

GICS #16 Class Notes

Controlled Quilting

Teacher Pauline Rogers teaching student Simon Pratt
www.pqw.com.au

I have taught quilting for many years, and I always have so many people tell me that they can't get comfortable with Free Motion quilting.

It is a challenging skill to learn if you are prepared to dedicate many hours of practice. Learning how to keep the stitches even and drawing shapes onto your quilt with the needle can be difficult. The bulk of a quilt is always challenging to manoeuvre under the needle on a small domestic machine.

I listened to all those quilters who did not like Free Motioning, and I came up with the technique I call, Controlled Quilting.

As most people know, I now concentrate on teaching quilters how to make their quilts as Quilt as You Go quilts.

I personally started to do my quilts this way some years ago as I was struggling trying to quilt my quilts Free Motion on my small domestic sewing machine.

I guarantee everyone can quilt using my Controlled Quilting method. When you first start, it won't be perfect.

But like anything, once you do it a few times and you get familiar with the technique and the settings on your machine, the confidence will start to kick in, and you will be creating beautiful quilting in no time.

This series of classes is not a project, but rather it is showing how I am teaching Simon step by step to quilt using my Controlled Quilting techniques.

The idea of the classes is to teach all who are taking this class how easy quilting can be once you realize that you do not have to Free Motion quilt to quilt stunning designs on your quilt.

Setting up your machine:

Use an Open Toe sewing foot.

Titanium Top stitch needle.

Put the thread in the bobbin and in the top of the machine.

Lay the Sew Slip mat onto the bed of your machine.

Set your stitch length a bit higher than you would for normal sewing. You will be sewing through 3 layers so the stitch will need to be larger.

Example- If you sew with a 2.5 stitch length, go up to 3 for this style of quilting.

Release the pressure of the foot. Refer to your machine manual on how to do this if you need to learn how. Refrain from adjusting the pressure right off the foot, as you will not get a good thread connection between the top and bobbin threads, and the fabric will move around too freely to deliver nice stitches.

Preparing your fabric:

Lay your backing piece out on the ironing surface, then the wadding followed by the top fabric.

Use a hot, dry iron and slowly press the top layer to the batting with a very slow circular motion till the wadding adheres to the fabric.

Turn the piece over and repeat the pressing process on the back fabric.

Marking the design to the fabric sandwich:

Choose the template you wish to use.

***TIP-** For ideas on the different designs you can create, go to my website www.pqw.com.au and find the QAYG patterns. Next to each one, you will see a downloadable free pattern.*

Use the Bohin fabric marking pencil with either the Black or White lead.

Lay the template on the top fabric and press down firmly. Have the lead of the marking pencil out long enough to fit through the split in the template.

It is VERY IMPORTANT to hold the pencil upright otherwise, if it is lent to the side, the lead will hit the side of the template and break the lead.

Once you have the design drawn, you are ready to sew.

Draw your bobbin thread up from the top and do a couple of small stitches in the one spot.

Put the stitch length back up, as you sew, and keep your eye on the line you have drawn, and not the needle.

Now find a line to stitch on to allow you to sew for as far as you can. It is not important to stitch the shape as such; just follow lines that lead from one to the other.

Releasing the pressure of the sewing foot allows you to be able to swing the fabric around curves without stopping and lifting the pressure foot all of the time.

If you are not able to adjust the pressure of the sewing foot, you will have to lift the pressure foot to pivot around the corners.

Continue stitching on the lines till you get the whole design stitched. Cut the top and bottom thread, so you have a good length of both threads. Thread onto a needle and tie a knot and pull the knot into the layer.

SPECIAL NOTE:

I often stitch over a previously stitched line of quilting to get to the next line; some quilters say this should not be done.

But I am a believer that stitching over a line of stitching builds up the layers of thread and adds to the effect of quilting.

When you get one design stitched, have a go at creating more, and you will undoubtedly be on the road to becoming an excellent quilter.

Remember, this is Controlled Quilting, so relax and enjoy.

Thanks also to Simon for being such a great student.

Stay happy.

Pauline.