

# Text Trapunto Technique



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This is a technique pattern. This resource is designed to teach you basic trapunto styling for you to add interest and personalization to your projects. You can add text to any quilt design. It works especially well in modern/contemporary quilts that are just begging you to fill in that “negative” space.

Let’s start with a test or sample block measuring 15” x 15”, finished.

*(Images will be of various letters.)*

## Supplies:

- 2 Fat Quarters
- 1 square of scrap batting 18” square
- Water Soluble Thread
- 2 additional pieces of batting scraps, larger than your monogram design
- Machine Quilting “hopper” foot attachment
- Quilting thread
- Sharp, small scissors
- Non-permanent marking pen

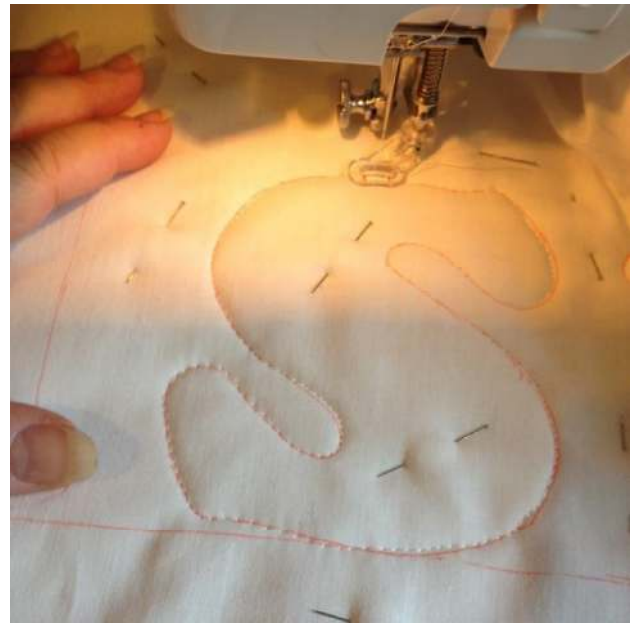
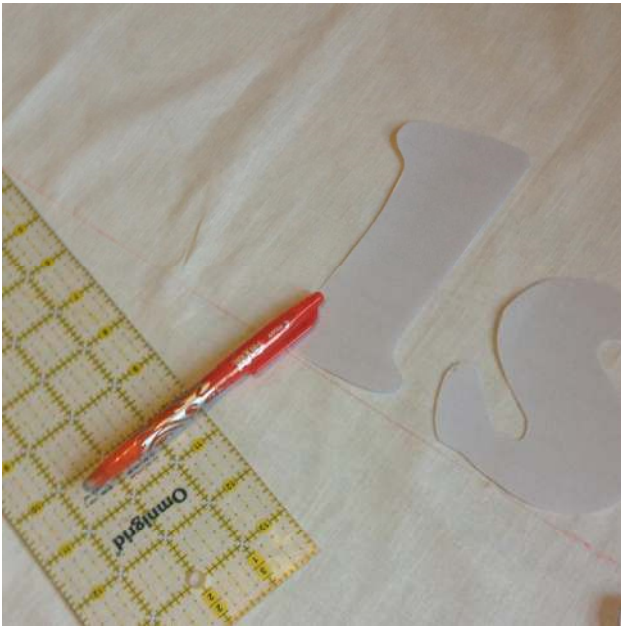
## Step 1: Trace Your Text

Decide on your text or monogram for this one block. I recommend one capital letter or symbol, such as the ampersand shown above.

Decide on a **fat** font. Thin areas on your letter or symbol will not show up as well and balanced as a nice all-round fat letter. You can find fonts at [dafont.com](http://dafont.com) or [1001freefonts.com](http://1001freefonts.com) or [fontspace.com](http://fontspace.com). Check out CooperStd or Ravie fonts. If you already have a font or letter style you love, try making the letter “bold” or “strong” or “heavy” to increase its weight. On your computer, make the font size as large as possible to fill up an entire sheet of paper. (or as large as your finished project requires)

Print your letter or symbol & cut it out. I always print in a faint, light grey to save on ink/toner.

Press fat quarters. Trim the main/top fat quarter to 16”.



Using a non-permanent marking pen, such as Frixion, determine your letter placement and trace your letters. Consider placing your letter off-center, using the [rule of thirds](#) for more visual interest.

## Step 2: Prep and Stitch

Layer the two pieces of scrap batting on top of each other and behind the traced letter.

**NOTE:** The batting scraps do NOT have to be behind the entire 16" block. The batting DOES have to be behind the marked shape, completely.

Pin around and in the entire marked shape.

Using Water Soluble Thread in the needle and regular white thread in the bobbin, stitch along the marked line through the layers of batting.



### Step 3: Trapunto Magic

Working from the back, trim away all the excess batting, 1/8" outside the stitched line using the very sharp small scissors. Be careful not to cut through the main fabric itself.



**NOTE:** If you are working on a project that will be sent to a long-arm quilter, do this step to your top sheet and send it off. Of course, he/she will want to know a trapunto top is coming as it will be a "custom quilt design" and will, likely, affect the price.

### Step 4: Quilting

Layer your prepared quilt top, the full 18" batting, and the larger fat quarter backing to create a traditional "quilt sandwich". Pin outside the letter's stitched lines. Pin outside the letter's stitched lines.

Switch the sewing machine presser foot to the Free Motion Quilting or Hopper foot. Set the stitch length to Zero (0) or drop the feed dogs for free motion quilting. Switch the thread back to regular machine thread.

To define the letter and secure the two layers of scrap batting, first, stitch around the letter on the marked line. This quilting line should fall on top of the water soluble thread stitching line.

*Optional: Carefully stitch 1/8" around the letter a second time to define the letter and give it dimension. Shown Right ->*



For the trapunto layers to really stand out, it is important to have tighter, close quilting near the letter. The easiest bet is tiny circles.



Straight lines also work well.



The trick is developing a quilting look that will let you stitch tight around the letter and expand into the rest of the quilting design.

In both samples, the quilting mixes straight edges with soft curves.

Remember, this is just a single block. Try something crazy!

**Fig 1:** The pebbles around the trapunto letters work their way into the quilt design in alternating rows of swirls and pebbles.



**Fig 2:** This pebble design bleeds into horizontal lines and crazy-worm-feathers. The irregular shape helps the motion in the quilting itself.



**Fig 3:** This quilt mixed quilting styles throughout and as a result had the all sorts of shapes flowing all over the place.



### Step 5: Trim & Finish

Once the quilting is complete. Trim the project and bind using your favorite binding method. (For this single block, trim to 15" x 15".)

You can see more Text Trapunto ideas & pictures at [reannalilydesigns.com](http://reannalilydesigns.com)