

Ten Questions To Ask Before Buying a Longarm Quilting Machine System

1. Does the machine have stitch regulation?

Survey results show that stitch regulation is the most requested feature on a longarm quilting machine. Stitch regulation provides even-length stitches at a variety of quilting speeds. Look for two modes of stitch regulation. In one mode, the machine stops stitching when the quilter stops moving the machine. The other mode allows the needle to continue stitching at a chosen minimum speed, so you can precisely position stitches at corners and along rulers. A machine that offers both modes of stitch regulation offers the most versatility.

Handi Quilter longarm quilting machines, HQ18 Avanté and HQ24 Fusion, each have two modes of built-in stitch regulation: cruise mode and precision mode. Even the HQ Sweet Sixteen sit-down machine has optional stitch regulation through the optional TruStitch stitch regulator.

2. Does the machine's manufacturer have an authorized representative who will provide personal training and machine service, and is customer service and education readily available?

Hands-on training should be included by trained dealers or sales representatives when you purchase your machine. A trusted warranty for mechanical, electrical, and the outer casing provides you a guarantee of quality craftsmanship when investing in a quilting machine. Reputable companies will also provide you with convenient customer support service and education options.

Handi Quilter has a large network of trained retailers and customer service and technical support hotlines. In addition, an online discussion forum provides a community of Handi Quilter owners. Handi Quilter is committed to education and offers educational retreats, online education videos, and monthly educational webinars. Handi Quilter also supports our network of retailers with educators known for their machine quilting teaching and experience.

3. How much quilting space does the machine offer?

The throat space and quilting space are not equal. Be sure to ask about available quilting space. When considering a quilting machine, remember bigger is not always better. The best quilting space is always a comfortable distance for both sight and reach. The recommended distance is from a 12-inch through 14-inch reach for comfortably controlled quilting.

The HQ18 Avanté has 15 inches of quilting space. The HQ24 Fusion has 20 inches of quilting space. The HQ Sweet Sixteen has 16 inches of quilting space.

4. Does the frame system require constant adjustment as you roll your quilt?

Making adjustments to your quilting surface, by either raising or lowering your quilt frame to provide a flat surface on which to stitch, each time you roll your quilt, becomes very inconvenient and extremely time consuming.

The HQ Studio Frame and the Fusion Frame enable you to squarely load your quilt for precise quilting. The latches and hand wheel make it easy to advance the project as you quilt. An optional 24-inch Super Leader replaces the 18-inch leader and eliminates the need to reach across the frame to attach the backing.

5. Is the machine upgradeable with integrated computerized quilting capability?

Machines that are built with the ability to upgrade when new technology or components are available provide you a better value as you will not need to purchase a new machine. Many machines can be retrofitted for computerized quilting. Integrated computerized quilting functions provide you better control, increased functionality, and more quilting options.

Handi Quilter offers HQ Pro-Stitcher. HQ Pro-Stitcher effortlessly integrates Handi Quilter's world-class quilting machines with innovative computer and software technology to guide the machine to quilt any design you want to use, create, or customize. HQ Pro-Stitcher works with all of the popular Handi Quilter stitch-regulated quilting machines: HQ24 Fusion, HQ18 Avanté, and the HQ Sixteen.

6. Are any dangerous moving parts mounted on the outside of the machine?

Machines with exposed belts can be a significant safety hazard. Motors mounted inside the machine are safer and quieter than outside mounts.

Handi Quilter machines are both safe and quiet and have no exposed belts. They are very easy to maintain because the only place you need to regularly oil is the bobbin hook.

7. Does the machine have integrated functions as well as add-on accessories such as a laser light, electronic micro handles, and more lighting?

Lasers provide a convenient way to trace pantographs and patterns. Make sure that the laser is not battery operated and can work from the front and back of the machine. Micro handles provide you with a way to have additional stability and control when doing detailed work. Adjustable lighting and electronic fingertip controls are important features.

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The Handi Quilter longarm machines include a laser and rear handlebars so you can use pantographs. Handi Quilter also offers many optional accessories to enhance your quilting experience, including integrated micro handles, additional lighting, horizontal spool pin for using specialty threads, rulers and templates, groovy boards and stylus, and more.

8. How much does the machine weigh? Does the machine run smoothly at both high and low speeds?

A machine that is too heavy will cause stress on back, neck, and arms. Test any machine for five minutes or longer to get a sense of what several hours of quilting might feel like. A comfortable weight is usually 65 pounds or less. Too much vibration can cause excessive noise and poor stitch quality.

Although Handi Quilter recommends that two people lift the machines when necessary, they are not excessively heavy. They are sturdily built and will provide years of quilting. Many Handi Quilter machine owners have stitched tens of millions of stitches with their machines.

9. Does the machine have a hopping foot and a large bobbin?

A quilting hopping foot “hops,” eliminating dragging and unwanted folds in the fabric. This foot should be round with 1/4 -inch equal distance between the needle and the outside of the foot. The hopping foot should be thick enough to accommodate 1/4-inch

thick acrylic templates and rulers to help quilters achieve precision quilting, including stitching in the ditch or echo quilting around pieced seams.

M-class bobbins are the largest in the commercial quilting industry and hold nearly three times as much thread as an L-class bobbin (depending on the thread weight). Large bobbins save time, while maintaining superior stitch quality.

Handi Quilter machines come with a 1/4-inch hopping foot and M-class bobbin. An external bobbin winder is included with each machine purchase which makes it easy to wind bobbins for quilting. An optional open-toe hopping foot is available for those who want greater visibility to where the needle is stitching.

10. Where is the machine manufactured and is there a trusted warranty?

If it's important to you that your quilting machine is manufactured in the USA, then ask the question. A trusted warranty for mechanical, electrical, and the outer casing provides you a guarantee of quality craftsmanship when investing in a quilting machine. Reputable companies will provide and stand behind their written warranty and will provide you convenient customer support services.

Handi Quilter machines are manufactured in our North Salt Lake, Utah headquarters. We provide a comprehensive warranty and provide local support through our retailers and added support from our Utah offices.

For more information on Handi Quilter products and services please visit our site:



Designed by a Quilter, for Quilters.®

www.handiquilter.com

1-877-MY-QUILT (697-8458) or 801-292-7988

Checklist of Questions

HQ¹⁸ Avante®

HQ²⁴ Fusion®

Competitor

Available quilting space	15" Depth/8" Height	21" Depth/9.5"Height	
Stitches-per-inch range	4 to 18	4 to 24	
Stitches-per-minute (maximum)	up to 1800	up to 2200	
Stitch-regulator modes	Precision & Cruise/Standard	Precision & Cruise/Standard	
Variable speed control	Standard	Standard	
Auto-needle positioning (Needle up/down)	Standard	Standard	
Integrated laser light (front and rear mount)	Standard	Standard	
Start-up accessory kit (bobbins, needles, thread, leaders, oil, brush, etc...)	Standard	Standard	
Training and quilting educational DVD	Standard (120 mins)	Standard (120 mins)	
Quilter's hopping foot	Standard	Standard	
Simple tension adjustments	Standard	Standard	
Full, half- and walking-stitch selections	Standard	Standard	
Bobbin size	Large M Class	Large M Class	
Use either metal bobbins or pre-wound bobbins	YES	YES	
Capable of computerized quilting	YES	YES	
MP3 player	NO	YES	
Manufactured/Assembled	USA	USA	
Machine weight (with handles)	54 lbs	65 lbs	
Solid-cast machine?	YES	YES	
Stretch or cut machine?	NO	NO	
Internal belts and motors?	YES	YES	
Quilt from front and rear of machine with INCLUDED front/rear handles?	YES	YES	
Vibration at high and low speeds	NO	NO	

Integrated, adjustable lights	Standard - LEDs	Standard - Adjustable LEDs	
Ultraviolet lights ("Black" lights)	Available	YES	
Lights simple to replace	YES	YES	

Basic machine maintenance	Self-lubricating bearings	Self-lubricating bearings	
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Dedicated customer service/support	YES	YES	
Dedicated technical support	YES	YES	
Dedicated educators on staff for support	YES	YES	
Online support and training and social networks	YES	YES	
Interactive website (education, tips, videos, gallery, products)	YES	YES	
Trained/certified local HQ retail locations	300+ locations	300+ locations	

Rigid quality checks during manufacturing	7 major tests (5 hrs)	7 major tests (5 hrs)	
Machine passes an in-depth quilting test by a quilter prior to shipping	YES	YES	

Initial training and set-up	Local Reps	Local Reps	
Trusted manufacturer's warranty	YES	YES	
Casting defects	10 Years	10 Years	
Mechanical	2 Years	2 Years	
Electrical	1 Year	1 Year	

Frame System

4-roller frame system with NO adjustments needed after loading	Standard	Standard	
Frame and table options (4-12 feet)	Various Options	Standard	
Smooth aluminum/plastic track system with V-track wheels	Available	Standard	
Heavy-duty marked leaders are included	Standard	Standard	
Adjustability in height and length	Standard	Standard	
ALL accessories are included (poles/track/rollers)	YES Standard	YES Standard	

Delivery method	UPS	UPS or Freight	
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Price			
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