

Before you send your treasured possession off to be quilted - here are 10 helpful tips to ensure your quilt comes home looking like you expected - or better!

1. Ensure that there are no more than 2 seams overlap on the rear side of your pieced front. If there are - try pressing one of the seams another direction so there are no "bumps" to be quilted over. These bumps may interrupt the quilting design or cause broken needles.
2. Take a photo of your completed top to get a good look at the quilt. Photos do help us to see the bigger picture! Otherwise, stand back and take a good look at the quilt - by hanging it on a line or laying it on a bed. This will help you to see any errors and help you think about how you may like it quilted.
3. Make sure to stay stitch all around the entire quilt -  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch in from the edge. This will prevent seams from pulling apart when stretched on the quilter's frame
4. There is no need to sandwich the quilt together with the batting and backing. The quilter attached each three pieces separately to the quilting frame when loading it to be quilted.
5. Your backing may have to be pieced if you do not have wide backing (108" wide). If you are piecing the backing - the best direction is horizontal. (across the middle of the back - not up and down) Sew in 1.5 inches along the selvedge edges - then trim off the selvedge. It is bound much more tightly than the weave of the fabric and will cause your backing to become wrinkled or 'wonky'!
6. You should have a backing that is at least 6 inches wider and longer than your quilt top to ensure the quilter can center the quilt properly.
7. Choose batting that will highlight your quilt. An 80/20 cotton polyester has less loft than a 100% wool batting. Polyester batting is no longer desirable for most quilts. 100% cotton has to be quilted a little more densely because it does not have the strength that an 80/20 blend does. The newer 100% wool washes beautifully.
8. When considering a quilting design - consider a design that highlights your pieced quilt. An edge to edge design can often take away from your work. A custom quilting job will highlight your work in piecing and keep the focus on the pattern of the quilt.
9. Don't panic if all your points are not perfect! Choose a wool batting and the quilting will mask those imperfect intersections!
10. Do your best to trim any fraying dark coloured fabric - especially if there is a white background on the quilt. Those fraying bits have a tendency to wander and appear under a white section - leaving small 'worms' in between the top and batting.

Finally:

Make your quilt something to remember by hiring a longarm quilter who has a portfolio to show you their work! You have likely put over a hundred hours into your craft - make sure the quilter highlights your work! And don't forget to order a label for your quilt - so that your work is honoured for years to come!