

PRESSING TECHNIQUES & TIPS

In quilting, we press, not iron our fabric, during block and quilt top assembly.

- ❖ Press with a light touch using tip of iron and an up/down motion
- ❖ Set the pieces to be pressed with the seam allowance away from you and the darker fabric on top – or the fabric that you wish to press the seam allowance towards on top
- ❖ Press seam as sewn - this sets the seam and helps prevent distortion and stretching
- ❖ Open the piece on top away from you and gently glide the iron across the seam allowance – this prevents puckers and pleats
- ❖ Steam or No Steam – this is a personal preference
 - I usually opt for steam when constructing my blocks – I find that the seams ‘set’ better
- ❖ But when using steam there are a few points to keep in mind:
 - pre-wash your fabric and there should be no problem with shrinkage
 - do not have iron set too hot
 - after pressing I let the piece sit for a couple of seconds before moving
 - do not use a heavy hand as this could heat-set the pieces distorted
- ❖ When constructing strip sets they only way to get them to lie flat is to press throughout assembly
- ❖ Setting the seams as sewn is instrumental in preventing the rainbow effect when pressing long strips
- ❖ If I have ‘marked lines’ on my ironing board cover I will line up the seam to be pressed first
- ❖ If you press a seam incorrectly – fold the two pieces together again, re-set the seam, re-press in the right direction
- ❖ Other methods of pressing:
 - finger pressing
 - notions designed to ‘finger press’ such as a wooden iron
 - when finger pressing the seam sets better on a hard surface
 - Clover Mini Press Iron – used with a pressing square beside your sewing machine is handy
- ❖ Remember: No one way is the best – try different methods – and decide for yourself which method works best for you or the situation at hand
 - e.g. steam or no steam, seam pressed to one side or pressed open