

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO MARKET



Nine-Patch Criss Cross, c. 1895. Maker unknown. From the International Quilt Festival Collection.

First, welcome to International Quilt Market! Since 1979, the show has been *the* trade show for the quilting and textile industries.

Quilt Market is a wholesale trade show, open only to credentialed attendees and those in the business. Here, you'll be able to visit more than 1,000 booths at the fall edition and 700 at the spring and see all kinds of products, both new and familiar ranging from fabrics, books, and patterns to sewing machines, notions, and supplies. You can also learn in dozens of Take & Teach classes and Business Seminars, and take that acquired knowledge, and skill back home to your shop or business!

Here are some FAQs we've gathered to help you make the most of your first Quilt Market experience!

WHY DO MY FEET HURT?

Because at Quilt Market, there is a LOT of ground to cover. We always recommend that you wear comfortable shoes. We like to say that, indeed, "fashion stops at the knees!"

WHAT IS SCHOOLHOUSE SERIES?

Schoolhouse Series is a great way for exhibitors and teachers to showcase, demonstrate, and educate potential customers on their newest products. It's held the day before Market opens, and each session is 15-30 minutes. There are scores of sessions offered during the day, with some duplicated. Be sure to attend the Premier Schoolhouse session at the start of the day to get important information and view a one-time-only special exhibitor presentation. You can get a schedule with times and room numbers at the Schoolhouse check-in desk, or refer to the Quilt Market App for info.

WHAT IS SAMPLE SPREE?

The night before the Quilt Market show floor opens, dozens of exhibitors set up tables and offer samples of their products for sale – many that can only be purchased wholesale otherwise – on a cash and carry basis. It does get a little frantic, but it's one of Market's most popular events. Also, rolling totes are *not* allowed in Sample Spree due to safety concerns.

DOES MARKET HAVE AN APP?

You bet we do! And you can download it from the App Store or Google Play by searching “Quilts Inc.” The app contains several helpful sections: Exhibitor listings; schedule of classes, seminars, and events; Schoolhouse Series schedule; presenter information; show floor and convention center maps; map of the area, and other general show information.

You can also use the app to “favorite” (mark) and take notes on exhibitor listings and new products, classes, seminars, and events. Then, easily access all of your saved information in the Favorites & Notes section for use at the show or after. The app also includes a Social Stream, which allows users to share posts and photos. Think of it like in-app social media for Quilt Market attendees! It’s a great way to share your show experience and connect with fellow Market-goers.

SHOULD I TAKE A QUILT MARKET BUSINESS SEMINAR? I DON’T OWN A QUILT SHOP.

Our seminars are planned to appeal to and provide valuable information for both shop owners and those in the industry, and are taught by experts. Topics can range from using social media and the internet to increasing your or your business’ profile, customer relations, financial matters, branding, publishing, and more...all things you can use even if you don’t own a brick and mortar store.

I HAVE A QUESTION, CONCERN, OR COMMENT. WHERE CAN I GO AT THE SHOW?

(PLEASE NOTE THAT OUR SPRING MARKET MOVES TO DIFFERENT CITIES, WHICH IS WHY THERE ARE NO SPECIFIC LOCATIONS SHOWN BELOW.)

- General show information: At our Houston show, there are two Information Desks – one in the center of the show floor under the large American flag, and one in the main lobby on the first floor in the George R. Brown concourse. At our spring show, which travels the country, information is available at easily accessible locations. Also, please consult your Market *Buyer’s Guide* or the Market App.
- Enrollment: go to the Enrollment Desk on the second floor near Hall C in Houston, or as noted in your *Buyer’s Guide* and on signage at our other Markets.
- Classes: go to the Education Office in room 340AB in Houston, or as designated in your *Buyer’s Guide* or on signage for other Markets.

- Media: go to the Press Room in room 215 in Houston, or check signage or your *Buyer’s Guide* for other Markets.
- Exhibitors: go to the Exhibitor Registration desk in the concourse of the GRB Convention Center or check signage or your *Buyer’s Guide* for other Markets.
- You can also send comments to shows@quilts.com, or call 713-781-6864 any time.

AND FINALLY, WE RECENTLY ASKED ON FACEBOOK WHAT ADVICE MARKET VETERANS WOULD GIVE A FIRST-TIME ATTENDEE. HERE ARE SOME SELECTED RESPONSES:

- Bring a good bag on wheels for walking around the show floor. All of the catalogues, samples and other stuff gets heavy. Well worth it, even if you are not allowed to bring it to Sample Spree!
- Pace yourself. It’s best to first walk the entire floor without really stopping in any of the booths. Make notes of the ones you want to check out further, and then go back to explore them. Otherwise, you’ll spend all of your budget long before you’ve seen everything, and might miss out on ordering what you want or need the most.
- Bring enough business cards!
- Note that the big name distributors often have reps who travel to shops, but the small independents don’t. Market may be the only time you get to see unique products from small, creative independents that can make your store stand out.
- You may feel overwhelmed, but that feeling is normal! Stop for a break, divide up the show floor into manageable “bites,” and take a “bite” each day! And remember...at your next Market, you’ll be a seasoned pro!

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