

T-shirt Quilts ... One Block at a Time!

A workshop with RaNae Merrill, based on the book *T-shirt Quilts . . . One Block at a Time!*

In this workshop you will learn a new approach to making T-shirt quilts: instead of putting together an entire top, you'll quilt individual T-shirts then join them. Quilting one shirt at a time allows you to:

Easily quilt shirts YOURSELF on your domestic machine.

Enhance the memories of each event by telling its story in the quilting design.

Make smaller quilts or pillows with a few T-shirts, then add more as your T-shirt collection grows.

Avoid struggling with a big, heavy, stretchy top. There's no need to send it out for quilting.

Our class project will be to sandwich and quilt one T-shirt. You may finish it into a pillow in class or save it to add to a bigger quilt later. If you make a pillow in class, it is easy to take it apart and use the block later in a quilt. If you would like to bring a batch of T-shirts that you want to combine into a quilt, you are welcome to do so and we'll talk about how to arrange them as part of the class discussion.

Materials list

This list gives just the materials needed for the class project. For more detail about quantities needed for a larger quilt, refer to the book. During class we'll discuss how to plan and make a larger quilt.

MUST HAVES (FOR A QUILT BLOCK OR FOR A PILLOW):

The *T-shirt Quilts . . . One Block at a Time!* book is required and is included in your class fee.

One or more T-shirts with a large logo on front, back or both (washed)

If you're buying new T-shirts, get X-large for more fabric. See page 3 if you want to print custom T-shirts, or to buy blank colored T-shirts for more fabric.

If you would like, bring a batch of T-shirts you plan to use in a quilt.

Thread for quilting and assembly

Buy a strong, good-quality thread, 40- or 50-weight cotton or tri-lobal polyester. Remember that T-shirts stretch, so you want a strong thread that won't break easily if the quilt stretches a bit.

Colors: Choose one or more colors that coordinate with the background of the T-shirt. Thread can match or it can contrast, depending on how much you want your quilting to be seen. One of my favorite threads is Magnifico from Superior Threads. It is 40-weight tri-lobal polyester, very clean to quilt with, very strong, a bit shiny and comes in a wide variety of colors.

Batting: The batting for this project MUST be double-sided fusible. Batting for one T-shirt will be provided in class. If you would like to buy more batting, get Hobbs Heirloom Fusible. You can find it in my online store: www.RaNaeMerrillQuilts.com -> Shop -> Tools & Notions

Backing fabric:

If you are making a pillow: 1-1/8 yards for a 20" x 20" pillow.

Choose a color that will coordinate with and accent the logo on the T-shirt. You will use this fabric as backing for both the front and the back of the T-shirt (when the pillow is assembled it will line the inside). You will also use it for a binding on the edge of the pillow.

For a T-shirt block (OPTIONAL): We will use the back of the T-shirt as the back of the block, so backing fabric is not required. However, if you would rather use quilting fabric as backing, then bring a piece slightly larger than the T-shirt.

OPTIONAL

if you would like to enhance your T-shirt with fusible applique accents:

- Fabric from which to cut fusible appliqué accents

- Fusible web such as Wunder Under or Steam-A-Seam (the lighter the better)

- Thread for satin-stitch zigzag around the edges of the appliqué.

- (I really like Superior's Magnifico for this; Color #2066 is a beautiful shiny gold.)

Pillow form: If you are making a pillow you don't need to bring a pillow form to class. The finished size of your pillow will depend on the T-shirt and logo size, but standard throw pillow sizes are 18" x 18" up to 22" x 22" so you can decide on the pillow form size after you make the pillow cover in class.

TOOLS

Provided in the classroom:

- Irons

- Sewing machines & needles

- Sewing Machine Feet, including:

 - One that will allow you to stitch zigzag

 - Machine quilting foot (ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL FOR QUILTING!)

Not provided - please bring:

- Basic sewing tools (scissors, pins, etc.)

- Rotary cutter with mat and 24" ruler (There will be a VERY LIMITED number of these in the classroom, so for convenience bring your own)

- Large square ruler (12" or larger is best) if you have one

- Fabric marking pens such as

 - Blue water soluble [plus Q-Tips for erasing], or purple air-erase or Bohin mechanical pencil or

 - Frixion pens. Light markers for dark fabrics, dark markers for light fabrics. Soap chips also work.

- Quilting gloves, if you have them

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CUSTOM PRINTING T-SHIRTS

If you want to put a photograph or other custom image on a T-shirt, you can order shirts online.

Google search: custom print T-shirts

I have used

Rush Order Tees: <https://www.rushordertees.com>

Cost is about \$30 for a single shirt; the price per shirt drops if you order multiples.

To prepare the image:

Image size: 300 ppi

File format: JPG or PNG

Color mode: CMYK

Check the site's requirements. They may also provide image preparation.

Order extra large sizes for more fabric for borders, sashing, etc.

Try putting the logo in the middle of the back for less loss of fabric at the neckline.

For multiple images on a shirt, put them on front and back.

If you need additional fabric or want to add different colored shirts, order plain T-shirts with no printing. Cost can be as low as under \$5.00 per shirt.

Looking for a T-shirt from a place or event you attended in the past? Search online -- you'll be surprised at what you find!