

Tips on Preparing your Quilt for Arm Quilting

1. When piecing your quilt blocks be sure that your seam allowances are $\frac{1}{4}$ ", any thing less will cause weak seams and may fall apart when put on the long arm machine.
2. To help prevent "ruffled" or "wavy" borders. When attaching your borders, for the width lay quilt top on a large surface or on the floor and measure through the center of the quilt top across the width. This is the measurement that you will cut the top and bottom borders. Match the centers of quilt top and border and pin together. Pin at both ends. Find the center of quilt top and border between end and center pin, pin together. Continue finding centers between pins and pinning together until border and top are even. This finding centers and pinning will allow you to ease any fullness evenly along the length of the border, helping to prevent pleats and tucks that can get quilted in. Sew borders on and press seams towards the border strips. For the side borders lay quilt top out flat and this time measure through the length in the middle of the top including the top and bottom borders you just added, this is the measurement that you will cut your side borders. Pin and sew them on and press the seams towards the border strips. This process will help to 'square up' your quilt and have it lay flat.
3. If you provide batting for your quilt, it must measure at least 8" larger than your quilt top measurements. So if your quilt top is 50" X 60" than your batting must be 58" X 68", Quilters generally will not be responsible for piecing or squaring up odd shape batting pieces to get the proper size needed, please double check that it is the correct size before your appointment.
4. The backing you provide must measure at least 8" larger than your quilt top measurements. So if your quilt top is 50" X 60" than your backing must be 58" X 68". If you need to piece your back please cut off all selvages prior to piecing. Selvages are tightly woven and cause puckering in the back. Use a $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance and press the seam(s) open. Also please square up your back, and press before dropping it off for quilting.
5. Please trim off all long threads from the back of the quilt top and make sure all of the seams are secure. Seams that are not secure will pull apart during the quilting process, so make sure you back track all of your seams. Quilters cannot be responsible for seams that pull apart do to poor seam construction.
6. Press quilt top & backing before dropping it off for quilting.
7. Do not attach any trims, notions or decorative items to the quilt top before it is to be quilted. Pantographs cannot be done on embellished quilts. These generally require a more time consuming and expensive quilting method.
8. Mark the top of the quilt with a piece of paper using a safety pin to attach it if there is a definite top or bottom to your quilt (this is helpful if choosing a one directional pantograph or pattern for your quilt design or if your quilt has a directional design on it that is not obvious).
9. Do not baste your quilt layers together before bringing them to your quilter, the layers are loaded onto the machine separately.
10. Please fill out the order form (if available) or pin a paper with your Name, phone number, batting you want and any other item you have discussed or would like on your quilt. This will make it easier and faster when dropping off the quilt.
11. Call to schedule an appointment to drop off or to discuss any work to be done on a quilt and to get an estimate. Make sure you know approximately what your total charge will be to avoid misunderstandings.
12. Payment is due in full at time of pick up, unless other arrangements have been made.

13. Check with your quilter for turn around time.

14. Minimum quilting fees vary, ask your quilter.

15. When choosing thread colors it is best to choose colors that blend/ match for the top & bobbin thread choices. This will reduce the "pokies" effect on the backing fabric (pokies are the contrasting thread poking through to the other side of the quilt). Really thin battings can also cause thread tension problems.

16. Another option is to choose a printed (busy) backing fabric, not only will it camouflage the pokies effect but will also help hide the starts and stops of the quilting process.

17. When using dark fabrics for quilt top & backing it is best to use the black batting, if lighter colored batting is used you will have the batting fibers showing on the dark backing of the quilt.

Some longarm quilters charge for needles, thread and for each different color of thread they use.