



MONICA CURRY
quilt design

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Quilting with White Fabric: Pros & Cons



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White background fabrics make stunning quilts. The high contrast makes the colours pop. However, there are a few pitfalls when using white fabric that can be frustrating and even ruin your quilt. I made this featured quilt for my mother-in-law and almost didn't give it to her. But, I was in a crunch for time so I decided to gift it to her anyway and hope she didn't notice too many of the flaws. If she did notice, she never said anything.

TIPS FOR QUILTING WITH WHITE FABRIC

1. USE A LIGHT COLOURED BACKING FABRIC

Because I was in a hurry, I used the quilt-as-you-go method to assemble this quilt. To make it "reversible" I used a variety of scrap layer cakes for the backing. I don't know if it was the batting (*Hobbs Heirloom Fusible White Cotton*) but the coloured background, as you can see below, showed right through to the front! Try using light coloured backing when using white.



2. BUY ENOUGH WHITE FABRIC FROM THE SAME BOLT

When you buy your white fabric, purchase enough for the whole project. Even if white fabric is from the same dye lot and colour number, shades can vary slightly. I ran out of white for this project and used left over white from another project. They looked the same under the studio lighting. But, when my hubby held up the quilt in the sunny kitchen, the left over white pieces definitely had a yellow cast.

3. AVOIDING & FIXING "SHADOWS"

I love Foundation Paper Piecing (FPP) and have done many blocks using this technique. When I used a white fabric in a FPP project for the first time, however, frustrating "shadows" from the darker seams showed through. Be sure to trim your darker seams before putting your blocks together. Also, check for any dark threads that may show through.

4. BEST WAYS TO PREVENT FABRIC BLEED

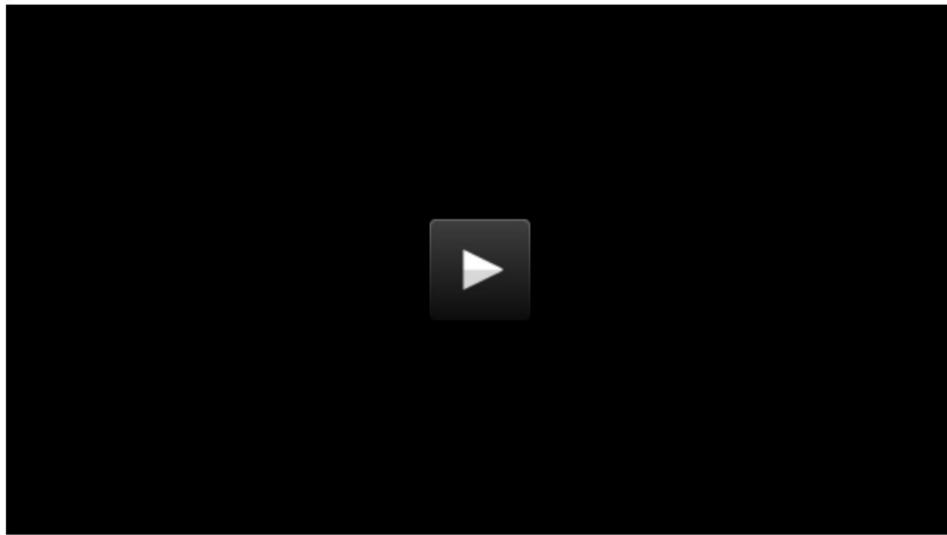
Any quilt can bleed colours, but quilts with white backgrounds can be ruined by colour bleed. Here are a few tips to prevent this problem:

- Prewash your fabrics, especially reds and purples.
- When your quilt is finished, wash it alone on cool setting. Add 1 cup of salt to the wash with a mild laundry soap.
- "Color catchers" are another option. These are laundry sheets you put in your load to prevent colour runs while allowing mixed washes. There are [several on the market](#) you can try.
- If there are only a few spots of bleed through on the white fabric after washing, spray the area with a mild water and bleach solution (3 part water to 1 part bleach in a spray bottle) rub with a small amount of Dawn dish soap and water.

My secret trick for getting stains and bleed off whites is [Clorox Clean-Up®](#) spray. It's normally used to clean hard surfaces but seems to work on fabrics as well.



White Fabric: Is it worth the trouble? by Karen Brown at [Just Get It Done Quilts](#)



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