



The Notions Department

Coordinated by the Q.U.I.L.T.S. Programs Committee • Inspired by our members

Issue 5

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On Thursday, April 4, 2024, Q.U.I.L.T.S. held its 2nd annual Live Notions Department. Attendees shared tools, hacks, techniques and products. Q.U.I.L.T.S. secretary Debbie West kindly recorded as many as she was able so that we could share them with everyone.

- Use the heavy cardboard core of packing tape rolls to store and dispense quilt binding; when used with a sew steady device or thread stand, binding neatly unwinds during sewing.
- Pocket scissors, men's grooming scissors – blunt tips allow cutting of thread without poking holes in fabric, self, etc., and one member stated that they can be taken on flights.
- Band-Aids – to keep blood off quilts.
- Push-button needle threader for hand-sewing needles, and machine-sewing needle threader – for quick, frustration-saving threading of needles.
- Doll needles – for basting and tying quilts; especially for the 'hidden stitch' or "International Tie", in which the thread travels through the batting with no knots or loose ends on the outside of the quilt.
- Butter knife or other blunt-ended knife – for turning out and ironing seams in tight places. The knife retains the heat making for a sharper seam. You can also use dowels or screw drivers (carefully).
- Fidget boards – for hand-quilting; to feel when the needle is through all layers without poking into finger tips.
- Elastic hair ties/bands – for wrapping around spools or bobbins to keep thread from unraveling; plus are visible, unlike some tapes made for the purpose.
- Magnetic wands – to pick up dropped pins and needles; some are telescoping, others have larger heads and release mechanisms to dispense pins easily.
- Dental floss, unwaxed, or 12 wt. thread – to perfectly line up fabric repeats for stack-n-wack quilts or to align points when joining pieces.
- Very fine crochet hook – for retrieving thread pieces or thread ends trapped under quilt tops.
- Quilt block resizing table – a worksheet with measurements calculated for enlarging or reducing quilt blocks: <https://www.mixmeasuremake.com/how-to-resize-a-quilt-block/>.
- Fan-fold and pin fabric yardage at the salvage edges before washing – keeps fabric from twisting or raveling and to remain relatively wrinkle-free.
- Dritz size 20 ultra-thin dressmaker pins – to pin paper labels to fabric.

- Hemostat – has serrated tips and can lock to securely grab and hold pins, needles, thread, etc.
- Small battery powered folding light – twists to various angles and is very portable.
- Sponges (new, dry) – to use in place of quilting gloves.
- Narrow, double-sided tapes – to hold zippers, appliqué pieces, seams, binding in place while sewing; comes on rolls in 1/4” and 1/8” widths.
- Wooden dowel, ~3/4” – curved surface for pressing seams perfectly flat.
- Pinking rotary cutter blade – reduces unraveling of cut pieces.
- Non-stick ruler - ?
- Lint roller – to remove loose threads; also around edges of jelly rolls and layer cakes to reduce lint.
- Regular and milkshake-size straws, wire, and safety pin – to make a device for easily turning sewn fabric tubes right side out. (From Sandra Dorrbecker workshop.)
- Multi-needle threader – loads many needles onto a spool of thread; for hand-sewing without stopping to reload the same needle!
- Friends – self-explanatory!



When our sharing time was up we moved on to the Emergency Quilt Challenge. Members had been asked to bring supplies they might find helpful in a mystery quilting emergency and nine brave souls stepped up to form two teams to meet that challenge.

It was 1991 and their friendship group had boarded the Royal Caribbean’s “Dusty Blue Calico Cruise.” The highlight of the cruise, which they had saved up for for years, was a lecture by Nancy Crow, prolific quilt book writer and tool designer. Nancy had one odd requirement for attendance – wearing a quilted vest. As the group of friends gathered at the pre-arranged meeting place in the atrium next to palm trees with fronds reaching up 7 or 8 decks towards the skylights above, hundreds of vest clad quilters streamed past them towards the ballroom, chattering excitedly. Suddenly the group noticed that one of their members was missing. At that very moment a scream rang out from a balcony high above, silencing the crowd around them. They looked up and saw that it was their missing friend, who then wailed, to the shock and horror of everyone below, “I FORGOT MY QUILTED VEST!!”

The two teams were given 1 minute to inventory their pooled supplies, which interestingly, and challengingly, was mostly chocolate, and then 3 minutes to construct a vest so that their forgetful friend could attend the long awaited lecture. As three volunteer judges observed, the two groups clustered around a team member and got to work. One team creatively pinned their collective homemade Q.U.I.L.T.S. name tags as well as other supplies on to their quilter to create the illusion of a vest. The second team did something similar but employed double sided tape and glue to affix pieces of chocolate, non-winning raffle tickets, playing cards from the door prize activity, and MORE!, winning the vote of the judges who conferred intensely before rendering their decision.

***Did we leave anything out? To add a notion, email
the Programs Committee at QUILTSPROGRAMS@gmail.com!***