

## Preparing your Quilt Top for Longarm Quilting

- Quilt top is pressed and all threads clipped. Loose dark threads left on the back of the quilt top can detract from the quilt if they are caught between layers. Please be sure **all** seams are secure. If you have a pieced border (flying geese, piano keys etc.) stay stitch the outer edge to avoid stretching and seams opening)
- If your quilt is directional, mark the top of your quilt top and back with a safety pin. If you have selected a pantograph (all over design) and have a preference, please specify whether you want the pattern to go vertically or horizontally on the quilt. Quilts are loaded on the frame based on the backing seam - this seam is pinned running horizontally to avoid loose floppy areas and possible puckering, keep this in mind when choosing your pattern.
- It is very important that your top is square. If there is a problem with the top, there may also be a problem with how the quilting design lays on the quilt.
- Measure the center of the quilt top vertically. Then measure the outside edges vertically. If there is more than a 1½", it is possible that your top will have tucks when quilted. Do the same measurements horizontally. The most common reasons for measurement differences are stretched bias edges, mitered corners that leave extra fabric on one or both sides of the miter or too much easement when piecing blocks. This can result in small tents or puckers and may cause tucks when the quilt is quilted. If there is any fullness in your quilt or ruffles in your borders, we will do our best to ease in the fullness. But quilt tops with these problems may have tucks and pleats after the quilting is complete.
- Backings and battings need to be at least 4" larger on ALL sides of the quilt. For example, if you have a 60" x 60" quilt top, you will need to supply backing and batting sized to 68" x 68". This will supply the needed 4" on all sides of the quilt. **Centering** a quilt top on a pieced backing is not possible on a longarm machine without pre-basting; and, even then, there is *no guarantee* it will remain centered due to the way they are loaded and the "draw up factor" involved during the quilting process. You must specify if you wish to have your top centered on the work order form and the basting fee will also apply.
- Please make sure backing is cut square also. Use a 90 degree ruler to make sure it is square. If you are seaming the backing, use ½" seam and press seam **open**. Do not use the selvages in the seam—if you must, clip into the selvedge every 12" to release the pressure and prevent excess puckering when the quilt is washed and dried.
- Press and fold each piece neatly and separately if mailing; place on hangers if delivering. Do not baste, tack, pin or fuse your top/back/batting together.

*Acceptable battings for use on a longarm: Hobbs Heirloom Cotton or 80/20 Cotton/Poly, Warm and Natural, Warm & White, Quilters Dream Poly and Cottons—if in doubt, feel free to contact me or your local quilt shop for advice on battings for machine quilting. Your batting choice will also have an impact on the final look and feel of your quilt.*