

Quilting on the Half Shell

free motion quilting, domestic machine

with Valli Schiller

Explore the clamshell family of quilting designs for fills, motifs, and borders. Though these versatile designs look complex, they're surprisingly easy to free motion quilt using grids and simple circles for marking. Optional ruler quilting makes them even faster.

In this class, you will...

- ✓ Learn to mark and free motion quilt various clamshell/circle based designs.
- ✓ (optional) Use ruler quilting templates and techniques to minimize marking.
- ✓ Get hands-on practice with a 20" square whole cloth sampler quilt (pattern provided) that you'll finish at home.

Skill Level—Intermediate

To get the most out of this class, you need working knowledge of free motion quilting.

You should already be comfortable with:

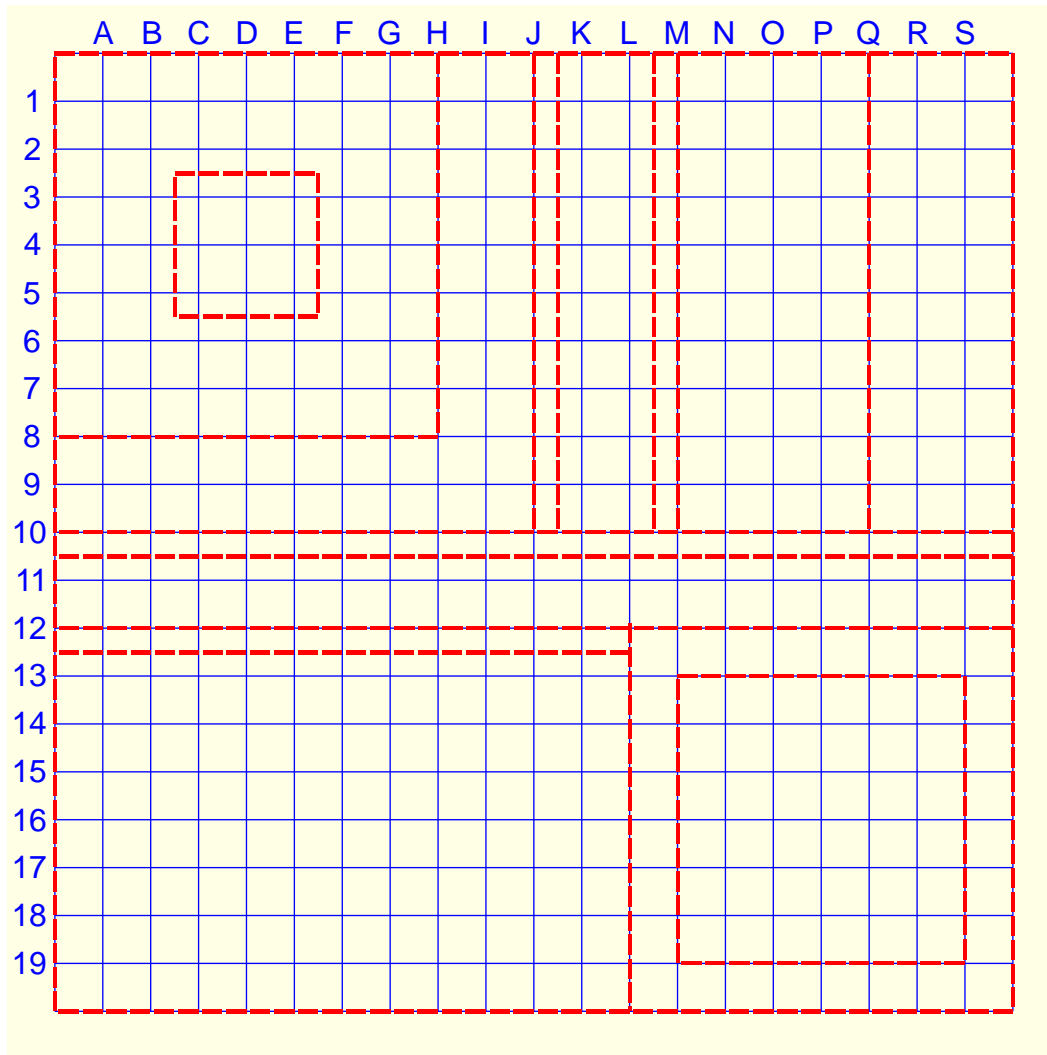
- ✓ Installing a free motion foot, dropping the feed dogs, setting automatic needle down, and making thread tension adjustments on **your machine**.
- ✓ Free motion quilting along a marked line, and freehand stippling/meandering.
- ✓ (optional) Using a ruler foot and acrylic templates to guide your free motion quilting.

Required Supplies

- Sewing machine in excellent working condition. **Bring your foot control** and manual.
- Free motion quilting (or darning/embroidery) foot for sewing machine.
- Bed extension table for sewing machine. The larger the flat surface around your needle, the easier it is to free motion quilt.
- Prepared quilt sandwich. See *Homework* section below.
- Small quilt sandwich for warming up and adjusting thread tension. Use scrap fabric and batting, no need to baste or mark.
- Thread & matching bobbin (50wt cotton or 40wt trilobal poly embroidery). Color should be same as quilt top or just slightly darker. Avoid using variegated thread for this project.
- Machine needles (90/14 *topstitch* or *quilting* needles are good choices)
- Thread snips
- Water erasable quilt marking pen
- Circle templates. See *Homework* section below.
- Straight ruler for marking guidelines
- Pencil and paper

Homework – do this BEFORE class

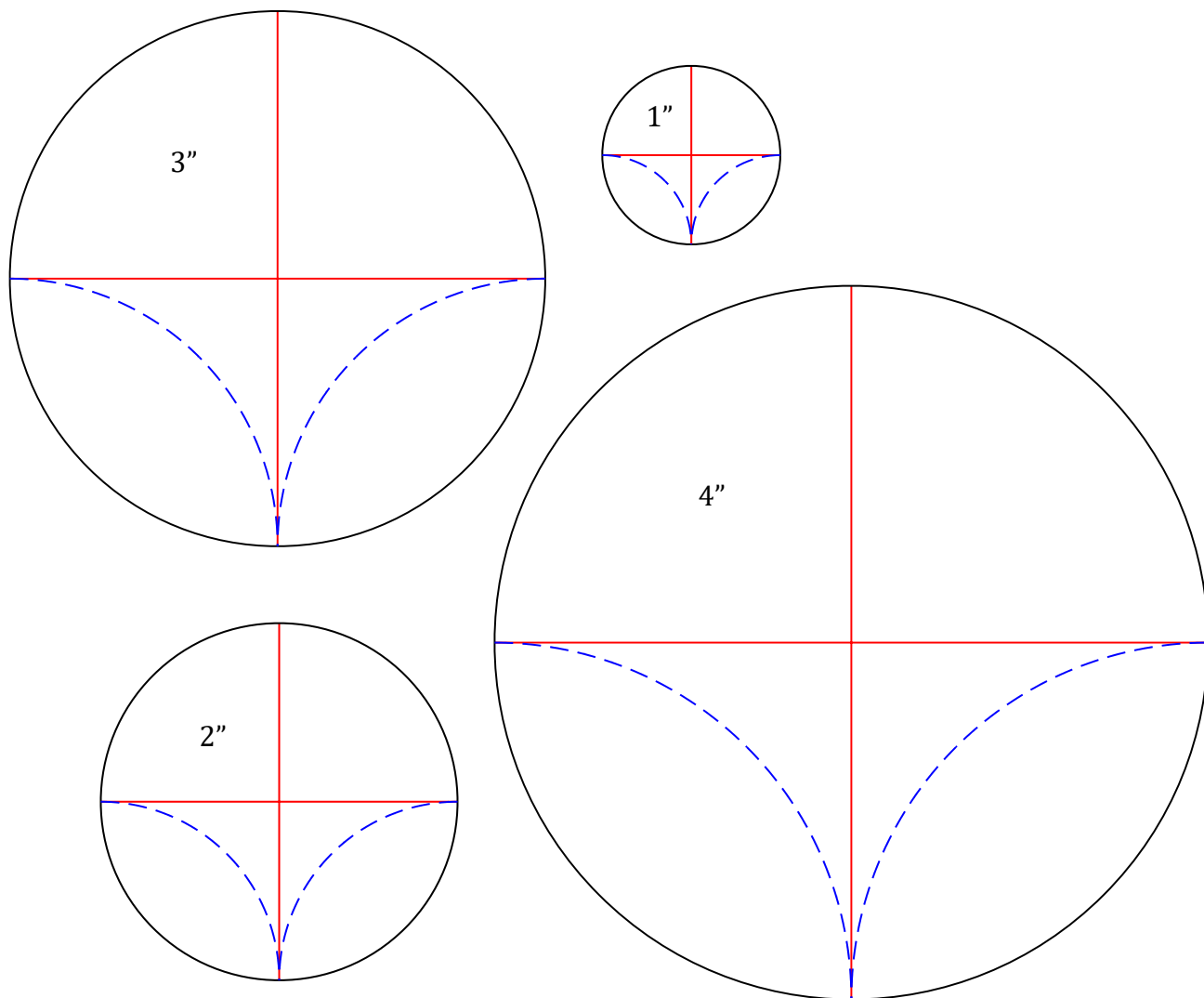
- **Mark** a 22" square of solid colored fabric with an all-over 1" grid (shown below in blue). Choose a fabric that shows markings easily. Leave a 1" unmarked margin around grid. Starting at top left, mark vertical gridlines with letters and horizontal gridlines with numbers
- **TIP:** A larger quilt sandwich will have room for more variations. Consider adding a border to your quilt sandwich, either marked with a 1" grid or pieced from 1½" cut squares.



- **Baste** marked top to batting and backing, using any method you prefer.
- **Quilt** the dashed red lines indicated above, using either walking foot or free motion. Take your time and **measure carefully**. These divisions are sized to accommodate the clamshell variations you'll be learning. Quilting these straight lines in advance will save you a lot of time in class.

Homework, continued

- Trace and cut out the following circle diagrams on transparent template plastic. Be sure to **print this supply list at actual size (100% scale)** and check diameter measurements for accuracy. If you prefer, you may substitute commercial circle templates in these sizes.



Optional Supplies (bring if you have them)

- *Supreme Slider*, *Sewslip*, or other silicone sheet
- Machine quilting gloves like *Machingers* or *Grabaroos*
- 1/4" graph paper
- Straight stitch throat plate for your sewing machine
- Long, bent tip tweezers
- Chalk marker

Ruler Quilting Supplies (optional)

- **Ruler quilting foot** specific to your sewing machine.
Bernina foot is #72; some *Janome* models can use the “convertible free motion foot” with “ruler toe”; the *Juki* “Ruler Foot for TL Series” is also compatible with several other straight stitch sewing machines. *Westalee* and *Accents in Design* make good after-market ruler feet for most makes/models – double check the size before you buy.
- **Circular acrylic ruler quilting templates**
 - Westalee/Sew Steady Clamshell*, *4" Arc*, and *2" Simple Circle* from Sampler Template Set #1, **OR**
 - Nested Mini Circles* from BERNINA Ruler Work Kit for Sit-Down Machines, **OR**
 - Other templates for stitching half or full circles with 4", 3", 2", and 1" diameters
- Straight edge acrylic template (for ruler quilting the pre-class *homework*)
- Apply non-slip **Handi Grip Adhesive Strips** to all templates.
- Masking tape