

## Educational Tidbit for June 2024

### REFRESHER ABOUT USE OF A ROTARY CUTTER

Happy June! Wow we are going into the sixth month of the year already. Time flies! The month of June brings us Flag Day, Father's Day, Juneteenth, and of course Summer begins. Let us hope that some sunshine will begin as well.

Beginning the last part of April and going through the month of May, I have been enjoying teaching 16 students in a class called Learn to Make a Quilt – A Beginning Quilt Class. The class goes through June 15<sup>th</sup>. During this class, I have been instructing some wonderful women in the art of quilting from beginning to end. Some have never used a rotary cutter, cutting mat, and ruler. We had some very interesting fabric cutting sessions. In order to provide better instruction, I went to YouTube for tips and a very handy beginner's guide in hard copy.

In addition to the class, every Monday, I go to our amazing Clubhouse 4 Quilt Room and work on projects and visit with members of our Crazy Quilters Guild and other folks who come in the room to work on projects. After observing some of the rotary cutting techniques used during these sessions, I decided this June tidbit would include a handout I provided to my students, just as a reminder to make good and safe habits when using our friend the rotary cutter. We need to remember that it is very sharp and can whiz through fabric, but can also cut a human. One little mantra I added to our in class instruction is: "Naughty, naughty, crossed the body". This little ditty can help you remember to cut safely, not quickly, and never cut toward any part of your body. Not only can you hurt yourself, but you will make a mess that you will have to clean up, no fun!

Please let me know if you have any ideas for future tidbits. I will be taking a hiatus until September on the tidbits, unless I have a brainstorm or you tell me you want me to research something. Have a great June, July, and August! Blessings to you and your family.

### Rotary Cutting Basics

(source: [Rotary Cutting Basics, A Beginner's Guide to Sizes, Types, Techniques Troubleshooting, Mats, Rulers, Safety and More](#), by Sarah Ashford, Published by C&T Publishing, Inc., P. O. Box 1456, Lafayette, CA 94549, copyright 2021)

Always use a cutting mat with a rotary cutter. A self-healing mat is highly recommended.

Always start with a fresh sharp blade for a good precision and accurate cut. A dull blade or nicked blade will yield poor cutting results. A dull or nicked blade requires more effort on the part of the user and one can end up over stressing hands, arms, and shoulders with that effort.

If you are right handed, you will hold the rotary cutter in your right hand and hold your cutting ruler in place with the left hand. If you are left handed, you will hold the rotary cutter in your left hand and hold the ruler in place with your right hand. **Remember: rotary cutter blades are very sharp – you do not want to cut yourself.** Make sure to move fabric, ruler, and mat in a configuration that allows you to safely cut the fabric. Use of hand weights can assist you if holding the ruler firmly in place challenges your physical abilities.

Let's begin cutting our fabric:

1. Line up the grain of the fabric parallel with the ruler and use the lines of the mat to ensure it is straight.
2. Line up the ruler with the grain and cross grain of the fabric, along the lines on the mat. Hold the ruler firmly in place.
3. Expose the blade on the rotary cutter.
4. Position the blade up against the ruler in a straight and upright position. Do not lean the rotary cutter left or right or push on the ruler.
5. Start cutting away from your body, applying firm pressure. Pause the cutting as you get further away from yourself to maintain pressure as you cut
6. After each cut, cover up the blade and put down the rotary cutter.