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QuiltWEEK[®]

2026 Quilt Contest Rules

AQSONLINE AQSONLINE QUILTTV

NATIONAL BRAND PARTNERS **BERNINA**
made to create

2026 SHOW DATES

DAYTONA BEACH, FL
February 18-21

NEW ENGLAND
April 8-11

PADUCAH, KY
April 22-25

GRAND RAPIDS, MI
August 19-22

LANCASTER, PA
September 16-19

General Quilt Contest Rules

These rules, along with the Show specific rules, apply to all 2026 AQS Quilt Contests:

1. An Entrant can enter their completed work by submitting it online at go.americanquilter.com/contests along with the nonrefundable entry fee of \$25 per quilt for AQS members (*using member name and email address associated with AQS membership*) or \$40 per quilt for nonmembers, digital photos (*see rule 10*), and appraisal and/or design permission, if applicable (*see rule 11*).

Explanation of Entrant(s):

An Entrant is a living quiltmaker(s) that has/have constructed and/or designed the top layer or completed the entire finished quilt.

- *Quilter/Quilted By: Performed the quilting of all three layers together. This can be the Entrant or a paid service. Paid Service Quilters are recognized by name only.*
 - *Other Stitchers: Anyone who has stitched on the quilt that is not listed as Entrant or Quilter.*
2. **Only one Entry per category per Entrant or Other Stitchers.** A Quilted By person can be listed on multiple quilt entries, but not as Entrant or Other Stitchers in the same category.
 3. **Quilts must have been completed between December 31, 2022, and the contest entry deadline.** Completed means all stitches and embellishments have been completed by the entry date. Quilts that have been altered, amended, or modified at any date after being entered in any quilt contest will be required to retain the original completion date. Changing the quilt in any way after it has been shown at any quilt contest will not change the completion date. Quilts that have been entered under one or more entrant name(s) must retain the same entrant name(s) for every AQS Quilt Contest.
 4. All quilts must be quilted by hand, machine, or both. Quilting is defined as a running stitch that passes through a top, middle layer, and backing fabric. The quilt must consist of 3 layers: quilt top, batting, and backing (quilted backing must be visible). Tied quilts are not eligible. Quilts made from stamped kits are not eligible. **Two-Sided Quilts:** AQS does not exhibit two-sided quilts. For two-sided quilts, please choose one side to enter.
 5. Quilts must be in excellent condition. Incomplete, torn, or soiled quilts do not qualify for entry or display.
 6. Quilts must be a single unit and may not be framed with wood, metal, etc. No rods may be sewn into a

quilt. Odd-shaped quilts or quilts with multiple panels must be mounted to a black fabric. To achieve this, attach the top of the quilt to the top of the black fabric, leaving the bottom free for judges to view the back of the quilt. Then attach a sleeve to the top of the back of the black fabric in order for the quilt to be hung. Instructions can be found on the AQS website at go.americanquilter.com/contests. Quilts with electrical components or special lighting cannot be utilized due to fire safety. Quilts must be able to stack with other quilts and be boxed or rolled without possible damage to the quilts.

7. Quilts must be titled and the title must be 35 characters or less, including spaces. Titles can not be repeated by the same entrant, however you can title them in series (Quilt I, Quilt II, etc).
8. Quilts can be entered in multiple AQS Quilt Contests for up to twelve months, from the date of the first appearance at an AQS Contest. This can include quilts that win a cash award within that 12 month period. For example, if you enter a quilt in Paducah in April of 2025, you may enter it in any other AQS Quilt Contest for one calendar year. However, it would not be eligible to enter any contests that occur in April 2026 or beyond.
9. All quilts must fit the size requirements and definition of the selected category. Please look carefully at category definition and sizes. You can only enter one quilt per category per contest location. For categories defined by quilting method:
 - **Stationary Sewing Machine** includes use of any sewing machine that allows the quilter to move the fabric rather than the machine, and the machine sits on or is mounted on a table. The quilting must predominantly use this method.
 - **Movable Quilting Machine** includes any machine that allows the quilter to move the machine head rather than the fabric and is mounted on a frame. The quilting must predominantly use this method.



General Quilt Contest Rules (Continued)

10. Three high resolution photos must be uploaded with the entry. Please include:
- **FULL-VIEW** photo of the completed quilt showing all four corners of the quilt. No part of the quilt can be obscured. Do not manipulate your photos; however, you may crop the background so long as all edges, corners, and binding of the quilt are visible. Do not photograph your quilt lying on a bed or the floor.
 - **DETAIL** photo showing quilting stitches. Select a 12" section representing your best work.
 - **ENTRANT(S)** photo from the shoulders up. If you are a group or team of quilters, please use a group photo that includes everyone. (*Please refer to our Photography Suggestions on page 12*)
11. **Permissions:** It is the entrant's responsibility to obtain all necessary **written** copyright releases for work that is covered under the copyright laws of the United States. This includes using someone else's pattern, artwork, photography, or another quilt as your inspiration, even if the design has been altered (see page 11). Fabric Panels are not considered Totally Original and the fabric designer must be named. AQS has provided a Design Permission Template for your convenience. It can be found on the Contest page at go.americanquilter.com/contests.
12. **Appraisals:** Quilts valued over \$1,000 require an appraisal submission. When uploading design permissions and appraisal files, make sure they are no larger than 10 MB and multiple pages are scanned as one document.
13. Quilts must be labeled in a bottom corner on the back and should include your name, address, and quilt title. **Prior to shipping, cover your name on your label by securely stitching or safety pinning a piece of fabric over the label. The quilt title must remain visible** (*If you cover the entire label, be sure the stitched fabric has the quilt title written on it*). If your name appears on the front of the quilt, you must cover **your name by securely stitching or safety pinning a piece of fabric to cover it.**
14. Quilts (*except miniatures*) must have an attached sleeve for hanging. Instructions can be found on the AQS website at go.americanquilter.com/contests.
15. AQS contest quilts are NOT for sale.
16. AQS has a family-friendly policy of displaying quilts appropriate for a diverse audience. AQS does not display quilts that express or depict controversial political, religious, or sexual themes. All decisions of the jurors and judges are final. AQS reserves the right to reject any entry or to move a quilt into a different category. AQS juries quilts based on technique and appropriate subject matter.
17. **Quilt Shipping and Handling:** All accepted quilts must be mailed to our home office in Paducah, KY, at the expense of the entrant. You may select to pick up your quilt after the show, hold your quilt for a future contest, include a printed return label purchased from FedEx, UPS, or United States Postal Service, or purchase Return Shipping through AQS.
- The Return Shipping Fee is \$50 inside the Continental U.S.
- Includes:**
- New heavy strength double flap box to protect your quilt
 - FedEx or UPS ground shipping with signature required.
 - Rapid return service.
- Outside the Continental U.S. and International Return Shipping Fees vary by location.
- Grand Rapids Ultimate Guild Challenge Shipping Fee** – all 8 quilts shipped in one box is \$80.
- Special handling fee of \$25 per show will apply if your quilt requires special folding/handling instructions. This packaging takes additional resources for logging in quilts, space in storing quilts, space to transport quilts, time to unpack quilts, repacking of quilts and ribbon handling/additional shipping.
- Details about shipping including dates, insurance, labels, and sleeves will be provided in the notification email for all accepted quilts.
- Quilts Held for Future Contests**
- Contestants entering consecutive shows may store their quilt at no charge. However, if they do not register for the quilt show contest but then request that their quilt be held through that show, they will be charged a \$15 fee.
18. **All notifications (accepted, disqualified, or declined) are emailed** on or before the deadline listed on page 9.

Rules Specific for DAYTONA BEACH

Enter Your Quilt Online by: September 18, 2025

To enter the Daytona Beach AQS Quilt Contest, submit your entry(ies) online at go.americanquilter.com/contests. Good Luck!

- All General Quilt Contest Rules apply (See pages 2–3)
- Quilts must be available to AQS from January 16, 2026 until one week after the event.
- Quilts must fit within the size requirements and definitions of the categories listed for this AQS Contest location.
- Written judging evaluations are NOT provided for this quilt contest.

Note: See General Rule 9 (page 2) for the definition of Stationary Sewing Machine or Movable Quilting Machine.

Decision Notification Emails will be sent: November 4, 2025



Categories:

1. **Large Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted:** Width 60" to 110"; Length 60" or more. Quilting must be predominantly completed on a stationary sewing machine that allows the quilter to move the fabric rather than the machine.
2. **Large Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted:** Width 60" to 110"; Length 60" or more. Quilting must be predominantly completed on a movable quilting machine that allows the quilter to move the machine head rather than the fabric.
3. **Hand Quilted Quilts:** Width 40" to 110"; Length 40" or more. Quilt can be any technique; quilting must be predominantly completed by hand.
4. **Modern:** Width 40" to 96"; Length 40" or more. Quilts using any technique that are inspired by modern design, often using improvisational piecing or appliqué and including bold colors, high contrast, and simple shapes on neutral backgrounds. Expansive negative space may allow the quilting to take the forefront.
5. **Wall Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted:** Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 60". Quilting must be predominantly completed on a stationary sewing machine that allows the quilter to move the fabric rather than the machine. Quilts made for display on a wall, using any technique.
6. **Wall Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted:** Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 60". Quilting must be predominantly completed on a movable quilting machine that allows the quilter to move the machine head rather than the fabric. Quilts made for display on a wall, using any technique.
7. **Fiber Art/Mixed Media:** Width 30" to 84"; Length 30" to 84". Works of art, made for display on a wall, using any technique, displaying innovative, contemporary design and materials, using fabric as the primary medium. This can include pictorial representation of a person, place, or thing.
8. **1st Entry in an AQS Quilt Contest:** Width 30" to 84"; Length 30" to 84". Quilts made for display on a wall, using any technique and may be quilted by hand, machine, or both. Contestant(s) must not have been displayed in any previous AQS Quilt Contest.

Rules Specific for NEW ENGLAND

Enter Your Quilt Online by: November 6, 2025

To enter the New England AQS Quilt Contest, submit your entry(ies) online at go.americanquilter.com/contests. Good Luck!

- All General Quilt Contest Rules apply (See pages 2–3).
- Quilts must be available to AQS from March 6, 2026 until one week after the event.
- Quilts must fit within the size requirements and definitions of the categories listed for this AQS Contest location.
- Written judging evaluations are NOT provided for this quilt contest.

Note: See General Rule 9 (page 2) for the definition of Stationary Sewing Machine or Movable Quilting Machine.

Decision Notification Emails will be sent: December 16, 2025



Categories:

1. **Large Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted:** Width 60" to 110"; Length 60" or more. Quilting must be predominantly completed on a stationary sewing machine that allows the quilter to move the fabric rather than the machine.
2. **Large Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted:** Width 60" to 110"; Length 60" or more. Quilting must be predominantly completed on a movable quilting machine that allows the quilter to move the machine head rather than the fabric.
3. **Hand Quilted Quilts:** Width 40" to 110"; Length 40" or more. Quilt can be any technique; quilting must be predominantly completed by hand.
4. **Modern:** Width 40" to 96"; Length 40" or more. Quilts using any technique that are inspired by modern design, often using improvisational piecing or appliqué and including bold colors, high contrast, and simple shapes on neutral backgrounds. Expansive negative space may allow the quilting to take the forefront.
5. **Wall Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted:** Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 60". Quilting must be predominantly completed on a stationary sewing machine that allows the quilter to move the fabric rather than the machine. Quilts made for display on a wall, using any technique.
6. **Wall Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted:** Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 60". Quilting must be predominantly completed on a movable quilting machine that allows the quilter to move the machine head rather than the fabric. Quilts made for display on a wall, using any technique.
7. **Fiber Art/Mixed Media:** Width 30" to 84"; Length 30" to 84". Works of art, made for display on a wall, using any technique, displaying innovative, contemporary design and materials, using fabric as the primary medium. This can include pictorial representation of a person, place, or thing.
8. **1st Entry in an AQS Quilt Contest:** Width 30" to 84"; Length 30" to 84". Quilts made for display on a wall, using any technique and may be quilted by hand, machine, or both. Contestant(s) must not have been displayed in any previous AQS Quilt Contest.

Rules Specific for PADUCAH

Enter Your Quilt Online by: November 20, 2025

To enter the Paducah AQS Quilt Contest, submit your entry(ies) online at go.americanquilter.com/contests. Good Luck!

- All General Quilt Contest Rules apply (See pages 2–3).
- Quilts must be available to AQS from March 20, 2026 until one week after the event.
- Quilts must fit within the size requirements and definitions of the categories.
- Quilts in all categories except Category 5 must have been made by no more than 2 people (excluding the quilter). Quilts with three or more makers must enter the group category, listed with a group name and names listed as stitchers.
- At this AQS Contest location, written judging evaluations are provided for each quilt exhibited.

Note: See General Rule 9 (page 2) for the definition of Stationary Sewing Machine or Movable Quilting Machine.

Decision Notification Emails will be sent: January 6, 2026

Categories:

1. **Large Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted:** Width 60" to 110"; Length 80" or more. Quilting must be predominantly completed on a stationary sewing machine that allows the quilter to move the fabric rather than the machine.
2. **Large Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted:** Width 60" to 110"; Length 80" or more. Quilting must be predominantly completed on a movable quilting machine that allows the quilter to move the machine head rather than the fabric.
3. **Large Quilts – 1st Entry in an AQS Paducah Quilt Contest:** Width 60" to 110"; Length 80" or more. Quilts made for display on a wall using any technique and may be quilted by hand, machine, or both. Contestant(s) must not have been displayed in any previous **AQS Paducah** Quilt Contest or won a cash award prior to this AQS contest year.
4. **Hand Quilted Quilts:** Width 60" to 110"; Length 50" or more. Quilts can be any technique. Quilting must be predominantly completed by hand.
5. **Group Quilts:** Width 60" to 110"; Length 50" or more. Made by 3 or more people. Quilts may be quilted by hand, machine, or both.
6. **Wall Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted:** Width 50" to 84"; Length 40" to 84". Quilting must be predominantly completed on a stationary sewing machine that allows the quilter to move the fabric rather than the machine. Quilts made for display on a wall, using any technique.
7. **Wall Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted:** Width 50" to 84"; Length 40" to 84". Quilting must be predominantly completed on a movable quilting machine that allows the quilter to move the machine head rather than the fabric. Quilts made for display on a wall, using any technique.
8. **Wall Quilts – Quilter's Choice:** Width 50" to 96"; Length 40" or more. Quilts made for display on a wall, using any technique of your choice.
9. **Wall Quilts – Modern:** Width 40" to 96"; Length 40" or more. Quilts, made for display on a wall, using any technique, that are inspired by modern design, often using improvisational piecing or appliqué and including bold colors, high contrast, and simple shapes on neutral backgrounds. Expansive negative space may allow the quilting to take the forefront.
10. **Small Wall Quilts – Hand Quilted:** Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 72". Quilts made for display on a wall, using any technique. Quilting must be predominantly completed by hand.
11. **Small Wall Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted:** Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 72". Quilting must be predominantly completed on a stationary sewing machine that allows the quilter to move the fabric rather than the machine. Quilts made for display on a wall, using any technique.
12. **Small Wall Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted:** Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 72". Quilting must be predominantly completed on a movable quilting machine that allows the quilter to move the machine head rather than the fabric. Quilts made for display on a wall, using any technique.
13. **Small Wall Quilts – Quilter's Choice:** Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 72". Quilts made for display on a wall, using any technique of your choice.
14. **Fiber Art/Mixed Media:** Width 30" to 84"; Length 30" to 84". Works of art, made for display on a wall, using any technique, displaying innovative, contemporary design and materials, using fabric as the primary medium. This can include pictorial representation of a person, place, or thing.
15. **Small Wall Quilts – 1st Entry in an AQS Paducah Quilt Contest:** Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 72". Quilts made for display on a wall using any technique and may be quilted by hand, machine, or both. Contestant(s) must not have been displayed in any previous **AQS Paducah** Quilt Contest or won a cash award prior to this AQS contest year.
16. **Miniature:** Width no more than 24"; Length no more than 24". All aspects of the quilt are reduced in scale. Quilts may be quilted by hand, machine, or both.

Rules Specific for GRAND RAPIDS

Enter Your Quilt Online by: April 30, 2026

To enter the Grand Rapids AQS Quilt Contest, submit your entry(ies) online at go.americanquilter.com/contests. Good Luck!

- All General Quilt Contest Rules apply (See pages 2–3).
- Quilts must be available to AQS from July 17, 2026 until one week after the event.
- Quilts must fit within the size requirements and definitions of the categories listed for this AQS Contest location.
- Written judging evaluations are NOT provided for this quilt contest.

Note: See General Rule 9 (page 2) for the definition of Stationary Sewing Machine or Movable Quilting Machine.

Decision Notification Emails will be sent: June 16, 2026

Categories:

1. **Large Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted:** Width 60" to 110"; Length 60" or more. Quilting must be predominantly completed on a stationary sewing machine that allows the quilter to move the fabric rather than the machine.
2. **Large Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted:** Width 60" to 110"; Length 60" or more. Quilting must be predominantly completed on a movable quilting machine that allows the quilter to move the machine head rather than the fabric.
3. **Hand Quilted Quilts:** Width 40" to 110"; Length 40" or more. Quilts can be any technique; quilting must be predominantly completed by hand.
4. **Modern:** Width 40" to 96"; Length 40" or more. Quilts using any technique that are inspired by modern design, often using improvisational piecing or appliqué and including bold colors, high contrast, and simple shapes on neutral backgrounds. Expansive negative space may allow the quilting to take the forefront.
5. **Wall Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted:** Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 60". Quilting must be predominantly completed on a stationary sewing machine that allows the quilter to move the fabric rather than the machine. Quilts made for display on a wall, using any technique.
6. **Wall Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted:** Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 60". Quilting must be predominantly completed on a movable quilting machine that allows the quilter to move the machine head rather than the fabric. Quilts made for display on a wall, using any technique.
7. **Fiber Art/Mixed Media:** Width 30" to 84"; Length 30" to 84". Works of art, made for display on a wall, using any technique, displaying innovative, contemporary design and materials, using fabric as the primary medium. This can include pictorial representation of a person, place, or thing.
8. **The Ultimate Guild Challenge:** Width 30" to 60"; Length 30" or more. This challenge honors the results of a quilt guild's challenge to its members. The guild issues its own challenge to its members, choosing rules, fabrics, themes, or whatever! The top eight quilts from the guild are submitted as one entry to The Ultimate Guild Challenge.

Each individual can stitch or quilt only one challenge quilt for one guild.

Each guild selects a primary entrant who creates an account and submits:

An entry form for the eight quilts including:

- The guild's challenge description and challenge rules.
- A group photo of the guild members.

For each quilt:

- A full description, details, appraisals, and/or design permissions
- A full and detailed image
- A non-refundable entry fee (\$25 if any contestants are AQS members, \$40 if all are non-members).



Rules Specific for LANCASTER

Enter Your Quilt Online by: May 21, 2026

To enter the Lancaster AQS Quilt Contest, submit your entry(ies) online at go.americanquilter.com/contests. Good Luck!

- All General Quilt Contest Rules apply (See pages 2–3).
- Quilts must be available to AQS from August 14, 2026 until one week after the event.
- Quilts must fit within the size requirements and definitions of the categories listed for this AQS Contest location.
- Written judging evaluations are NOT provided for this quilt contest.

Note: See General Rule 9 (page 2) for the definition of Stationary Sewing Machine or Movable Quilting Machine.

Decision Notification Emails will be sent: July 14, 2026



Categories:

1. **Large Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted:** Width 60" to 110"; Length 60" or more. Quilting must be predominantly completed on a stationary sewing machine that allows the quilter to move the fabric rather than the machine.
2. **Large Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted:** Width 60" to 110"; Length 60" or more. Quilting must be predominantly completed on a movable quilting machine that allows the quilter to move the machine head rather than the fabric.
3. **Hand Quilted Quilts:** Width 40" to 110"; Length 40" or more. Quilt can be any technique; quilting must be predominantly completed by hand.
4. **Modern:** Width 40" to 96"; Length 40" or more. Quilts using any technique that are inspired by modern design, often using improvisational piecing or appliqué and including bold colors, high contrast, and simple shapes on neutral backgrounds. Expansive negative space may allow the quilting to take the forefront.
5. **Wall Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted:** Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 60". Quilting must be predominantly completed on a stationary sewing machine that allows the quilter to move the fabric rather than the machine. Quilts made for display on a wall, using any technique.
6. **Wall Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted:** Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 60". Quilting must be predominantly completed on a movable quilting machine that allows the quilter to move the machine head rather than the fabric. Quilts made for display on a wall, using any technique.
7. **Fiber Art/Mixed Media:** Width 30" to 84"; Length 30" to 84". Works of art, made for display on a wall, using any technique, displaying innovative, contemporary design and materials, using fabric as the primary medium. This can include pictorial representation of a person, place, or thing.
8. **Miniature:** Width no more than 24"; Length no more than 24". All aspects of the quilt are reduced in scale. Quilts may be quilted by hand, machine, or both.

Contest Timetable • Questions

2026 AQS Quilt Contest Timetable and Important Dates

CONTEST	ENTRY DEADLINE	NOTIFICATION EMAILS SENT	QUILT DUE AT AQS	WINNER ANNOUNCEMENTS
Daytona Beach	September 18, 2025	November 4, 2025	January 16, 2026	February 18, 2026
New England	November 6, 2025	December 16, 2025	March 6, 2026	April 8, 2026
Paducah	November 20, 2025	January 6, 2026	March 20, 2026	April 21, 2026
Grand Rapids	April 30, 2026	June 16, 2026	July 17, 2026	August 19, 2026
Lancaster	May 21, 2026	July 14, 2026	August 14, 2026	September 16, 2026

Questions?

Visit go.americanquilter.com/contests for answers to the most frequently asked quilt contest questions and helpful links. For questions or more quilt contest information, email contests@americanquilter.com or call 270-898-7903.



2026 Quilt Contest Cash Awards

Paducah • \$127,700

Top Awards

Best of Show	\$20,000*
Best Hand Workmanship	\$12,000*
Best Stationary Machine Workmanship	\$12,000*
Best Movable Machine Workmanship	\$12,000*
Best Wall Quilt	\$5,000*
Best Miniature Quilt	\$3,000*
Best Wall Hand Workmanship	\$3,000
Best Wall Stationary Machine Workmanship	\$3,000
Best Wall Movable Machine Workmanship	\$3,000
Nancy Ann Sobel Award of Merit in Hand Quilting	\$1,000

*Purchase Awards become the property of AQS and are donated to The National Quilt Museum Collection.

Categories 1–15:

1st Place	\$1,500
2nd Place	\$1,000
3rd Place	\$750
Honorable Mention	\$100

Categories 16:

1st Place	\$500
2nd Place	\$300
3rd Place	\$200
Honorable Mention	\$100
Judges' Recognition	\$550
Viewer's Choice – Large Quilts	\$300
Viewer's Choice – Small Quilts	\$300

All Other AQS QuiltWeek Shows • \$54,550*

Best of Show	\$10,000
Best Wall Quilt	\$3,500
Best Hand Workmanship	\$3,000
Best Stationary Machine Workmanship	\$3,000
Best Movable Machine Workmanship	\$3,000
Best Original Design	\$2,500
Best Use of Color	\$2,500
Best Miniature Quilt (Lancaster Only)	\$1,000

In All Categories**

1st Place	\$1,500
2nd Place	\$1,000
3rd Place	\$750
Honorable Mention	\$100
Viewer's Choice	\$250

* AQS QuiltWeek Lancaster \$53,300

** In Lancaster - Category 8 Miniatures: 1st Place \$500, 2nd Place \$300, 3rd Place \$200

Design Permissions

Is your work a Totally Original Design?

The definition of a Totally Original Design is that it is NOT a copy of a previous work (any original artistic effort); it is an entirely new creation by maker, and is not any part of a pattern, quilt, or work of art designed by others. A Totally Original Design does not require design permissions.

When do you need to seek permission?

If you use someone else's pattern, mimic or duplicate in your own style the artwork, photography, or even another quilt as the basis, starting point, or full source of your design, it is important that you ask for and receive that creator/owner's permission before displaying your quilt publicly. This also includes depictions of art, which includes fan art. Even though the quilt and the hard work are all yours, the design is the intellectual property of its creator. Your quilt, even if the design has been altered, is considered a derivative work of their original design. Purchasing a pattern (or book, or photo, or magazine) gives you permission to make a quilt from the pattern only for your own use. It does not grant permission to publicly display the quilt for competition or to use it for commercial purposes

Who do I need to ask for permission?

- Quilt Patterns – All entries using pattern(s) require proof of design permissions at time of entry.
 - o Single pattern permission is typically the designer named on the pattern. Contact the designer.
 - o If published in a magazine, the permission is typically granted to the publisher for a set period of time. Contact the publisher.
 - o If published in a book, the publisher owns the rights. Contact the publisher.
 - o If uncertain, contact the Quilt designer/author and ask who owns the permission of the design.
- Photos
 - o If the photo was taken by a professional photographer, regardless of payment, you must contact the photographer.
 - o If the photo is procured online, review the website's usage agreement to determine if you have to credit

the image use or pay royalty. Online sourced photos, regardless of payment, require the statement of usage permissions at the time of entry.

- o If the photo was taken by a non-professional photographer, you must contact the photographer and seek permission.
- o If you took the photo, congratulations it's yours! Select Totally Original Design.
- Works of Art – Movies, Music, Art, Literature, etc.
 - o If derived from a piece of fine art, contact the artist, owner, or museum.
 - o If derived from a movie, contact the production company.
 - o If derived from music (use of song lyrics), contact the songwriter.
 - o If derived from literature, contact the publisher.

How Do I Ask Permission?

Seeking permission does not have to be intimidating or difficult. In most cases, a simple email is all that is needed. If you need a Design Permission Template, go to the Contest page at go.americanquilter.com/contests. Contact information is usually available through the book, magazine, or pattern company, and may even be printed in the book, magazine, or on the pattern. Often, designers, photographers, and artists have their own websites with contact information posted.

Inform the artist/designer that you have created a quilt from their pattern/artwork, attach a photo, and request their written permission to enter and display it in the contest and to publish photographs with proper source credit. Typically, they require the name of the artist/designer, the title, and publisher of the book, magazine, or website if applicable, and any other information that may seem important. Most of the time, people are happy to hear that a quilt inspired by their work is being entered into a juried quilt contest.

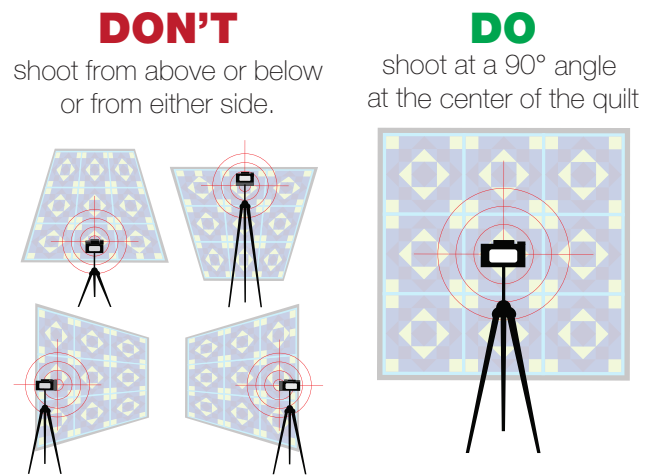


Important Information to Know When Shipping Your Quilt

- Protect the value of your quilts by having them appraised.
 - o It is very important to have a certified appraiser do an appraisal of your quilt. It is a relatively small amount of money to protect your art. Accepted entrants can request to have their quilt appraised while hanging at a QuiltWeek show.
 - o For more information about appraisals, go to AmericanQuilter.com, select Quilting Community, then choose Appraisers List.
- There are a couple of options when insuring your quilt:
 - o You can use a fine arts rider on your homeowner's insurance rather than buying the shipper's insurance.
 - o If you can't use your homeowner's insurance, shipping insurance coverage allows for up to \$1000 without an appraisal.

Important Photography Information

- Your camera should be on the highest-quality setting.
 - o Your file sizes will be larger, this is NOT a problem.
 - o The larger the file size, the better the image quality
- Keep your camera steady and in focus.
 - o Consider using a tripod.
- Use your best source of lighting.
 - o The best results come when shooting outdoors on a cloudy day.
 - o Avoid harsh, direct sunlight, as it distorts the color of your quilt.
 - o For indoor photos, choose a room with the most natural lighting or supplement with additional lighting.
 - o Avoid any shadowing over your quilt.
- Include a full photograph of the quilt.
 - o Save image as "title-of-quilt-f"
 - o For the best results, suspend your quilt from a curtain rod, letting it hang freely. There should be no folded corners.
 - o Shoot your quilt at a 90° angle from the CENTER of the quilt.
 - o No ribbons, tags, or obstacles on or in front of your quilt.
 - o Note: If you shoot your quilt from above or below, the quilt does not appear square (see illustrations). Do not photograph your quilt lying on a bed or the floor.
- Include a detailed photograph of the quilt.
 - o Save image as "title-of-quilt-s"
 - o Choose a 12-inch section of your quilt that highlights your piecing and emphasizes your quilting.
 - o Do not use a cropped photograph of your full quilt. Take a close-up photograph.



- Include a photograph of the quilter
 - o Save image as "firstname-lastname"
 - o This should be a headshot from the shoulders up.
 - o If you are a group or team of quilters, please use a group photo that includes everyone. If you are a group of quilters, save as group-name.

Trouble uploading?
Contact contests@americanquilter.com



Quick Reference Category List

DAYTONA BEACH	NEW ENGLAND	PADUCAH	GRAND RAPIDS	LANCASTER
Large Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted: Width 60" to 110"; Length 60" or more.	Large Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted: Width 60" to 110"; Length 60" or more.	Large Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted: Width 60" to 110"; Length 80" or more.	Large Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted: Width 60" to 110"; Length 60" or more.	Large Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted: Width 60" to 110"; Length 60" or more.
Large Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted: Width 60" to 110"; Length 60" or more.	Large Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted: Width 60" to 110"; Length 60" or more.	Large Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted: Width 60" to 110"; Length 80" or more.	Large Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted: Width 60" to 110"; Length 60" or more.	Large Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted: Width 60" to 110"; Length 60" or more.
Hand Quilted Quilts: Width 40" to 110"; Length 40" or more.	Hand Quilted Quilts: Width 40" to 110"; Length 40" or more.	Hand Quilted Quilts: Width 60" to 110"; Length 50" or more. Small Wall – Hand Quilted Quilts: Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 72"	Hand Quilted Quilts: Width 40" to 110"; Length 40" or more.	Hand Quilted Quilts: Width 40" to 110"; Length 40" or more.
Modern: Width 40" to 96"; Length 40" or more.	Modern: Width 40" to 96"; Length 40" or more.	Wall Quilts – Modern: Width 40" to 96"; Length 40" or more.	Modern: Width 40" to 96"; Length 40" or more.	Modern: Width 40" to 96"; Length 40" or more.
Wall Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted: Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 60".	Wall Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted: Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 60".	Wall Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted: Width 50" to 84"; Length 40" to 84". Small Wall Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted: Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 72".	Wall Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted: Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 60".	Wall Quilts – Stationary Machine Quilted: Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 60".
Wall Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted: Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 60".	Wall Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted: Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 60".	Wall Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted: Width 50" to 84"; Length 40" to 84". Small Wall Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted: Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 72".	Wall Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted: Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 60".	Wall Quilts – Movable Machine Quilted: Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 60".
Fiber Art/Mixed Media: Width 30" to 84"; Length 30" to 84".	Fiber Art/Mixed Media: Width 30" to 84"; Length 30" to 84".	Fiber Art/Mixed Media: Width 30" to 84"; Length 30" to 84".	Fiber Art/Mixed Media: Width 30" to 84"; Length 30" to 84".	Fiber Art/Mixed Media: Width 30" to 84"; Length 30" to 84".
1st Entry in an AQS Quilt Contest: Width 30" to 84"; Length 30" to 84".	1st Entry in an AQS Quilt Contest: Width 30" to 84"; Length 30" to 84"	Small Wall Quilts – 1st Entry in an AQS Paducah Quilt Contest: Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 72". Large Quilts – 1st Entry in an AQS Paducah Quilt Contest: Width 60" to 110"; Length 80" or more.		
		Group Quilts: Width 60" to 110"; Length 50" or more. Made by 3 or more people	The Ultimate Guild Challenge: (8) Quilts with the Width 30" to 60"; Length 30" or more.	
		Wall Quilts – Quilter's Choice: Width 50" to 96"; Length 40" or more. Small Wall Quilts – Quilter's Choice: Width 30" to 72"; Length 30" to 72".		
		Miniature: Width no more than 24"; Length no more than 24".		Miniature: Width no more than 24"; Length no more than 24".



2026 AQS Quilt Contest Timetable and Important Dates

CONTEST	ENTRY DEADLINE	NOTIFICATION EMAILS SENT	QUILT DUE AT AQS	WINNER ANNOUNCEMENTS
Daytona Beach	September 18, 2025	November 4, 2025	January 16, 2026	February 18, 2026
New England	November 6, 2025	December 16, 2025	March 6, 2026	April 8, 2026
Paducah	November 20, 2025	January 6, 2026	March 20, 2026	April 21, 2026
Grand Rapids	April 30, 2026	June 16, 2026	July 17, 2026	August 19, 2026
Lancaster	May 21, 2026	July 14, 2026	August 14, 2026	September 16, 2026