

the Sassy Quilter

saving the world one quilt at a time.....

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HOW TO MAKE MEMORY QUILTS...

📅 November 17, 2013 by [sassyquilter](#) 💬 20 Comments



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So excited to to say I am finished with my Memory Quilt!

This one was different for me because I was hired to make it, usually I make them and if someone wants to buy...that's up to them. This project was a bit of a bear at times, but I love the way it came together. Making a quilt out of baby clothes can be tricky, so many different fabrics to work with and pretty thick compared to our usual quilting cottons.

Here is my basic process on this quilt:

1. Consult with your client and get an idea of what exactly they want. I printed out photos from the internet of other memory quilts to get an idea of what she liked and asked her to pick out what appealed to her the most, and what things she did not like. If they are not familiar with the quilting process you may have to guide them towards using what will be best in a quilt. Do they want just





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squares of fabric or do they want to keep the front of the shirt intact to preserve it as whole? Do they want you to try to remove or work around imperfections(stains) or keep those in there due to the memory attached. How big of a quilt do they want? Crib size, throw? How will this quilt be used, keepsake or lots of wear and tear?

2. Decide on a time frame and general cost range. What is the maximum time frame they are happy with. Give yourself plenty of time here! All kinds of things pop up and this is probably not the only quilt you will be working on. For pricing I gave an amount for the construction and a receipt to be added for supplies.

3. Now for design time! During consultation I had mom pick out all the important clothes and we laid them out on the table how they appealed to her. I took several photos with my phone and drew up a chart too, noting what each article of clothing was and what they meant to her(first Christmas, first outfit,etc...) This really helped when trying to organize my thoughts later. Mom also gave me a large bag of filler clothes too be used as needed. When trying to come up with my design and construction plan, I had to measure all of the shirts and pants and come up with the largest block possible that would work for all of the outfits(8.5")....this was time consuming! Remember to be mindful of necklines, zippers and snaps! Mom wanted to preserve the outfits as a whole, but was okay with a few blocks being pieced. This may have been a little overboard, but I cropped and printed out small pics and arranged them like tiles. For the pieced blocks, I cut and pasted the printed pictures to created the blocks. I didn't feel chopping up someones memories until I felt like she was happy with the design. If you are a computer wiz, you can probably do this on Photoshop. After presenting this to mom, make any changes necessary and you are good to go.



This is my crazy cut and paste project:)

4. Time to prepare the clothing. When working with kids clothes you will most likely have all different types of fabric, unless you are doing a onesie only quilt. By the way, this would make your life a lot easier:) No matter what you chose you will need to stabilize your fabrics. This will require an interfacing that is fusible. I used a Pellon, midweight fusible interfacing.



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BEGINNER QUILTING SERIES





The "weight" of the interfacing will determine the stiffness of your finished block. A lightweight may be a good choice for lighter weight fabrics that you want to retain a softness, but my fabrics included everything from swimsuits to sweaters to denim. Open up your clothing on the sides or the back if not using that part and follow the instructions for fusing it to the interfacing. If keeping a neckline in the block, you will need to do some piecing before you fuse to the interfacing. Once that is done center your designs and cut your blocks. Use a fresh blade here and your wrists will thank you.



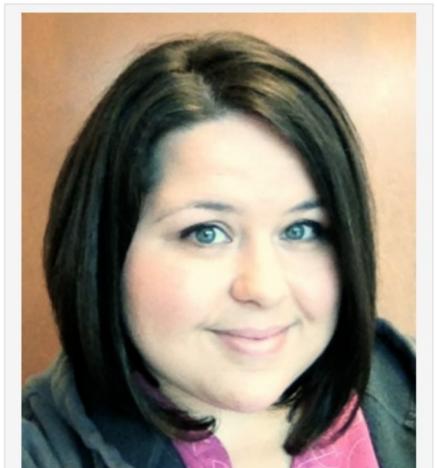
These are my prepared blocks, the interfacing is keeping them nice and firm for piecing.

5. Piece your quilt top. I used a fresh needle here too! I used a generic quilting needle, 80/12, figuring it would suit most fabrics the best. Go slow and use pins if needed. The interfacing really kept me on a level playing field here and it went together smoothly. I pressed my seams open to lessen the bulk.



-SASSYTIP-

When removing blood stains use your own saliva....i know, i know! It is a little gross, but the enzymes in your saliva can best break down your own blood. If that is out of the question..try dabbing hydrogen peroxide. You can use a q-tip for either method.



Hi! I'm Paula and I am an original Sassy Quilter, taught by my grandmother "Sassy", and I have a passion for all things quilting:) Especially teaching newbies and sharing quilting with those who just don't know how awesome it really is!

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Countdown to Quilt Con 2015
I am so in!
 57:05:15:16
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FLICKR PICS



I wanted to keep this cute sleeve on the sweater, so I just stitched it down.



I used the back of another shirt as a backing to keep this neckline.



This shirt had the cutest little cuffs on the sleeves, so I just added them to the corners of the block.

6. Sandwich your quilt. I used a thinner polyester batting due to the already heavy weight of this quilt top.



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Aurifil Blogger

7. Get to quilting. Your quilting design is also something you need to discuss during your consult. Thread color? Density? or Tie Quilt? I recommend a stitch in the ditch approach for a multi-fabric quilt, but an all over stipple would work well for one made with onesies. Using a tying method to hold these quilts together is another great option. Here is a great tutorial by Connecting Threads [here](#).

8. Finish the edges. You can bind the quilt using your normal [binding methods](#) or you may opt to do a pillow case style finishing method. I chose the later for this one. First I layered my batting, quilt top-face up, backing-face down; then I stitched around the perimeter of my quilt leaving a open area on one side. Next, turn the quilt inside out and stitch the opening closed. I quilted close to the finished edge to give it the appearance of binding.

QUILT ALONGS...



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Memory quilts can be a bit different from what we are used to working with, but with the right tools and knowing what you are getting in to, you can do it!

Happy Quilting!

Keep it Sassy♥

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Comments

Nina Akersveen-Davis says:

November 17, 2013 at 8:28 pm

ABSOLUTELY ADORABLE!!! And what a keepsake..I wish I had my kids done!
~ Love, Nina ~



sassyquilter says:

November 17, 2013 at 8:38 pm

Thanks Nina, Pretty cute right. I love that each piece has a special memory.



Susan @TheBoredZombie.com says:

November 17, 2013 at 8:35 pm

That's awesome Sassy Lady! I've not tried to tinker with too many different types of fabrics. Seems like every time I do, I pick on that stretches like crazy and isn't forgiving! Guess I should try stabilizer for things that aren't worn. 😊



barbara woods says:

November 17, 2013 at 8:50 pm

Wonderful quilt



Code: MODERN QUILT GUILD



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Lea says:

November 18, 2013 at 12:16 am

What a sweet quilt. Your client will love this quilt! That was a great idea about photographing each outfit in a block like that so she could give you her thoughts.



Reply

Kathy Mathews says:

November 18, 2013 at 12:25 am

I was sewing happy to read this as I will be making one soon for Zara. Looks great!



Reply

Tami Chaulk says:

November 18, 2013 at 3:01 am

So cute! You did a lovely job!



Reply

Elita @ Busy Needle Quilting says:

November 18, 2013 at 5:24 am

Well done! I have also done a memory quilt in a similar fashion but had to do more figuring as the blocks were not able to be standardised. Makes a difference! You did a great job detailing all of the steps you needed to complete it. I'm sure it will be a big help to someone for their next one. Thanks for sharing!



Reply

Leigh Anne says:

November 18, 2013 at 11:04 am

You did a fantastic job on this Paula! I am working on a unique memory quilt right now and am excited to do my own post about it 😊



Reply

Paula says:

November 18, 2013 at 11:15 am

I love this. Someone asked me recently about doing one, but I'm just not at that confidence level yet. Maybe with my own 'memories' but sure don't want to mess someone else's up! You did a great job!



Reply

Stephie says:

November 18, 2013 at 12:53 pm

Now that's a lot of work! Congratulations Paula, bet the lady loves it 😊 Love your paper version too - great idea.



Reply

Carrie @Gotcha Covered Quilting says:

November 18, 2013 at 2:34 pm

Very well done. It came out so cute! Your tutorial was wonderful, as usual. Luckily you're always one step ahead of what I need, so I follow your tutorials and get my projects done like a champ :). Seeing this kind of makes me wish I had kept a few of my kids' outfits.



Reply

Jennifer says:

November 18, 2013 at 2:46 pm

Looks Great Paula! I know you're glad to have this finished



Reply

Michelle Bartholomew says:

November 18, 2013 at 6:12 pm

This is SO cute! What a great way to preserve memories!



Reply

{beginner quilting series} - {quilt} - {Cotton Bliss} - {Sassy Saturday} - {Star Surround QAL} - {Fat Quarter Shop} -

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HISTORY

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Joanie says:

November 18, 2013 at 7:43 pm



Wow Paula you went to great lengths to plan this quilt. Very wise! I love how you kept some of the best features of some of the items such as the ruffled cuff or the knitted sweater cuff. So cute! I have made a baseball t-shirt quilt and need to start another this week! That is the extent of my memory quilts. Anyways great job! It will be a cherished quilt for sure!

Reply

snips says:

November 19, 2013 at 8:01 am



This is adorable! I love how you've kept in the details like collars and pockets, so cute! I have boxes of my little guys onesies that i eventually want to make a quilt out of. Thanks for the tip about the interfacing, definitely going to use it!

Reply

MammaNene (@mamma_nene) says:

November 19, 2013 at 8:46 am



This quilt is so meaningful... and I love the binding trick you shared in the end of the post... thanks! I'm sure I'll use it!
MammaNene @ SergerPepper.com

Reply

AmandaK@whatthebobbin says:

November 19, 2013 at 2:13 pm



Super cute! I am going to get around to making two of these (1 for my girl and 1 for my boy) someday...soon I hope. Thanks for sharing!

Reply

Kelly @ My Quilt Infatuation says:

November 23, 2013 at 12:10 am



what a unique quilt, Paula! I love how you included the little clothing details in the blocks.

Thanks for linking up to Needle and Thread Thursday!

😊 Kelly @ My Quilt Infatuation

Reply

Beth says:

August 30, 2014 at 7:19 am



Seeing this brought tears to my eyes. I loved that you used the front of the outfits, it really helped you see how it used to be. It brought me back to when my daughter in 12th grade was a baby. Wish I had thought to save some clothes from back then! Great job!

Reply

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