

Free-Motion Mastery in a Month:

A Block a Day to Machine Quilting Success!

A multi-day workshop with RaNae Merrill

PLEASE NOTE: If you received this materials list from a source other than RaNae's website, please check for the most up-to-date version at www.RaNaeMerrillQuilts.com

Click on "Teaching & Events" in the top bar

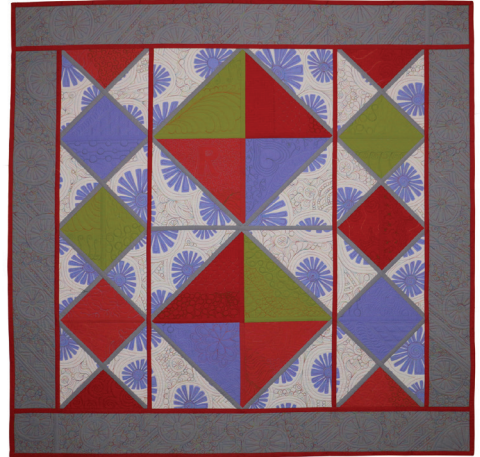
Select "Workshops & Lectures" in the drop-down menu

Click on "Free-Motion Mastery in a Month"

Click on "Download Multi-Day Materials List"

If you are taking this class through a STORE, please get the materials list from the store, as they may have additional information.

Free-Motion Mastery in a Month will help you build machine-quilting skills and confidence with simple daily exercises, even when you can't be at a sewing machine. Quilting one block at a time, there is no bulk to manage, no special sewing machine table needed, and no risk of ruining a quilt top.



Through a graduated series of tracing, sketching and quilting exercises you'll build skill upon skill, pattern upon pattern, as you embed the muscle memory and eye-hand coordination to quilt comfortably and confidently. In class we'll work at an accelerated pace through all the techniques, exercises and skills of the 30-day program, while quilting as many blocks as possible for the 16-block quilt in the book. You will see significant improvement in your machine-quilting skills, and if time allows you may finish the quilt. This class is taught on domestic sewing machines but the principles and exercises work for both sit-down and frame-mounted longarm machines.

Learn how to:

- Pre-train your hands anytime, anywhere, before quilting.
- Recognize and quilt the six shapes that make up all quilting designs.
- Set up a domestic sewing machine for free-motion quilting.
- Move your hands, body and quilt for relaxed, efficient quilting.
- Join pre-quilted blocks to make a quilt of any size.

Required materials for class:

1. A copy of **Free-Motion Mastery in a Month**. Please purchase it before class as it has a lot of information about preparing for the class.
2. A tool kit containing the following items: (See book pages 30-31.)

_____ A Master Trainer™ tool (Standard size for domestic machines or Longarm size for longarm machines (either sit-down or stand-up).

_____ The 10 FMM30 laminated Tracing Sheets

_____ A dry-erase pen

_____ Gripper pads for quilting

_____ Anchoring putty (or bring masking tape)

_____ An erasing cloth

_____ A sketchbook

_____ A mechanical pencil



A pre-quilted block, example of large motif fabric with empty background to be filled in with quilting

Tool Kits containing all the items listed above (with either Standard or Longarm size trainer) are available for purchase. If you are on a budget, you may purchase in class a mini kit containing only the four items in the left-hand column, and bring the items in the right-hand column yourself. (The mini-kit is not available in the web store. To reserve one send an email to orders@ranaemerrillquilts.com. The price is half of the current price for the Complete Tool Kit with Standard Trainer, plus possible shipping charges.) Please pre-order tool kits--see instructions on the next page.

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Sewing tools:

____ Basic sewing tools (scissors, seam ripper, etc.)
____ Thread-trimming scissors
____ 12 safety pins (if not using fusible batting)
____ Optional: Silicone slider sheet

To finish the quilt you will also need:

____ Rotary cutter & mat
____ Square rotary cutting ruler 10" or larger*

* = Available for purchase in class

To pre-order books, tool kits and fabric kits: If you are taking the class at your local quilt shop, the store will probably be selling books, tools and fabric kits. If not, go online to www.RaNaeMerrillQuilts.com. Click on SHOP. Click on FREE-MOTION MASTERY IN A MONTH for books and tool kits. Click on PATTERNS & KITS for fabric kits. Place an order through the store. If you would like your order brought to class, when you place the order write in the notes section what event you'll be attending and what items you would like brought to the event. If I am able to carry the order with me to class, I will. If my travel arrangements will not allow me to carry the order to class, I will either ship the order to you individually, or ship all orders together to the event and adjust shipping charges accordingly.

To order books, kits and other supplies, sign up for her newsletter, or get information about workshops and lectures, please visit:

www.RaNaeMerrillQuilts.com Contact RaNae by email at ranae@ranaemerrillquilts.com

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Notes:

About Fabrics

Working with the right fabrics is fundamental to the FMM30 learning process, so choose fabrics carefully, based on these descriptions.

Motif Blocks: These need to be a large-scale print with clearly outlined figures surrounded by about 50% empty space. These are known in the industry as “low-volume” fabrics. The empty space is *really* important—you’ll use it to practice

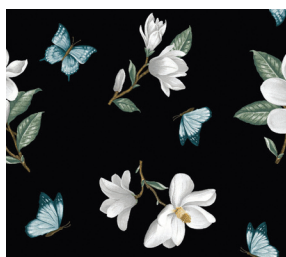
fills. Preprinted blocks often work well. However, if you plan to cut up your Motif Blocks in the final layout, be sure to select fabric that can be cut. Don’t choose blocks with animals that would end up having their heads chopped off!



Kaufman Fabrics *Forest Fellows* AUI-15230-286

Solid Blocks and Borders: These should be cut from one or more solid colors. Solid means absolutely flat color or slight mottling. A print will make it difficult to see clearly what you are quilting, and will hide the quilting when it’s finished. The fabric may seem boring at the start, but will let your quilting shine in the end.

Joining Strips: These can be solid, a small print or even a stripe. Use more than one color if you wish. If you want to hide them, match the fabric of the blocks they are joining.



Blank Quilting 8277-99



Blank Quilting 8163-11



Large-motif fabrics can be used in different ways. Cut whole blocks featuring a single motif...



...or, cut four identical squares then join them into a Pinwheel block.

Backing: Any fabric. If you coordinate it with the top fabrics, you can turn some blocks over for more variety.

Hint If you’re worried about your quilting looking imperfect, choose a large-motif fabric with a hand-drawn or primitive design. The imperfections of the fabric design will make the quilting look just right!

Note: This page reads slightly differently from the book. Use the information [HERE](#).

FABRIC QUANTITIES

These are minimums for a 16-block quilt, based on fabric 44" wide. If your fabric is narrower, or if you want "insurance," buy more. Review the cutting charts on book page 39 before buying.

A 16-block quilt size may be available - check the online store.

FOR 8 MOTIF BLOCKS AND 8 SOLID BLOCKS See Layouts, page 24

Motif Blocks (Front)	Whole blocks: $\frac{2}{3}$ yard or enough for 8 motifs or Pinwheel blocks: Enough for 4 repeats of 8 blocks (see page 26)
Motif Blocks (Back)	$\frac{2}{3}$ yard any fabric
Solid Blocks (Front and Back)	$\frac{2}{3}$ yard light color for front of blocks $\frac{2}{3}$ yard dark color for back of blocks (Can be a mix of colors)

FOR 9 MOTIF BLOCKS AND 7 SOLID BLOCKS See Layouts, page 24

Motif Blocks (Front)	Whole blocks: 1 yard or enough for 9 motifs or Pinwheel blocks: Enough for 4 repeats of 9 blocks (see page 26)
Motif blocks (Back)	1 yard any fabric
Solid Blocks (Front and Back)	$\frac{2}{3}$ yard light color for front of blocks $\frac{2}{3}$ yard dark color for back of blocks (Can be a mix of colors)

FOR BOTH LAYOUTS

Joining Strips	$\frac{7}{8}$ yard minimum <i>Depends on how many times you cut up the blocks and put them back together. See diagrams</i>
Binding	$\frac{1}{2}$ yard
Borders & Backing for Borders	$1\frac{5}{8}$ yards ($2\frac{1}{8}$ yards)*
Batting	54" x 54" square

* You may find it helpful to cut backing and batting larger than top fabric by about 1" on each side, to give you some extra fabric to hang onto when quilting edges. If you do this, use the measurements in parentheses.

Cutting lists and diagrams can be found with their corresponding Daily Assignments:

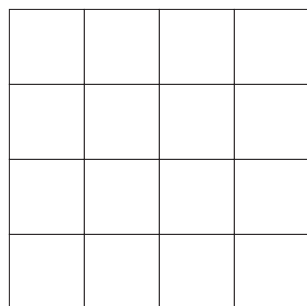
For Blocks:
Day 1, page 39

For Borders:
Day 21, page 61

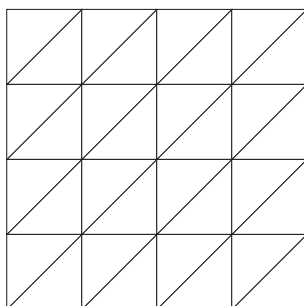
For Joining Strips:
Day 26, page 67

YARDAGE FOR JOINING STRIPS

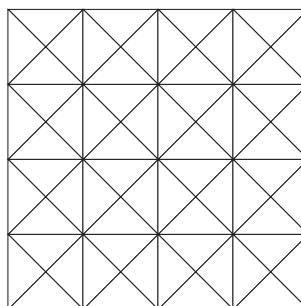
The yardage required for joining strips will vary depending on how much you cut up the blocks in your layout.



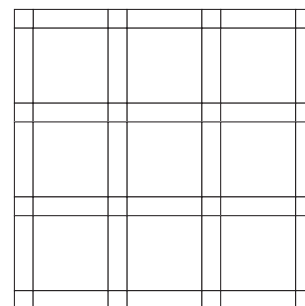
$\frac{7}{8}$ yard



$1\frac{5}{8}$ yards



$2\frac{1}{4}$ yards



$1\frac{3}{4}$ yards

Thread

FOR QUILTING

Quilting Thread: 40-weight or 50-weight cotton or polyester

- ▶ A color that matches the background of your Motif Blocks. You will use this thread for outlining the design in the fabric, so let it blend in and errors will be hidden.
- ▶ A medium value color that is darker than your light Solid Blocks fabric and lighter than your dark Solid Blocks. This is what you'll be using to practice quilting. Use it for top and bobbin thread so your blocks are reversible. You want to be able to see it when you are quilting. A variegated thread can hide irregularities and pull together different colored fabrics. King Tut from Superior is a great option.
- ▶ Any other colors you might want to use for thread-play.

Bobbin Thread: Use the same weight and color of thread for the bobbin. This makes it easier to balance tension, and the matching color will help hide small tension errors. Plus, your blocks will be reversible, giving you more options for designing your finished quilt.

FOR ASSEMBLY

- ▶ A color that matches your joining strips, or a neutral
- ▶ A color that will hide against the background, or invisible polyester thread, for stitch in the ditch along edges of joining strips

NOTE

It's important to use fresh, high-quality thread. Aurifil and Superior are two excellent brands. Read *Thread*, page 83.

Hint

If you're using more than one color of fabric, match thread color to the different fabrics. Then, mix up the thread colors on the fabrics. The contrasting thread will help pull together the fabrics in the design.

Batting

Choose a batting that has a bit of stiffness to it—a cotton/poly blend is excellent. And not too thin.

If you can, use double-sided fusible batting. It makes sandwiching the blocks very easy and secure, without pins to get in the way. I adore Hobbs' 80/20 cotton/polyester double-sided fusible batting. It is slightly tacky before being fused, repositionable even after being fused, and does not release fumes when ironed. The

Warm Company makes a double-sided fusible polyester fleece that I've used as well. Quilter's Dream makes single-sided fusible in both cotton and polyester.

Fluffy polyester or wool are not suitable for this project because they are too flexible to provide the body that will make it easy to manage a block in your sewing machine, and the layers will tend to shift because of the loft.

Sewing Machine Set-up

Note: If you are taking this class at a guild you will bring your own sewing machine. Some quilt shows and stores provide sewing machines in the classrooms while others require that you bring your own sewing machine. If you are not sure if you need to bring your own sewing machine, please check with the show or store.

Your sewing machine will be sitting on top of a table, which means it will be higher than ideal. In order to be comfortable over the course of several days' quilting, please consider bringing a couple of large books, towel and plastic bag to create an arm support, a cushion to raise your chair height, and a foot rest to raise your pedal. Please see the next page (or book pages 84-85) for more information.

- _____ Make sure your machine is cleaned, lubricated and working properly. Sew on it before you come to class to test it! **DO NOT SKIP THIS STEP -- IT IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL**
- _____ Know how to drop the feed dogs
If your machine does not allow the feed dogs to be dropped, know how to set the stitch length to 0. There are plates available to cover the feed dogs, but I find that most of these are too high for free-motion quilting -- they end up pressing against the free-motion foot and don't allow the fabric to move around.
- _____ Know how to adjust the tension . If you have a computerized machine, know where to find the tension adjustment control **BEFORE YOU COME TO CLASS.**
- _____ Bring the instruction manual (you can probably find it online if you can't find it at home).

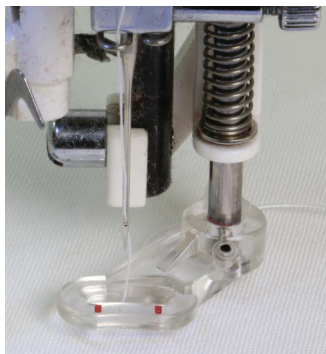
You will need these accessories:

- _____ Free-motion quilting foot or darning foot **ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL!!**
See photos below and follow these instructions carefully:
If you buy a new foot for this class, attach it on your machine before you come to class. Do this at the store where you buy the foot so that you know how to attach it, and so you can test that it fits your machine properly. Check the height of the foot: when you lower the presser foot, the free-motion foot must allow the fabric to move freely between the foot and the feed dogs.
- _____ 2 empty bobbins
- _____ Extra needles in a variety of sizes & types (80/12, 90/14 Universal, Quilting, Microtex or Topstitching style)
- _____ 1/4" foot (You will need it to assemble the quilt.)

Quilting Feet: Here are several common free-motion quilting feet. All of them allow the fabric to move freely in any direction without touching the feed dogs. You may already have one or more of these. If you are buying a new foot, choose one that allows you the best visibility of the area around the foot, like the first one shown below. **Be sure to test the foot on your machine before you come to class.** You should be able to move the fabric freely when the presser foot is down and the feed dogs are dropped.



Open-toe darning foot
(Bernina #24)



Clear plastic darning foot
(Singer)



Closed-toe quilting foot on
Bernina stitch regulator



Echo-quilting foot on Bernina stitch
regulator

Ergonomics

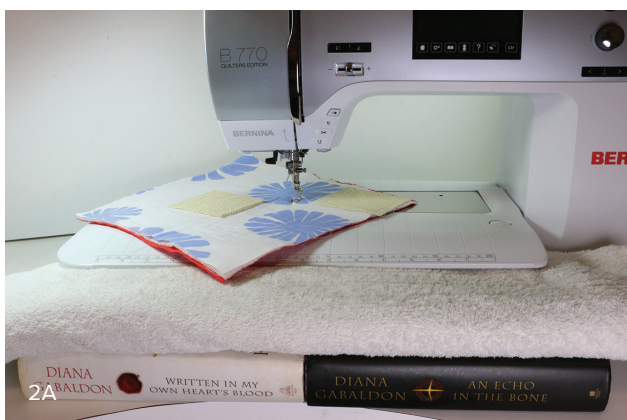
Just as you set up your sewing machine, set up your body for successful quilting—and good health! Good posture matters for comfortable, successful quilting. (Most of the following information applies to DSMs and sit-down longarms, but the general principles hold for stand-up machines as well.)

BODY POSITION

Sit comfortably. Adjust the height of your chair and table so that your arms and shoulders do not hunch up or lean down to quilt.

If your sewing machine sits down in the table with the machine bed level at the table surface, your elbows should be at table height and your forearms should rest flat on the table (1).

If your sewing machine sits on top of the table, you need to raise your forearms to the level of the sewing machine bed. You also need to support the front edge of the extension table. Place a couple of books under the edge of the extension table with a folded towel for cushioning wrapped in a plastic bag on top for sliding. Raise your chair and rest your forearms on the books. Get a foot rest if it helps (2, 2A).



Sit directly in front of the needle so you're not leaning to one side or the other (3).

