

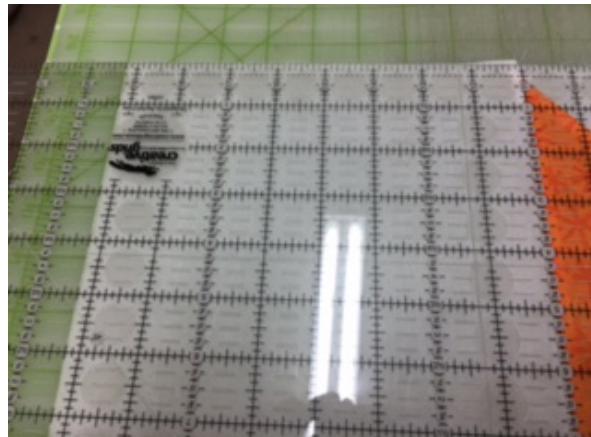
Quilting Techniques

By Kelley McKenzie

Basics:

Fabric Prep: Fabric prep is important. Everyone has different opinions if fabric should be prewashed. In Kelley's opinion, fabric should be prewashed only if it is **not** quilt shop quality. Quilt shop quality fabric is purchased from your local quilt shop that starts at \$10.99 and goes up from there. It is 100% cotton and is nice and soft, but still has some thickness to it. You cannot see through it. Some of the well-known names of high quality fabrics are Michael Miller, Moda, Free Spirit and the list goes on. Also, always press the fabric before starting a project.

Cutting Fabric: There are no big secrets when it comes to cutting fabric, except to have the right tools. **Always** start out with a fresh blade on your rotary cutter. Other supplies that are needed is a good square, long ruler with markings that are easy to see and a cutting mat. When cutting quilt pieces, never go off of the measurements on the cutting mat, but use the markings on the ruler.



Piecing and Pressing: The number one rule (and it is easy to break) is do not iron, but press the quilt pieces. By pressing and not ironing, the fabric will not stretch out. Also notice that in the pictures below when joining two seams together, you marry the seams, which means they are pressed in opposite directions. If pressing lights and darks together, always make sure to press to the dark side so that the dark fabric will not shadow through the front.



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Technique:

Applique: There are many different techniques for applique. In this technique, the supplies needed would be Terial Magic spray, paper, fabric scissors and decorative threads. Applique pieces can be purchased through many pattern companies or you can simply make your own. In Kelley's example, she used Erin Schlosser's Design Pillow Panache pattern.



First, prep the fabric with Terial Magic by spraying the fabric until it is completely covered and saturated. Let the fabric lay flat and dry. This takes about 15-20 minutes. Once the fabric is dry, lay the applique template on top and cut the pieces out. Select the thread to use and pin the applique to the background fabric. Select the blanket stitch on your machine and place your applique foot on your machine (F Foot).

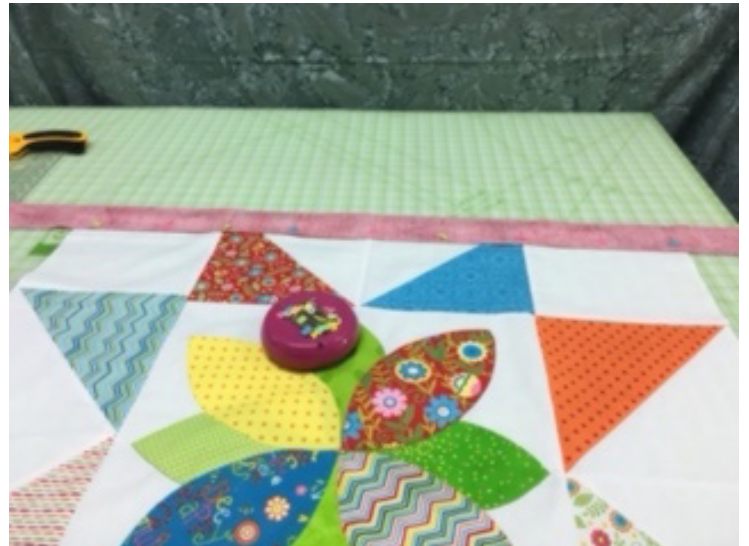
If you own a Horizon Memory Craft 15000, 12000, 11000 or the Skyline S7, you can go into your application mode, select applique and you are set. Once you are ready to pivot, simply select the corner button at the top of the screen and then the beginning of a pattern button. When selecting this, the machine knows to automatically start the applique stitch from the beginning and then it always produces a perfect applique without unappealing stitches outside the applique itself.

If you do not own one of the machines above, then watch carefully while you sew as the machine gets to a point that needs to be pivoted. Also make sure it takes a stitch toward the applique and not away from it.



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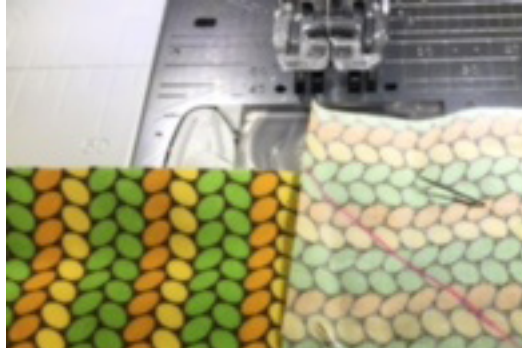
Borders and Sashing: Once again, there are many different opinions on how to attach borders. This technique is easy and you do not have to be a math genius to do it. First, make sure the quilt middle is square and all edges are straight, then measure the quilt. Let's pretend that the quilt is 50" x 60" and the border will be 6" wide. Purchase 2 yards of fabric so that the borders can be cut lengthwise. When the borders are cut lengthwise, they are less likely to have fullness in them from where a seam would have been to join it. Always attach the longest side first by pinning the border on from the center out while smoothing any fullness with your hand gently. Repeat for the opposite long side and press the seams. With the straight edge ruler and chalk pen, draw a straight line where the end of the border should be cut off (but do not actually cut it off), this will be your sew line for the next borders to be sewn on. Now using the same technique, pin the borders on, sew and press. With a pair of scissors, gently cut the excess border fabric from the first set of borders sewn on. The last set of borders can be cut off normally with a rotary cutter. By not cutting off the first set of borders before attaching the next two strips, it prevents it from cutting crooked borders that sink in.



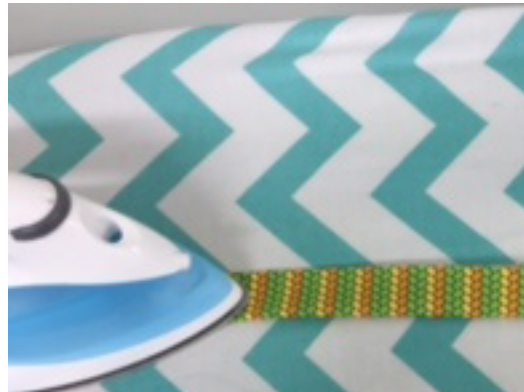
Binding by Machine: Many people still and always will bind quilts by hand, but most people like Kelley do not have time for that. Kelley considers herself a utility quilter, meaning she uses her quilts. They are not for shows. Kelley washes her quilts bi-weekly because her family tends to be a bit rough with them. Therefore, she needs a binding that is going to be strong and durable, but still looks nice. Here is what she does:

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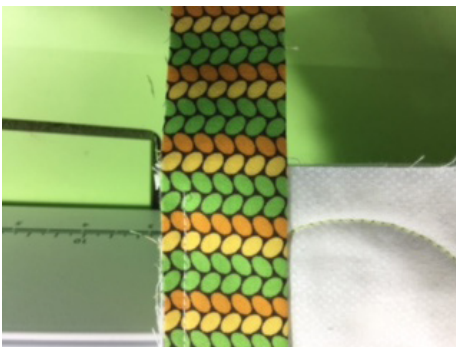
Cut the binding strips 2 1/2" wide. Add up all of the sides of the quilt and then for security, add 15 more inches to that number. That is how long the binding will need to be to go all the way around the quilt. Sew the strips together and press in half width wise so it is still very long, but only 1 1/4" wide.



Place the raw edges of the binding on the backside raw edge of the quilt. Sew a little over a 1/4" past the edge.

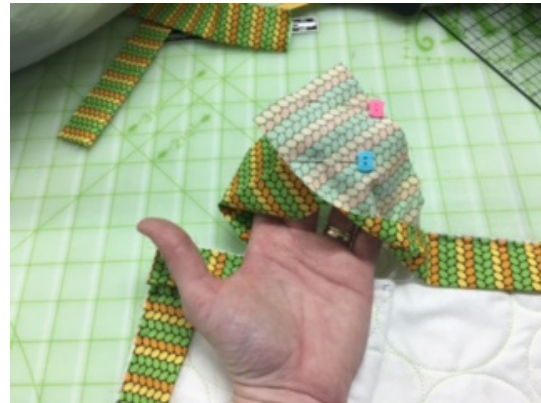
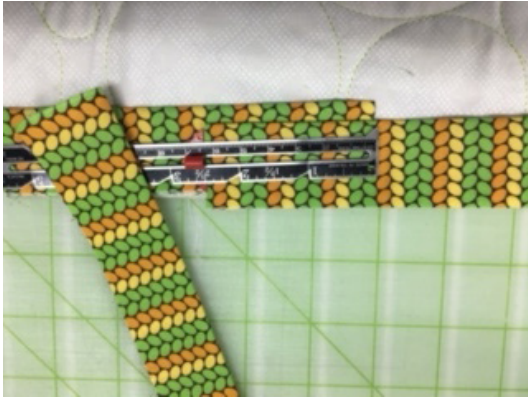


When reaching a corner, stop a 1/4" from the end and fold the fabric back at a 90 degree angle and then fold it back over on top of itself, continue sewing down.



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To join the binding strip together at the end, overlap them 2 1/2" and then join them together at the overlap.



Flip the binding to the front and use a simple decorative stitch to sew down the front. Kelley likes to use what she calls the broken zigzag. She widened it to 7mm and lengthened it to 2.5mm. Now you have a nice looking binding that only took 20 minutes.



“I hope these simple techniques helped you learn something new or gave you a new pointer. I LOVE quilting, it is my passion and I love to pass along knowledge as I receive it from others. If you ever have a question, you can email me at kmckenzie@jai-freelance.com.” - Kelley McKenzie