

Hi all,

We had a discussion at the last guild business meeting about color bleeding in QOV. We have seen the problem before but it seems to be increasing in frequency. Some members routinely prewash their fabrics while others don't. We all love to use our left over fabric to make blocks from the pattern that are supplied in the newsletter. Because we use the intense blues and reds in most QOV along with the whites using unwashed scraps can be an issue. We have supplied a scrap and small fabric amount procedure and color bleed testing instructions which are included here. There are also some other notes and instructions for using Oxyclean to remove color bleed from a completed quilt.

I would encourage you to test or wash the fabrics/scraps that you will be using for any QOV. This will save on fabric and time wasted. Those of us that put blocks together and wash completed quilts thank you in advance for your efforts.

Renae Butler QOV Group Leader

How to Do a Fabric Bleed Test:

1. Place a small fabric sample in soapy water (2" square is plenty). Use the soap and water temperature that you use for washing your fabric and quilts.
2. Let stand for about 30 minutes. If the water is discolored, your fabric is bleeding.
3. If there is no color in the water, remove your fabric sample, do not rinse, place directly on a white paper towel. Wait a while and see if there is any color on the paper towel. If there is your fabric is bleeding.
4. If there is no color on the paper towel, the fabric should be OK, but I would still suggest washing it with Color Grabbers.

5. If you had color bleed on the paper towel, rinse out the soap and dry your sample. Repeat from step 1. If it bleeds again-don't use the fabric in a QOV.

It was suggested on a website and by a guild member that a product called Synthrapol can also be added to the wash cycle. This serves a similar purpose to Color Grabbers, the Grabbers absorb color from the water while Synthrapol keeps the color suspended in the water to be washed away in the rinse. You can find the product at some quilt shops and on Amazon.

Vinegar-The jury is out on vinegar. I always use a couple of tablespoons in my regular wash rinse instead of fabric softener and it works well for that. I just did some research on using it in the wash cycle for quilts and quilt fabrics. There doesn't seem to be agreement on whether or not it helps.

Dawn-Old articles say to wash quilts in Dawn Ultra to help with the color bleeding. The product is now label Dawn Ultra Original. It can be used when washing the quilts. It has been successfully used to remove the color bleed in small areas by rubbing it directly on the spots before rewashing.

Color Grabbers-Use multiple Color Grabbers. For a quilt or large amount of fabric put in 10 per load. They can be reused until the color is medium. They can be dried and then reused. For something where you suspect there will be more bleeding put in half new and used. That also gives a good indication about how much that particular fabric is bleeding. Color Grabbers can be purchased at Publix. Each box has a \$1 coupon in it. Publix sells them at BOGO pricing and you can use the box coupons with the BOGO special.

How to Wash small Fabric Scraps OR single blocks.

Start by sorting fabrics by color &/or light/dark
Fill small sink with warm water. Enough to float fabric.

Add 1tbs laundry detergent, 1tbs Dawn dish soap, 2tbs white vinegar and a color catcher sheet. Add fabric, swish by hand for a few minutes.

Let sit for 10 minutes, swish and rinse 2 times.

IF color catcher is saturated with color, drain, add another color catcher and repeat.

If 2nd color catcher has only a hint of color, it should be ok...but

Before drying, fabric is folded around 1" wet sq. of white muslin fabric.

Recheck 20 minutes later.

If OK I leave white fabric in fold, press dry and re-check.

Still transfer of color.....it is rejected.

To check a completed bloc:

Spray with water and spray starch,

Next, fold fabric over a small wet square of white muslin fabric.

Let sit for 10 + minutes and check for bleeding.

If OK, leave white fabric in fold, press dry and re-check.

If it bleeds then try to save by hand washing.

After washing, wrap in towel, twist to remove as much water as possible.

Place blocks and small fabrics in a mesh bag, put in dryer. When almost dry Press with iron.

Directions for removing Color Bleed from completed project:

Spray bleed with Oxyclean and let sit for 10 minutes. Rewash with laundry soap and lots of Color Grabbers.