

Preparing Your Quilt for Longarm Quilting: Tips from the Pros

At the October guild membership meeting, the program was about what happens to your quilt at the quilter's. Rebecca Smith compiled the information from her own and other longarmers' experiences. Here are some tips to help your quilter make your quilt the best it can be.

THE BACK

- The quilt back should be 8-10 inches wider and longer than the quilt top. If you plan to wash the backing, be sure to cut an extra 3 inches or so each way before washing, so it will still be large enough after shrinkage.
- All selvages should be cut off. ALWAYS!
- Pieced backs should be square and lie flat. Piece the back so that seams don't end up along the edge of the top. You don't want the extra layers of fabric in the binding.
- Press everything, being sure to press seams fully flat.
- If you choose to press seams open, sew with a shorter stitch.
- If a backing (or the top) is directional, pin a note saying "top" at the top.
- Remove threads.

THE TOP

- To avoid wavy borders and borders that are too small (causing the body of the quilt to poof up), measure and pin your borders before sewing them on.
- Check that all seams got sewn and that there are no gaps.
- If dark fabric in the seams is shadowing or showing on front, trim slightly at any seams pressed to the light side.
- Trim all threads from front and back.

AND FINALLY...

Communicate with your quilter. If you talk on the phone and make decisions about the quilt, be sure to write them down and enclose them with the quilt along with your name and phone number. It could be a month or more before it is up for quilting.