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📣 📣 LAST CALL for the 30% off sale at ShopMartingale.com! We're flipping the switch and turning off the sale at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time tonight (Friday, May 15)! Visit ShopMartingale.com now before the clock hits midnight! 📺: Nooks and Crannies from "Simple Whatnots: A Batch of Satisfyingly Scrappy Little Quilts" by Kim Diehl. Finished quilt: 16-1/2" x 22-1/2". Download the "Simple Whatnots" eBook and treat yourself to some sewing time this weekend! If you spend \$40 we'll ship your print books for FREE (USA only)! #madewithmartingale #martingaletp #patchwork #quilt #quilting #ninepatch #scrappyquilts #scrapquilts #smallquilts #mini quilts #kimdiehl @kim_diehl_quilts

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Have you tried machine quilting panels for practice? (+ giveaway!)

Posted by Jenny Wilding Cardon on August 11, 2017, in quilting & sewing, bestsellers, machine quilting, quilt finishing, quilt tips, quilting for beginners, quilting tutorials

How are your free-motion machine-quilting skills coming along? If you need a little practice (don't we all?), Pat Sloan has a smart little tip: practice your free-motion quilting on printed fabric panels.



A free-motion-quilted panel from Pat Sloan's Teach Me to Machine Quilt

Why practice on panels? In her book *Pat Sloan's Teach Me to Machine Quilt*, Pat sings the praises of printed panels—the motifs are easy to follow, they're small enough for a practice piece, and when you're done, you have a cute little quilt to share. They make great baby quilts!

Here's Pat's five-step plan for improving your free-motion skills with panels, excerpted from *Pat Sloan's Teach Me to Machine Quilt* (and there's a lot more about machine quilting where that came from!).

- Baste five small quilts.** Use a panel or 1½ yards of a baby fabric and add two borders: a narrow inner border and a wider outer one. This will give you quilt tops to practice on that don't require a lot of time or work to assemble. Choose a panel or fabric that will keep your interest and give you motifs or designs to follow. Number your quilts 1 through 5.
- Over the next two weeks,** quilt all five quilts, in order from 1 through 5. Make a promise to yourself to quilt every day, even if it's for only 10 minutes. The repetition over the two weeks is very important.
- Write on a piece of paper** the day you started to quilt each quilt, starting with quilt 1. When you finish it, record the date and pin the paper to quilt 1. Do the same for each of the five quilts.



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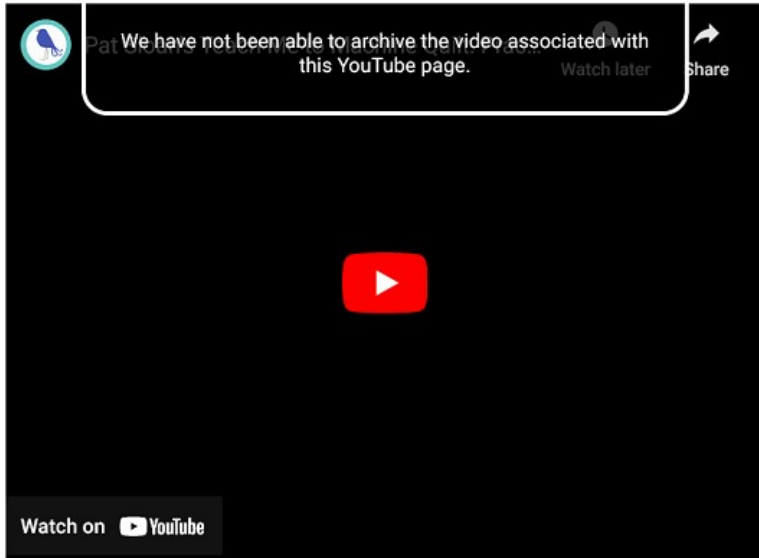
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When you’ve finished the first one, start on the next one. Don’t stop to attach the binding until all five quilts are done.

4. **When quilt 5 is complete**, get out all five quilts and compare your work. You’ll see a huge improvement from quilt 1 to quilt 5.
5. **Now, attach an easy binding** on each quilt. Throw the quilts in the wash and then give them away! I’m serious. Do *not* keep them, because you’ll constantly compare what you did. Don’t dwell on where you started. You want that feeling of accomplishment, so you can move onto quilt 6!

Pat also made a quick video about machine-quilting on panels here:



Reading this post in email? [Click here to view the video.](#)

Sew smart! Feeling inspired? Well . . .

Pat and our pals at **Moda Fabrics** sent us five panels to play with—and we’d love to give all of them to one of you!



To win all five panels and a copy of *Pat Sloan’s Teach Me to Machine Quilt*, tell us in the comments:

- Pat Durbin – Pat’s Quilts
- Rebecca Silbaugh – Ruby Blue Quilting Studio
- Sara Lawson – Sew Sweetness
- Stacey Trock – FreshStitches
- Sue Abrey – Quilt Times
- Susan Purney Mark
- Tonya Alexander – Eye Candy Quilts
- Vanessa Christenson – V and Co.



How would you rate your machine-quilting skills?

- **Stellar! I’ve been practicing.**
- **I’m practicing, but I sure could use some panels to practice more.**
- **Still quilting by check. Help!**

We’ll choose a random winner one week from today and let you know by email if you win. Good luck, and happy quilting!

Want even more machine-quilting tips from Pat? [Pick up her book](#) at our website today and instantly download the eBook for free. Take a look at all the projects you can make *and* machine quilt in Pat’s book!



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1,025 Comments

I’m still practicing, but I sure could use some panels to practice more. 😊

—Cat Revenig on August 11, 2017

Still quilting by check – so intimidating to do all the piecing and then not be confident of quilting. Panel practice is a great idea!!!

—Regina Arlauckas on August 11, 2017

Practising, but need all the help I can get!

—ChrisO on August 11, 2017

I am practicing ! anything that Pat Sloan writes is a great asset to the technique realm so I could really use her new book here. Thank you fro the giveaway

—Barbara Long on August 11, 2017

Im practicing, but I sure could use some panels to practice more

—stephanie box on August 11, 2017

I’m practicing, but I sure could use some panels to practice more! It is fun!

—Sara Byman on August 11, 2017

I'm practicing, but I sure could use some panels to practice more.

—Sandy Richard on August 11, 2017

I love to piece tops but aren't very good at machine quilting. I thought that was an interesting concept to quilt 5 days in a row and check out your progress. That would be a really great way to practice my machine quilting and then I would donate the quilts. I would love to receive the book and panels to help better my machine quilting. I could probably learn a lot from Pat Sloan's book.

—Donnamarie on August 11, 2017

You can never have too many panels, so handy for a quick baby gift. When I first started quilting years ago when my children were little (grown up now), I started with panels. There were no rotary cutters, mats and all the extra gadgets we have these days to make quilting so enjoyable. I have given scads of baby quilts away throughout the years.

—Cynthia Fedak on August 11, 2017

I'm practicing and still need lots more practice.

—Sharon on August 11, 2017

Still quilting by check. Help is my real answer to your question.

—Marthese on August 11, 2017

I'm practicing, but I sure could use some panels to practice more.

—Carol Vickers on August 11, 2017

I've been putting together basic squares baby quilts (for charity) with the plan to quilt them over time but this suggestion is brilliant. Panels!!!

—Erin Owens on August 11, 2017

I am quilting by check. Tried to machine a long-long time ago and stripped the gears on my machine. If I quilt on my machine I am only going straight. Help!!!