



make the thread fuzzy and stretchy. **Monofilament** – Single nylon or polyester filament.

Machine threads are available in various weights. Thread weight is actually a measurement of length per kilogram – so if a thread is labelled 40-weight, it means 40km of it weighs 1kg. It may only take 30km of a heavier thread to weigh 1kg, so it would be 30-weight. The smaller the weight number, the heavier the thread:

- 28wt or 30wt threads are heavier varieties that are usually used for ‘showy’ work such as decorative stitches.
- 40wt thread is ideal for quilting and blends in well.
- 50wt is finer, and is good for piecing and appliqué.
- 60wt is very fine and also appropriate for appliqué.

Choosing a suitable thread for a stitched project can be difficult as there are so many fibres and colours available. Often, colour matching is a matter of personal preference, as is picking the brand of thread you feel best suits your sewing machine. Here are some tips to help you select the right kind.

### MATCH THE FIBRES

If you’re using 100 per cent cotton fabric, as many quilters do, then cotton thread is best for machine-piecing. Using like with like means that the fibres are of equal strength and shouldn’t pose any problems; whereas polyester thread, for instance, is stronger than

cotton, and could tear cotton fabric. A good alternative is core thread, which is cotton wrapped around polyester. It has the strength of polyester, while the cotton wrap is in contact with the fabric.

### MATCH THE COLOUR

If you use the same colour thread in the bobbin as in the top of the sewing machine, then even if the bobbin thread pops up to the front of the work, it will blend and be hardly noticeable.

### TEST IT FIRST

While it might seem wasteful, you might have to throw away thread you’ve had for a long time as it’s probably no longer viable. It’s a good idea to check it before starting a new project – if it breaks merely by pulling it off the spool, it will likely snap in your machine too. ❖



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