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QUICK-LIQUÉ

Do you need to make a quilt in a hurry? If you find yourself in a time crunch (or you just like to get things done fast) you can shave hours off your completion time with these machine appliqué shortcuts I call Quick-liqué.

I love that my longarm machine can do more than simply quilt! It just requires a little “out-of-the-box” thinking about how I move my quilting machine. Domestic machine appliqué is typically done using a zigzag stitch, satin stitch, blind hem stitch, or blanket stitch. Even though my quilting machine only sews a straight stitch, I can simulate all of those decorative stitches and more by guiding it in different directions—just as a domestic machine quilter would manipulate her fabric while darning or thread painting. With just a little practice you’ll be pleasantly surprised at how well you can accomplish these stitches using a stand up machine!

My Quick-liqué techniques work well on domestic machines as well as longarm machines. This method does have one caveat, however. To make it super-fast, the appliqué pieces have raw edges that are secured with decorative stitching. Your fabric patches may have some slight raveling around the edges, creating a more casual appearance. If you prefer a more finished look, use the simulated satin stitch and place your stitches very close together to cover the edges more thoroughly.

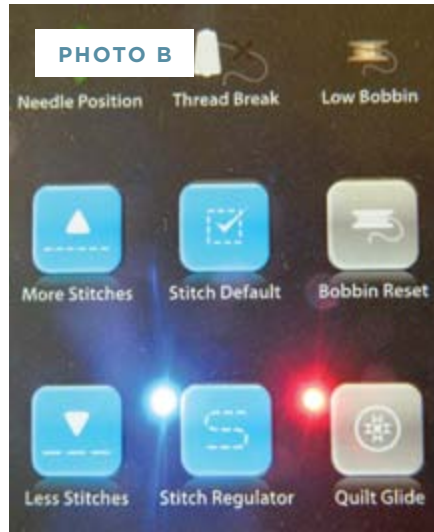
Experiment with your machine’s stitch mode settings and tension to give you the best results. For example, you may feel more comfortable using your machine’s stitch regulator for regular quilting. Shorten your normal stitch length so that your

machine will make smaller stitches. This gives you more control as you make tiny maneuvers to create different stitch patterns. Adjust your tension to give your stitches clear definition. I placed a pin next to my practice stitches in *Photo A* to show you where I adjusted my tension. To the left of the pin, the top thread is pulling the bobbin thread to the top. I slightly tightened my bobbin tension and slightly loosened the top tension to get great stitch quality—even when making tiny turns.

My longarm machine has a wonderful feature called “Quilt Glide” that allows me to combine the benefits of regulated



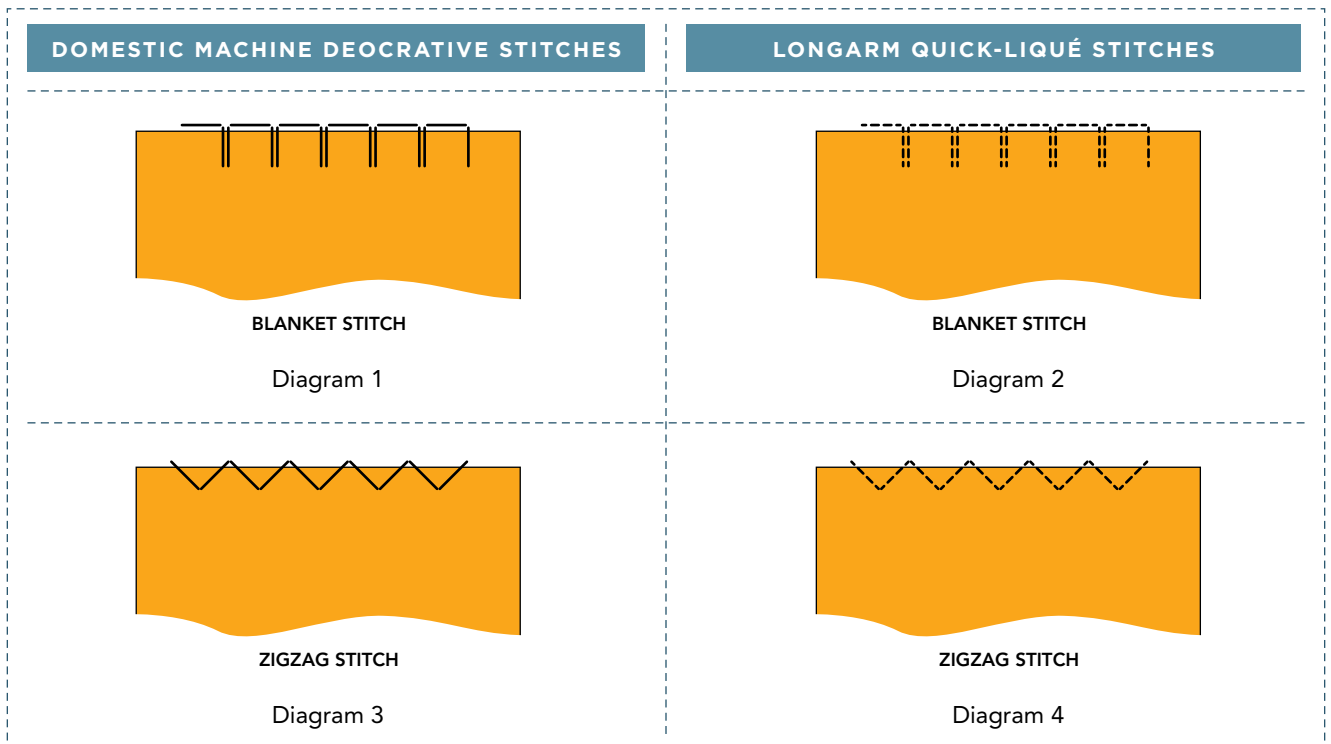
PHOTO A

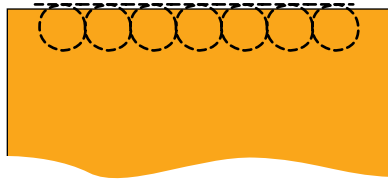


stitches and manual sewing motion (*Photo B*). My needle is constantly moving, but the stitches are still regulated as I sew. This increases my fluidity and makes detail quilting easy. If you don't have a similar feature on your quilting machine, try using the manual sewing mode instead. Slow your motor speed until you can control your stitches without feeling rushed. You may find that you prefer the manual sewing mode to regulated mode for Quick-liqué.

I've included some of my favorite Quick-liqué stitches here, but your imagination is the only thing limiting you when it comes to stitching your appliqué patches in place. Remember that a longarm machine only creates straight stitches. Where a traditional sewing machine may take one single stitch to create a design, you'll take several small ones to create the same effect with a stand-up quilting machine. For example, on a domestic sewing machine the blanket stitch is usually formed from a single stitch taken along the edge of the

fabric, followed by a single stroke onto the appliqué piece and immediately back off again (*Diagram 1*). Three single stitches form the shape. When I sew a blanket stitch with my longarm, I take several small stitches along that same path instead of one single stitch, traveling on and off the appliqué on the same line (*Diagram 2*). A domestic sewing machine sews a zigzag stitch with a single stroke to the left and another to the right (*Diagram 3*). When I zigzag with my longarm, I repeat the zigzag pattern, but it is comprised of tiny stitches along the way (*Diagram 4*).





PEARL STITCH



SCALLOP STITCH



DARNING STITCH

Diagram 5

Diagram 5 shows three more stitch techniques—pearl stitch, scallop stitch, and a darning stitch.

Take a little time to test your thread choice and to practice your stitching techniques before you start on your actual project. If you really want to make this quick, use a thread color that blends with as many fabrics as possible to avoid thread changes. You can use invisible thread as well;—just remember that your fabric’s raw edges will be exposed. I find that choosing colored thread adds more depth and texture to raw edge Quick-liqué. Take a look at my sample stitching in *Photo C*. I practiced each stitch technique with three different threads, including variegated, white, and black. You’ll need to decide if you want your thread to make a statement or to blend in, keeping in mind that some stitching methods make the thread more noticeable.

Now that you know the ins and outs of using your longarm for decorative stitching, try this technique with a simple pattern. In no time, your project will be done!



PHOTO C

WEB EXTRA



To download instructions for this Quick-liqué Table Topper, go to FonsandPorter.com/Quick-lique