

Finish Line Unfinished Projects

You know they're there, even if they are out of sight, stashed in the back of a closet or tucked away in a bottom drawer. Somehow, they multiply. Cryptically referred to as UFOs, unfinished objects are the projects that once beckoned us with joy but now hound us with guilt. But why

don't we finish our quilts? In "Finish Line" in the March 2008 issue (400) of *Quilters Newsletter*, ZJ Humbach discusses some of the reasons cited in *The National Survey of Quilting in America 2006* by *Quilters Newsletter* and Quilts Inc. Here's the complete list with tips for avoiding UFOs:

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE REASONS YOU DON'T FINISH A QUILT PROJECT?

| REASON | TOTAL 2006 | ZJ's TIPS |
|--|------------|---|
| Find a New Project I'm More Interested In | 55% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluate why projects don't hold your interest - Work on smaller projects - Sign up for classes with enough time to finish during class |
| Enjoy Making the Top More Than the Quilting/Finishing | 40% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hire a longarm quilter - Try quilt-as-you-go methods - Let applique stitching double as quilting |
| Run Out of Time | 35% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choose project difficulty based on time available - Make smaller projects - Hire a longarm quilter |
| Get Bored with the Same Project | 30% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluate why projects don't hold your interest - Select multitechnique quilts - Make smaller projects |
| Don't Like the Quilt Top | 15% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consult with a longarm quilter - Wait until it's quilted before deciding |
| Don't Like the Fabrics Together | 11% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Add borders to change focus; different sizes/colors or pieced add interest - Audition different threads - Use a variegated thread to blend colors - Let quilting motif be more predominant - Consult with a longarm quilter |
| Made a Mistake and Abandoned the Project | 10% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take a short break - Determine if it's worth fixing or if it will make it worse - Ask yourself if it's significant; it may not be visible once quilted or from several feet away - Be creative—strategic applique or embroidery works wonders. Some of the best quilts began as mistakes |
| Project Too Difficult | 5% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluate what skills you need - Brush up on techniques—read or take classes - Ask a skilled quilter for help - Set it aside and grow into it later |
| Project Too Big | 5% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Break it into smaller sections, similar to block-of-the-month quilts - Work on other projects simultaneously - Have a friend help you; then help her - Hire a longarm quilter |
| Other | 10% | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have a longarm quilter layer and baste your quilt; then you can hand or machine quilt it |

If you absolutely do not like the top or decide to abandon it, please pass it along to someone who will put it to good use. The Quilts of Valor Foundation gives quilts to wounded service members and connects quilters with volunteer longarmers. Visit their website at qovf.org.