

## **Choosing the Right Thread**

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Presentation Notes, Prairie Piecemakers Quilters' Guild, November 2, 2010*

All of us have become frustrated when a beautiful, carefully pieced quilt has been rendered less wonderful by a poor thread choice. The resultant difficulty in quilting with broken or frayed threads and lumps and bumps in the final product can drive us right up the wall. However, there is a solution. By investing a little time in choosing the right thread and the appropriate needles, adjusting your machine tension and speed and practicing on a spare scrap of batting and fabric, fantastic results can be yours.

We will be talking about Wonderfil threads. Wonderfil is a small Canadian company that is attempting to fill the quilting niche market for quality threads. I have brought a "cheater" panel that has been created to practice the movements of free motion machine quilting. I have partially quilted it using different Wonderfil threads, labeling each one, to provide a sample of what each thread is like.

The first thread we will be discussing is the Invisafil is used in place of invisible thread as it is both strong and delicate AND will not melt when ironed. It's a one hundred wt polyester thread that is available in thirty solid colours. It comes in large two thousand five hundred metre spools or in six packs of assorted colors on four hundred metre spools. This thread has many uses and performs equally well in stitching in the ditch, fine stippling, trapunto, invisible appliqué and couching to name just a few.

Throughout the panel, I used Deco-Bob as the bobbin thread. Available in thirty-six solid colours, it is an eighty wt and is available in two thousand metre spools. Deco-Bob, as the name suggests, is primarily used in the bobbin, especially with machine embroidery, but it can also be used in the same places as Invisafil.

Mirage is a thirty wt rayon thread that is available on eight hundred metre spools. It has randomly placed color changes. In free-motion quilting color changes blend and re-appear, creating added interest. As with the previous threads it can be used for quilting, embroidery, thread painting or appliqué. We recommend Deco-Bob as the accompanying bobbin thread.

Wonderfil has a large selection of solid (three hundred and forty-two of them!) and thirty multi-colored forty wt Rayon threads, which have a soft, supple texture and a high lustre. These threads are great for machine embroidery, embellishment, thread painting or appliqué. Rayon is not used for its strength, but only for decorative purposes. This thread is available in theme packs of ten colours or a starter kit of fifty colours on one hundred and fifty metre spools.

To add depth and texture to thread painting, Accent twelve wt rayon can be used. It is suitable for machine embroidery with less dense stitching. Other uses are machine sashiko stitching, heavy thread appliqué and blanket stitching. There are forty solid and twenty multi colours available in four hundred metre spools.

D-Twist has been created with two different coloured rayon threads. This twenty wt thread has twenty-four colour combinations available in five hundred metre spools. It is great for texture backgrounds in thread painting, and for animal figures in machine embroidery. To prevent twisting it is recommended to use a thread stand.

Razzle is a rayon thread available in forty-six solid colours on two hundred yard spools. Dazzle has a rayon base with a twist of glitzy metallic- there are thirty-four of these colors available on two hundred and fifty yard spools. Both of these threads are eight wt – and can only be used through the bobbin for sewing or couching on a project. This thicker thread is excellent for hand embroidery, knitting, crochet, tassels and fringes.

Sizzle is similar to Razzle and Dazzle and can be used the same way. It is a four-ply metallic thread over a rayon core and comes in thirteen solid colors on one hundred and eighty yard spools.

Metallic thread, on the other hand, is smooth running for free-motion sewing or embroidery, and can add some glitz to your thread painting and quilting. It has extraordinary softness, a rayon core, and comes in thirty-seven solid colors on one thousand metre spools and 1 multi-coloured offering on a one hundred metre spool.

To add shimmer and brilliance to embellishments, there is Hologram polyester thread. Used in thread painting and machine embroidery, it adds wonderful charm. It is available in eight colours on three hundred metre spools.

Although all of the above threads were rayon or polyester based, Wonderfil has some fantastic one hundred percent cotton threads.

Silco is a lint free forty wt cotton available in thirty solid colours and thirty multi colours on seven hundred metre spools. It is used for quilting, embellishing and embroidery.

Long staple Egyptian cotton is double gassed and mercerized for a soft finish. Konfetti has a different feel from the lint free Silco, it is perfect for both hand and machine quilting, piecing and general sewing. It is a basic fifty wt cotton thread, available in sixty solid colours on either one thousand or three thousand metre spools.

As with Konfetti the next two threads are a long staple Egyptian cotton. Both have beautiful colour variegation with the colour changing every two point five inches. Using both weights together gives a realistic appearance to thread painting and decorative stitching. Tutti is a fifty wt cotton on either one thousand or three thousand metre spools and Fruitti is a twelve wt cotton on either four hundred or one thousand two hundred metre spools. Each are available in forty-one multi colours.

When using different threads a basic universal needle may not work, now is the time to try smaller size needles, microtex, quilting, embroidery, topstitch, large eye or metallic needles. It is always best to test out new needles and thread on scrap fabric and batting. If you take the extra time before you start to sew, you will be much happier with the results.