



CARING FOR YOUR QUILTS

Proper care of quilts is an important part of a quilts history. Some quilts are created as heirlooms, some just for fun. Either way, a few simple steps can lengthen the life and beauty of your creations.

A Few Words About Antique Quilts

If a quilt is more than 50 years old, it is considered an antique and should be handled with great care. Only the airing, vacuuming and storage instructions are recommended for antique quilts. We do not recommend laundering an antique!

Before Washing a Quilt...

Washing a quilt should be a last resort. Often a quilt just needs a good airing and or maybe some quick spot cleaning rather than a full body wash. Read the following information completely before washing a

quilt. There may be a gentler way to clean the quilt.

AIRING QUILTS

Often a quilt may just need a good airing with maybe a little spot cleaning here and there (see Spot Cleaning on page 2).

Airing Indoors~ If you have a spare bed, lay the quilt out on the bed to air out.

Airing Outdoors~ #1 rule: No direct sunlight! Place a 100% cotton sheet on the ground. Place the quilt on the sheet and allow to air out. Move the sheet and quilt as necessary to keep direct sunlight from hitting the quilt. A clothesline can be used if the quilt is small and it is not a bright sunny day.



VACUUMING

This is the most non-invasive form of cleaning a quilt. Lay the quilt on a cotton sheet. Place



the quilt on top of the sheet. Place a piece of nylon/fiberglass screening, (edges covered with twill tape) on top of the quilt. Using a hand attachment and lowest suction setting vacuum the quilt. If you do not have access to screening place an old piece of pantyhose over the vacuum attachment and vacuum the quilt.

SPOT CLEANING (a form of wet cleaning)

If you did not make the quilt and are uncertain as to the quality of the fabrics, it is recommended you test each fabric for colorfastness before wet cleaning. Dip a cotton swab in water and rub on an inconspicuous area (if possible) of the quilt. If any of the dye comes off onto the swab do not wet clean. If the fabric passes the water test move on to testing for cleaning solvent stability. Dip a swab in the solvent you will be using to spot clean (Orvus soap works best; QuiltWash is not recommended for spot cleaning). Test a dry section of the fabric. Again, if dye comes off onto the swab do not wet clean. If the fabrics pass the test. Spot clean away!

LAUNDERING (a form of wet cleaning)

Test the fabric for color fastness before washing (see Spot Cleaning).

Never use a top loading washing machine. The agitation produced can pull at the fibers in the quilt and damage it. Front loading machines do not agitate so they are best for this purpose. Be sure the machine you will be



using can handle the quilt, when wet. If not, you may need to go to a laundromat. Be sure to run a cycle through the machine in case the person before you used bleach or harsh detergent.

DRYING

Dry using the outdoor airing technique described on page 1. If placing small quilts on a clothesline be sure to cover the line with a cotton sheet first.



STORING QUILTS

AIR

Store in dark areas with good air circulation. Never store quilts in damp places. If storing on shelves make sure they are painted/finished to avoid damage from the wood.

CLOTH BAGS

Again, good air circulation is necessary. Cloth bags made from 100% cotton work best. This will also protect the quilt from any bare wood including cedar in chests.



QUILT FOLDING

Place acid-free tissue paper between quilt layers. Scrunch tissue paper and place at the folds to avoid pancake creases. Refold stored quilts approx. Every 6 months so any stress on fibers is relieved and redistributed.

