



How to display your quilts

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Quilts of any style are exquisite pieces of textile art and they deserve to be hung and appreciated by all. It's always handy to know how best to look after a precious quilt and, if there's the opportunity to display your work of art, it's important to know how to hang it in the most effective way. One advantage of using quilts as wall-hangings is that they absorb a substantial amount of noise. Large ones can always be returned to beds at a later date – and if you change your home decor, you have a perfect reason to begin a new quilt!

Here are some practical tips for displaying your quilts to their best advantage.

LOCATION

Wherever you plan to display your quilt, make sure it's not in the line of direct sunlight or strong artificial lighting.

MATERIALS

Raw timber contains acids so wood should not come in direct contact with cotton as it will discolour and age cottons as well as rayons and linens. If you use a chest for storage, take care to wrap the quilt in acid-free tissue paper or clean cotton sheets to protect it.

HANGING OPTIONS

Tabs

You can display a small or country-style quilt with tabs in a contrasting colour. These can be stitched to the quilt before the binding is sewn down, the secret being to have enough tabs along the top edge to ensure the piece won't sag when hung.

To work out the length of the tabs, put a tape measure over the rod you intend to use and, deciding on the desired finished length of the tabs, double this measurement and add $\frac{1}{2}$ in for the seam allowance. For the cutting width, measure how wide you want the tabs, double it and add $\frac{1}{2}$ in for the seam allowance.

Cut out a rectangle of fabric and then cut a piece of batting the same length but half the width. Fold the rectangle in half lengthwise with right sides together, place the strip of batting over it, aligning the edges and stitch down the long side. Turn the tube through, fold it in half then align the raw edges with the edge of the quilt top, see diagram 1.

Complete the binding then thread the dowel or rod through the tabs.

Rod pocket

The advantage of a rod pocket is that there is a piece of fabric between the rod

and the actual quilt. Any acid in a timber rod or coating on a metal rod, and any wear and tear will only affect the pocket and not the quilt. A concealed rod pocket can easily be incorporated into the finishing of a quilt if the binding hasn't yet been attached.

Rod pocket for an unfinished quilt –

Trim the batting and backing fabric to $\frac{1}{4}$ in past the edge of the quilt top after the binding has been stitched to the front of the quilt – don't roll the binding over to the back and hand-stitch it yet.

Measure the width of the quilt at the top edge then cut a 7in-wide strip to this size less 1in. It's a good idea to use leftover backing fabric – it has already been joined so it's the correct width and will match the backing, making the rod pocket less obvious if the quilt is used on a bed.

Fold a $\frac{1}{4}$ in hem under the two short ends and press them. Then fold and press under another $\frac{1}{2}$ in seam allowance and machine-stitch the hems in place.

Fold the rod pocket in half with wrong sides together then pin it to the back of the quilt, lining up the raw edges of the rod pocket with the top edge of the quilt. The rod pocket will sit slightly above the top of the binding seam from the back and equal amounts

