

## 5 Really Good Reasons to Pre-Wash Your New Quilting Fabrics

- 1) Pre-washing the fabric equates to pre-shrinking the fabric. This translates to less shrinkage once the quilt is assembled and washed.
- 2) Removal of excess dyes. This may not seem like a very big deal, and nearly all of today's quilting fabrics are colorfast. But you can't tell by looking at a fabric if it's going to be the one that bleeds from one fabric to the next or from the front to the back of the quilt. I'd much rather know that a fabric is prone to bleed before I put in 1,000 hours of quilting assembly time.
- 3) If the fabric is going to release excessive dye when it's pre-washed, chances are it'll continue to bleed once it's in your project. Identify it and banish it from your cherished-to-be quilts.
- 4) Chemicals and sizing are added to the fabric in the manufacturing process, pre-washing removes those chemicals, making the fabric more accepting of products you want to add to make your quilt, like fusible web, fusible interfacing, or freezer paper.
- 5) It's one more opportunity to really appreciate your fabric before it's stored away or cut into it for a project.

## How to Pre-Wash Your New Quilting Fabrics

- 1) Instead of throwing freshly-cut fabrics directly in the washing machine, use a wash basin instead. You'll be able to see any of the dye-releasing culprits, and keep from having all kinds of raw-edge thread tangles and fraying.
- 2) Fill the basin with HOT water and a squish of dish soap and swish around.
- 3) Let the fabrics sit in the hot water for about 15 minutes, swishing occasionally. A certain amount of dye-release is normal and expected. If the water turns a dark color look for the culprit and evacuate it from the bath, and refresh the water before the dye adheres to the other fabrics.
- 4) Drain the hot water then fill the basin with the fabric with clear COLD water. This should stop any of the excess dye release. Make sure you add enough water to get excess soap out of the fabric. Do a second cold rinse if needed.
- 5) Put the fabric into the washer, set it to drain and spin, or a similar setting on your washer.
- 6) Next, put the fabric in the dryer. Based on the amount of fabric dry for 10 - 20 mins.
- 7) If you give a quilt as a gift, consider adding a dye-catching laundry sheet in a plastic bag with the quilt's washing instructions. You can even put \*cold water wash, gentle dry\* on the quilt's label.