

Stitch in the Ditch

I'm ready to machine quilt this quilt. I've got the walking foot on and I have my quilt top, batting, and backing all pinned together. I made sure that the safety pins are not on the seam lines and before I've started, I've kind of drawn a rough, really rough, design here and I've put arrows in where I'm going to start and how I'm going to go around this quilt, because when you're stitching on the machine, you really don't want to start and stop. So I can go all around the squares, these squares in this quilt top, by starting in one place and ending in that exact same spot without having to start and stop. So the first thing I need to do is, I need to make sure that my bobbin thread is drawn up, so I just pull this up, just click on my needle one time to get this up. And the reason why I like it up on top is because if I have it underneath the quilt sometimes it gets caught up in the stitching, it's hard to get that out, so if it's up on top, it's great. I've also made sure that my needle position is always going to end up down when I stitch. I have something on my machine that allows me to do that. If you don't have that on your machine just try to remember to turn that needle so that it's down whenever you start stitching. And I've set my stitch length at a larger stitch length than normal, because when you're machine quilting you usually want that stitch length to be a little bit larger.

So I'm ready to stitch. Now I'm not going to do any fancy knots here for you, I don't want to get into that, but there's a number of different ways you can start that. I just backed it up and I reversed it and came forward; which isn't probably the best but that's what we're going to do now. So I'm stitching and I'm going to try to get the needle to come right down in this ditch. I don't want to come over on this side, I want the needle- I don't know if you're going to be able to see that well- but I'm going to put my nail here to show you that there's a hill with the fabric, the way it's been pressed, the hill is on this side and the valley is down here. So I want to be stitching into that blue and I want my needle to come right up against this red fabric. So here I go. And I'm just going to continue stitching.

Now notice my hands- this hand is way far over here. I want to stop, bring it forward because I really like to use my hands to act as like embroidery hoops, if you want to say, to sort of stabilize this. And I just continue stitching like this in the ditch. The problem is when you come to an intersection like this, sometimes it wants, the needle wants to jump. So I went through there kind of slow and notice, right here. It looks very strange and the reason why it looks strange is because when I pressed it, this has a tendency, the seam allowance underneath here, wants to come on this side. So I've got to be careful when I get to this spot, because once again, the needle is, now the needle is going to be on this red because I'm on a new section. So I've got the valleys down here, the hills right here, the needle's going to go down in this valley and push up against this so I've got to be careful when I come through here. So I can just continue stitching in the ditch that way until I've, let's go a little bit further so we can pull that up and show you what it looks like. When you're stitching in the ditch, when you're stitching in the ditch, what's going to happen is- you're not going to see the stitch. It's kind of, or it'll probably be hidden in the ditch.

So let me come over here and show you. Right here I didn't do such a good job. I jumped and I went over on this side. Remember I said I want that stitching to be down in the ditch. I can say I did that on purpose to show you want not to do, but I really didn't do it on purpose. So the stitching is down here, it's in the blue. If I turn this over on the other side, you're going to see the stitching, it's just going to be straight lines stitching. And I'm going to do that all the way around the quilt.