

April 2020 Educational Tidbit

GADGETS AND GIZMOS

There are so many wonderful gadgets and gizmos out on the market designed to help us with our sewing projects. I would like to introduce you to some that I have discovered. In this episode I show you a lighted magnifier, mini-vac, and cleaning brushes.

First, I want to discuss a lighted magnifier device that I got for Christmas. It is called the Daylight YoYo Magnifier, a product sold by the Missouri Star Quilt Company. It is small and the base is weighted. You can hold it in your hand, you can put it in your purse or pocket, and you can set it on your desk. It folds up and is very adjustable. The light is powered with three AAA batteries. I used it today to take out some snarled stitches. My sewing machine decided to ingest the leading edge of my fabric. I should have used a leader, but I did not, and so I paid the price. This magnifying gizmo was so great. I set it down, turned on its bright LED light, adjusted it so I could see the threads, and was able remove the threads without damaging the fabric.



The next gadget/gizmo item I want to introduce is a mini vacuum that I purchased from Nancy's Notions, along with a mini vac attachment kit. According to the write up at the Nancy's Notions website, manufacturers and colors may vary. Mine is bright red and it was produced by the Fuller Brush Company. If you wish to purchase that particular brand, you can go to Amazon or

simply Google “Fuller Brush Company Mini Vacuum”. I purchased this tiny vac because my sewing machine gets clogged up with dust bunnies that I cannot reach with a typical sewing machine cleaning brush, and a regular vacuum is simply too large and bulky. These bunnies grow at a steady rate from all the stuff that comes off fabric and thread as I sew, as well as environmental dust. I can usually tell that they have gotten pretty large because it affects the performance quality of my sewing machine. My machine begins to sound like it is growling at me.

To clean out the dust bunnies and other stuff that has fallen inside my machine below the needle and feed dogs, I remove the outside cover plate and anything that is loose that could get vacuumed up. To keep all these miscellaneous pieces from getting lost, I use a small wooden bowl to hold them. Below is a picture of the small vac, the debris removed in my latest cleaning (lots of big bunnies in there), and the bowl holding the pieces that I remove from the machine.

Another item I use for cleaning the machine are these little microfiber cleaning sticks, again available from Nancy’s Notions, under “machine cleaning brushes”. Shown below are 4 unused sticks, and the one on the right is the one I used to get the bits out that the vacuum missed. By cleaning my machine periodically, I can avoid machine break down, sewing complications, and expensive service repair calls.





OH BY THE WAY – Here is a package of the same type of cleaning brushes that our quilting friend Shari Riter purchased at the Road to California Quilt Show. Just in case you need to do a “Google” search to purchase some for yourself, the package says “Microbrush”.

I hope you enjoyed this tidbit. I will be back with you in May.