



Free Motion Quilting

Sewing Machine Checklist for Quilting with a Darning Foot

Locate your sewing machine manual and the instructions that came with your darning foot. Keep them at your sewing machine for any needed troubleshooting.

Install your darning foot according to the instructions. Pay particular attention to the position of the 'arm' of the foot if it has one. It rides on the needle screw.

- Install a new needle, either a 75/11 or 80/12 Microtex Sharp or Quilting Needle. Both work well with 50wt 100% cotton thread.
- Set your stitch length to 0. There is no need to have the feed dogs moving.
- Set your machine to 'needle down'. (Older machines may not have this.)
- Lower for feed dogs (or cover them if you have an older machine.)
- Make any other adjustments as instructed in your sewing machine manual.
- Install a straight stitch throat plate (the one with a small round hole) if you have one for better stitch quality. (Older machines may not have one.)

On a small practice sandwich made with leftover scraps from your quilt, do some practice stitching. Evaluate your tension. Make any necessary adjustments. Do some very curvy lines, too, to make sure you don't have any eyelashing.

Once you are satisfied with your stitches...no bobbin thread shows on the top and no needle thread shows on the back, you're ready to start quilting.

Pull the bobbin thread to the top. Hold onto the needle thread tail, take a stitch and give it a tug. A loop of bobbin thread should appear over the needle thread. Pull both tails to the top. Hold onto these thread tails for the first eight or so very tiny stitches and then clip them close to the quilt top. This microstitching takes the place of tying a knot in your threads. You're good to go!

Relax. Breathe. And enjoy the process!

For more help with free motion quilting visit:

<http://www.generations-quilt-patterns.com/free-motion-quilting-html>