

how to quilt as you go

how to quilt as you go is an innovative quilting technique that allows crafters to combine piecing and quilting steps, streamlining the quilt-making process. This method is especially beneficial for those seeking to minimize bulk and simplify the handling of large quilt projects. By quilting individual blocks or sections before assembling them, quilters can maintain precision and achieve unique textures and designs with ease. This approach is suitable for both beginners and experienced quilters who want to save time and enhance the durability of their quilts. The following guide explores essential materials, step-by-step instructions, various methods, tips for success, and common challenges associated with quilt-as-you-go techniques. Understanding these elements will help quilters master this efficient and creative method while producing beautiful, high-quality quilts.

- Understanding the Quilt-as-You-Go Technique
- Essential Materials and Tools
- Step-by-Step Guide to Quilt as You Go
- Popular Quilt-as-You-Go Methods
- Tips for Successful Quilt-as-You-Go Projects
- Common Challenges and Solutions

Understanding the Quilt-as-You-Go Technique

Quilt-as-you-go (QAYG) is a quilting technique that involves quilting individual blocks or sections before assembling the final quilt top. Unlike traditional quilting, where the quilt top, batting, and backing are layered and quilted as a whole, QAYG integrates piecing and quilting into a single process. This method reduces the difficulty of handling bulky layers and large quilt sizes, making it manageable to quilt on a domestic sewing machine. It also allows for creative freedom in quilting designs on each block, enabling unique textures and patterns throughout the quilt.

Benefits of Quilt-as-You-Go

The quilt-as-you-go method offers several advantages that appeal to quilters of all skill levels. These benefits include:

- Ease of handling smaller quilted blocks rather than a bulky quilt sandwich.
- Ability to incorporate intricate quilting designs on individual blocks.
- Reduced risk of shifting layers during quilting.
- Flexibility to work on the quilt in smaller, manageable sections.

- Opportunity to finish projects more quickly by combining piecing and quilting.

Essential Materials and Tools

Successful quilt-as-you-go projects require specific materials and tools tailored to this method's unique approach. Having the right supplies ensures smooth workflow and professional results.

Fabric Selection

Choosing appropriate fabrics is crucial for quilt-as-you-go. High-quality 100% cotton fabrics are preferred for their durability and ease of sewing. Coordinating colors and patterns should be selected to achieve the desired aesthetic. It is important to prewash fabrics to prevent shrinkage and color bleeding.

Batting Choices

Batting is the quilt's insulation layer, providing warmth and texture. For QAYG, thin to medium-weight batting works best to avoid excessive bulk when blocks are joined. Cotton, polyester, or wool batting options are available, with cotton being the most common choice for its natural fiber qualities.

Tools and Supplies

The following tools are essential for quilt-as-you-go projects:

- Sewing machine with quilting capabilities
- Rotary cutter and cutting mat
- Quilting rulers for accurate measurements
- Iron and ironing board
- Thread suitable for quilting
- Pins or clips to hold layers together
- Hand sewing needle for finishing seams

Step-by-Step Guide to Quilt as You Go

Mastering how to quilt as you go involves following a systematic process that combines piecing, quilting, and joining blocks. This section outlines the essential steps to complete a quilt using the QAYG method.

Preparing Quilt Blocks

Start by cutting fabric pieces for the quilt blocks according to the chosen pattern. Cut batting pieces slightly smaller than the fabric blocks to reduce bulk in the seams. Layer each fabric block with batting and backing fabric, ensuring smooth alignment.

Quilting Individual Blocks

Quilt each block separately by stitching through the fabric layers and batting. Use quilting designs that complement the block pattern, such as straight lines, stippling, or free-motion quilting. Ensure the quilting is secure and even to maintain block stability.

Joining Quilted Blocks

After quilting, join the individual blocks using one of several techniques, such as sewing blocks right sides together or using sashing strips to connect blocks. Special seam allowances and careful stitching are necessary to maintain the quilt's structural integrity and appearance.

Popular Quilt-as-You-Go Methods

Several variations of the quilt-as-you-go technique cater to different project styles and preferences. Understanding these methods helps quilters select the best approach for their needs.

Joining Blocks with Sashing

This method involves quilting blocks individually and then joining them with sashing strips sewn between blocks. The sashing provides spacing and a decorative element, allowing for creative design options in the final quilt layout.

Continuous Quilt-as-You-Go

In this approach, the quilt batting and backing are attached to the quilt top as the blocks are pieced together, allowing for continuous quilting across the entire quilt. This method is efficient for large quilts and maintains a consistent texture throughout.

Backing-as-You-Go

Backing-as-you-go entails attaching the backing fabric to each quilted block before joining blocks. This technique eliminates the need for a separate backing layer and simplifies the finishing process, making it ideal for quick projects.

Tips for Successful Quilt-as-You-Go Projects

Implementing best practices ensures that quilt-as-you-go projects result in beautiful, durable quilts. Attention to detail and careful planning are key.

Maintain Accurate Seam Allowances

Precise seam allowances are crucial when joining quilted blocks to avoid gaps or misalignment. Use a consistent seam allowance, typically $\frac{1}{4}$ inch, and measure carefully during assembly.

Press Seams Properly

Press seams flat after sewing each block and during assembly to reduce bulk and create a smooth quilt surface. Use steam and a hot iron, pressing seams to one side or open depending on the pattern requirements.

Test Quilting Designs

Practice quilting patterns on scrap fabric and batting before quilting the actual blocks. This ensures familiarity with the design and prevents mistakes on the finished quilt.

Use Quality Thread

Choose strong, colorfast thread that complements the fabric. High-quality thread reduces breakage and enhances the quilt's appearance and longevity.

Common Challenges and Solutions

Quilt-as-you-go projects may present specific difficulties, but understanding common issues and their remedies helps maintain project momentum and quality.

Managing Bulk at Seams

Bulk can accumulate where blocks are joined, making seams thick and difficult to sew. To minimize bulk, trim batting edges carefully and consider using thinner batting. Press seams open when possible to distribute thickness evenly.

Achieving Consistent Block Sizes

Discrepancies in block size can cause alignment problems during assembly. Measure and cut fabric and batting precisely, and check block dimensions after quilting. Make adjustments early to ensure uniformity.

Handling Fabric Shifting

Layers may shift during quilting, leading to uneven stitching. Use pins or clips to secure layers firmly, and sew slowly with controlled movements. Stabilizing sprays can also help keep fabric layers in place.

Seam Weakness After Joining Blocks

Seams joining quilted blocks can sometimes be prone to stress and wear. Reinforce seams with backstitching and avoid stretching the fabric during assembly. Using a walking foot on the sewing machine can provide consistent feeding and stronger seams.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the 'Quilt As You Go' technique?

The 'Quilt As You Go' technique involves quilting individual fabric blocks or sections separately before joining them together to complete the quilt, making the process more manageable and portable.

What materials do I need for quilting as you go?

You will need fabric for your quilt top, batting for each block, backing fabric, quilting thread, a sewing machine or needle for hand quilting, and basic quilting tools like rotary cutters, rulers, and pins.

How do you join quilted blocks in quilting as you go?

Quilted blocks can be joined using various methods such as sewing blocks together with sashing strips, using lattice or joining strips, or even overlapping edges and stitching them together, depending on the desired look.

What are the benefits of quilting as you go compared to traditional quilting?

Benefits include easier handling of smaller blocks, less bulk under the sewing machine, the ability to work on the quilt in sections, and often faster completion since quilting and piecing are combined.

Can I use any quilting pattern with the quilt as you go method?

Yes, you can use most quilting patterns with the quilt as you go method, but simpler designs are often easier to manage on smaller blocks before joining them.

How do I ensure my blocks align properly when

quilting as you go?

Careful measuring, consistent seam allowances, and precise cutting are essential. Using sashing strips or a joining method that creates space between blocks can also help with alignment and ease of assembly.

Is batting required for each block in quilting as you go?

Yes, each block typically has its own small piece of batting, which is quilted together with the fabric layers before the blocks are joined, allowing for individual quilting of each section.

What quilting stitches work best for quilt as you go?

Straight-line quilting, simple geometric patterns, or free-motion quilting can work well. The choice depends on your skill level and the design, but simpler stitches are often easier to manage on smaller blocks.

Additional Resources

1. *Quilt As You Go Made Modern*

This book offers innovative techniques for quilting in smaller, manageable sections that are later joined together. It features contemporary designs that appeal to modern quilters, making the process less daunting and more enjoyable. Detailed instructions and step-by-step photos guide readers through the quilt-as-you-go method with ease.

2. *The Quilt-As-You-Go Log Cabin Sampler*

Ideal for beginners and experienced quilters alike, this book focuses on the popular log cabin block pattern using the quilt-as-you-go technique. It breaks down complex patterns into simple, quilted units that are sewn together at the end. The book also includes tips on fabric selection and finishing techniques to ensure a polished final product.

3. *Quilt As You Go: 8 Smart Projects*

This collection features eight unique quilt-as-you-go projects, ranging from table runners to full-sized quilts. Each project includes detailed instructions and illustrations, making it easy to follow along. The book emphasizes practical tips for mastering the technique and creating beautiful, functional quilts.

4. *Modern Quilt-As-You-Go: 10 Fresh Projects*

Combining modern aesthetics with traditional quilting methods, this book offers ten fresh quilt-as-you-go projects. Quilters will find inspiration in the bold colors and geometric patterns featured throughout. The instructions focus on efficiency and creativity, helping quilters finish projects faster without sacrificing style.

5. *The Complete Guide to Quilt As You Go*

This comprehensive guide covers everything from the basics to advanced quilt-as-you-go techniques. Readers will learn how to choose fabrics, prepare blocks, and join quilted sections seamlessly. The book also explores various quilting designs and finishing touches to produce professional-quality quilts.

6. *Quilt As You Go: Simple Steps to Stunning Quilts*

Perfect for those new to the quilt-as-you-go method, this book breaks down the process into simple, manageable steps. It includes beginner-friendly projects that build confidence and skills progressively. Helpful tips and troubleshooting advice ensure quilters can overcome common challenges with ease.

7. *Quilt As You Go: Fast & Fun Projects*

Designed for quilters who want quick results, this book offers fast and fun quilt-as-you-go projects suitable for gifts and home decor. The projects are designed to be completed in a shorter time frame without compromising quality. Clear instructions and vibrant photos make the quilting process enjoyable and accessible.

8. *Quilt-As-You-Go: Techniques & Projects for Beginners*

This beginner-focused book introduces the quilt-as-you-go method with easy-to-follow instructions and charming projects. It emphasizes foundational skills, such as cutting, piecing, and quilting in sections. The projects range from small accessories to larger quilts, providing a broad learning experience.

9. *Scrappy Quilt As You Go*

Celebrate fabric scraps with this creative book that teaches how to use leftover pieces in quilt-as-you-go projects. It encourages sustainability and creativity, showing how to make beautiful, unique quilts from scraps. The book includes various layouts and finishing techniques to turn scraps into stunning, finished quilts.

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