

Choosing and Using Wadding (T008-1)

Here's some tips for choosing and using wadding in your sewing projects.

About Wadding

The decision to use cotton, polyester or a mixed blend comes down to personal preference.

Some quilters prefer to use cotton because it is a natural product, but it will shrink slightly (which may be a desired effect).

Polyester will not shrink and is well suited to projects that will be washed regularly.

A mixed blend can offer the benefits of both types in a reduced way.

1. Choosing Wadding

Before you decide on wadding for your project consider what it will be used for. Don't use a piece you have left over from something else just to save money. If you have put a lot of time and effort into a piece, using the appropriate wadding will make it fit for the purpose you intended.

2. Wadding for Kids

If you are making something for a baby or young child, always use pure cotton wadding. It is warm, light, and fire-retardant and doesn't give off fumes like some polyester wadding.

3. Selecting the Right Thickness

Don't use thick wadding for small quilts. The quilt will have hardly any drape and won't have much of a snuggle factor.

4. Always Check 2oz Polyester Wadding

If you are buying 2oz polyester wadding, ask to see it rolled out before you buy. This grade of wadding varies widely in quality and some brands have unsightly ridges that will be noticeable on your quilt.



5. Joining Expanded Polyester Wadding

If you need to join expanded polyester wadding – butt the edges together and loosely join using a large zigzag hand-stitch and doubled thread.

6. Joining Cotton Wadding

If you need to join pure cotton wadding – butt the edges together and stitch on a sewing machine using a long zigzag stitch.

7. Never Iron Expanded Polyester Wadding

Do not attempt to iron your quilt if it has been made with expanded polyester wadding. The wadding will be permanently flattened and the quilt ruined.

8. Cotton Wadding Shrinks When Washed

Pure cotton wadding will shrink slightly when washed. This will give a lovely vintage feel to your quilt but, if you would prefer a more modern look, wash and dry the wadding before using.

9. Use Pure Cotton Wadding for Heat Insulation

Pure cotton wadding makes a good heat-resistant filling for tablemats and runners. Cotton is a good insulator and a poor heat conductor so will help to protect your tabletop.

10. Use a Double Thicknesses of Pure Cotton Wadding for Oven Gloves and Tea Cosies

This is just enough to avoid singed fingers and cold tea.