project will be completed before the adhesive disappears (a good incentive to finish it).

Permanent spray adhesive allows you to play with appliqué shapes and then, when satisfied with the result, iron them in position for raw-edge appliqué or for other stitching. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions to ensure a permanent bond.

Spray adhesives in a protected area to prevent damage from the overspray. Place small items in a box larger than the project, or spray the project outside if possible; either way, be sure to use spray adhesives in a well ventilated area.

Fusibles

Some ready-to-use quilting products are manufactured with fusible web already in place, needing only



a hot iron for instant application. Fusible bias tapes are ideal for Celtic-style appliqué or stained-glass patchwork. Available in a variety of colors, they're ready to press in place right out of the package.

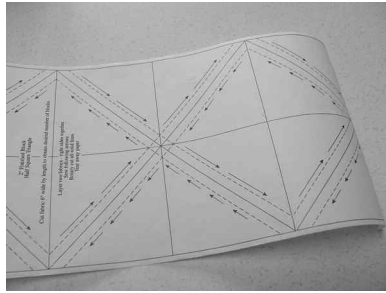
Fusible battings, offered in various weights and fibers, have a glaze of glue on both sides, allowing quilt layers to be "basted" together with the light touch of an iron. Fleeces, lighter in weight than battings, also come in fusible varieties.

Paper-backed fusible webs are sold by the yard, in pre-cut sheets or in narrow strip rolls. They come in a wide variety of bonding strengths, from very light (designed to hold appliqué in place for stitching) to very strong (designed for no-stitch appliqué). Some are dry and papery until they meet the heat; others are slightly tacky to allow for repositioning until ironed. Always test-fuse on the project fabric, as some fusibles will alter the hand of the material.

For all fusible products, be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions for best results.

Paper Products

Paper products for quilters are typically designed for one-time use as tear-away stitching guides. They include patterns for foundations piecing, iron-on quilting



templates pre-marked with stitching lines and stitch-through machine quilting stencils.

Stabilizers

Tear-away stabilizers are sold in pre-cut sheets, by the yard or by the roll. They're used to support a single layer of fabric for machine appliqué to prevent the fabric from tunneling under a row of dense satin stitching.

Threads

Threads come in a variety of weights, most commonly from size 12 to 80—the larger the number, the finer the thread. Remember that with larger threads, a larger machine needle is necessary for proper stitch formation. All-purpose sewing thread works well for piecing, but there are numerous specialty fibers worth exploring for specific quilting tasks.



Patchwork — Regular all-purpose sewing thread (100% polyester or a polyester/cotton blend) works fine for machine piecing. Many traditional quilters prefer 100% cotton because it presses flat, melding into the fabric layers to take up minimal space in the seamline. This minimizes the fabric lost in the turn of the cloth at each seam.

Hand Appliqué — For the most invisible appliqué stitching, choose the finest thread weight possible. Although pricier than other fibers and a bit harder to find, ultra-fine silk thread is highly desirable for inconspicuous stitching. Conversely, in primitive or whimsical appliqués the prominence of the thread is an important creative element. Embroidery floss or lightweight perle

cotton makes a hand-sewn appliqué stitch more conspicuous, and 12-weight machine thread adds a rustic look.

Invisible Machine Appliqué — Fine monofilament thread in the needle (either smoke or clear), paired with a neutral color regular sewing thread in the bobbin, allows quilters to move from one appliqué fabric to another without re-threading the machine.

Visible Machine Appliqué — To cover raw edges with smooth satin stitching, use threads intended for machine embroidery. They're finer than regular sewing threads and are designed for good coverage. Widely available in a vast selection of colors, including variegateds, machine embroidery thread offerings include cotton, rayon, acrylic, polyester and metallic blends.

Hand Quilting — Threads specifically manufactured for hand quilting are stronger and thicker than regular sewing thread and usually have a glazed finish that ensures smooth, even stitching.

Machine Quilting — Machine quilters have many thread options to choose from. For purely decorative purposes, lightweight machine embroidery or metallic threads are popular options. For durability, look for spools labeled for machine quilting. Variegated machine quilting threads are very popular and available in a variety of weights. Monofilament thread is preferred by many machine quilters for its ability to blend invisibly over most fabrics. 🖱️

For more information on quilting notions, see the following Guidelines:

- 1.125 Mats for Rotary Cutters
- 1.133 Rotary Cutters
- 6.185 Binding & Tapes
- 9.120 Quilting Tools
- 17.110 Machine Embroidery Threads