



Tips from your Longarmer

Pressing your top: Give your top one final press from the front. Please be sure your seams are lying the direction you want them, or open if you prefer. This helps keep pleats from occurring.

Take the loose threads off your top. This is SO IMPORTANT! If threads are on the right side of the quilt top, they can be sewn down. If they're on the back, especially with a light-colored quilt, they're apt to show through after the quilting. I try to catch those pesky threads as I quilt, but I can't guarantee to catch them all.

Take a victory lap! This is extremely helpful if you have a lot of seams or biased edges along the edge of your quilt top, especially with piano borders or no borders at all. Take a 1/8" seam all along the edge to help prevent the seams from separating or stretching and from the longarm catching on loose seams.

Trim your quilt straight and square. This helps me create beautiful square results for you. If your top is not square to start with, I will do my best, but I cannot guarantee it will be square when it comes off the machine.

If there are irregularities in your quilt, such as wavy borders or the inability to make it square, we can discuss this and agree on what steps will need to be taken and what you can expect from the final product.

Prep your Backing: Give your backing a final press as well. Be sure seams are pressed open and flat. Please cut off any salvages on your inner seams as they will shrink differently once washed. A 1/2" seam allowance allows for a flatter, smoother backing. Leaving the outer edge salvages on will assure a straight edge for loading the quilt back.

When possible, seams running horizontally make for easier quilting but are not necessary. Horizontal seams evenly distribute the bulk along the longarm allowing for smoother loading and tension on the backing fabric.

Check your backing measurements! Backing fabric should be NO LESS than 4" extra inches on EACH side (8" total extra length and width.) The more the better actually! This allows sufficient space for attaching the backing to the longarm and allows room for rulers while custom quilting and ruler work. Please remember to measure twice and cut once.

Mark the top of both the quilt top and backing, especially if your quilt or backing is directional. A piece of paper with the word "top" pinned to the top of each is all I need. If you have a seam on your backing and have a preference on where it is placed, please also note this on the backing as well.

Let's talk about your binding plans: If you plan on using your backing as your binding, please let me know. It will determine placement and how I move along the edge of your quilt.

Fold your backing anywhere but along the seam. I know this sounds silly, but after you take all the work of pressing it flat, the last thing you want to do is fold the seam closed again. Moving your fold over just a couple of inches from the seam helps keep that freshly pressed seam flat and pretty.

Bundle your top, backing, batting, etc. all together. Put it in a bag, box, or tote along with any notes you have for me. This ensures that everything is together and ready for its place in the queue.

Do not baste your quilt together. The top, batting, and backing should be separate.

Do not use basting spray or pins to hold the pieces in place. These are not necessary on a longarm quilting machine. Each piece is placed on the machine separately before quilting.

Communication is key. I just can't emphasize this enough – I want to help you finish your beautiful quilt just as you imagined it. If you know exactly what quilting style you want...say so. Or if you want your longarmer's help making design and thread choices, please still provide some guidance as to your taste and style.

When you drop off your quilt, we will talk about thread color, designs, density and how you envision your quilt to turn out. Please think about these things ahead of time to make your decision process a bit easier. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have and will take the time to work with you to achieve the beautiful texture and style of quilting you are dreaming of.