Quilt Preparation for the Longarm

**www.wequilt.org**

***Quilt preparation is the first step for getting the best quilting possible.***

We operate a hand guided longarm using pantographs and Innova’s Panto Vision T2. We enjoy working closely with the quilter to optimize their desires regarding the finished product. Custom work is accepted after a one on one consultation.

**Square Quilt and Backing:**  Your quilts need to be square (same width top & bottom/same length left and right side) for a more accurate loading on the longarm. Flaring in the middle or at the top or bottom may cause waviness. Note: Very often there is a slight difference…¼ to ¾” variance…this is no problem. When attaching borders measure your quilt at the top, bottom, and middle – get an average measurement and cut your borders to fit your quilt based on that average. This helps in preventing wavy borders.

**Stay Stitching:** If you are ***not*** putting a border on your top, stitch the perimeter of the quilt as close to the edge as possible to eliminate seam separation when tension is applied when loaded on the longarm.

**Backing**: Whether the pieced top or backing has any squaring issues, we will contact you so they can be corrected. Backing seams should run horizontally (left to right) This eliminates puckering as the quilt is being advanced on the frame. A thick vertical seam can easily cause issues as the quilt is advanced in the longarming process. Remember…when it is all said and done…the back is 50% of the quilt you have spent hours making. Don’t shortchange your efforts by cutting corners on the backing. We would never recommend ‘muslin’. If that is your choice, we will complete your quilt as you request.

**Minky Backs:** It is preferred the ‘selvage’ is on the left and right of your back. The loading system we use requires that a Minky Back be **10”** longer and wider than the top. It has been our experience that controlling the “stretch” of Minky when loaded this way results in a smoother finish. If that is not possible, we will do everything to control the stretch and provide a quality finish. We find the left and right selvage makes it easier to work with, saving time and eliminating possible problems.

**Extra Backing and Batting:** To fit your quilt on the frame we need an extra 8” – 10” (10” preferred) of backing. This means 4” – 5” extra backing all the way around the quilt top. If you provide batting it should be 6” wider and at least 10” longer than the pieced top. Currently we charge $7.20 a yard (.20 cents per linear inch) for Hobbs 80/20 off the 30Yd X 96” Roll. We stock Hobbs and other brands as well that are prepackaged. We charge “our cost” plus 15% for the packaged blend or size if used.

**Pressing the Fabrics:** Please press all the fabrics of the quilt top and backing. Press the quilt top so that all the seams lay as flat as possible and iron the backing fabric so that there are no deep creases (especially in batik fabrics.) **Backing seams should be ½” and pressed open.** When pressing the borders, it is good to press the border’s seams open when possible. Before loading we press tops, and iron backs to further eliminate creases due to hanging/folding/shipping etc. at no charge.

**Trim Threads:** Cut loose threads on the pieced top, they can catch on the hopping foot of the longarm. Cut loose threads on the back of the top as well as threads can get lodged between your quilt sandwich and show through backing and/or the top. We will remove any loose threads we find during quilting without any additional cost to you. We know that no matter how many you get some are going to be missed.

**Batting:** There are many kinds of batting available. If you are making a quilt with very dark fabrics, you might want to consider black batting. Please use quality batting, craft batting will not hold up as well.

● ***If your backing or top is directional***, please mark it clearly or mention it during the intake process. Let us know any specifics about your top and back.

● Any quilting issues such as puckering, weak seams/holes, wavy borders, pleats etc. will ***NOT*** go away with the quilting, ***they may be exaggerated***. We will do our very best to work with the issues to minimize them in the process of finishing your quilt.

● In most instances, we can say we have been able to determine difficulties that may be encountered during the longarming process before the first stitch is applied. In those cases, you will be contacted so we can determine how you want to handle the situation. On occasion the problems may be encountered during the process. Again, we will contact you to work out what would be the best outcome for your quilt.

***It is our goal, when finished, to compliment your quilt. We will do everything possible to attain that goal. The first step is working with you during the intake process to meet the needs and desires you envisioned.***