

# Finishing Details

Adding that “wow” factor!





# DISCLAIMER

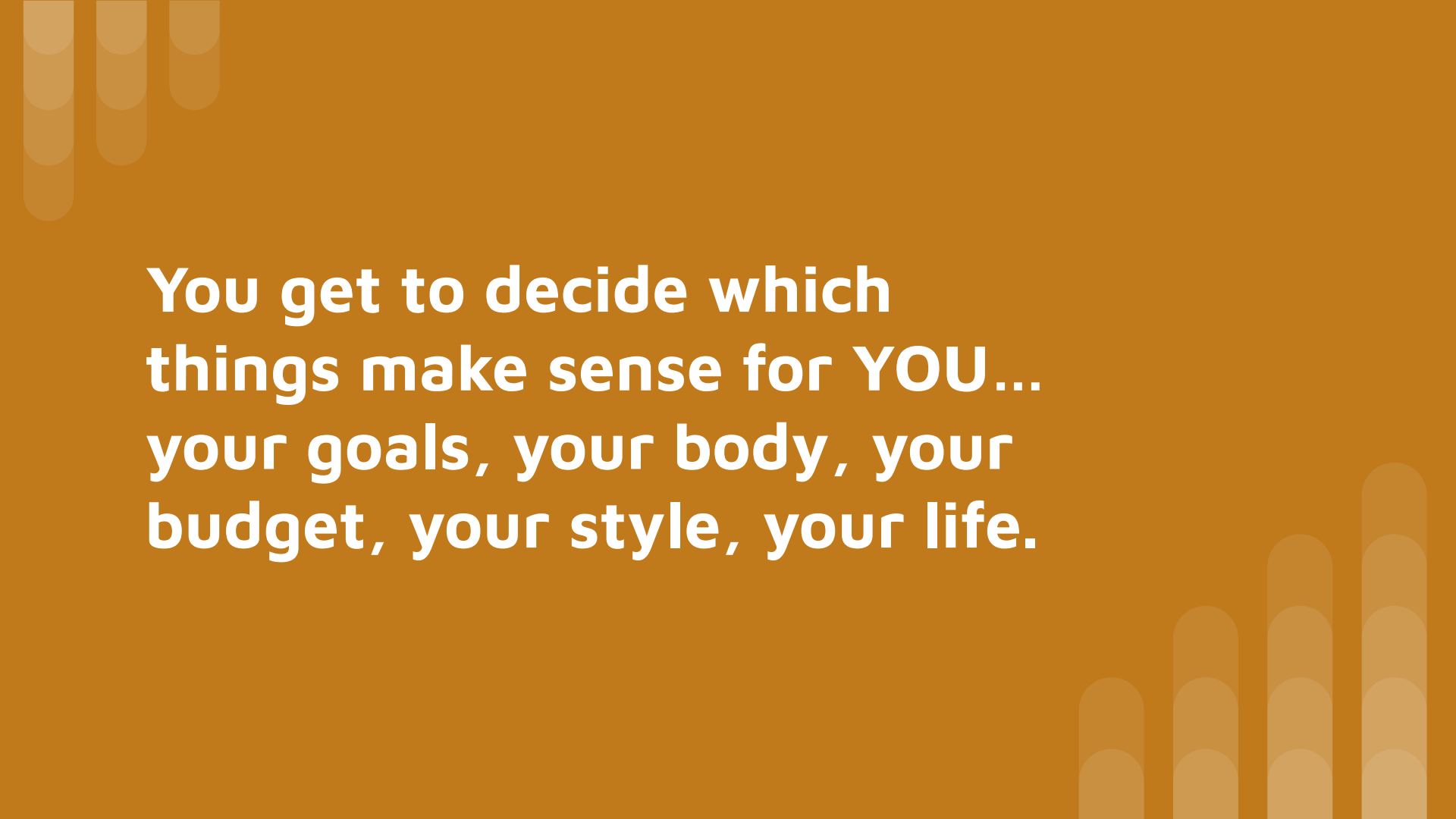


The image features a solid orange background. In the top-left corner, there are three vertical bars of varying heights, each composed of several overlapping semi-transparent circles. A similar set of four vertical bars is located in the bottom-right corner, also made of overlapping semi-transparent circles.


**These are not things you  
“have” to do.**

The image features a solid orange background. In the top-left corner, there are three vertical bars of varying heights, each composed of several overlapping semi-transparent circles. In the bottom-right corner, there are four vertical bars of increasing height from left to right, also composed of overlapping semi-transparent circles.


**These are things you CAN  
do.**



**You get to decide which  
things make sense for YOU...  
your goals, your body, your  
budget, your style, your life.**

The background is a solid orange color. In the top-left corner, there are three vertical bars of varying heights, each composed of several overlapping semi-transparent orange circles. In the bottom-right corner, there are four vertical bars of varying heights, also composed of overlapping semi-transparent orange circles.

**The goal of this presentation  
is to help you if you find  
yourself sometimes asking  
questions like...**

The image features a solid orange background. In the top-left corner, there are three vertical bars of varying heights, each composed of several overlapping semi-transparent circles. A similar set of four vertical bars is located in the bottom-right corner, also composed of overlapping semi-transparent circles.

**“why didn’t this turn out as  
good as it looked in my  
head”**



or





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**“why is this project less  
attention grabbing than I  
hoped?”**



or





**“I like this pattern, but mine  
feels boring to me, what’s  
missing?”**



**Maybe some of these tips  
will help!**



# Rules of Thumb

Slow down

Consider the details

Look for the “extra”

Use the right tools for the job (when possible)

Before taking a “short cut”--understand what the “long way” is meant to accomplish

Gut check– what would draw you to this in a shop?

# Technique Specifics

Pressing

Top Stitching

Thread

Durability

Non Quilt Items

Mini Quilts

Quilts

Final Presentation



# Pressing

Why press?

- Gives a “crisp” look
- Helps set the folds to lend more stability (ex at bag bottoms)
- Helps linings, pockets, etc lay nicely



# Top Stitching

Why top stitch?

- Holds facings
- Closes gaps from turning the right way out
- Looks decorative
- Strengthens seams
- Holds seams in place so they sit flatter

Source: *Treasurie* (see references)



# Topstitching



# Thread

- Color (match? contrast?)
- Weight
- Proper tension
- When stopping/starting in the center or in visible areas like top stitching...bring up threads to avoid thread nests



# Contrasting Thread?

Contrast on the handle, but crooked, which is why I use coordinating thread. I can't sew straight enough. Know yourself.

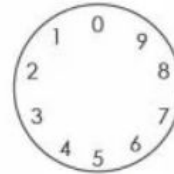


# Tension

## Sewing Machine Tension Guide



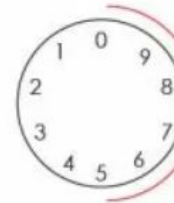
upper thread and  
bobbin are balanced  
no adjustment  
needed



Don't touch!



upper thread too loose  
or bobbin thread  
too tight  
increase tension  
(higher number)



**CLOCKWISE**  
higher number



upper thread too  
tight or bobbin  
too loose  
decrease tension  
(lower number)



**ANTI-CLOCKWISE**  
lower number

# Durability

- Bury / secure your threads
- Don't cheat your seam allowances
- Consider further finishing on seams that see a lot of stress...ex: serging or french seams



# Non Quilt Items

- Use the right interfacing
- Add zipper tabs



# Interfacing

How do you want the bag to look?



**Bosal**



**Fusible Fleece**

# Interfacing

Note: Heaviest interfacing had more trouble poking out ends of pillow.



No interfacing - very thin - fast to make even with zipper on bottom.



No interfacing on cotton. SF 171 on tshirt, so feels slightly heavier Slip pocket with velcro squares on back.



Canvas lining, batting and quilted. Feels most luxurious. Zipper on bottom.



# Minis and Small Quilted Items

- Add a label
- Add hanging elements for wall art
- Binding tiny things is HARD. Consider alternative edge finishes like:
  - Serging (fabric postcards)
  - Facing
  - Self binding (leaving the backing larger and unquilted and flip to the front and stitch down)
  - Flip and sew (no corners to navigate! Great for coasters)
  - Flip and sew mock binding (assemble like a normal quilt, do the flip and sew method with your quilt sandwich and another square, right sides together on the front. Instead of leaving an opening for turning, cut out the center of the “binding” and fold it under to your desired look. Stitch down by hand. Easier to poke out the corners, no fiddly facing strips, no visible stitching from the front.)
  - Rounded edges and bias binding (also no corners!)

# Quilts

- Add a label
- Sneak something special / fun into the quilting
- Jazz up the binding
  - Faux piping
  - Pops of color
  - Line up color changes with elements in your design
  - “Big stitch” binding or other decorative hand stitches along the binding
  - Add prairie points
  - Scallop the edges and use bias binding

# Final Presentation

- Use a roller to clean off lint.
- Trim seam bulk
- Trim thread tails
- Add final embellishments (tags, zipper pulls, etc)
- Consider the wrapping
  - Make a bag with scraps
  - Tie with a pretty ribbon

# Use a lint roller.

Noticed my cats had been sleeping on it after I took the photo. Remembered the MQG mentioned this as a problem with submitted quilts, so decided to leave it as a finishing detail.



# Design Specifics

## Single Fabrics

- Fussy cut to center prints/features
- Consider the scale of the prints relative to the item
- Current colors/fabrics, popular teams/characters—know the trends
- Specialty fabrics—cork, vinyl, mesh, hand dyed

## Multiple Fabrics

- Patchwork/piecing
- Applique design elements
- Consider color value

## Decorative elements

- Hand stitching
- Embellishments
- Fusible postage stamps
- Decorative machine stitches
- Ribbon trim
- Fabric tags
- Zipper pulls

# Use Specifics

Consider the user-is the item practical, easy to use (zipper pull)

Add extra features—pockets, adjustable straps, key strap clip locations, double sided zipper, purse sized zipper

Consider the function—size for common objects (phone, pen, chapstick, etc)

Consider durability-washing, items for children, sun exposure, etc

Consider multi-functional-double sided items that work for two seasons/holidays

# Example: Zipper Pouch

## Technique Consideration

- Zipper tabs
- Pressing- before, during, & after
- Top Stitching
- Use a Zipper Foot
- Choice of interfacing
- Box the corners
- Check your lining for bunching / finish the inside seams
- Hand stitch the lining closed

## Design Considerations

- Use an eye catching / fussy cut print Piece the exterior or stitch on some decorative ribbon
- Add a pleat or bow
- Add embroidery or hand quilting
- Add a label or decorative zipper pull
- Use a colorful / striped / printed zipper
- Make into an animal / monster
- Theme your fabrics for an occasion or holiday (ex: back to school pencil pouch)

## Use Considerations

- Shape your pouch for a purpose (ex: scissors)
- Add interior or exterior pockets
- Use a high contrast or light lining so items are easy to find
- Add a loop for a strap or wristlet to attach
- Use vinyl so contents can be easily seen

# Zip Pouch



**Corners rounded/no boxed corners. Would have been better with zipper tabs and boxed corners.**



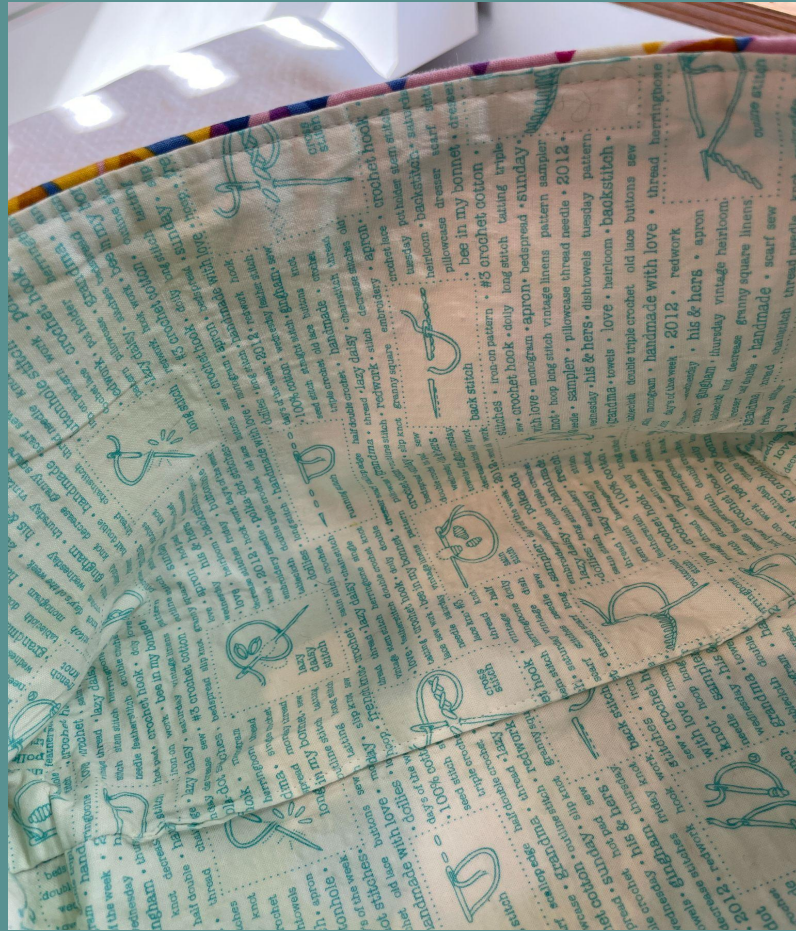
**Zipper tabs and boxed corners**

[www.aquiltinlife.com](http://www.aquiltinlife.com)



# Interfacing Choice

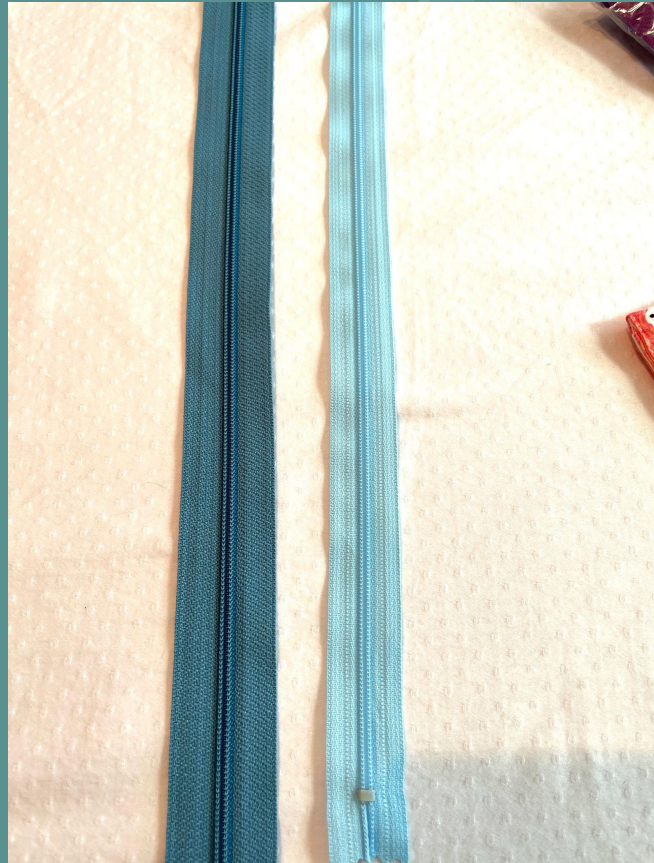
Fusible interfacing made this difficult to wash. Crinkled after washing and was difficult to completely iron out. Watch your fusible interfacings if you plan to wash/dry.



# Which size zipper?

YKK purse (wider) or dress (normal) zippers

[https://www.etsy.com/market/zipit\\_zippers\\_shop](https://www.etsy.com/market/zipit_zippers_shop)



# Example: Pillowcase

## Technique Considerations

- French seams for durability
- Ironing- before, during, & after
- Top Stitching

## Design Considerations

- Use an eye catching / fussy cut print
- Consider the scale of the print...use large prints to make the most of the space
- Add a decorative element between body and trim—ex: prairie point

## Use Considerations

- Avoid piecing seams on the body
- Select soft materials
- Stay with 100% cotton that will wash, and wear well

# Some Handy Tools

Zipper foot-to sew more close to a zipper

Hump jumper-to deal with uneven thicknesses  
(front/back or side to side)

Hammer-reducing seam bulk

Bodkin- for threading elastic through  
tubes/turning tubes

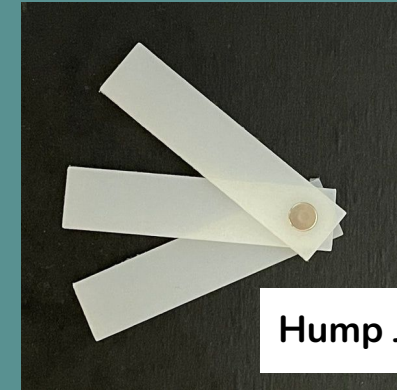
Point turner-poke out corners

Flatter / Spray Starch-relax wrinkles

Clappers-flatten seams

Wool Pressing mat-provide heat from both  
sides

Tailor's Ham - allow pressing of interior  
surfaces/curves shapes



**Questions?**

# Additional Resources–Patterns

- <http://sewsweetness.com> (tons of how-tos, info on adjustments and “wow” factors)
  - Has free patterns and all of her patterns include videos. Great for beginners. I think quilting the fabric before cutting is a good idea because you have to pull the fabric pretty tightly to prevent it from feeling loose. Her videos save me. I ALWAYS have to go back and cut more pieces. (Debby)
- <https://noodle-head.com/>
  - Some of the best-written bag patterns out there. I am pattern illiterate and I can follow her pattern (Debby).
- <https://www.byannie.com/>
  - Good bag patterns. Good cutting instructions. Reasonable sewing instructions, not as good as Noodlehead. She likes to quilt all of her fabric before cutting. She prefers that you use her Soft and Stable, but it is not necessary, though it is excellent, but pricey interfacing. (Debby)

# Additional Resources–Techniques

- [The best bag sewing tips by Apple Green Cottage](#)
- [@cleverwoppet on Instagram's 5 post series on zipper pouches](#)
- [Top stitching tips](#) from The Goods Design Co
- [Top stitching tips](#) from Treasure
- [Top stitching tips](#) from Tily and the Buttons
- [Easy Ribbon Embellishment](#)
- [Facing technique](#) by SillyBoDilly
- A Field Guide to You and Your Sewing Machine by Bernie Tobisch

**Thank you!**

A decorative pattern at the bottom of the slide consisting of numerous vertical bars of varying heights and shades of orange and yellow, creating a textured, bar-like effect.