

FABRIC

How to buy it, wash it, store it etc....

By Pat Ferguson * Quilter/Teacher

www.patfergusonquilts.com

email pat@patfergusonquilts.com 860-429-6999

FABRIC TERMINOLOGY:

- * selvage- the tightly woven edge of the fabric- you do not want to use this in your quilt piecing
- * raw edge- the end of the fabric that is cut away from the bolt- runs perpendicular to the selvage
- * grain- the direction in which the fabric threads run
 - cross grain- the threads that run from selvage to selvage- has a slight stretch to it
 - lengthwise grain- the threads that run parallel to the selvage- has no stretch to it
 - bias- 45* angle cut across the fabric- has maximum stretch
do not use on outside edges of blocks or quilts, press carefully

HOW TO CHOOSE COLORS:

- * when visiting the fabric store, bring along a colorful item from the room to help match- arm cover, pillowcase, pillow, valance, art work etc...
- * choose a print fabric that has many colors and pull the colors out of it
also choose lighter and darker shades of each color- these add zing
- * most fabrics have a color bar printed on the edge- match these colors
- * buy pre-coordinated packets or bundles
- * if you want to tone down colors add gray or tan
- * if you want to brighten colors add crisp white or stark black
- * always choose top quality 100% cotton
- * watch for directional prints, plaids & stripes- they are harder to work with and may require extra yardage

HOW MUCH TO BUY?

- * follow your pattern and add at least 1/4 yard for insurance- if you love one particular fabric, add at least 1 yard so that you can use it in another project
- * if you are using the same fabric in the body of the quilt and in the border add the yardages together and purchase 1 piece instead of 2 separate pieces- you will have 1 larger leftover piece instead of 2 smaller ones
- * if you find a fabric that you don't have plans for but you can't leave the store without it, buy at least 6 yards- this will allow you enough for the body and borders of a larger quilt- remember, chances are, it won't be there when you go back to purchase more!!

WHEN YOU GET THAT FABRIC HOME:

- * check for bleeding- cut a small fabric square and soak it in warm water and mild detergent- if water changes color rinse until it stops- if it doesn't stop after 2 or 3 rinsings you probably should not use it or
 - try "**RETAYNE**" a liquid fixative that locks the dye molecules onto the surface of the fabric and stops the bleed
 - place wet square on a piece of white paper towel & watch for bleeding
 - Warm water and white vinegar will sometimes help stop bleeding
 - beware of dark colors especially reds, greens and blues
- * check for fade factor- cut a small piece of fabric and tape onto a sunny window after one week, check the cut piece against the original piece to see how quickly it has faded. Quilted projects should never be left in the sun.
- * wash it- snip corners diagonally to decrease raveling
 - unfold fabric to prevent crease lines in the washing machine
 - use mild detergents like "**QUILT SOAP**" or "**ORVUS**" and warm water
 - wash like colors together
 - wash smaller pieces in a mesh lingerie bag
 - fat quarters wash easier than long skinny quarters
- * dry it- in dryer to achieve maximum shrinkage
 - leave out the softener or dryer sheets for fusible projects
 - if hanging fabric to dry, wash in warm water to shrink it
- * press it- with a medium hot iron- it will be neater and take less space
- * fold it- I fold all of my fabric selvage to opposite selvage and then in half the same way again as if ready to place on cutting board, then into about 9" sections so that all of my pieces are the same size for easy stacking
- * store it- enamel coated wire shelves are ideal- they allow air circulation
 - wood shelves can stain fabric- line them with plastic or...
 - use clear plastic boxes which allow you to see colors inside
 - store in closet or cover shelving with a curtain to avoid sunlight
- * if you will be using the fabric soon, fold it lengthwise twice and place it over a coat hanger- this will prevent wrinkles and your fabric will be already folded for laying on your cutting mat

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