

National Quilting Day 2013

You Quilt with WHAT?

Found objects from another part of the world used in quilting.

Acrylic suction cup hook-attach to the side of sewing machine or table to hang small scissors or thread snips.

Adding machine tape-Use to determine quilting design size in a border. Cut tape the length of the border. Fold tape in half width-wise repeatedly. Draw design on one folded section. Count sections to determine number of repeats needed. No measuring!

Bar soap slivers-use to mark fabric. Pull a threaded needle across the soap for less thread tangles and easier stitching.

Balloon or rubber jar opener-grips a needle when stitching through thick layers.

Chop sticks or knitting needles-when turning fabrics right side out a gentle push with sticks will create sharp corners.

Cling wrap (Saran)-small strip around thread spools prevent unraveling. Works well with invisible threads.

Coupon clutch-organize fabric swatches, yardages, or notion lists before Shop Hops.

Dental floss-sew on buttons (good for heavy coat buttons/snaps.). Drop a filled bobbin into empty floss container, pull thread across cutter for safe cutting tool when traveling.

Dishwasher basket (recycled)-Hang on peg board or bulletin board to keep tools handy.

Dryer sheets (used)-clean grime (especially, fusible web) off a hot iron. Picks up fuzz and threads from a cutting mat. Cleans machines and tables of tape residue.

Examining table paper (large roll from medical supply)-excellent paper to work with when tracing quilting patterns. Cut a piece the size of the block, border, etc, trace the pattern onto the paper, pin onto the quilt top and stitch on the traced line. It tears away easily when quilting is finished. Economical.

Flannel back tablecloth-makes an easy design wall. Cut a small piece and take to class and the unfinished project can be rolled up and stored without additional handling.

Fishing Tackle and lure boxes (from sporting goods)-Nice storage for spools of thread.

Freezer paper (from grocery store)-Iron paper to the back of fabric to stabilize when writing on a label. Iron to fabric and cut to 8.5"x11" and it will run through a printer nicely for copying pictures or verse for labels or quilt blocks. It can be reused several times.

Garden gloves-Look for cotton gloves with little texture dots to wear when machine quilting. They grip the quilt as it is maneuvered through the machine; absorb moisture from hands; are washable and inexpensive.

Golf tees-keep a spool of thread and matching bobbin together.

Grapefruit spoon-works great to close the pins when pin basting a quilt sandwich.

Hair clips-hold quilt binding in position for easy stitching with no pricks from pins.

Hemostats (ask a medical office or veterinarian, may give you an old pair)-help turn fabric right side out after stitching tubes/tabs. Helps manipulate stuffing into stuffed toys and pillow corners. Acts like an extra hand when braiding or twisting threads, yarns or trims.

Kitchen sponge (new, dry, 3"x5")-hold one in each hand when free motion quilting to easily maneuver the quilt.

Latex glove-wipes fuzz from cutting mat, ironing surface and tables. Does not have to be hole free.

Lint rollers-pick up threads and fuzz from a finished quilt project before an exhibit.

Masking tape (keep a big roll)-use to mark straight stitching lines on quilt top when quilting by hand or machine. When wrapped around a couple fingers, sticky side out, picks up threads after unstitching a seam. When layering the quilt sandwich use tape to hold backing taut and secure to the table as you assemble the batting and top. Wrap tape, sticky side out, a couple inches wide on the end of a yardstick to snatch lint from a quilt hanging too high to reach. Use tape to label your storage containers by project or contents.

Match Box car storage box (toy department)-holds spools of thread in compartments on both sides and is clear plastic for seeing thread colors without opening box.

Meat tenderizer-removes blood stains from a project. Dissolve a small amount of tenderizer with cold water and apply with a Q-tip. When it is your own blood use your own saliva ASAP.

Mint tins (empty)-Hot glue a magnetic piece (recycle from refrigerator magnet ads) in the inside lid. Roll a piece of masking tape sticky side out and stick to the inside bottom of the box. Pins & needles (threaded or not) cling to the magnet and snippets of thread will stick to tape. Keep handy with sewing supplies for classes, quilting bees, etc.

Over-the-door or standing towel rack-use to keep project fabric strips in stitching order.

Pen cap-(using masking tape, again) tape a cap to the machine to hold a seam ripper.

Ponytail holders-A loop for closures on jackets, bags & purses. Wrap the cutting area with scotch tape to prevent unraveling, cut in the middle of the tape. Keeps both ends secure.

Post-it tabs-stick on pages in quilt books and magazines for ease in locating patterns or articles later. Write 1 or 2 words on the tab to identify the project. Mark a tab with machine needle size and attach to packet of needles of that size. When needle is installed remove tab from the packet and stick to the face of machine as a reminder what size is in the machine. When that needle is removed from machine stick the tab back on the correct packet.

Pants/skirt hanger-use to hold a pattern or book open. Hang from cupboard door or whatever is available in the sewing area. Attach a hanger to finished quilts and hang on closet rods for storing quilts. Large quilts should be folded loosely when stored. When possible 'fold' width wise of the quilt and attach the hanger to a side of the quilt. When hung for display gravity will help remove any 'fold' lines.

Pizza boxes (new and clean)-use to store quilt blocks or sections as they are finished for a project. Boxes stack nicely and can be labeled. Unfinished blocks remain square with less handling if project has to be put away for awhile.

Prescription bottles (with plastic lids)-Drill or make a hole in the lid, place a filled bobbin in the bottle, put thread through the hole to control the spool/bobbin from rolling away. Another bottle or empty Tic-Tac container can be used to drop damaged needles or pins into for safe disposal. Damaged machine needles can be used in drywall to hang a wall quilt. If they have to be removed they make a very small hole which can usually be filled with a dab of paint.

Plastic bucket-As binding comes off the end of ironing board as it is pressed in half, let it drop into the bucket. When quilt is ready for the binding set the bucket on the floor between your feet as you sit at the machine. Bring the end of the binding between your knees and stitch to the quilt. The binding has not been handled or twisted. If the binding is not used immediately the bucket can be set aside untouched until ready for its quilt.

Q-tips-will clean fuzz from a bobbin case, machine feed dogs, and needle area when using fabric that sheds a lot.

Rubber fingers (office supply)- Gives fingers a grip to maneuver quilt when machine quilting. Assists in gripping a needle when hand sewing through layers.

Scotch tape-will hold buttons or snaps in position until first thread stitches have secured it. It is superior to masking tape in this use as the button holes can be easily seen through clear tape. Wrap with tape the cutting area of braided cording before cutting to length to eliminate the cord untwisting. Cut in the middle of the tape & both cut ends will be secure. Leave tape in place after stitching into seams of project to prevent unraveling.

Straw (recycled from fast food drinks)-place over short spool spindles to make cone thread spools usable on all machines. Straw can be cut and left on the spindle whatever size spool.

Slap bracelets/cardboard cores-Slap a bracelet over rolled stabilizers and fusibles or slide rolls into cardboard cores from paper towel or toilet tissue rolls. Label with product type. Manufacturer's instructions should be rolled with each product.

Trading card protector sheets-Fill with stash fabric swatches for a specific project or theme fabrics (Christmas). Place sheets in 3-ring binder. Remove from binder and take sheets along on shopping trips. Swatch of newly purchased fabrics is easily slipped into appropriate sheet to keep fabric supplies up-to-date.

Under bed storage container-holds fat quarters (folded in eighths), charm packs, jelly rolls and layer cakes in a single layer. Also, great place for stabilizers and fusibles.