

Let's Talk About Thread

Over the years standard practice has been to use a neutral colored thread – something that would disappear on the wrong side of the fabric. However, when piecing more complex quilt patterns; visual cues are a great aid to success. I'd like you to think about thread in another way.

York Pinwheels is a classic blue and white quilt. When I was piecing it, the thread on the top of the machine was fuschia and the bottom thread was lime green. Why don't these colors show on the front??

The answer is three-fold:

1. Bottom and top tension of the machine are well balanced.
2. I use a jeans/denim 70/10 needle which pierces the fabric and leaves a small hole.
3. I use Aurifil #50 thread. This is a long-staple, fine, Egyptian cotton thread.

The strong, contrasting colors show up on the back providing good visual cues. "Hitting the X" to achieve a successful intersection is much easier when you can see the target.

Why 2 colors?? If the intersection is not as successful as you would like, correction is much easier when you can easily discern where the stitching went astray. With two different colored threads, the diagnosis is a snap.

Quiltmakers who come from a clothing construction background, gulp when they consider the use of non-matching thread. But if you try it, I think you'll like it. I frequently Auriful fuschia (#4020) and lime green. (#2888).