

Now revised with new projects!
The fun and easy way[®] to start stitching

Quilting

FOR

DUMMIES[®]

2nd Edition

Cheryl Fall

Host of The Creative Life with Cheryl Fall

A Reference for the Rest of Us!



FREE eTips at
dummies.com[®]

Now revised with new projects!
The fun and easy way® to start stitching

Quilting

FOR

DUMMIES®

2nd Edition



Cheryl Fall

Host of The Creative Life with Cheryl Fall

A Reference for the Rest of Us!



FREE eTips at
dummies.com

***Quilting For Dummies[®],
2nd Edition***

by Cheryl Fall



WILEY

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

Quilting For Dummies® , 2nd Edition

Published by

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

111 River St.

Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774

www.wiley.com

Copyright © 2006 by Wiley Publishing, Inc.,
Indianapolis, Indiana

Published simultaneously in Canada

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning, or otherwise, except as permitted under Sections 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act, without either the prior written permission of the Publisher, or authorization through payment of the appropriate per-copy fee to the Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, 978-750-8400, fax 978-646-8600. Requests to the Publisher for permission should be addressed to the Permissions Department, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030, (201)748-6011, fax (201)748-6008, or online at <http://www.wiley.com/go/permissions>.

Trademarks: Wiley, the Wiley Publishing logo, For Dummies, the Dummies Man logo, A Reference for the Rest of Us!, The Dummies Way, Dummies Daily, The Fun and Easy Way, Dummies.com and related trade dress are trademarks or registered trademarks of John Wiley & Sons, Inc. and/or its affiliates in the United States and other countries, and may not be used without written permission. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Wiley Publishing, Inc., is not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in this book.

LIMIT OF LIABILITY/DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTY: The publisher and the author make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this work and specifically disclaim all warranties, including without limitation warranties of fitness for a particular purpose. No warranty may be created or extended by sales or promotional materials. The advice and strategies contained herein may not be suitable for every situation. This work is sold with the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional services. If professional assistance is required, the services of a competent professional person should be sought. Neither the publisher nor the author shall be liable for damages arising herefrom. The fact that an organization or Website is referred to in this work as a citation and/or a potential source of further information does not mean that the author or the publisher endorses the information the organization or

Website may provide or recommendations it may make. Further, readers should be aware that Internet Websites listed in this work may have changed or disappeared between when this work was written and when it is read.

For general information on our other products and services, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

For technical support, please visit www.wiley.com/techsupport.

Wiley also publishes its books in a variety of electronic formats. Some content that appears in print may not be available in electronic books.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2005927617

ISBN-13: 978-0-7645-9799-2

ISBN-10: 0-7645-9799-X

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5

20/QY/QS/QW/IN



About the Author

Cheryl Fall, a professional designer since 1986, is the author of 12 how-to books and over 2,500 how-to articles in various publications. Magazines featuring her work over the last 19 years have included *The Quilter*, *Quilt World*, *Quick and Easy Quilting*, *Family Circle*, *Woman's Day*, *Country Living*, *Craftworks*, and *Sewing Savvy*.

Cheryl is also the host of *The Creative Life with Cheryl Fall*, a nationally distributed PBS 'Plus' program that features lifestyle-enhancing projects, ideas, and useful information for women. She has also spent years creating quilting and sewing projects and teaching for various manufacturers, including Coats & Clark and Singer. As an accomplished fine artist, Cheryl has created and licensed designs for use in the textile, giftware, table top, and home furnishings markets.

Quilting can be an all-consuming occupation, but Cheryl still finds the time to goof around. Residing near Portland, Oregon, she's been happily married for more than 20 years to husband Tony and has two college-age daughters and one spoiled-rotten cocker spaniel named Buster, who thinks he rules the roost.

Dedication

I dedicate this book to would-be quilters the world over and to those who are learning this art. May all your quilts be terrific!

Author's Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my wonderful family because without their support, this book may have never made it to press. I can't thank my hubby and daughters enough for all the cooking, cleaning, and laundry they did while I was putting this book together (okay, sometimes I milked it, but it sure was fun!).

My deepest gratitude to Stedman Mays, agent extraordinaire; Chrissy Guthrie, Stacy Kennedy, and Elizabeth Rea at Wiley; and Carol Owens. These wonderful people helped make the revision of this book possible, and their help has been very much appreciated. You're all absolutely outstanding in your profession and pleasures to work with.

Originally, much of the art for this book was done by the late Phyllis Barbieri, whose help was invaluable and whose loss is deeply felt. She and technical reviewer Laurette Koserowski, both from Traditional Quilter magazine, made a great team. For the new edition of the book, I must thank artist Connie Rand for her illustrations. Many thanks, too, to all the companies and individuals who contributed time or product for this book, including:

Coats & Clark for the use of some past projects that I'd done for them as well as their terrific assortment of

threads and bias tape. (Thanks for the occasional pep talk, Meta and Lynn!)

P&B Textiles, VIP Fabrics, Springs, RJR Fabrics, and Marcus Brothers for the delectable fabrics used in these quilts. Your catalogs offer such temptation to a fabricophile like myself!

Handler Textile Corporation and Pellon for their fusible products and stabilizers, which make machine appliqué a joy.

Nolting Manufacturing for professionally machine quilting several of the larger projects in this book, saving me tons of time. Your generosity is very much appreciated.

Fairfield Processing for the batting, pillow forms, and stuffing used in the projects.

I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my assistant and photographer, Mary Nevius. No matter how daunting the task, she always stepped up to the plate and got it done.

Last but not least, I want to thank an inanimate object that I just know has a soul hidden somewhere in its gears — my trusty sewing machine. It has seen its share of quilts pass over its throat plate; it takes a lickin' but keeps on stitchin'!

Publisher's Acknowledgments

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments through our Dummies online registration form located at www.dummies.com/register/.

Some of the people who helped bring this book to market include the following:

Acquisitions, Editorial, and Media Development

Project Editor: Christina Guthrie

Acquisitions Editor: Stacy Kennedy

Senior Copy Editor: Elizabeth Rea

Editorial Program Assistant: Courtney Allen

Technical Editor: Carol Owens

Editorial Manager: Christine Meloy Beck

Editorial Assistants: Hanna Scott, Nadine Bell, David Lutton

Cover Photo: © Abbie Enneking, 2005; Quilt Designed by: Shirley Shedron

Cartoons: Rich Tennant (www.the5thwave.com)

Composition Services

Project Coordinator: Jennifer Theriot

Layout and Graphics: Carl Byers, Andrea Dahl, Lauren Goddard, Joyce Haughey, Melanee Prendergast, Heather Ryan

Proofreaders: Jessica Kramer, Aptara

Indexer: Aptara

Publishing and Editorial for Consumer Dummies

Diane Graves Steele, Vice President and Publisher,
Consumer Dummies

Joyce Pepple, Acquisitions Director, Consumer
Dummies

Kristin A. Cocks, Product Development Director,
Consumer Dummies

Michael Spring, Vice President and Publisher, Travel

Kelly Regan, Editorial Director, Travel

Publishing for Technology Dummies

Andy Cummings, Vice President and Publisher,
Dummies Technology/General User

Composition Services

Gerry Fahey, Vice President of Production Services

Debbie Stailey, Director of Composition Services

Contents

[Title](#)

[Introduction](#)

[About This Book](#)

[Conventions Used in This Book](#)

[What You're Not to Read](#)

[Foolish Assumptions](#)

[How This Book Is Organized](#)

[Icons Used in This Book](#)

[Where to Go from Here](#)

[Part I : Gathering Your Tools and Getting Ready](#)

[Chapter 1: The Art of Quilting](#)

[Following the Recipe for a Fabric Sandwich](#)

[“Quilt-thropology:” A Brief History of Quilt Making](#)

[A Persistent Pastime: Quilting Today](#)

[Chapter 2: Threads, Needles, and Gadgets — And All That Jazz](#)

[A Thread for Every Occasion](#)

[Stocking Up on Sewing Basket Essentials](#)

[More Basics and Nice-to-Haves](#)

[Chapter 3: The Pièce de Résistance: Fabric](#)

[Quilting in Tall Cotton](#)

[Hitting a Homer with Your Batting](#)

[Backing Up Your Quilt with the Proper Fabric](#)

[Part II : Planning Your Masterpiece](#)

[Chapter 4: A Patch in the Fabric of Time: Designing Quilt Blocks](#)

[Would a Quilt Block By Any Other Name Feel as Cozy?](#)

[Choosing Your Quilt Block System: Four-patch or Nine-patch](#)

[Mapping Out Your Designs](#)

[Chapter 5: Creating and Using Templates](#)

[Paper or Plastic?](#)

[Going with the Grain](#)

[Making Templates](#)

[Putting Pencil to Fabric](#)

[Chapter 6: Playing with Blocks and Borders: Which Way Should They Go?](#)

[Set 'Em Up, Sally!](#)

[Making a Run for the Border](#)

[Chapter 7: Using Your Computer as a Crystal Ball](#)

[Software for Soft Quilts: Checking Out What's Available](#)

[Beginning Your Quilt Design: Building Blocks](#)

[Glimpsing Your Quilt's Future](#)

[Part III : Sharpening Your Sewing Skills](#)

Chapter 8: Cuts and Creases: Pressing Matters

[Creating a Cutting Game Plan](#)

[Slicing through Rotary Cutting Basics](#)

[Addressing Pressing](#)

Chapter 9: Positively Perfect Piecing

[Perfect Machine Piecing for the Impatient Quilter](#)

[Hand Piecing for the Purist](#)

[Piecing Blocks with Set-in Seams](#)

[Standing on a Firm Foundation](#)

Chapter 10: Do You Know the Way to Appliqué?

[Appliqué: Stylistic Versatility](#)

[Appliqué Basics for Hand and Machine](#)

[Doing Seams: Appliqués with Seam Allowances](#)

[Look, Ma, No Seam Allowances! Fusible Machine Appliqué](#)

Part IV : Ahead to the Finish: Quilting the Pieces in Place

Chapter 11: The Plan of Attack: Deciding How to Quilt Your Quilt

[Machine versus Hand Quilting](#)

[Considering Spacing](#)

[Choosing a Stitching Pattern](#)

Chapter 12: Assembling the Quilt Sandwich

[Marking Your Quilting Stitch Designs](#)

[Pulling Together Top, Batt, and Back Layers](#)

[Taming the Bed-size Beast](#)

[Chapter 13: Ready, Set . . . Quilt! The Ins and Outs of Quilting Your Masterpiece](#)

[Introducing the Quilting Stage and Your Options](#)

[Hooping It Up with Hand Quilting](#)

[Making Fast Progress with Machine Quilting](#)

[Taking the Tie Road](#)

[Chapter 14: Finishing Touches: Bindings and More](#)

[Calculating Your Binding Needs](#)

[In a Bias Bind](#)

[Using What You Already Have: Self-Binding](#)

[Keeping It All Inside: Pillow-style Finishing](#)

[Part V : Completing the Circle: Projects to Try](#)

[Chapter 15: Fabulous Skill Builders](#)

[Hand-Quilted Starburst Pillow](#)

[Half-Size Starburst Quilting Pattern](#)

[Trapunto Mini-Pillow](#)

[Full-Size Trapunto Pattern](#)

[Dancing Blossoms Wall Hanging](#)

[Blossom Spray Pattern](#)

[Center Leaf Spray Pattern](#)

[Traditional Basket Wall Hanging](#)

[Half-Size Quilting Pattern and Full-Size Appliqué Templates](#)

[Half-Size Basket Template](#)

[Chicken Scratch Foundation-Pieced Quilt](#)

[Chicken Scratch Foundation Block Pattern](#)

[Chapter 16: Mixed-Technique Projects](#)

[Rosy Wreath Quilt](#)

[Stem Diagram and Leaf Template](#)

[Scrappy Bloomers Wall Hanging or Lap Quilt](#)

[Scrappy Bloomers Template](#)

[Snow Crystals Lap Quilt](#)

[Snowflake Template](#)

[Winter Holly Lap Quilt or Wall Hanging](#)

[Leaf Template and Half-Size Appliqué Pattern](#)

[Chapter 17: Projects for the Machine Queen](#)

[Pieced Flower Pots Wall Hanging](#)

[Pieced Blossoms Lap Quilt](#)

[Americana Appliqués Banner](#)

[Americana Star Template](#)

[Scrappy Pines Lap or Nap Quilt](#)

[Pine Tree Template](#)

[Chapter 18: Small-Scale Projects](#)

[Appliquéd Bluebirds Breakfast Set](#)

[Bluebird Template](#)

[Pink Tulips Breakfast Set](#)

[Pink Tulips Patterns](#)

[Blue Star Place Mat and Hot Pad](#)

[Pastel Nine-Patch Wall Hanging](#)

[Part VI : The Part of Tens](#)

[Chapter 19: Ten Quilting Timesavers](#)

[Go For a Wash and Spin](#)

[Keep Your Machine Tiptop](#)

[Set Up an Efficient Workspace](#)

[Stick to Neutral Thread](#)

[Divide Your Work into Mini-Projects](#)

[Forego the Iron in Favor of the Finger](#)

[Work Assembly Line-Style](#)

[Stitch on the Run](#)

[Keep Several Needles Threaded](#)

[Spring for Prepackaged Binding](#)

[Chapter 20: Ten Tips for Displaying Your Art](#)

[Pin Your Quilt to the Wall](#)

[Use Wooden Quilt Hangers](#)

[Hang Around with Dowel Sleeves and Rods](#)

[Use a Café Curtain Rod](#)

[Cover a Table](#)

[Drape the Quilt over Furniture](#)

[Fold and Stack](#)

[Artfully Arrange](#)

[Fold and Place](#)

[Drape It over the Stair Railing](#)

[Chapter 21: Top Ten Criteria Quilting Judges Use](#)

[Design](#)

[Unity](#)

[Balance and Layout](#)

[Neatness](#)

[Construction](#)

[Craftsmanship](#)

[Quilting](#)

[Finishing](#)

[Special Features](#)

[Overall Appearance](#)

[Appendix: Resources for Quilters](#)

[Shopping for Quilting Supplies](#)

[Recommended Reading](#)

[Quilting Magazines to Inspire You](#)

[Fun Reads Based on Quilting](#)

[: Color Insert](#)

Introduction

Everybody loves quilts. They're soft, cozy, and comforting, and they've been around since man decided layers were the way to go. What more and more people have been realizing over the years, though, is that making quilts is fun and a wonderful way to express one's creativity with a practical bent.

Quilt making provides a wonderful opportunity to experiment with color, design, texture, and shape even if you're convinced you don't have an artistic bone in your body. Let your imagination guide you in choosing your fabrics and projects. Making quilts today is easier than you may have ever imagined; what's more, quilt making doesn't require any special skills, just a general knowledge of sewing and the desire to try! If you can sew a button or mend a hem, you can make a quilt. With just a few basic tools, a small amount of fabric, and a little time, you can create your own piece of comfort. This book shows you how. (And don't worry about mistakes — they add to the charm of your finished project.)

And speaking of projects! The range of quilted objects you can create is limitless! Think beyond the traditional bed quilt, and consider making quilted place mats, hot pads, or a table runner for your kitchen or to give as a host or hostess gift. You can even create quilted wall hangings as art for your home.

About This Book

This book guides even the beginningest-beginner through all the steps necessary for creating a first quilt. Although most people interested in quilting have sewn a bit, you can use this book even if your sewing experience is limited to threading a needle. If you're in the shallow end of the experience pool, you can simply start small, build experience and confidence, and eventually move on to tackling your grand design.

I show you how to select fabrics and materials, create a design, and then cut, piece, quilt, and finish your creation — all within the covers of this book. And to kick-start you in putting the skills covered in the book to actual use, I include 17 projects to fit any skill level. All are easy to create when you follow the illustrated and detailed step-by-step instructions.

Conventions Used in This Book

I used a few conventions when writing this book. Here they are:

- ✓ Each time I introduce a new quilting term, I *italicize* it.
- ✓ Step instructions and keywords that you should pay attention to in lists appear in **boldface**.

- ✓ Web sites and e-mail addresses appear in monofont to make them stand out.

What You're Not to Read

Of course, I'd love for you to read this book from cover to cover. After all, I've worked pretty hard on it, and it includes some great tips and tricks I've learned over the years! However, I do live in the real world, and I realize that you may be pressed for time and just want the bare-bones facts. If that's you, you can safely skip the sidebars, which appear in gray boxes, and any paragraphs that have the Technical Stuff icon attached. Reading these tidbits will enhance your quilting knowledge, but you can get by just fine without them.

Foolish Assumptions

I hate to assume anything about anyone I've never met, but when writing this book, I did have to make a few assumptions about who may be reading it. If you fit into any of the following categories, this book is for you:

- ✓ You're someone who has admired the art of quilt making from afar, but until now, you've been too skittish to try it.
- ✓ You're already in the process of learning to quilt and want a good, basic guide to help you build your skills.

✔ You've discovered that you're a fabric junkie and want to figure out what to do with all the great fabrics you've accumulated.

✔ Your favorite auntie is insisting you learn to quilt so that when you inherit her fabric stash, you can actually do something with it.

How This Book Is Organized

For logic and ease of use, this book is organized into six parts, the chapters of which progress from the most basic definition of a quilt and its parts through various skills and techniques that will help you create your quilt. This section gives you a brief description of each of these parts.

Part I: Gathering Your Tools and Getting Ready

A quilt may be made up of fabric, batting, and thread, but those aren't the only things you need to produce the final product. In this part, I go over all the basics of a quilt's components and talk a lot about the necessary supplies and tools you need to get started. I also share my hints about fabric selection and choosing the right batting for your project.

Part II: Planning Your Masterpiece

Quilts break down into a variety of elements, from blocks and strips to borders and appliqués. In this part, I introduce you to all these design elements and guide you through the general processes of creating quilt blocks and using templates. Here, you find out how to make templates, transfer markings to your fabrics, and design your own quilts either from your doodles or using your computer.

Part III: Sharpening Your Sewing Skills

Quilting gives you lots of creative flexibility, but it's important to remember that creativity doesn't trump precision. Careful measuring, cutting, and pressing are crucial if you want your quilt to lay crisp and flat. This part tells you what you need to know to stay on the straight and narrow with your quilting skills. I also give you a primer on appliqué, a potentially challenging technique that really pays off by giving you even more decorative and creative options.

Part IV: Ahead to the Finish: Quilting the Pieces in Place

Ultimately, your quilt is a creatively stitched-together sandwich of fabric (the bread) and batting (the filling). This part helps you build the coziest of quilt sandwiches, getting all your creative juices flowing. When you've read through these chapters, you should know enough to get started on a project of your own (if you haven't already). Basting, stitching, and binding are all covered here, so you're sure to finish your masterpiece in style.

Part V: Completing the Circle: Projects to Try

If you're anxious to start quilting but don't have any of your own projects or designs in mind, this part provides 17 projects to get you started. These projects are all suitable for rank beginners and cover a wide range of styles and techniques, so you're sure to find something that gets your quilting fingers twitching.

I provide patterns for the appliqué projects, but for some you need to run to your trusty copy center and enlarge them to full-size. (They're reproduced here at 50 percent; my ideas are clearly bigger than this book.)