

Posted on November 1, 2015 by Cindi

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The Great Signature Pen Debate – the final decision

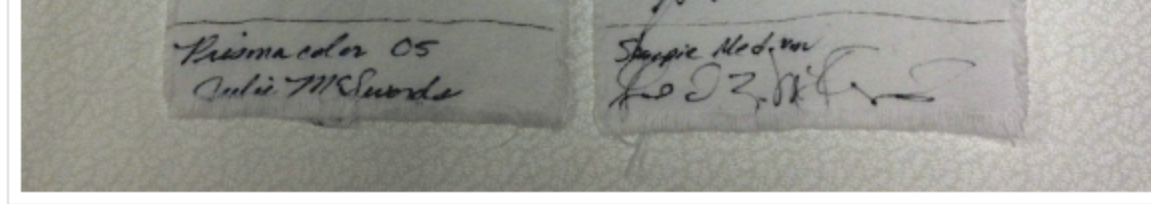
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After many weeks and many washings, I finally chose the pen that I felt would be the best for Kylee's wedding quilt. Remember this picture from my [previous post](#)?



Well, here's those same signatures, sewn together and washed 15 times.





Yes, I said 15 times. In cold water, hot water, with fabric softener and without, on about every setting on my washer and dryer, and in 4 different kinds of detergent. Like I said, you never really know how a quilt will be washed once it's out of your hands! I was a little annoyed that I didn't sew the samples together in order and right-side up, but it actually worked better for me. With the signatures all jumbled up I looked at the ink, and not at what was written. As an FYI, I also heat-set all of the signatures with a hot iron for at least 15-30 seconds before I threw them in the washer.

These were the pens I used:



The Sharpie Fine was the first to go, after the first wash. Why is it that Sharpies never come out of my clothes, but disappear after the first wash on scrap fabric?

The Sharpie Medium and PrismaColor Premiere pens stayed black, but ran. Gone.

The Microns turned a sort of purple-black and faded quite a bit after all the washings.

The clear winner:



The Nano-Liner by Royal Langnickel was da bomb in my experiment. It stayed black, my testees said it was a smooth pen on the fabric, and did not fade. And, surprisingly, it was the least expensive of all the pens, at \$1.98/pen at Hobby Lobby!

I bought 5 pens in nib sizes 5 and 7. I thought the size 4 nib was a bit "thin", and wouldn't be seen at a distance as well as thicker nibs. I failed to get a picture of the signing table (hey! I was too busy decorating the reception halls and tables!), but here's a pic of the sign I made:





I had to laugh when I asked Kylee to add their signatures to the sign. I figured more people would be apt to sign them if it had their John Hancock on the sign. I left plenty of room for a large signature, and what does she do? Well, you could probably fit that signature on a check. ROFL!

So, after a wedding in Florida, a reception in Ohio and chasing people down at both to make sure everyone signed a block, I've got about 120 blocks ready to go.



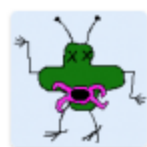
I think I may add a few nice "marriage" sayings to some of the leftover blocks as fillers. The next couple of weeks will be filled with pulling off the blue painter's tape (which held up very nicely over 3 weeks, a plane ride and tumbling around in a trunk!), trimming up the blocks and deciding how I want to lay them out!

As a disclaimer, these pens worked for me in my experiment. I hope this information helps in YOUR search and experimentation for signature pens!

Cindi

This entry was posted in [Quilting News, Views & Reviews](#) and tagged [fabric pens](#), [Signature quilt pens](#), [signature quilts](#) by [Cindi](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#).

23 THOUGHTS ON "THE GREAT SIGNATURE PEN DEBATE – THE FINAL DECISION"



Sarah on [November 1, 2015 at 3:07 pm](#) said:
 Thank you for posting your results. I don't that I have heard of this pen before but sure will be looking for it at our Hobby Lobby. Once again thanks for the follow up.

[Reply ↓](#)

[Cindi](#) on [November 4, 2015 at 8:30 pm](#) said:
 Sarah, it's actually a pen I use a lot for drawing. Love the flow of it, and it really held up well....

[Reply ↓](#)



KitsylKeelSmith on [November 1, 2015 at 7:21 pm](#) said:
 Deaar Cindi,

Thanks for the great tip about writing pens for fabric. Saves us a lot of work and money. Would love to see the finished quilt. Am anxious to see how you lay it out.

Reply ↓



Cindi
on November 4, 2015 at 8:29 pm said:

Kitsy, I will definitely be posting a pic of the finished quilt!

Reply ↓



Monette Ignacio Cabrera
on October 5, 2016 at 12:50 am said:

Hi Cindi,

Thank you so much for your tips... It's a big help for me! I am now preparing some 200-250 pcs of "siggy blocks" which I started this July for my daughter's wedding in March next year. I even requested my brother-in-law to get some fabric pens for me in the US. Although, we have some Sharpie and Pilot brands here in my country (I'm from the Philippines 🇵🇭 btw), it's a little expensive compared from the prices in the US and since they're coming home to attend next year, he already bought me some Sharpie brand fabric pens, which he said he also uses it to mark his kids clothing and it never bleed nor fade on the fabric 😊 Huhuhu....

But now that I have read your post, 😊😊😊 I'm thinking if it's not a bother for him to buy me again a new set of fabric pens like these ones you posted 😊😊 and yes, please post some photos of the quilt when it's done!

I'm so excited too for my daughter's wedding and I haven't told her I'm making this for her since I want it to be a surprise for her and her fiancé. I also did some brush lettering for the instructions so their guests would know where to sign or write messages on each block.

L♥VE your post! 😊

Monette 🌸

Reply ↓



cat on November 1, 2015 at 10:36 pm said:

Thank you! I did a similar test some years ago for the label of a baby quilt. So long ago, that I'd forgotten the results. I'm going to use you suggestion from this day forward.

Reply ↓



Cindi
on November 4, 2015 at 8:28 pm said:

Cat, I always suggest you do your own experiment – you never know, you may find something even better that you can suggest to me!!

Reply ↓



Diane Johnston on November 8, 2015 at 10:10 am said:

Off to buy that pen, and what a great idea for left over bits of fabric! Thank you!
Diane

Reply ↓



Cindi
on November 9, 2015 at 4:41 pm said:

Be sure to test it first, Diane! Your results may be different – it's always good to test!

Reply ↓



Diane Johnston
on [May 20, 2016 at 9:21 am](#) said:

Hello again, I have tested and used the pen, also find that it flows over material better than other pens.

On another note, I had lots of black material and some wild stuff that I really did not like! Then, along came your post, "Neon".... Bingo, the fun of quilting, something ugly turns into something wonderful. Thanks!
Diane

Reply ↓



[ruthlynesnow@gmail.com](#) on [April 9, 2016 at 10:53 am](#) said:

I have both Micron and Crayola fabric markers here at home but will go to Hobby Lobby today. Did you ever try the Crayola ones?

Reply ↓



Cindi
on [April 11, 2016 at 12:45 pm](#) said:

No, I didn't try markers. I used what I had available at home, and wanted something with a nib that would be strong enough to hold up to many signatures.

Reply ↓



valerie on [May 19, 2016 at 12:56 pm](#) said:

I'm going to do a wedding quilt for my sister in law this summer. Thank you so much for this very thorough post and for sharing your results. I'd read several places that lots of people liked the micron pens for this purpose, so I was excited to see your experiment!!

Reply ↓



Lora on [June 17, 2016 at 6:06 pm](#) said:

Could you share the dimensions of your blocks – the white outer block, as well as the colors and the white strips? I love your ideas!

Reply ↓



Cindi
on [June 23, 2016 at 5:35 pm](#) said:

Easy peasy, Lora! It's a 5.5" block (5" finished). I just divided it into three equal pieces both ways, then drew the triangles from corner to corner on all 4 sides! I actually drew mine up in EQ. If you're doing it yourself and don't want to deal with the weird calculations for a 5" finished block, you may want to draw out a 6" square. Divide it into three 2" sections both ways, then connect your triangles from corner to corner. It'll be 5.5" finished!

Reply ↓



Nelda Justice on [September 4, 2016 at 2:12 pm](#) said:

Thank You

Reply ↓



Diane Johnston on [October 5, 2016 at 2:09 pm](#) said:

My Hobby Lobby has a set of four, 1, 2,3,4. I think they have stopped selling individual pens. I was able to purchase a few #5's the end of August. I will have to guard the pens at my granddaughter's wedding in October. I really like the Nano-liner.

PS: my friend in Florida found a few in clearance section of Hobby Lobby.

Reply ↓



Patricia McKenzie on [December 12, 2016 at 7:41 am](#) said:

Thank you so much for sharing your work. I love to quilt so will be going to hoppy lobby.

Reply ↓



Molly Polly on [January 22, 2017 at 1:37 pm](#) said:

Thanks for these posts. By far the best information I've been able to find. Our Hobby Lobby doesn't sell Nano's in anything but a multi pack, with multiple tip sizes, the largest of which is the #5. I've checked Royal's website, and want to ask you, to help me be sure, that this is what you used. The fine print under the name of the marker is a bit different, but I believe in the image on the website, I can still make out "permanent" in that line. http://www.royalbrushstore.com/products/productdetail/RD601P+-+NANO+LINER+005+PACKAGED+BLACK/part_number=RD601P/201.0.1.1.6108.1022952.0.0.0?pp=12&

Any help is appreciated! BEAUTIFUL quilt!

Reply ↓



Cindi

on [January 22, 2017 at 3:58 pm](#) said:

Molly, that's the one!

Reply ↓



Stephanie on [February 2, 2017 at 3:24 pm](#) said:

Thank you for doing this experiment and sharing your results! I've been looking for the "best" pen to use for my wedding quilt. Everything says they're the best but no articles that I found actually did a test! Thank you again! 😊

Reply ↓



Cindi

on [February 2, 2017 at 7:17 pm](#) said:

Thanks for visiting us, Stephanie! There is no way I was going to put pen to fabric without testing it first – there was too much time and energy spent on this quilt to take any chances. Please, do your own test strips – and have lots of people sign them. It's amazing the different pressures that people use, and how it affected the results!

Reply ↓



Susan Speers on [March 29, 2017 at 5:31 pm](#) said:

Just what I needed! Will locate some and test before daughters wedding Memorial Day weekend!

Reply ↓

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