



SANDHILLS QUILTERS GUILD

1	Pre-wind neutral bobbins	When winding bobbins, always wind at least 2. This will cut your bobbin winding time in half. This is an especially helpful idea when attending a class or retreat. Store your collection of pre-wound bobbins in a bobbin case, and you're ready to sew for hours (or days)!
2	Increase accuracy	Many machines come with specialty 1/4" feet, these also need to be tried and tested to be sure they are accurate. To test your seam allowance, sew and then measure the width of the seam with an acrylic ruler; Another way to do this is to rotary cut three 1 1/2" x 5" strips of fabric. Sew them together with your 1/4" seam. Press the seams open and measure the width of the middle strip from the right side of the fabric. The middle strip should measure exactly 1" wide. If this measurement is not correct, cut new strips and continue to make adjustments until your seams are 1/4". Some machines allow the needle to be moved to the right or the left, and often it's possible to make an adjustment by simply moving the needle.
3	Maintain your machine	Remember to periodically clear any lint and oil the bobbin case of your machine. A well-maintained machine is one that will provide years and years of trouble-free sewing. One easy way to regularly take care of this routine maintenance is to clean and oil after you have emptied five bobbins (keep empty bobbins together so you know). For professional maintenance, most manufacturers recommend a regular cleaning once a year. Choose your birth month as a reminder (and a gift to yourself) to have your machine taken in and cleaned by a pro.



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4	Binding Strips	If you prepare your binding strips ahead of time, store them on an empty paper towel roll to keep them neat and tangle-free until you need them. A small piece of masking tape will secure the end
5	Rotary Cutter Storage	Store your rotary cutter in a clearly labeled eyeglass case.
6	Blue/Black Thread	Use navy blue thread on black fabric and black thread on navy blue fabric so you can see the thread if you need to rip out a seam.
7	Embroidery floss	For your latest project using embroidery floss, wind on the cardboard tabs and put on a binder ring. No more loss floss!
8	Blood from a pin prick	Poked yourself with a needle/pin and got a spot of blood on your project? Your own spit will take it out asap! Sounds yukky but it works
9	Magnetic Knife Strip	Use a wall magnetic knife strip (found in the kitchen department) to hang on the wall for all your scissors.
10	Remove Papers From Foundation-Pieced Projects	To make it easier to remove papers from foundation-pieced projects, run the handle end of a pair of scissors along each stitching line to weaken the paper.



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11	Hand Quilting	When hand sewing/quilting, thread several needles to be ready instead of having to stop and thread again.
12	Velcro a Pill Vial to Machine	To your machine, Velcro a medicine vial to keep seam ripper, pins, small scissors, etc handy
13	Large Cone Thread	Use a coffee mug to hold your large cone thread to thread through your machine. Cone should be able to move freely in the cup
14	Pre-washing Fabric- Help Eliminate Fray Mess	Put fabric in a pillow case and knot the end OR clip corners of selvage end
15	Making your own Scrap fabric	Save scraps and fuse onto one sided fusible (overlapping scraps slightly) and zig zagging in between scraps to create your own unique fabric for small projects
16	T-N-T	Remember T-N-T ... Thread, Needle, Tension. Having machine problems? Check the thread. Rethread top and bottom or change the brand or weight of thread. Next check the needle. Put in a fresh needle. If neither of these work, <i>might</i> be the tension.
17	Clear Plastic Tumbler	Use a clear plastic tumbler over your cone thread to keep it dust free and able to see the color



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18	Water-Soluble Stabilizer	Keep water-soluble stabilizer in a zip-type plastic bag to prevent it from drying out.
19	Selvage Uses	As a tie for gifts, tying up rolled rugs, tying up tomato vines, tying up cords for traveling, etc.
20	Flannel Backed Vinyl Table Cloth	Can be used as a temporary design wall
21	Drinking Straws	Cut drinking straws in half and place over the spool pins of your thread rack to hold more than one spool of thread
22	Smart Phone, IPAD, Camera	Layout your fabric and take a picture to "interview" your design, choice of color(s), etc. Rearrange as necessary
23	Moisturize Self Healing Mats	It is recommended to a soak mat every so often. Self healing mats need moisture. To soak it, put in a bathtub or large container (needs to be large so it can lay flat) and soak for 15-20 minutes in a solution of 1/4 cup white vinegar to every gallon of cool water (Water MUST be cool). Then use a squirt of mild dishwashing soap (Ivory) and clean the mat with a "soft" mushroom brush. The purpose of this gentle scouring is to remove the fibers that get trapped in the cuts marks preventing the cuts from "healing".



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24	Different Perspective	Looking at your work in a mirror, or with a reducing glass, or through the wrong end of binoculars are other ways to accomplish a new view on your design layout.
25	Basting a Quilt	When basting a quilt, use a neutral color or white thread which will not leave colored lint or transfer dye onto the quilt top
26	Wrist Strain	Try lycra gloves or wrist bands for relief from pain & cramping
27	Gel Mats	Use Gel mats at your cutting table to stand on while cutting. This will ease your legs and back
28	Even feet	Whichever foot you sew with (left or right), use a piece of Styrofoam or wood or plastic to raise the opposite foot to the same height as your sewing foot. This helps avoid strain on back, hips, knees, etc.
29	Dollar store finds	Mini bands used for little girls hair are great for putting on your bobbin(s) to hold thread tails in place; Also hair clips are inexpensive to use as binding clips
30	Vacuum Wall Quilts	Quilts that are hung on a wall often get dusty. Every so often, gently vacuum your quilt.



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31	Gridded Ironing Board Cover	If your blocks are often not square, purchase a gridded iron board cover. It has printed lines that allow you to straighten blocks by pinning them to the cover and steaming them into shape.
32	Cutting Mat Storage	Use a men's pants hanger to store mats in a closet.
33	Needle Grabbers	Use the small flat disc needle grabbers between your ruler and fabric for a non-slip solution to ruler slipping
34	Retain Store Fabric Boards	To store large pieces of fabric for backing or whatever, ask your fabric store for some of the empty cardboard fabric boards to wrap your fabric on. Storage of folded fabric encourages creases - OR - purchase cut lengths of PVC pipe to "roll" the fabric onto and store upright in a basket in the corner.
35	Waterfall skirt/pant hangers	Store fabric on these for efficient use of space and hang in a closet away from direct light. These are also great to hold your multiple strips when doing a project
36	Clear storage boxes	Many like to store their fabric in clear storage boxes. This can trap moisture. Drill a few holes in the boxes to allow fabrics to breathe



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37	Best Tip of All!	Make and give away something every year to someone you'll never meet. <i>The gift is in the giving.</i> Use the best fabric that your budget affords. The project that you made may be the only made-with-love gift that person receives in his/her life. (Tip from Nancy Zimmerman)
38	Pure Glycerin	Use this on hands for machine quilting instead of gloves.
39	Lint Roller	Good for "picked out" pieces of thread, picking up pins and needles from the floor,
40	Pedicure Toe Separators	Use for securing bobbins when not in use