

FINISH Strong

Tips from a professional for finishing your quilts with success.

Kristi Ryan is a passionate machine quilter. Her quilting career began more than 30 years ago, and she has been quilting by machine for 15 years. She started her machine-quilting career on a domestic sewing machine and now does quilting for others (whose names you would recognize) on a longarm machine.

Kansas City, Missouri-based Ryan is strictly a free motion quilter. She doesn't have a computerized machine and admits to not wanting one. Just as a painter uses pigments and brushes, she draws with needle and thread. The background on this page features a sampling of Ryan's work. She made an overall plan and then stitched a medley of some of her favored motifs.

Through the years, she's discovered how to run a successful home-based business. Seeking a peer who "speaks the same language," she was introduced to fellow quilter Angela Walters. "Everyone needs a support system; Angela is mine," Ryan says. She shares another secret of working from home: "Learn to say no!"

Because Ryan has stitched extensively on both conventionally printed fabrics and digitally printed ones, she can knowledgeably speak to quilting different fabrics. Here are some of her tips for machine quilting.

- **Use the best needle available** for the job. Ryan prefers titanium needles, which are available from a wide range of distributors. Her current favorites are from Organ Needle Co. Start each project with a new machine needle.
- **Be a thread snob.** Good quality thread is well worth the money; it looks nicer, stitches better and reduces frustration.
- **Find the weight of thread** that works best in your machine. Some machines struggle with certain threads. Try a number of brands and weights to get

a good match for your machine. Ryan currently favors So Fine and Omni, both by Superior Threads, in her longarm machine; both are available in a wide range of colors.

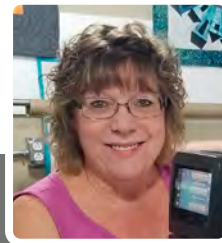
- **Fully float all quilt tops** without any difficulty on longarm machines.
- **Slow down while you stitch.** Digitally printed fabrics need to be stitched at a slower speed, even on a domestic machine. Rapid stitching risks getting half-inch runs in the printing. Stitching with a noticeably slower stitch prevents these. **QT**

MYTH:
Digital fabric
performs
differently than
traditional fabric.



QT Fabrics digital prints, how do they perform when quilted?

We asked professional long arm quilter **Kristi Ryan** to perform extensive testing on both our 75 x 75 and 60 x 60 digitally printed goods.



LONGARM TESTING methods:

Purple Fabric - 75 x 75 construction tested

1. Schmetz ball point 90/14 needle with So Fine 50 weight thread.
2. Bernina Needle 100/16 and Glide 40 weight thread.
3. Bernina Needle 100/16 and Omni 40 weight thread.

Blue Fabric - 60 x 60 construction tested

1. Schmetz ball point 90/14 needle with 50 weight So Fine thread on top and 40 weight Omni on the bottom.
2. Bernina Needle 100/16 and Glide 40 weight thread.
3. Bernina Needle 90/14 and So Fine 50 weight thread.
4. Schmetz ball point 90/14 needle and Omni 40 weight thread.

RESULTS

No run issues with QT Fabrics either on the front or the back of the quilt.

Use a new/quality needle | Use the best weight of thread for the project

"I have been sewing for almost 40 years! And longarming professionally for over 15 years. I have used QT fabrics in many of my projects. The perfect finish for my quilts and those of my customers, is a brand new needle and good thread. Everytime I put a new quilt on the frame, I add a new needle. Best advice for any longarmer. Good Thread and a new needle with each project. This practice gives me wonderful finishes!"

"I have quilted many digitally printed fabrics. I have never had a problem with one from QT."



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