

# Tips for Working with Flannel

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- ▶ Choose simple designs with large, uncomplicated pieces. Avoid working with tiny pieces.
- ▶ Buy extra fabric if you plan to prewash because flannels shrink and fray more than quilter's cottons when washed and dried.
- ▶ Choose low-contrast plaids rather than high-contrast.
- ▶ Spray starch helps to control stretching. Use before cutting. Flannel has more give than quilter's cottons and needs to be handled with a little more care to avoid stretching your pieces.
- ▶ Use quick cutting and piecing techniques. Larger flannel pieces make it easier to control the stretching.
- ▶ Use a large (60mm), sharp rotary blade. This will make it easier to cut through the layers of flannel.
- ▶ Increase stitch length to 2.5 or 3 (10-12 stitches per inch). A shorter stitch length tends to stretch the flannel and embed in the flannel's loose weave making it much harder to rip out seams.
- ▶ Press carefully to avoid stretching pieces out of shape. Do not use steam when pressing flannel.
- ▶ Be sure to clean your machine often. Flannel leaves a lot of lint behind.
- ▶ Use low loft batting. Flannel is heavier and warmer than quilter's cottons.
- ▶ If machine quilting, increase stitch length. For hand quilting, use perle cotton and utility quilting stitch.
- ▶ Cut French-fold binding 2½" wide. Flannel fabrics are heavier than quilter's cottons so you will need a slightly wider binding in order to have enough fabric to fold over the quilt edges.
- ▶ Start with a new needle when sewing flannel.