

FABRIC FIEND

I'm the first quilter in my family. It all started 10 years ago when I walked into my local quilt shop and fell in love with their fabrics. My husband bought me a sewing machine that Christmas - little did he know what he was getting himself into! It took me a month to open the

box and to teach myself to sew. I decided to try quilting first because in my opinion, there's no better way to showcase fabrics than with a quilt! I got the quilting bug fast, and set up a blog dedicated to it.

Following the birth of my son in 2012, I felt drained creatively. The only time I

had to quilt was late at night and when I was very tired - not ideal when using a rotary cutter! I felt somewhat discouraged as I could never finish a project. That's when I started experimenting with quilt-asyou-go. I found it to be such a fun, creative and refreshing solution - I could make modern and traditional quilts, and finish them fast. I started with a simple place mat, and then made an entire quilt. My creativity came back with a vengeance and I felt compelled to share my passion for this style with the world. I started teaching classes at my local quilt shops and blogging about my projects.

MODERN METHODS

As you may know, traditional quilting requires you to piece together individual blocks and to assemble them to create a quilt top. You then make a giant quilt sandwich (consisting of the quilt top and backing with wadding in between) and tack it with hundreds of pins. Following that, you then run the whole thing through a sewing machine to quilt it - which can be challenging and tiresome.



In comparison, my quilt-as-you-go method is similar to paper-piecing, except the fabric is pieced directly onto small wadding blocks instead of paper. It's a form of improvisational quilting which doesn't

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> require a precise pattern. It also allows you to craft intricately, without the hardship of running an entire quilt through your sewing machine. Instead, you work with smaller wadding blocks, which makes it more manageable. After you piece and quilt the fabric directly onto the wadding blocks, you then assemble the shapes to create





your already-quilted top. To finish, you just add backing fabric (this is achieved with minimal sewing) and then bind it.

THREADS OF LOVE

I've made quilts of all sizes, table runners, place mats, coasters, pillow cases and bags using the quilt-as-you-go method. I enjoy

> being able to quilt a block each and every day and seeing immediate results. Having a stack of pre-quilted blocks also motivates me when starting a quilting project!

> I've received a lot of positive responses from my first book, Quilt As-You-Go Made Modern. People have contacted me to say they used to be afraid of quilting, but

thanks to my book they're now keen stitchers and are bursting with creativity. It's responses like this that have encouraged me to write my second book, out autumn 2017.

Excitingly, I recently designed my first fabric collection for Lecien Fabrics. It's called High Tea Collection and was inspired by my love for vintage china dishes. My passion for quilting stemmed from falling in love with fabric at my local quilt shop, so it's great to see it has come full circle!

I hope to keep inspiring people to be creative, whether that be via my books, or the latest project I've shared on social media. I want people to know they can finish their own quilts - whatever the size. It's so fulfilling to see people creating beautiful things, knowing that I might have played a small role in helping them get started. **@**



To find out more about Jera, head to quiltingintherain.com