

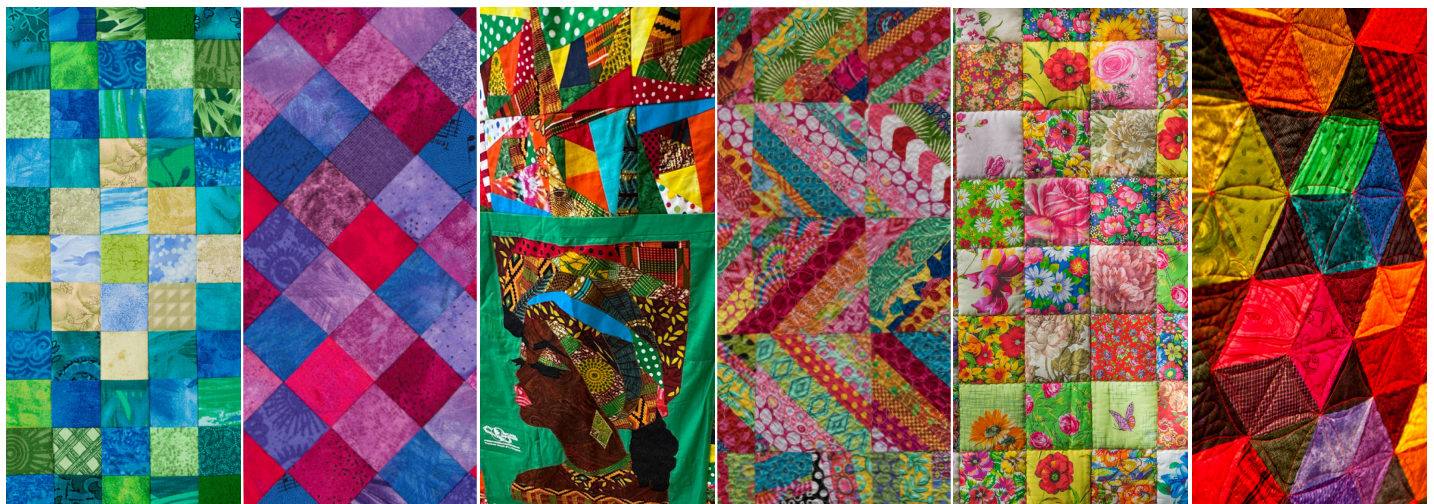


Linked in Friendship, Connected in Service
Southern Area



Quilts for Keeps

Comforting Those With Cancer



Southern Area Resource Guide

Presented by The Arts Facet

Quilts For Keeps: Comforting Those With Cancer

Southern Area Resource Guide

This guide provides basic tips and resources to help chapters get started with making lap quilts. Chapters are encouraged to consult with an experienced quilter or specialty quilt shop for more detailed instruction.



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- Program Background
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- Making the Quilt
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Overview

Quilts for Keeps: Comforting Those with Cancer is a heartfelt, collaborative initiative designed to provide comfort and hope to adults and children battling cancer through the creation and donation of inspirational lap-sized quilts. This project provides chapters with meaningful opportunities to unite through quilting while fostering ongoing connection, creativity, and service. While Friendship Month in November is a great time to promote the initiative, chapters are encouraged to make lap quilts throughout the year, especially during key observances like Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October and other cancer awareness initiatives, amplifying their impact by offering comfort and hope to those in need.

Purpose

- Create lap-sized quilts tailored for individuals facing cancer-related illnesses.
- Donate quilts as part of local and Southern Area activities and initiatives.
- Offer symbols of warmth, hope and comfort during chemotherapy and other treatments.

Two Ways to Make an Impact:

- **Local:** Donate your chapter-made lap quilt(s) to a cancer center or organization in your community. Through local partnerships, chapters can provide warmth, comfort, and encouragement to men, women, and children undergoing cancer treatment throughout the program year.
- **Southern Area (Two per Chapter):** Create and bring your chapter-made lap quilt to the 2027 Southern Area Conference in support of the Southern Area's partnership with Moffitt Cancer Center. Quilts collected at the conference will be donated to provide warmth, hope, and comfort to cancer patients of all ages and genders.

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A Collaborative Effort Across The Facets

This initiative integrates seamlessly across facets - - The Arts, International Trends and Services (ITS), Health and Human Services (HHS), Mental Health, and with Membership. It encourages chapters to actively engage in quilting as both a cultural expression and a service activity that supports individuals facing cancer-related challenges locally, regionally, and internationally.

Cultural and Historical Roots

Quilting holds a profound place in Black American culture, tracing back to the early 17th century. It represents ingenuity, creativity, and community, especially among African American women. Passed down through generations, quilting serves as a vibrant form of artistic and cultural storytelling, preserving a rich heritage.

Within the Southern Area, many chapters boast a longstanding tradition and passion for quilting, making this project a natural and meaningful extension of their talents and commitment.

Health and Social Benefits

Beyond its cultural significance, quilting supports mental wellness by stimulating cognitive function, enhancing mood, and boosting self-esteem. It also promotes mindfulness, improves fine motor skills, and fosters social connection, offering a sense of belonging and community support.

Quilts for Keeps: Comforting Those with Cancer invites all chapters to participate, crafting beautiful symbols of hope and healing—one lap quilt at a time.



Supplies



Source: Amy Smart: Diary of a Quilter

The following basic tools are needed for quilting: **rotary cutter, scissors, ruler, seam ripper, cutting mat, thread, pins, fabric, iron, and a sewing machine.** You may already own some of the supplies. Until you are certain you want to invest, ask a Link sister or friend if you may borrow any of these tools.



Quilting Basics



WHAT IS A LAP QUILT?

A lap quilt is a smaller, rectangular quilt made to cover a person's lap and legs while sitting—whether in a chair or wheelchair. It's cozier and more personal than a larger throw quilt, providing warmth and comfort exactly where it's needed.

A lap quilt features the same essential elements as a larger quilt—**quilt top, batting, backing, and binding**—but is smaller in size, making it ideal for covering the lap and legs rather than a full bed.

TOP

The decorative part of the traditional quilt, featuring a pattern or artwork. It is usually made of cotton, although other fabrics can be used as well, including velvet, silk, tulle, polyester, and microfiber.

BATTING

The middle of the quilt, or the stuffing. It is a padded layer that gives the quilt its puffy appearance. Typically for a quilt, a thin "low loft" batting about $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick is used. Today, most commercially available batting is made of cotton or polyester.

BACKING

The bottom or back of the quilt. It is normally a solid piece of fabric in the same material as the top.

BINDING

This fabric creates a finished edge around a quilt and binds everything together. It usually consists of a strip of fabric, double folded, that is wrapped and sewn around the raw edges of quilt.

Lap Quilt Considerations

Durability

The most important consideration when making a quilt to be used as a covering is **durability**. A lap quilt must be able to stand up to frequent use and washing. For that reason, 100% high-quality cotton fabric is the preferred material for the top and bottom layers. **TIP:** *Pre-washing and drying the fabric before using it in the quilt minimizes shrinking and "crinkling."*

Commercial batting comes ready to use. 100% cotton fabric and batting can be found at large retail chains like Hobby Lobby and JoAnn Fabrics as well as online. Most cities also have specialty quilt stores that offer a much larger fabric selection.

Design

Another item to consider is **design**. Quilt tops are typically made up of a series of fabric squares (blocks) that are sewn together to make a pattern. Although a solid square of fabric can be used for a block, more often the blocks are made of simple shapes that can be arranged in different ways to create a design.

Many books and online resources feature patterns for different types of quilt blocks. Some of the better-known patterns for quilt blocks are:

- **Log Cabin** - Block made of strips of fabric arranged around a center square.
- **Nine Patch** - Block made of nine smaller squares of fabric
- **Pinwheel** - Block made of four triangles that form a spinning shape
- **Eight-Pointed Star** - Block made of eight diamonds that form a star shape
- **Crazy Quilt** - Block made of irregular scraps of fabric sewn together and trimmed to size
- **Friendship Quilt** - Block made of signatures or messages from friends or family. The messages may be embroidered with yarn or decorative thread to prevent fading during washing.



Lap Quilt Considerations

Size

While there's no official size for lap quilts, here's an easy reference chart to help guide you.

TIP: A 36x48 inch lap quilt is a versatile and practical size—ideal for individuals in wheelchairs, offering warmth without bulk. It's also well-suited for sitting, draping over a chair, or use by children. Smaller sizes are also preferable for shipping.

Common Lap Quilt Sizes

Lap Quilt Size	Width (Inches)	Length (Inches)
Small	36"	48"
Medium	40"	50"
Large	45"	60"

Blocks



Quilt **blocks** are fabric units or components sewn together to create a quilt. The number of blocks you need for each row and column in your quilt equals the dimension (length or width) divided by the finished size of your quilt block. When quilt blocks are sewn together, some of the fabric gets enclosed in the seam. Therefore, quilt blocks must be cut larger than the desired size to allow for seam allowances of $\frac{1}{4}$ " on each side.

Quilt blocks come in a range of sizes, with 6", 8", 10", and 12" squares being the most common. Smaller blocks, such as 2" or 3", are often used in scrappy or beginner quilts, while larger blocks like 15" or 16" are also popular. The block size you choose typically depends on the quilt's overall dimensions, the design's complexity, and your personal preference.

12" Block: The 12-inch finished quilt block is a favorite among quilters; its versatile size—whether featuring a simple or intricate design—makes it easy to quickly assemble a quilt.

A 12" finished block measures 12" once sewn into the quilt top. Before sewing, each block is actually 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ " to account for the $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance on all sides.

According to [Hailey Stitches](#), a 36" x 48" lap quilt made with 12" blocks requires 12 blocks. This is calculated by dividing the quilt's width and length by the block size— $36 \div 12 = 3$ blocks across and $48 \div 12 = 4$ blocks down—giving a total of $3 \times 4 = 12$ blocks.

Fabric

Using a specific color palette or theme is one way to make the process of choosing your fabrics easy. Think about scale and contrast as well as color and fabric placement for your quilt design. A neutral background fabric makes the featured fabrics “pop.”

Once you know the number of quilt blocks you need and the design for your blocks, you can begin estimating the amount of fabric that will be needed to make your quilt top.

The pattern for a quilt block will typically specify the number of different fabrics you should use for each block and the amount of each fabric that is needed.

Chapters are encouraged to consult with an experienced quilter or specialty quilt shop to confirm the number of blocks and any adjustments that may be needed if you want to include a border.

Additionally, a quilting expert can help with fabric selection, color coordination, and determining the amount of fabric to be purchased. Trying to determine this without guidance can lead to expensive mistakes.



Making the Lap Quilt

There are multiple steps involved in making a quilt. Below is a general outline of the process:

- 1 **Pick a pattern.**
- 2 **Choose your fabric.**
- 3 **Cut the fabric.** (*TIP: There are tools and templates available at fabric stores that can make this process much easier.*)
- 4 **Piece (or sew together) fabric to construct the quilt blocks.** This can be done by hand or machine. Decorate blocks if desired.
- 5 **Assemble the blocks into a quilt top.** Add borders if desired.
- 6 **Measure and cut the batting** to fit the completed quilt top, including borders.
- 7 **Cut and piece the backing fabric** if needed. Cotton fabric typically comes in 44-45" widths, so it may be necessary to sew pieces together to fit the finished size of your quilt.
- 8 **Quilt the three layers of the quilt together** (by hand or machine). This can be done with lines of straight stitching or elaborate designs. Specialty quilt shops typically offer the services of professional quilters who can handle this part of the quilting process. They use machines called "long arms" to produce a wide variety of stitching patterns. Using long-arm quilting results in a professional and durable quilt that should last for many years to come.
- 9 **Bind the finished quilt.** There are instructional books and videos on binding widely available. Specialty quilt shops that do long-arming, usually offer binding services for an additional fee.
- 10 **Label your quilt and show it off!** A fabric label listing the name and maker is typically sewn or ironed onto the quilt back. *TIP: Quilts that are intended for display also have a fabric sleeve sewn to the back to facilitate hanging.*

Resources

Suggestions

- Be sure to feature one block with your chapter's logo in the quilt.
- Make your quilting circle or club a destination social activity inclusive of as many chapters members who want to participate.

Reference Materials

There are numerous online tutorials available on how to quilt and simple books that guide you through the process. A few are listed below. Alternatively, quilting kits are great for beginners because they include nearly everything you need to make your first project.

- [All You Need To Know About Lap Quilt Sizes and How to Make One](http://CabbageRoseQuilting.com) (CabbageRoseQuilting.com)
- [A Complete Guide to Quilting for Beginners](http://Gathered.com) (Gathered.com)
- [How to Make a Quilt From Start to Finish](http://PolkadotChair.com) (PolkadotChair.com)
- Fulton, Jennifer. *Quilting (Idiot's Guide)*. 2014.
- [Quilting for Beginners: Essential Techniques | Quilting Tutorial](http://Crafty.com) (Crafty.com YouTube Video)
- [Nancy's Notions | Free Quilting and Sewing Resource Library](http://nancynotions.com) (nancynotions.com)
- [Complete List of Common Quilting Terms](http://AllPeopleQuilt.com) (AllPeopleQuilt.com)

Inspiration

- [TheAfricanAmerican Quilters of Baltimore](http://YouTube.com) (YouTube Video)
- [Feature Story on Brown Sisters Stitchers' Quilt Guild](http://YouTube.com) (YouTube Video)
- [Hockley, M. Quilters in Black History](http://Fairfieldworld.com), (Fairfieldworld.com)

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Special Acknowledgement

A heartfelt thank you to Crown Jewels (NC) alumna member, Link Linda Baker Keene, who generously shared her vast quilting knowledge, offered guidance, and provided inspiration to help create our original resource guide.



Following her 25-year career as a corporate marketing executive and a "Second Act" as a non-profit CEO, Linda decided to pursue making art despite having had no formal training. Primarily using batiks, Linda creates small art quilts depicting scenes of African American life and culture. Each piece incorporates a variety of quilting techniques, as well as embellishments that enhance the overall image. The hand-stitched backgrounds are a tribute to the generations of women quiltmakers in her family who came before her. Her primary goal as an artist is to create work that people will want to have in their homes because of the positive feelings it generates.

Linda's artwork has been featured in online platforms such as Artsy Shark and Pathfinders Travel, and exhibited in juried shows hosted by organizations including the Yadkin Arts Council, Raleigh Fine Arts Society, Art League of Hilton Head, Morningstar Gallery, Marin Society of Artists (CA), and 311 Gallery. In 2023, her work was included in The Vault exhibition at the Mint Museum in Charlotte, NC. Most recently, Linda's art appeared on a digital billboard in Times Square as part of ArtPop's Charlotte Region Cities Program, Class of 2025.



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- Offer symbols of warmth, hope and comfort during chemotherapy and other treatments.

Three-Pronged Approach

- **Local:** Partner in your communities with cancer centers and organizations to donate chapter-created lap quilts that bring warmth and encouragement to men, women, and children undergoing cancer treatments.
- **International:** In alignment with Health and Human Services Facet goals, thoughtfully craft lap quilts for women with breast cancer in Ghana to support mammogram screening and breast health awareness.
- **Southern Area:** Support the Southern Area Conference initiative with Moffitt Cancer Center by donating chapter-created lap quilts to comfort cancer patients of all ages and genders.