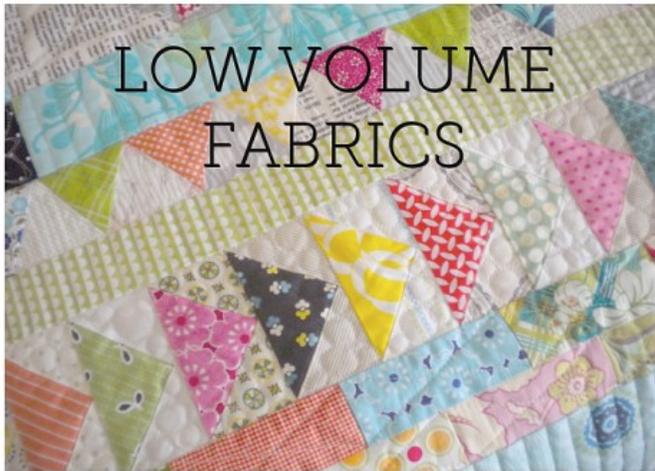


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## Quilting with Low Volume Fabrics: Soft Backgrounds with Style

By Sherri McConnell



A Low Volume fabric can best be defined as a fabric which shows up as a light solid (or nearly solid) in a black and white photograph. These fabrics can vary from the lightest tone on tone fabrics, to text fabrics printed on a light background, to light floral fabrics. Fabrics classified as Low Volume come in a variety of colors from white to cream to beige to grey. Quilting with Low Volume fabrics isn't something new—quilts using these types of fabrics for backgrounds can be seen in nearly every era of American quilt making; however, the use of these fabrics is definitely something that is currently trending with today's modern quilter.



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When choosing Low Volume fabrics, be sure to gather a variety of different types of prints: soft polka dots, light floral prints, tone-on-tone fabrics, soft text prints, and geometrics are all good choices. Even a bold pattern like a chevron can work as a Low Volume fabric if the colors are light enough. It's a good idea to start collecting some of these types of fabrics if you are planning on doing some low volume quilting. Low Volume quilts work best when a variety of different Low Volume fabrics are used in combination with one another.

Here are some ideas for incorporating Low Volume fabrics in some of your upcoming quilting projects:

- Substitute a variety of Low Volume fabrics for a single background fabric in any quilt using dominant colors or designs. Even though the Low Volume fabrics can sometimes be a bit busy, when combined with stronger design and fabric elements, the variety of different background prints won't overwhelm the quilt.
- Try using Low Volume backgrounds in just a few blocks from a quilt or sampler. Using just a touch of these fabrics will make the quilt a bit more modern with a touch of whimsy.
- Look for fun Low Volume prints such as line drawings of flowers and trees or even chicken-wire prints and cross-word puzzle prints.
- Practice using Low Volume fabrics in a smaller project such as a [pillow](#), [table runner](#), or [mini-quilt](#) before moving on to working with these fabrics in a larger project.

Several popular quilt patterns allow today's quilter to practice quilting with Low Volume fabrics. Some of these recent patterns include:

- The *Marcelle Medallion* quilt from the book *Liberty Love* by Alexia Marcelle Abegg.
- The *Sunday Morning* quilt by Cheryl Arkison from the book *Sunday Morning Quilts* by Amanda Jean Nyberg and Cheryl Arkison.
- The *Made to Measure* quilt by Blueprint instructor [Sarah Fielke](#).
- A variety of small projects included in Ayumi Takahashi's book *Patchwork Please*.

quilting with low volume fabrics

Quilting with Low Volume fabrics is fun! [Modern quilting designs](#) from simple straight lines, to bubbles and flowers, all help to add some sparkle to these light-toned fabrics.

*What is your favorite choice of Low Volume fabric? Do you have a Low Volume quilting project in mind?*

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