

April 2009 Newsletter

Textiles 101 – Batting

Once upon a time, I received a quilt for a wedding gift. It was a tied quilt made out of blue plaid with a solid blue backing. It was very cute and I enjoyed it a lot. Unfortunately, when I washed it, the quilt ended up as a fluffy ball in the dryer. Has this ever happened to you?

Batting is an important part of any quilt. Choose batting wisely and your quilt will last for a long time – skimp on the batting and regret it.

There are a multitude of batting and types out there, but reviewing a few may be helpful.

Hobbs -

A very popular batting is the Hobb's 80/20 natural batting. This is a low loft batting (almost flat) that is very popular because it gives an antique style look to your quilt.

The 80/20 number indicates the fiber content. The 80% number gives you the cotton content, the 20% number gives you the polyester content. You are probably asking why it has polyester in it (since I harp on that so much). But the reason is that the polyester bonds the batting together. So...when you wash it you still have a quilt left and it doesn't end up as a fluffy heap in the dryer. Washing an all cotton batting (or un-bonded polyester for that matter) will cause the fibers to pull apart and it will not retain its shape. What would be left after washing would only be suitable for stuffing.

Also, Hobb's manufactures other batting to note:

Hobb's 80/20 is also available in black suitable for dark fabrics.

Hierloom Wool is a very nice 100% wool batting. Light weight and retains heat well

Polydown 100% polyester that is low loft, hypo-allergenic with a down-like feel

80/20 Fusible which eliminates the need for basting

Quilter's Dream

Dream Cotton is made by a contemporary manufacturer that offers some very interesting batting options. It is 100% cotton batting that is specially processed to prevent shifting and lumping. It can be quilted up to 8" apart and is very warm and lightweight. It is 100% natural and environmentally friendly. Lovely batting for a 100% cotton (be careful in purchasing some off brand 100% cottons because they may not hold together through the washing process).

Other notable Quilter's Dream batting:

Dream blend 70/30 batting

Dream Green – made from 100% recycled plastic bottles

Dream Angel Select – 100% Flame retardant with no Bromides or PBDE's (these are questionable chemicals used in most flame retardant processes)

It is evident that there are multiple choices for the avid quilter as far as batting is concerned. Hopefully this information will allow for a more educated decision making in quilt finishing.

Happy Quilting!