

Free Motion Stippling Instructions  
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On some of my projects you will notice that I have stippled around the embroidery designs. I love this technique because it gives the embroidery a pretty three-dimensional look.

### **Prepare Fabric for Stippling:**

To practice this stippling method, cut one 10” square of fabric and one of low loft batting. Very lightly, spray the piece of batting with temporary spray adhesive. Place the wrong side of the fabric on the sprayed batting and smooth out any wrinkles.

### **Set Up Your Machine:**

1. You can set up your sewing machine for free motion quilting in several ways. There are some sewing machines that will automatically lower the feed dogs when selecting free motion quilting. There are other machines on which you will need to manually lower the feed dogs. You will also need to place either a free motion quilting foot or darning foot onto your machine. It is best to refer to your sewing machine manual for complete instructions on setting up for free motion quilting.
2. Thread the machine with thread of your choice. I prefer to use thread that matches my background fabric for the finished product, but you might want to use a contrasting thread for practice. Place bobbin thread into the bobbin.
3. Engage the needle down button if you have the option.
4. Adjust the tension on the machine so that the needle and the bobbin thread are equal.

### **Get Comfortable:**

Sit directly in front of your sewing machine. Remember that stitches should never cross over each other and that the stippling should look like puzzle pieces. You, not the machine, are creating the stitch length when free motion quilting. There is no need to adjust the length of the stitch on your machine. The sewing machine

should be moving faster than your hands. The style of moving your fabric should be smooth and even. You need the stitches to be as even in length as possible. The speed you are sewing with and the speed that you move the fabric really determine the stitch length. The most important thing is that you practice and have patience. If you are persistent and practice often you will have great success.

### **Get Started:**

1. Place the fabric to be quilted under the presser foot and needle. I prefer to start quilting at a top corner of the fabric. There are some who would prefer to start in the middle of the fabric. Do what works best for you. Slowly start stitching and take a few stitches in the same place to secure the thread.
2. Use your hands to guide the fabric in the direction you want to sew. Stitch in a casual random pattern remembering that you want the stippling to look like puzzle pieces. You will want to change direction often and watch your stitch length to make sure the stitches are staying as even in length as possible. You are basically meandering around the fabric with fluid, even stitching. Keep the machine at a steady speed.

Remember that it will take time and lots of practice to master free motion stippling.