Different Types of Machine Quilting Series - Trapunto Quilting
By Joanna Marsh of Kustom Kwilts and Designs

Let’s dive into some different types of machine quilting! This will be a multi-part series, beginning with trapunto quilting. “Trapunto” is a technique that utilizes at least two layers to create a raised surface on a quilt. It can really give quilted pieces an almost 3D effect and add dimension and texture to your projects. There are several different techniques that can be used to achieve the trapunto effect. The technique used in this tutorial is the simplest method.

Janome Supplies Required

- Memory Craft 8900QCP Special Edition
- 1/4" Seam Foot O
- QBS Foot for Free Motion Quilting
- Prewound Bobbins
- Empty Bobbins
- Blue Tip Needle

Supplies You’ll Want to Invest in (or at least research):

- Quality machine quilting thread in various colors that contrast your solid fabric
- Quilting thread that blends with your fabric, monofilament or vanishing thread
- Scrap batting sub cut into (16) 6” x 6” squares
- 2/3 yard of solid color fabric sub cut into three 2 1/2” width of fabric strips
- 1 yard of fabric for backing
- 1/3 yard for binding sub cut into three 2 1/2” width of fabric strips
- 30” x 30” piece of batting
- Embroidery scissors or small snips
- Paper crafting scissors
- Spray baste or safety pins
- Disappearing ink pen
- Template printed on cardstock and cut-out triangle for beginner and star for advanced
- Quilting gloves (optional)
- Seam ripper, if needed
- Supreme Slider by Pat LaPierre (smaller size)

Tip: If you prefer to test out this technique, rather than make a mini quilt, only cut four of the 6 1/2" squares to piece together. Then use a 16” x 16” piece of fabric for backing and batting.

Print out your template sheet onto cardstock, or a heavier weight paper. The sample in the images is using the simpler triangle template. For your first time working with trapunto, Joanna recommends using the triangle template. If you prefer a bit of a challenge, try the star template. Keep in mind, for future projects, the more detailed the template, the most difficult the batting trimming will be. Cut the template out with paper crafting scissors (not fabric scissors).
Take the (16) 6 1/2” solid fabric squares that you cut and place the template on the right side of the fabric, within 3/8” of the edges of the fabric. Hold the template in place and use the disappearing ink pen to trace around the template. For a more varied look, rotate the placement of the template instead of centering it on the fabric squares (as shown in the images). It’s important to keep the templates at least 3/8” away from the edge of the fabric so that the batting is not sewn into the seam allowances once the blocks are pieced together.

Tip: Frixion pens are great for this! After the quilting is completed, simply press the fabric and the marks will vanish with heat.

Place a scrap piece of batting under the fabric square and pin in place, making sure the batting is centered under the traced shape.

Tip: You can also try using two pieces of scrap batting for extra loft or puffiness under the trapunto shape.
Use a thread that matches the solid color of the fabric to quilt on the lines you traced. Basically, outline the shape with short quilting stitches. If desired, you can use a monofilament thread for this or a wash-away or vanishing thread. Be sure to backstitch a few stitches when you start and stop. Quilt around the entire perimeter of the shape.

Remove the pins and turn the fabric square wrong side up so the batting is facing up. Take a pair of embroidery scissors or small snips and trim away all the batting outside the quilting line. Be very careful not to cut the stitches or the fabric in this step. Take your time and slowly trim the excess batting away.

Repeat all of those steps to the other 15 squares of fabric.
Different Types of Machine Quilting Series - Trapunto Quilting

Piece the prepared trapunto blocks together using a 1/4” seam allowance. Press the seams open or press to alternating directions to eliminate bulk.

Prepare a backing measuring 30” x 30”. Make a quilt sandwich, layering backing, batting and top. Use spray baste or safety pins to secure all of the layers.

Select a few thread colors for machine quilting that will contrast with the solid colored fabric you are using. Select a quilting motif that is somewhat dense. I opted to quilt pebbles and some curved lines fairly heavily to really make the trapunto shapes pop and alternated thread color to give a little more dimension to the quilting.
Different Types of Machine Quilting Series - Trapunto Quilting

To prepare the Janome Memory Craft for quilting, attach the QBS foot for free motion. Lower the feed dogs and adjust the presser foot to 5” and set the machine to “D4” “D4S”. Wind the bobbin with quilting thread and thread the machine with matching thread. Now is a good time to test quilt a scrap piece of fabric and batting to make sure you don’t need to make any tension adjustments and to preview how your thread choice will look on your fabric.

Begin quilting, making sure you don’t quilt on top of the trapunto shapes you previously quilted around. Quilt with the same color thread until you are ready to change thread color on the next motif. Leave some intentional space to quilt with additional colors you may have selected.
Tip: When free motion quilting, try to keep your quilting stitches a uniform length - not too small and not too large. You may want to practice the quilting motif before starting on the mini quilt. You can also use a Supreme Slider mounted to the sewing machine table to ease the movement of the quilt sandwich under the machine. Quilting gloves are optional as well, but will provide you with a little extra grip to achieve more precise quilting.

If using multiple thread colors, change your bobbin to match the next quilting thread and thread the machine with the same thread. Quilt as desired with the next color and again with any other colors you choose. For the final thread color you quilt with, fill in any empty areas that haven’t been quilted yet. Again, be careful not to quilt inside the trapunto shapes.

Trim away all excess batting when quilting is complete and square up the mini quilt. Take the 2 1/2” strips of binding fabric and sew together until you have a total length of at least 108”. When the length is complete, press the strips in half lengthwise, wrong sides together (so the width now measures 1 1/4”). Attach the binding around the mini quilt, mitering the corners.

Now you’re ready to display your multi-dimensional quilt project and work your way up to more complicated shapes, images or text. The possibilities are really endless with your Janome Memory Craft and trapunto quilting.
Different Types of Machine Quilting Series - Trapunto Quilting
Different Types of Machine Quilting Series - Trapunto Quilting