**Tips for Quilters-an interactive exchange**

* **Tips from me to you**
  + To make openings easier to close, sew from s.a. to edge. This keeps the s.a. on the outside. Finger press and hand or machine close TAKE SAMPLE OF SEWN
  + To fold fabric on grain, new off the bolt or washed, DON’T match the selvedges, move between fingers till hangs straight until no diagonal wrinkles exist TAKE 2 YARDS OF FABRIC
  + Can’t see to thread machine, put white out or white nail polish on foot shank. In a pinch put; your finger behind the needle. The white/light makes the needle eye easier to aim for
  + 100% cotton WILL RIP on grain and edges will lie flat. More poly combo harder to rip and more edges curl in opposite ways. 100% poly rips straight. Higher thread per inch equals less fraying/fringe threads on edges. Homespun, although cotton is a very loose weave, so I don’t recommend ripping.  
      
    To straighten grain, pull on diagonals both ways
  + Sew 1 stitch across a point. It leaves a bit of room for s.a. and extra stability to cut across a point
  + Sewing between a seam and raw edge or fold? Start at the raw edge or seam allowance and sew to the fold. This ensures raw edges meet, material is evenly distributed to the fold. Stitch past the fold. The stitches leave a string, don’t back stitch at a fold/point it puts too much bulk at the point by backstitching. Sewing 3-4 stitches past the fold has sewn stitches with less tendency to pull out
  + Less people are coming to quilting have a clothing construction background or terminology and terms like “turn of the cloth” may not be common knowledge. This is the allowance for an adjustment in seam or facings which takes into account thickness of the thread and firmness / thickness of fabric. We see it in “a scant” seam allowance which allows for different sizes of thread and the allowance for binding roll. Cut your binding strips the thickness of the batting in addition to the finished seam allowance.
  + Single hole plate for straight stitch won’t eat fabric
  + Wash/not wash pro/con
    - PROS
      * Pre-shrink
      * Color fast (color catcher, vinegar, retayne)
      * Remove odors and excess sizing, returns hand to fabric
    - CONS
      * Loses sizing
      * Easier to fold into preconfigured pieces like my collection
  + Iron before storing pro/con
    - PROS
      * It lies flatter to stack more
    - CONS
      * Causes creases, can expose edge to fading
      * Doesn’t necessarily prevent more folds and you have to iron again
      * If you have large stacks of fabric and you fold carefully, it can stay flat
  + Need bobbin storage?? Use the toe separators from the pedicure/ nail shop. Many times they can’t be reused, so ask for several
  + Hang quilts and small amounts of tools on single or double used sewing needles. They don’t rust, can be hammered in with a tack hammer, remove easily and don’t require spackle to fill the hole. Put needle between quilt and binding to hang quilts. Space needles on corners and every 12-16 inches depending on weight of quilt.
  + Do your feet dangle a bit or is your presser foot a bit of a reach when you have your chair adjusted for your sewing table? Make foot rests from books and shelf lining wrapped around. Safety pin the edges to fasten. The “spare foot” rest may be a little higher than the power pedal one.
  + Quilting tools from the hardware store:
    - Carpenters ruler-heavy and keeps corners square, can also be moved down to keep lines straight
    - Magnetic strips for keeping tools upon
    - Make big quilts? Get a 10-24ft metal tape measure
    - Plastic tubing slit covers bobbins to prevent untangling
    - Pegboard and jars of small tool holders that connect
    - Odd sized or often used squares? Buy plexiglass sheets and cut with a saber saw or in the store. Thick enough to trace around, sturdy enough to use rotary cutter
    - Need to keep your sewing surface smooth and slippery use Blaster Dry Lube (has Teflon in it). Recommended by major sewing table manufacturer
* **Ask “This Old Quilter”-what are your problems and how would I solve them**
* **If there’s time: your fav tips, please wait to be acknowledged**