

Preparing Your Quilt for Judging

I. Design:

- Look at your quilt top design. Is it balanced?
- Does the arrangement of dark, light and medium values create the needed contrast?
- How do your color choices work together?
- Is the scale of the prints or block size compatible?
- Do all the parts of the quilt look like they belong together? Is it unified?
- Is the visual impact pleasing?

II. General Appearance:

- Is the quilt clean?
- Does it have pet hairs on it?
- Does it have an odor of smoke, mustiness or mildew?

III. Technical Aspects:

Piecing:

- Are your blocks square?
- Do they meet squarely at the corners?
- Do your blocks lie flat?
- Are your points (triangles, squares, flying geese, etc.) sharp?
- Have you cut any points off when piecing?
- Are your sashings straight?
- Do the rows meet up in a straight line?
- Are your corner stones square?
- Is your sashing size relative to the block size?
- Are your seams well sewn? They should be free of gaps or open places. If possible dark fabric seams should not shadow through light fabric.
- Are your borders straight?
- Is your border size compatible with the centerfield?

Thread Color:

- Is your thread color distracting?
- Is quilting thread color compatible with quilt top?

Applique:

- Are your points sharp?
- Are your curves smooth?
- Are your inside edges smooth? No frayed areas?
- Does your applique thread match your applique or is it distracting?
- Are your applique stitches small and securely attaching the applique piece?

IV. Quilting Techniques:

Density:

Is the quilting evenly distributed over the quilt surface?

Distortion:

Has the quilting caused any distortion?

Are there any puckers, tucks or pleats that should not be there?

Has quilting caused the borders or sashing to be crooked?

Hand Quilting:

Are your stitches the same length on the front and back of the quilt?

Is your thread tension consistent?

Are your start and stop knots buried?

If you have traveled your thread does it show on the quilt top?

Machine Quilting:

Are your stitches the same length on the front and back of the quilt?

Is your thread tension consistent? Does it need adjustment?

Are your starts and stops distracting?

Marking lines/Basting thread:

Have you removed all marking lines?

Have you clipped all thread ends on the front and back of the quilt?

Have you removed all basting threads - including applique basting?

Binding:

Is the width of the binding the same on the front and back of the quilt?

Is the binding securely attached with small even stitches?

Does the batting fill the binding?

Is the binding smooth and not twisted?

If you rounded the edges of the quilt is the binding smooth and not twisted?

Are your mitered corners 90°?

V.

Tips:

Blocking your quilt will help it lie flat

Pay special attention to binding technique - most all judges look at binding.

Don't be afraid of the judge. Having your quilt judged is actually having it evaluated. Most of the time we know what areas we are strong in and what areas need improvement. If you have an area that needs improvement - work on it. Make your quilt a blue ribbon winner!