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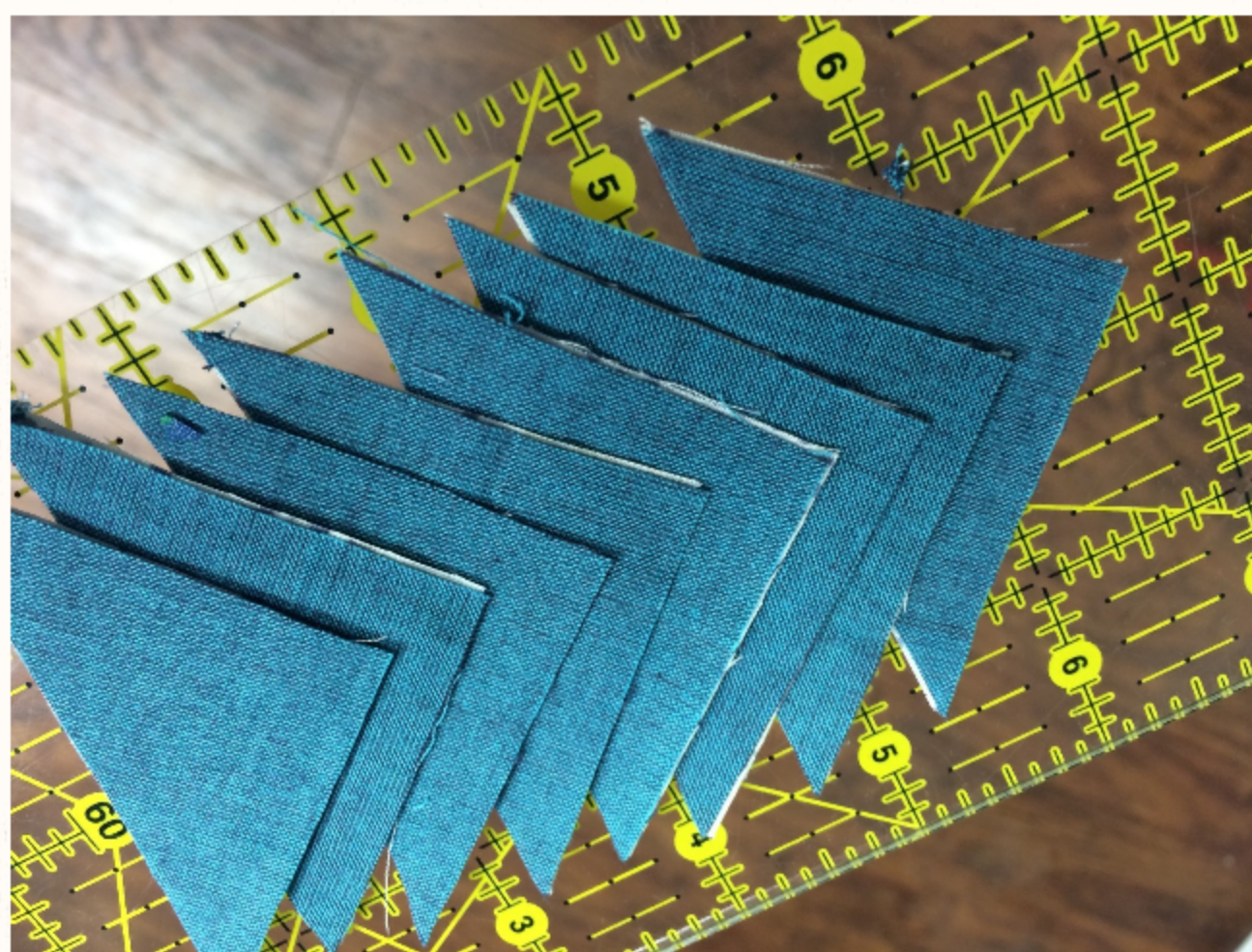
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15 Tips and Tricks for Quick and Easy Quilting

By **Diane Knott** on March 15, 2015[♥ Add to Favorites](#)

Would you like to get more **quilting** done in less time? Are you always on the lookout for quilting shortcuts? Do you ever wonder how other people seem to get so much done?

HERE ARE SIMPLE TIPS AND TRICKS FOR GETTING A BIT MORE DONE IN A LITTLE LESS TIME, OR AT LEAST MORE EFFICIENTLY.

**1. USE CHENILLE STEMS FOR CLEANING YOUR MACHINE.**

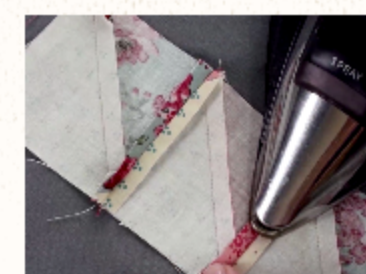
They are very inexpensive and easy to find at craft stores. They can be bent or looped to fit into tiny, out of the way spaces. They collect the dust and lint and can be wiped off and reused. Also, if you trim them or keep folding them, you can use them multiple times.

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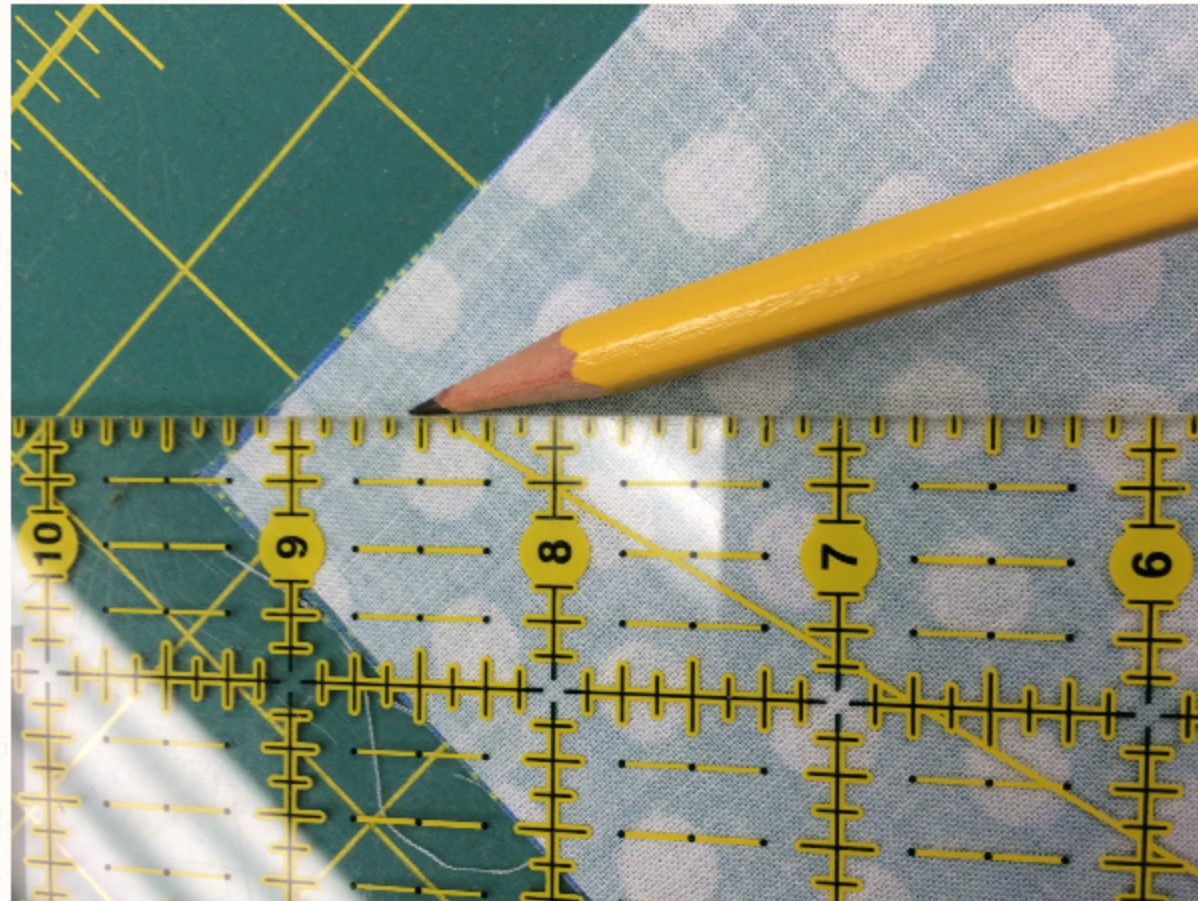


2. WIND BOBBINS WITH ALMOST EMPTY SPOOLS OF THREAD.

When piecing scrap quilts, use up these different colors of thread. A very scrappy quilt can have red, purple, orange and white thread and it will be your secret. No one will ever be able to tell as long as you don't use very dark thread with very light fabrics, then it may shadow through.

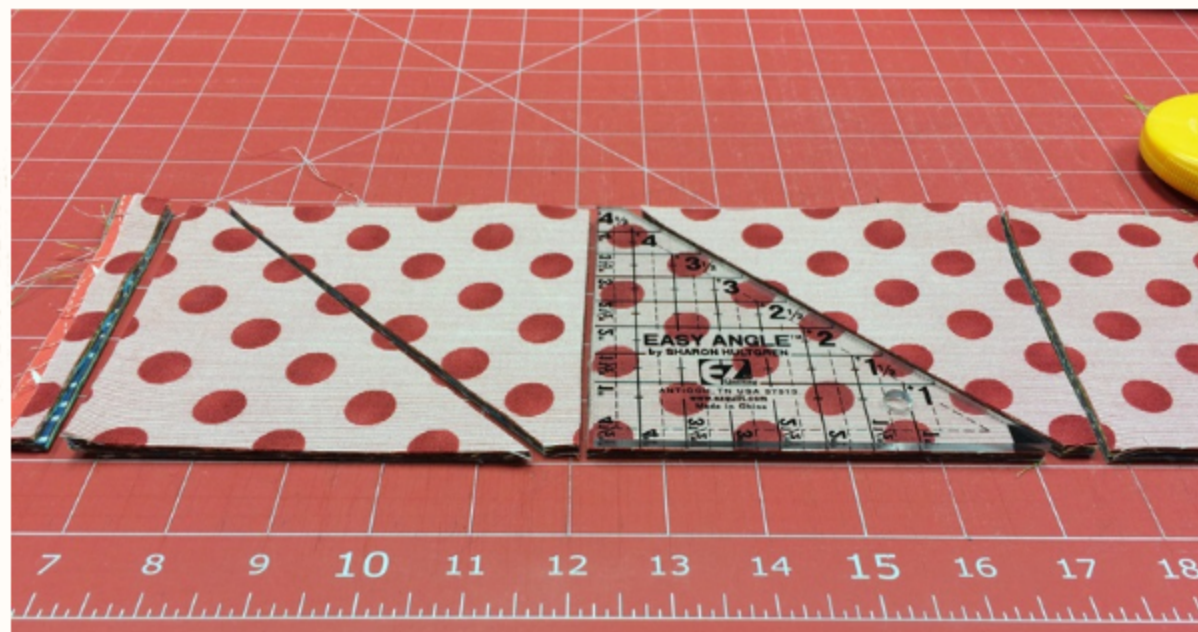
3. KEEP LOTS OF VERY SHARP PENCILS FOR MARKING FABRICS.

Sharpen a handful of pencils at a time. They are most accurate when the tip is very tiny.



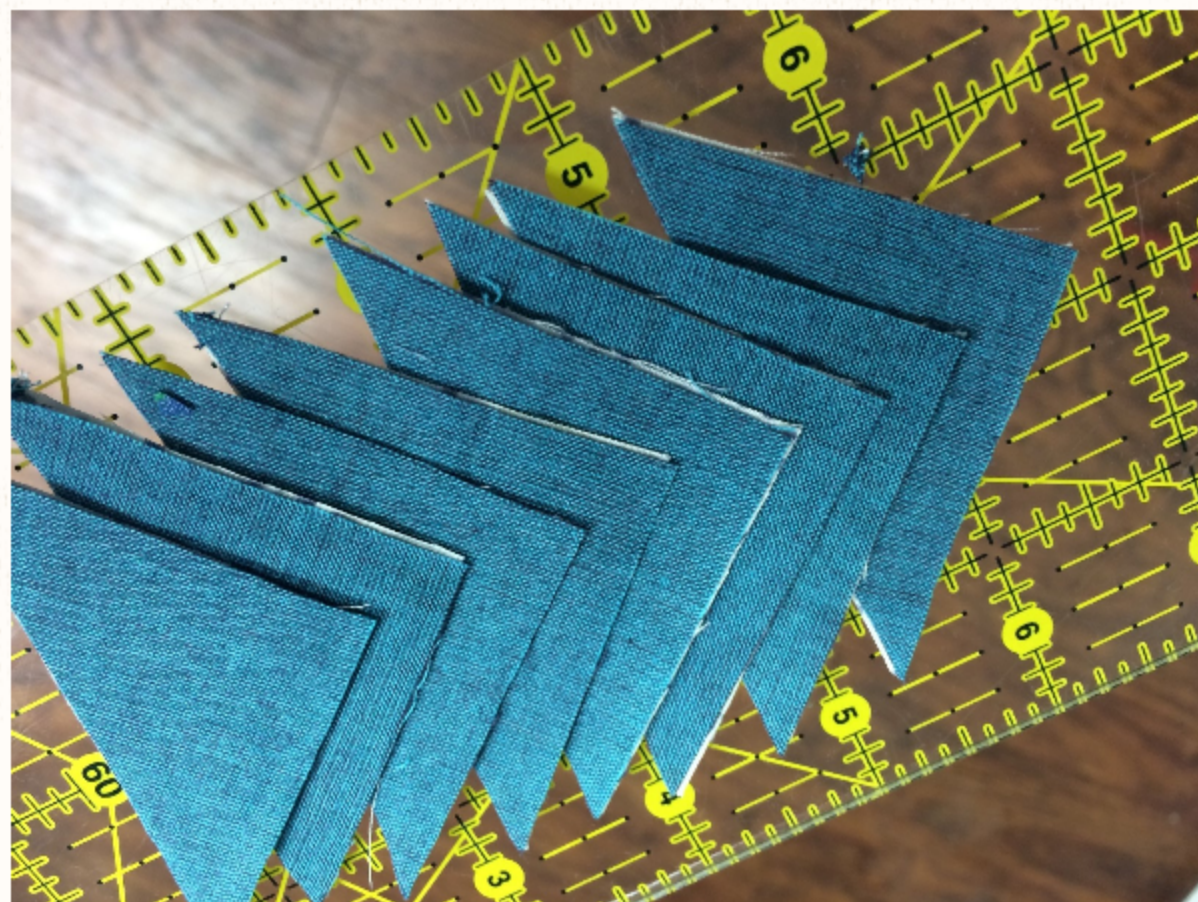
4. DRAG THE PENCIL LIGHTLY ON THE FABRIC AT A LOW ANGLE.

This will prevent skipping and stretching. The marking will show with almost no pressure at all. This also works for white marking pencils on dark fabrics.



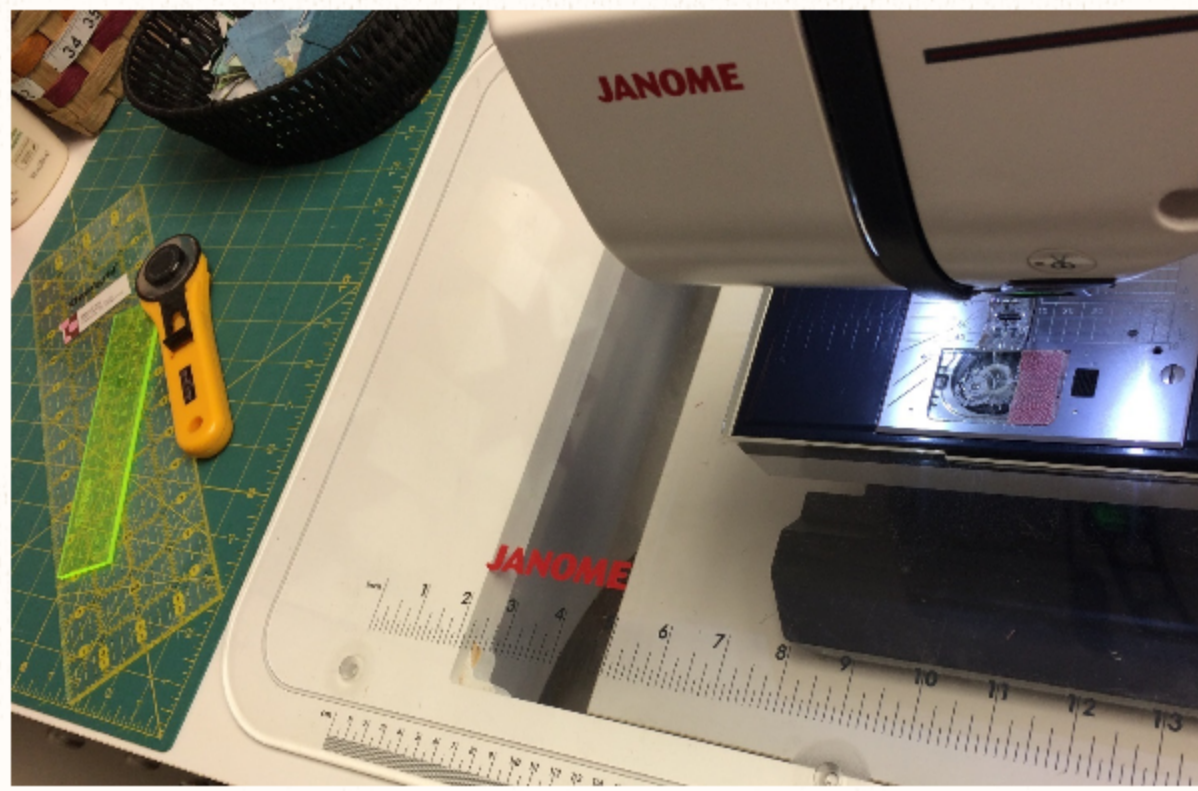
5. LAYER FABRICS RIGHT SIDES TOGETHER WHEN CUTTING.

They can be sewn together without taking them apart and there is no need to pin.



6. RULERS AND CUTTING MATS HAVE MULTIPLE USES.

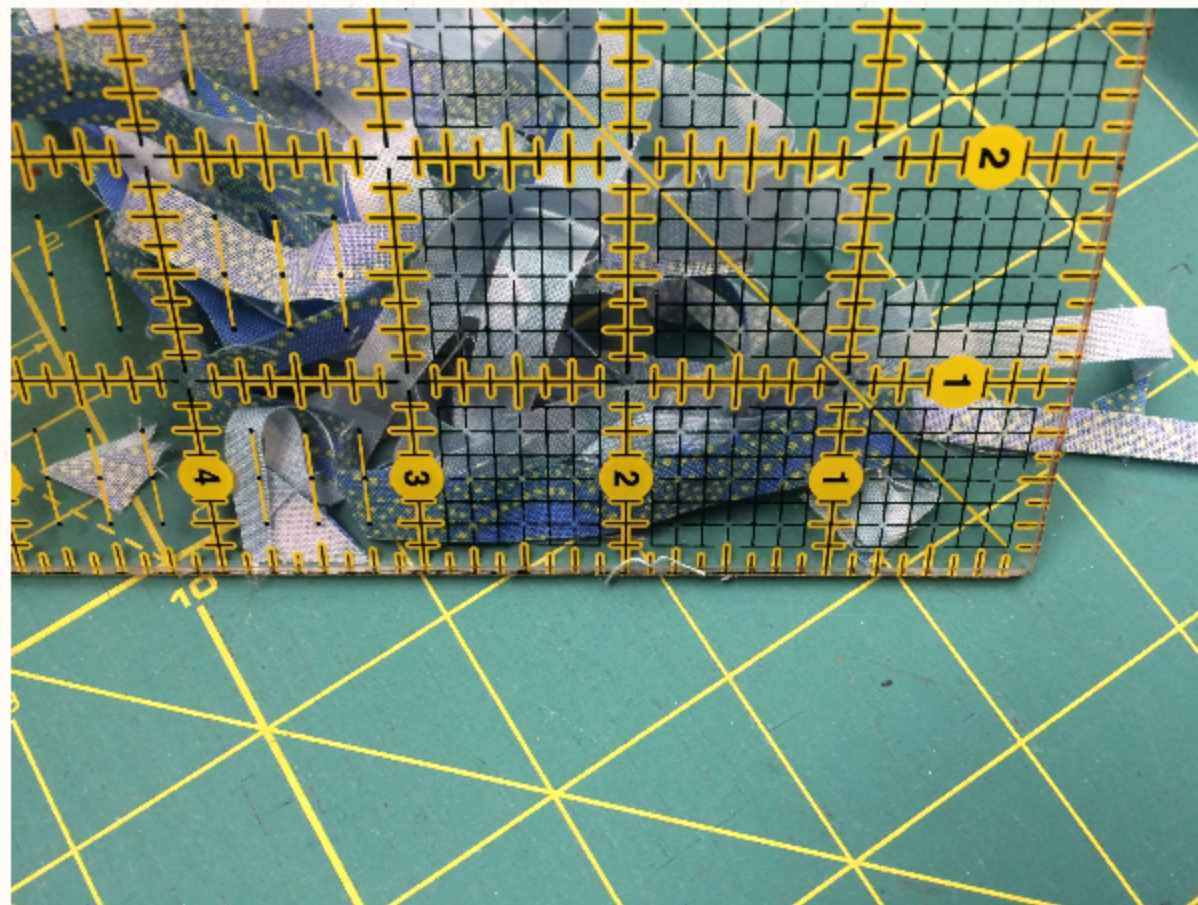
When moving lots of small cut pieces from the cutting board to the machine, use a ruler or small cutting mat to keep them in order.



7. CREATE YOUR OWN SMALL MATS.

For very old and worn cutting mats, simply use a power saw or hand saw to cut them into pieces that fit your space. A quick sanding of the edges will remove any dust or rough spots.

These smaller mats are great for little cutting surfaces near your machine or for traveling to workshops and retreats. They also make great bottoms for handmade totes and purses. They can be cut to fit any size, and they are already marked with straight lines!



8. USE THE EDGE OF THE RULER TO SCRAPE UP TRIMMINGS FROM PATCHWORK PIECES.

The edge will collect even the tiniest threads and they can be pushed into a bin. Keeping things tidy while you work will make clean up easier later.



9. KEEP A SMALL BASKET NEARBY.

This is great way to collect trimmed off corners or scraps large enough to use again. These can be saved for another step, or another project all together. If you aren't going to use them soon, put them in a clear baggie with a note that says how many there are and what size they are.





10. PRESS SEAMS.

Press seams closed to set the threads in place, then press from the back of the patchwork, and finally flip it over and press from the front side. Remember not to move the iron back and forth with pressure as that will distort and stretch fabric.



11. NEVER PUT WATER IN YOUR IRON!

The iron will last much longer and there will never be any unfortunate leaks or spitting. Use a small spray bottle of water or pressing product instead. A quick spritz with a spray bottle is super effective and easily refilled.



12. BUY OLD PRINTER'S TRAYS FROM FLEA MARKETS OR ANTIQUE SHOPS.

They are perfect for storing threads, are easy to hang with a couple of screws and they are pretty.

Arrange thread in rainbow order, or in a way that is practical for your use.

13. USE RETURN ADDRESS LABELS.

They are great for identifying rulers, mats, rotary cutters and other small tools you take with you on retreats and workshops. If they are left behind, the finders will know how to contact you!



14. WHEN YOU FINISH A BIG PROJECT, REWARD YOUR MACHINE WITH A NICE CLEANING.

Also, refold and store unused or leftover fabrics. File the patterns and tools that were needed. Re-fill bobbins, replace rotary blades if needed and restock any supplies that were used up. A quick tidy of your sewing space will leave it ready for a new project!

15. DID YOU KNOW THAT EVERY CRAFTSY CLASS IS FILLED WITH WONDERFUL HINTS AND TIPS, JUST LIKE THESE?

When you take a class, you not only will learn a skill or technique, but you will also learn lots of little things along the way that help make quilting quick and easy!

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The Quilted Tree Skirt

with Caroline Fairbanks-Critchfield

\$9.99



Quilting with Rulers: Free Motion Made Simple

with Angela Walters

\$40.00



Startup Library: Hand Embroidery

with Kat McTee

\$59.99 \$70.00

48 COMMENTS



GERI

March 15th, 2015

great tips — thank you so much

[Reply](#)



Maggie Leonard

May 20th, 2015

Great tips. Enjoyed learning new shortcuts. Thanks for the info.

[Reply](#)



Susan

March 15th, 2015

Good hints. Answered some questiones
Thanks.

[Reply](#)



Diane

March 15th, 2015

Very useful tips! Thanks

[Reply](#)



Virginia Weaver

March 15th, 2015

Thank you for the awesme ideas!

[Reply](#)



Lenora Good

March 15th, 2015

To add to the sharp pencil tip, if you learn to turn the pencil as your drag it across the fabric it will help keep the point sharp, and the line skinny, and require fewer sharpenings.

[Reply](#)



Cheryl

March 15th, 2015

NEVER use lines on rotary mat for measuring quilt pieces!!! They are not accurate enough. Only use your quilting rulers. I like the Snapware stacking boxes for threads–each box has its own color

[Reply](#)



Michelle

February 10th, 2016

I found that out the hard way this week. Sigh. 1st quilt ever.

[Reply](#)



Karen

March 15th, 2015

Great ideas!

[Reply](#)



Cathy

March 15th, 2015

Great tips. I plan on using quite a few of them. Hugs,

[Reply](#)



Lynn Boettcher

March 15th, 2015

Good tips for beginners, nothing new here for me since I've been quilting for over 40 years.

You could add: If you're marking your quilt with pencil use a piece of fine grit sand paper to keep the fabric from shifting. I've had mine for years – I glued it to the inside of a binder where it is always handy and safe.

[Reply](#)



Kathy

March 15th, 2015

I have tried everything including alcohol for cleaning the needle when appliqueing and nothing seems to work well to keep the sticky off the needle. Any and all suggestions are welcome as I do so enjoy appliques on my quilts. Thanks

[Reply](#)



Martha

March 16th, 2015

Use Web Bond temporary adhesive spray to adhere your appliqué and you won't have that problem.

[Reply](#)



Sharon
March 18th, 2015

A couple drops of machine oil on a cloth will take the sticky off the needle.

[Reply](#)



JulieCC
July 9th, 2015

Try "Goo Gone" or anything with citrus oil.

[Reply](#)



Angie
March 15th, 2015

Good tips! I like mechanical pencils for drawing lines on fabric – I don't have to worry about sharpening them! Also, a lint roller comes in handy – they are great for cleaning tiny pieces of thread and fabric bits off the cutting mat.

[Reply](#)



Sally K
March 15th, 2015

Good Tips! I liked the chenille stems one the best.

[Reply](#)



roseann difiore
March 16th, 2015

Some great tips I like the the chenille stems best

[Reply](#)



Beverly Shepard
March 16th, 2015

Great tips! I especially like the ones relating to cutting mats. I have several old ones that need recycling!
Thank you!

[Reply](#)



Karen in Breezy Point
March 16th, 2015

Great tips! I've stopped using water in my iron and I think it's going to last a lot longer!

[Reply](#)



LoriD
March 16th, 2015

I use almost all of those tips! Nice to have them here.

[Reply](#)



Pat Smith
March 16th, 2015

All your tips are great, especially a novice quilter like me. I really love the video/cd's seeing what other people do to demonstrate their quilting. Keep sending them on line

[Reply](#)



Linda
March 17th, 2015

I lick all the ideas. Will dump the water out of my new iron! Also the chenille and the basket for scraps. Thank you so much.

[Reply](#)



Judy
March 21st, 2015

I tried to use my e-mail address to send myself an e-mail to see how it works and it said I did not have a valid e-mail address. I get your e-mails all of the time. I am a member. Then I tried to download the free tips booklet and now I cannot find it or access it again. What am I doing

wrong?

[Reply](#)



Judie Harron

March 24th, 2015

Thanks for the tips...I enjoyed learning a few new things...chenille stems...brilliant! It is on my Joanne's list now...also cutting up mats for bag bottoms...lol! Great idea...thanks for sharing, it is one reason I love the quilting community! Judie

[Reply](#)



Rose Marie

March 27th, 2015

Thanks for the tips. I like the tip about not using water in my iron

[Reply](#)



carol

March 27th, 2015

Thanks for all the tips, as a beginner the tips are so helpful it makes the learning more enjoyable . Can spend more time with the instructions on how to make the top and get to the quilting.

[Reply](#)



eyrlene kammerer

April 3rd, 2015

Even though I am an advanced sewer, I can always pick up some new technique from these videos.

I am looking for the video that described how to renew your cutting board. I would like to try it on one of my boards.

[Reply](#)



Marilyn

April 19th, 2015

OLFA Cutting Mats love moisture!

It is recommended that you soak your mat from time to time. Your self healing mat loves moisture.

To soak it, put your mat in a bathtub or large container (would have to be large so it can lay flat) and soak it for 15-20 minutes in a solution of 1/4 cup white vinegar to every gallon of cool water. Let me repeat, cool water. Do this every so often to help extend its useful life.

[Reply](#)



Karen A Williams

April 3rd, 2016

Thank you for sharing this...I will definitely try it

[Reply](#)



Big Kid

April 19th, 2015

Wonderful information. I will be using all of it. I use clear storage boxes to separate my fabric. One box for 1/2 yard cuts one for 1 yard cuts and one for 2 yard cut.

[Reply](#)



Jennifer Rewis

April 19th, 2015

I brush out my bobbin case with each new bobbin. And change my needle after each large project. I do large quilts and I'm used to maintaining my long arm machine. My old Bernina should last as long as I do with the same care!

[Reply](#)



BettyJean Cannon

April 19th, 2015

Thank you for the 15 ideas to make Quilting a lot easier. I really need all the advice I can get.

[Reply](#)



Jacqui

April 26th, 2015

Thank you for the pipe cleaner tip (chenille sticks) I have had some of these in my tool bag for years used once for doll making. I will now share them with my quilt group and put them to

years used once for doll making. I will now share them with my quilt group and put them to good use along with the pastry brush! Many thanks

[Reply](#)



Joy
April 26th, 2015

I'm going to try the tip about filling bobbins with leftover thread off of nearly done spools. I use every bit if scrap fabric, I should take that same effort not to waste thread either.

[Reply](#)



Sharon Kendall
May 19th, 2015

If I used a pipe cleaner to clean my machine, my technician would have a fit. He recommends the small computer vacuum.

[Reply](#)



JulieCC
July 9th, 2015

Yeah, I think it would just push the lint around.

[Reply](#)



Carol Swanwick
June 1st, 2015

Have been away from quilting for awhile d/t family issues and reading comments is encouraging me to restart sewing!

[Reply](#)



Dana Bailey
June 20th, 2015

Thank you for all tips, I am always looking for ways to do things faster and easier. I personally have also found that finger pressing goes a long way. Buying old clothes and cutting them down is most economical. I do so enjoy the whole process from start to finish.

[Reply](#)



JulieCC
July 9th, 2015

I never use pencils. I use Pilot Frixion pens. All they need is heat to erase them. There are different sizes.

[Reply](#)



Lynn C
September 1st, 2015

A lot off great ideas. Can't wait to get started on next project

[Reply](#)



SHirley Gargiulo
September 26th, 2015

Enjoyed all the helpful tips and look forward to using them.

[Reply](#)



Beverly Ritzenthaler
March 1st, 2016

loved the tips, thank you.

[Reply](#)



Annette
March 1st, 2016

Thank you for these great tips.

[Reply](#)



Jeanne
March 7th, 2016

The guide document is empty.

[Reply](#)



Nada
October 13th, 2016

The last picture just before the comments, which refers to:

“Genius Hacks Every Quilter Should Know
quilting hacks guide

Discover insider quilting tricks for making every project easy & efficient!
Get My FREE Guide »”

has a broken link. It does not go to the referred page. Thanks. Hope it can be fixed.

[Reply](#)



Earnest Watkins
April 9th, 2018

My wife thinks it would be a lot of fun if we learned out to quilt together. The part that I'm worried about though is all the clean-up that would have to take place. Your suggestion to use a ruler for scraping fabric into a bin to make cleanup better is definitely something I'd be willing to do.

[Reply](#)



Meredith Hill
July 3rd, 2018

Jenny Doan from the Missouri Star Quilting Company recommends using steam when ironing. So does Jordan's Fabrics in their tutorials. Just saying...

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