

# Glossary of Terms

**Appliqué** - Stitching shapes and motifs of fabric to another fabric for surface embellishment.

**Appliqué Stitch** - A hand-stitch referred to as a blind-stitch or slip-stitch.

**Backing Fabric** — There are three layers to a quilt: the quilt top, the wadding and the backing fabric.

**Block** - The integral design component of a quilt. A block is a single design unit constructed by the piecing (or appliqué) of fabric.

**Basting** - Temporary stitches to hold fabrics together using a basting stitch or basting pins.

**Batting** - Filling or middle layer of a quilt that provides bulk and warmth — known as wadding.

**Between** - A short needle used for quilting - the higher the number, the shorter the needle.

**Bobbin** - A small spool wound with thread used in a sewing machine. The threads from the bobbin form the stitches on the underside of the fabric you are sewing.

**Border** - Strip of fabric used to frame the quilt body or quilt blocks, creating the quilt top.

**Bias** - The diagonal of woven fabric is the bias. The true bias is at a 45° angle to the selvages. Even without selvages you can find the bias by stretching the fabric slightly. The bias has the most give.

**Binding** - Fabric added to the edge of a quilt to neaten it and hide the raw edges of all the layers. It is also the technique of finishing the edges of the quilt.

**Bleeding** - Loss of dye from fabric.

**Blind-stitch** - A hand-stitch also referred to as appliqué stitch or slip-stitch.

**Calico** - In Australia and Britain calico refers to muslin. In North America calico refers to fabric with small repeating patterns, usually floral.

**Charm Quilt** - A patchwork quilt made of many different fabrics - no two the same.

**Chain Piecing** - This technique is used to speed up piecing. Feed each set of pieces through without lifting the sewing machine foot or cutting the threads.

**Chintz** - Cotton fabric with a glazed finish, also called polished cotton.

**Colourfast Fabric** - Fabric where dye does not run when immersed in water.

**Cornerstones** - The squares that connect sections of sashing where they meet at the corners of blocks.

**Corner Squares** - squares that connect borders where they meet at the corners.

**Cotton** - A natural fibre even-weave fabric or natural fibre thread.

**Crazy Quilting** - A type of patchwork where irregular shaped pieces are used to create blocks or whole quilts.

**Cross-hatching** - A form of quilting where quilt lines run parallel with each other in both directions, e.g. from point to point on the diagonal creating small squares in the quilting design.

**Crosswise Grain** - The shorter threads that make up the crosswise grain in the fabric also known as the weft threads. These threads run perpendicular to the warp threads and selvage. Fabric has slightly more stretch on the crosswise grain than on the lengthwise grain.

**Directional Print** - Fabric with a definite up and down to the design. When using a directional print be careful with cutting and piecing.

**Darning Foot** - Used for free-motion machine quilting.

**Embellishments** - Decorations and trimmings used to add interest to a project. This could include embroidery, ribbons, beads, lace or buttons. Crazy Quilting uses embellishments.

**Embroidery** — Decorative stitch on fabric.

**Fat Quarters** - Fat quarters are pre-cut pieces of cotton cloth, taken from one metre of fabric, cut in half length-wise, and in half width-wise. This is often a more useful shape (56cm x 50cm) than a normal quarter-metre (112cm x 25cm).

**Feed Dogs** - On a sewing machine feed dogs are the 'teeth' underneath the foot that feed fabric through the machine. When straight-line quilting they work in conjunction with the walking foot. When free-motion quilting, the feed-dogs are disengaged.

**Finger Pressing** - The pressing of fabric with your fingers. This technique is regularly used in patchwork and quilting, as it can be a quick way to mark a spot. When using good quality 100% cotton it is very effective.

**Finished Size** - The measurement of a completed block or quilt.

**Foundation** - background fabric used in appliqué and crazy patchwork.

**Foundation Paper Piecing** - The fabric is sewn directly onto a paper pattern allowing complicated patterns to be created easily and accurately.

**Four-Patch Block** - A quilt block divided into four equal sections. Within the grid additional divisions may occur.

**Free Motion Machine Quilting** - A form of quilting done without marking a pattern on the quilt beforehand. Use stippling and make your own designs. Draw with your sewing machine needle as you would with a pencil or pen.

**Fuse** - To apply heat to a fabric with a heat activated glue so it glues to another piece of fabric.

**Grain** - direction of the woven threads in a piece of fabric. The lengthwise grain runs parallel to the selvedge. The crosswise grain runs from selvedge to selvedge.

**Half-Square Triangles** — Cut a square in half diagonally to create two half-square triangles.

**Hand Quilting** - stitches that hold the layers (quilt top, wadding and backing) of a quilt together and sewn by hand.

**Hue** - another word for colour.

**Intensity of colour** - Purity or brightness of colour. Adding or subtracting grey alters intensity.

**Lap quilting** - Quilting by hand without a hoop or frame.

**Layering** - Assembling of the backing, wadding and quilt top prior to basting, in preparation for machine or hand quilting.

**Lengthwise Grain** - The lengthwise grain (warp) is parallel to the selvage. Fabric has the least give on the lengthwise grain.

**Loft** — The thickness and resilience of wadding/batting. Low loft is thin wadding and high loft is thick wadding.

**Machine Piecing** - Sewing one piece of fabric to another using a sewing machine.

**Machine Quilting** - Stitching that holds the layers of a quilt together using a sewing machine.

**Mitre** - Corner joins of a binding or border that creates a seam at a 45-degree angle.

**Mitred Corners** - corners that have been folded and sewn at an angle of 45 degrees.

**Muslin** - An even-weave fabric with a homespun appearance that may be cream or bleached white in colour.

**Nine-Patch Block** - A quilt block divided into nine equal sections. Within the grid additional divisions may occur.

**Novelty Print** - Fabrics with whimsical designs, such as Christmas patterns and cartoon characters.

**On-Point** - A block arrangement where the blocks are placed on a the diagonal to the quilt sides.

**Outline Quilting** - Stitching around a shape (e.g. an appliqué shape).

**Palette** - Array of fabrics that are used within a quilt with a particular emphasis on the range of colour.

**Patch** - A small piece of fabric used in patchwork.

**Patchwork** - patches of fabric that have been joined together to form a pattern.

**Piece** - a cut piece of fabric.

**Piecing** - Sew patches of fabric together to create a block.

**Pin Basting** — Holding the three layers of the quilt together with basting pins in preparation for machine quilting.

**Postage Stamp Quilt** - A small quilt made from patches the size of a postage stamp.

**Pressing** - As opposed to ironing! When pressing, lift the iron to reposition it on the fabric so you set the seams and remove wrinkles without distorting the fabric.

**Presser Foot** - The main foot used on the sewing machine for machine piecing and general sewing.

**Quarter Inch Foot** — A specific sewing machine foot used to sew ¼” seams.

**Quarter Inch Seam Allowance** - The standard seam allowance in quilting. It reduces bulky seams making it easier to quilt the quilt.

**Quilt Body** - Several blocks sewn together.

**Quilt Top** - Quilt body plus borders attached - the uppermost layer of a quilt.

**Quilting** - Process of securing the three layers (top, wadding, backing) of a quilt together.

**Quilting Stencil** - A design like a ‘template’ with grooves cut out of it, allowing you to mark the design on your quilt in preparation for the quilting stitches.

**Raw Edge** - The unfinished, cut edge of the fabric. There are techniques that use raw edge as a feature

**Rotary Tools** - Safety mat, rulers and rotary cutter with sharp blade.

**Rotary Cutting** - This method is achieved with the rotary cutter to eliminate marking the fabric

**Sandwich** - Three layers of a quilt placed together. The first layer is the backing, the second layer is the batting (or wadding) and the third layer is the quilt top.

**Sashing** - Strips of fabrics that are stitched between blocks.

**Scale** - The relative size of one object to another.

**Seam Allowance** - Distance from a seam to the edge of the fabric and in patchwork and piecing this is always 1/4".

**Selvedge** - Woven band along each side of a length of fabric.

**Shade** - Hue created by adding black to the base colour.

**Sleeve** - Tube made from fabric that is attached to the back of the quilt. A rod is inserted through the tube so the quilt can be hung.

**Stabilizing Fabric** - Fabric that is ironed on or sewn to the reverse side of a material that requires additional support - usually a non-woven interfacing in quiltmaking.

**Stash** - Collection of fabric.

**Stencil** - Card or plastic with a pattern or shape cut within it, which can be traced around to transfer a design onto fabric.

**Straight Grain** - Fibres that run across the width, or down the length, of a piece of fabric.

**Stitch-in-the-Ditch** - Stitch in the seam-lines around and within the pieced blocks. This is an excellent way to stabilise your quilt.

**Template** - Pattern or shape that can be traced around to transfer a design onto fabric usually made from paper, card or plastic.

**Tint** - Hue created by adding white to the base colour.

**Unit** - Machine pieced part of a block.

**Value** - Lightness or darkness of a colour.

**Wadding** - Filling or middle layer of a quilt that provides bulk and warmth — also known as batting.

**Walking Foot** - Used for straight-line machine quilting.

**Water Soluble Pen** - Fabric-marking tool with ink that is removable in cold water.