

# MASTERING Swirls

Free-Motion Challenge Quilting Along



***Quilting Diagrams & Tip Sheet***

*For more information about the challenge, visit [QuiltingIsMyTherapy.com](http://QuiltingIsMyTherapy.com)*

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## Suggested Supplies

Dive into the world of swirl designs with me in this free video series and let's quilt beautiful swirls together. Below, you will find the suggested supplies for the class.

### Basic Supplies

#### Sewing Machine with a Free-motion Quilting Foot

Of course, to practice free-motion quilting you'll need a sewing machine with a free-motion quilting foot. Any free-motion quilting foot will work. If you're quilting along with me on a longarm, no worries! I will be demonstrating the designs on both types of machines.

#### Quilt Sandwich

To play around with all the designs, you'll need something to practice on. You can quilt along with me on the custom challenge panel, use an unfinished quilt top, or even some fat quarters. You can baste your quilt sandwich with any method that you prefer.

#### Needles

For quilting on a sewing machine, I love Superior's Topstitch Titanium needles, they are stronger and stay sharper longer. The size you use depends on the thread you are quilting with. I usually use a #90/14 or an #80/12.

#### Machine Quilting Thread

High quality thread can help prevent tension issues and thread breaks. I will be demonstrating the designs using, Glide, a 40 weight thread. 50wt cotton also works great for machine quilting.



### Optional Supplies:

While not necessary, you may find the following supplies helpful when quilting on your sewing machine:

- **Supreme Slider**- to help the quilt glide through your machine easier.
- **Extension Table**- gives you a larger area to work on and helps hold the quilt up.
- **Machine Quilting Gloves**- allows extra control when moving the quilt.

Welcome to the first week in the Mastering Swirls Free-motion Challenge Quilting Along. I am so excited that you're quilting along with me, I just know we are going to have a blast diving into swirls and learning all about this versatile design. This week features two video tutorials.

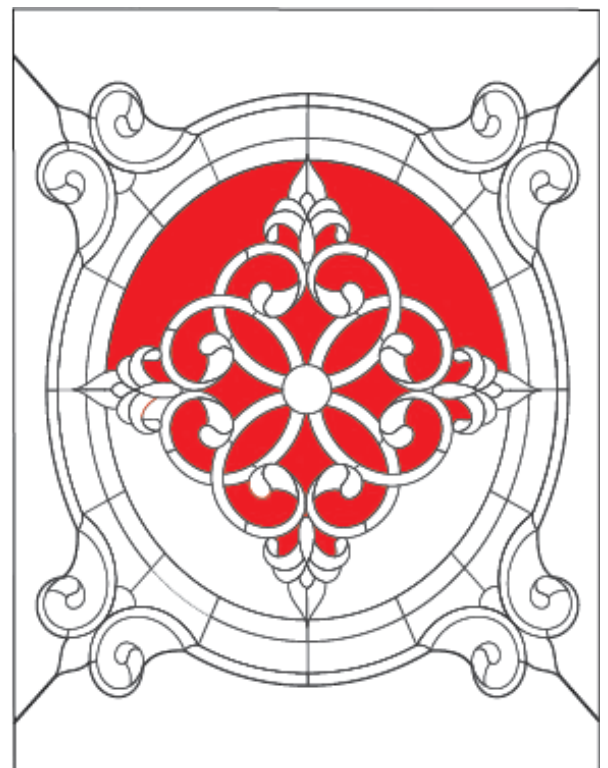
In the first video, I'll show you the basics of quilting the swirl meander. Learn how the design goes together and how to troubleshoot common swirl quilting frustrations!

It's one thing to know how to quilt a swirl, it's a completely different thing to know how to use it on a quilt. In the second tutorial, I'll show you how to use the swirl design in different areas of your quilts such as background areas and blocks. Learn how to fill in an area and how to (hopefully) avoid getting stuck.

## Your Challenge

If you're quilting along with me on the custom panel I designed for this videos series, fill in the areas highlight in red with swirls.

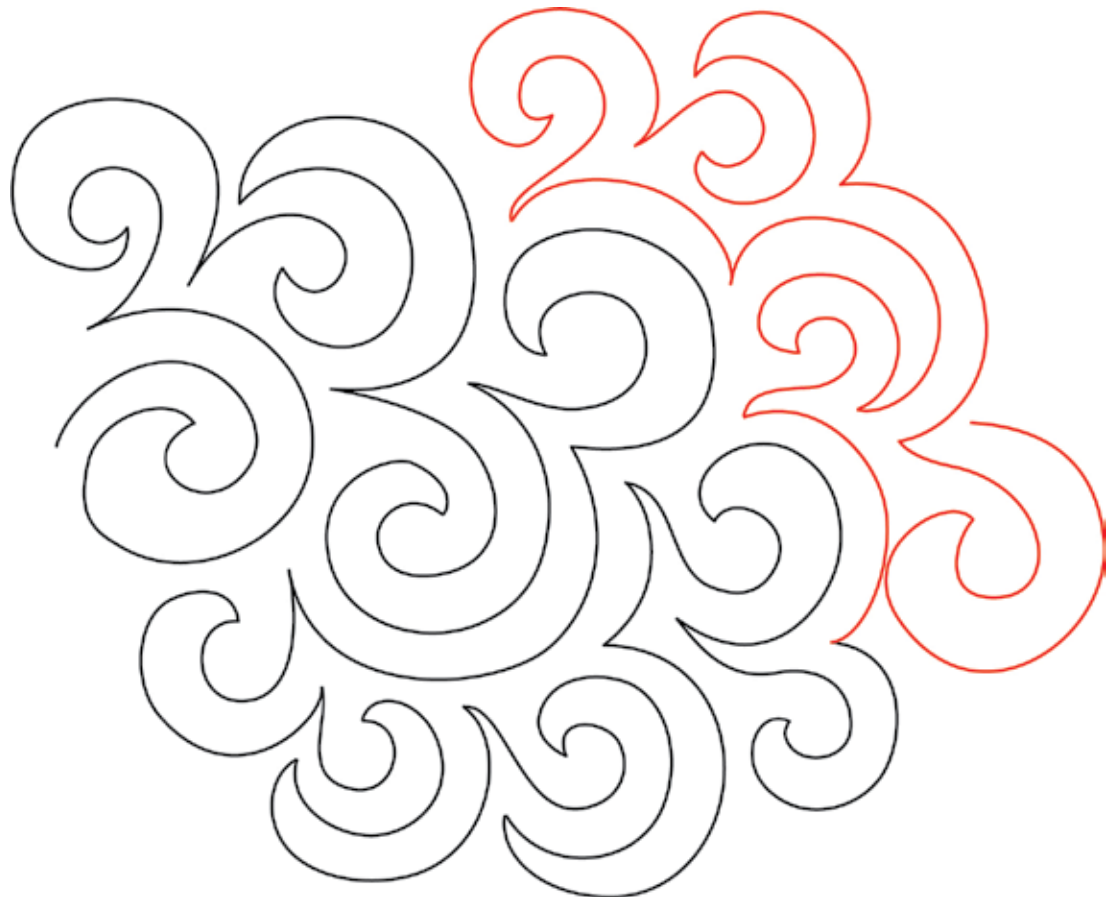
For more of a challenge, outline some of the shapes in the larger areas before filling them in.



## Quilting the Swirl Meander

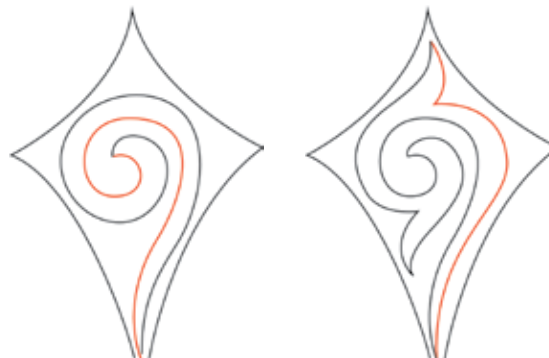
This versatile, stunning design, can be used in so many different ways: a curvy all-over design, a denser filler and even an elegant motif! But first, let's learn how the swirl meander goes together.

Try tracing along the lines of the diagram to get the hang of the way the design goes together.



## Swirls in Blocks

Even though swirls tend to be known as a filler design, they also work great in blocks. Whether you quilt a single swirl to fill in a block or string a chain of them together, it's a fun way to use this design in different ways.

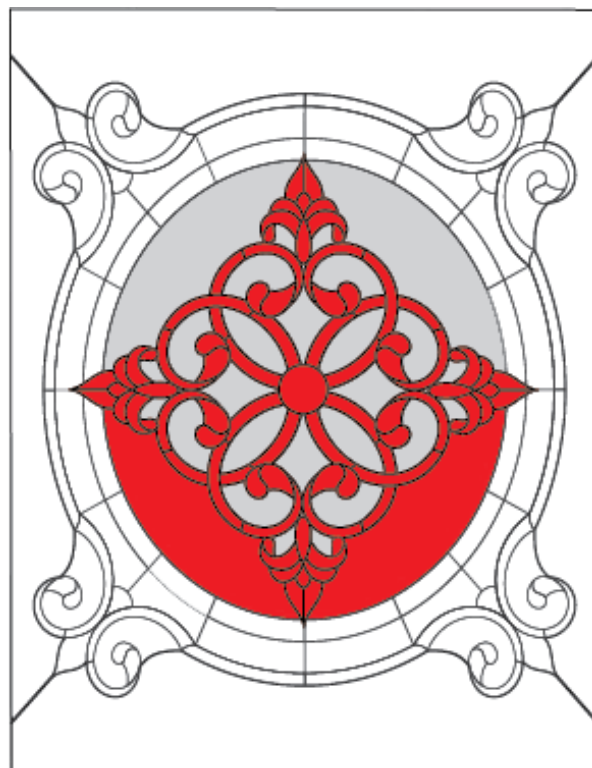
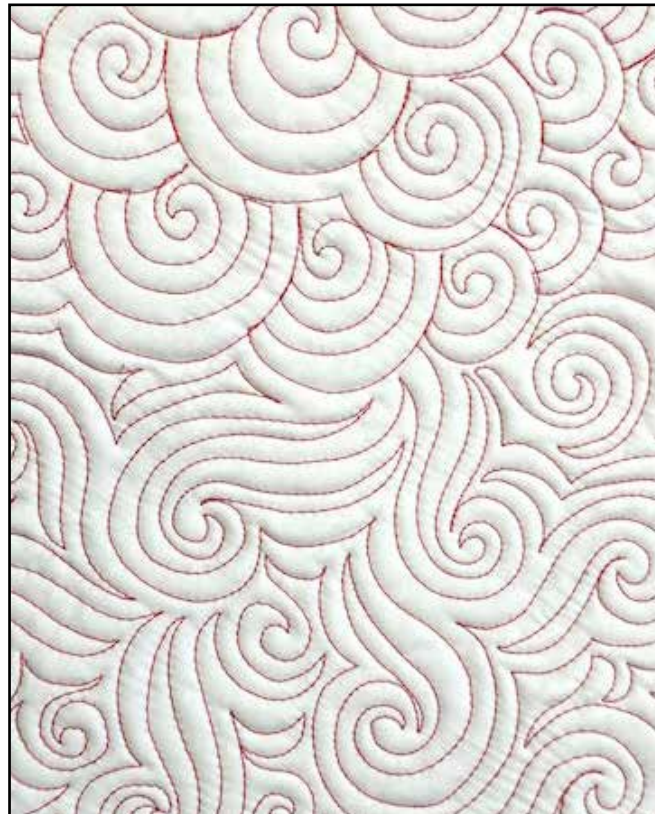


Welcome to the second week of the Mastering Swirls Free-motion Challenge Quilting Along. Last week, we learned how to use the swirl design in different areas of our quilts. This week, we're learning how to quilt two different types of swirl variations.

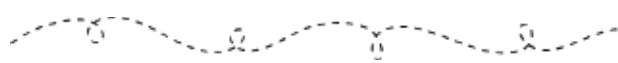
There are so many different ways to quilt swirls, it was difficult to decide which two to include! I finally narrowed the options down to the the elongated swirl and the concentric swirl. I chose these designs not only because they are some of my favorites, but also because they incorporate traveling and echoing. These two skills will help you create even more design variations.

## Your Challenge

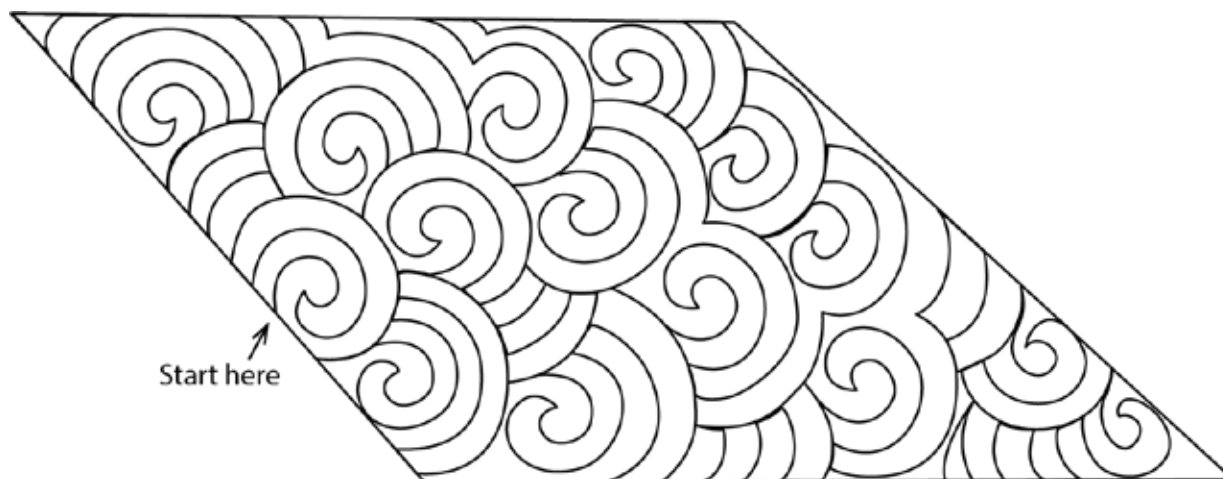
If you're quilting along with me on the custom panel I designed for this videos series, fill in the areas highlighted in red with swirls. For more of a challenge, outline some of the shapes in the larger areas before filling in the rest of the area. This is also the perfect time to quilt the center motif on the panel. I used serpentine lines in the white portions, but echo lines would look great as well.



## Quilting the Concentric Swirl

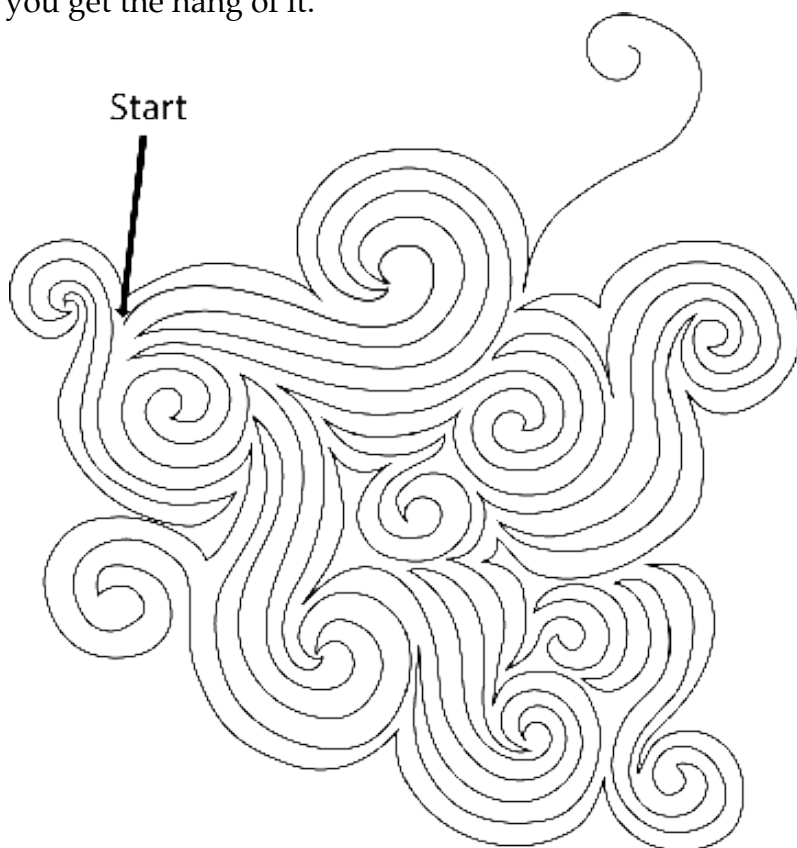


Add a little bit of traveling to the swirl meander to create the concentric swirl design. This design creates depth by appearing to “go behind” other elements, providing beautiful texture without drawing attention away from important parts of the quilt. Try using it around elements of the quilt that you want to highlight.



## Quilting the Elongated Swirl

Stretch out your swirls to create a variation that looks stunning on your quilt. This echo-heavy design is easy and fast to quilt once you get the hang of it.



# MASTERING Swirls

Free-Motion Challenge Quilting Along

## Week 3

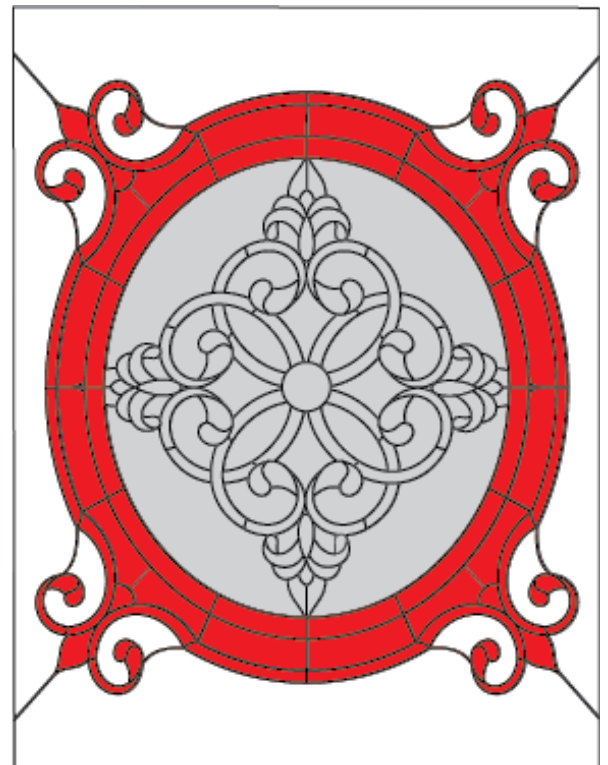
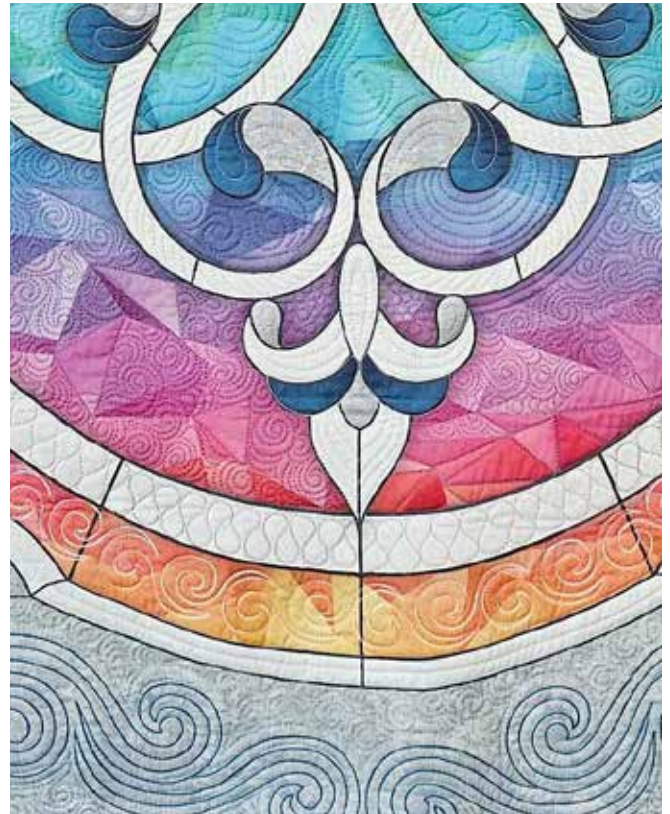
Welcome to the third week of the Mastering Swirls Free-motion Challenge Quilting Along. In this week's tutorial, we are learning how versatile the swirl design is by quilting it in a different area of our quilt. Instead of quilting swirls so they "meander" around to fill in an area, we're going to quilt them in a row to create a beautiful design for thinner borders and sashings.

While it might sound more difficult, I promise that it really isn't! In fact, some quilters find it easier to learn how to quilt the swirl design in a defined area, such as a sashing, as opposed to filling in larger areas.

Not only will I show you how to go about quilting swirls in the thinner borders, I'll also talk a little bit about the Ribbon Candy design. It's another one of those versatile designs that work great in thinner borders and sashings.

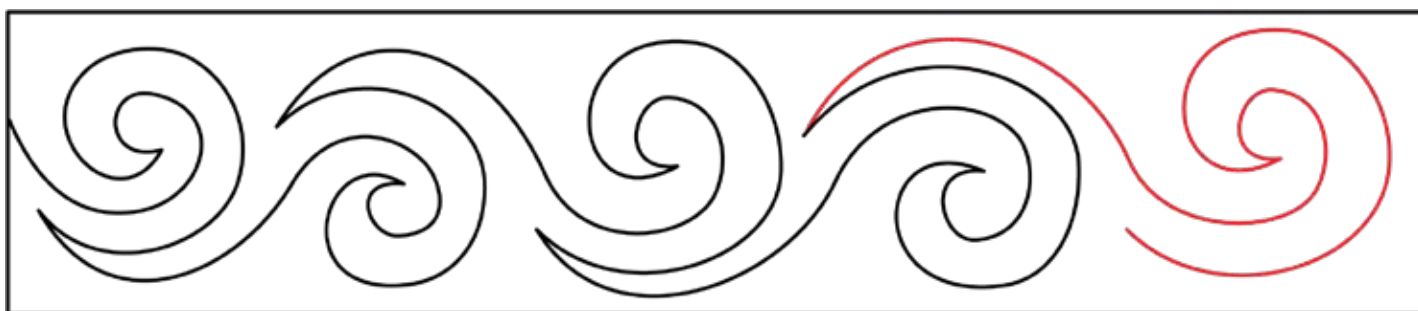
### Your Challenge

If you're quilting along with me on the custom panel I designed for this videos series, fill in the areas highlight in red. You can quilt along the lines in the fabric, or come up with your own design ideas. This is also the perfect time to quilt the outer white portion of the fabric design. Try quilting echo lines in this area, like I did, or experiment with other design ideas.



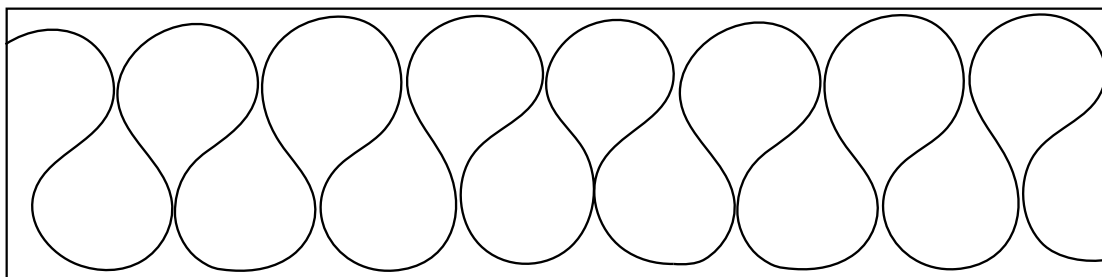
## Quilting Border Swirls

Swirls are a great design option for thinner sashings and borders. It's an easy way to add curvy interest to your quilt.



## Quilting Ribbon Candy

Ribbon Candy is another design that works great in skinner strips and borders. Try tracing the quilting diagrams until it "clicks".





In this week's video tutorial, we are going to echo, echo, echo to create an elegant Swirl Chain design.

The Swirl Chain is so fast and fun to quilt once you get the hang of it! It not only looks great in all areas of a quilt, it's also easy to use in so many different ways.

I have talked about the Swirl Chain design in past Free-motion Challenge Quilting Alongs, but it's definitely worth revisiting!

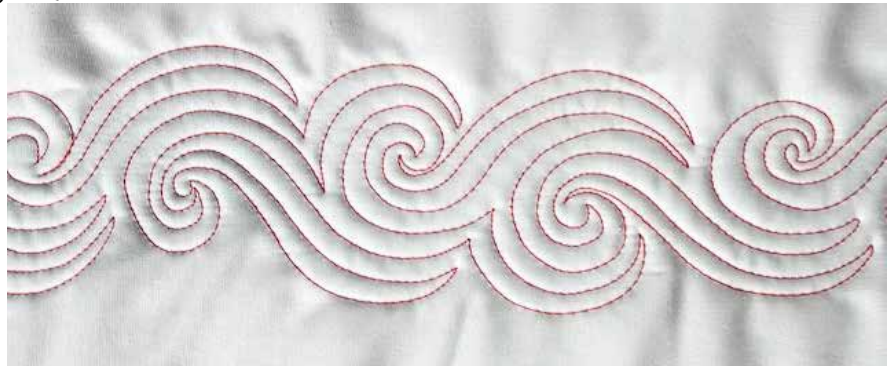
If you're quilting along with me on the panel, you might have noticed that I incorporated the swirl chain into the design of the fabric. You can quilt along the lines of the design to get the hang of how it goes together.

Think of it like quilting training wheels.

In this tutorial, I'll not only show you how the swirl chain goes together, I'll show you how to pick filler designs to use around it. When we're done, I hope you love this gorgeous design as much as I do!

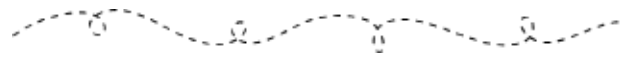
## Your Challenge

If you're quilting along with me on the custom panel I designed for this videos series, quilt along the lines of the swirl chain on the top of the panel. Then, fill in the rest of the top are with the filler design of your choice, or even with another swirl chain

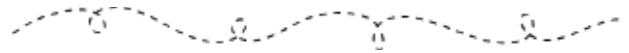


# Quilting the Swirl Chain

Get ready to echo, echo, echo! Quilting this elegant design is as easy as quilting a swirl, echoing and repeating.



## Filling Around the Swirl Chain



What you put around your swirl chain is as important as the design itself. To “highlight” your swirl chain, use a filler that is quilted more densely than the swirl chain. To help it blend in a little more, use a fill that is similar in density to the swirl chain.



Can you believe we're already to the last video in the Mastering Swirls Free-motion Challenge Quilting Along video series! We have certainly covered a lot of information. In this last video, I'm showing you how to quilt the curvy Swirl Scroll design.

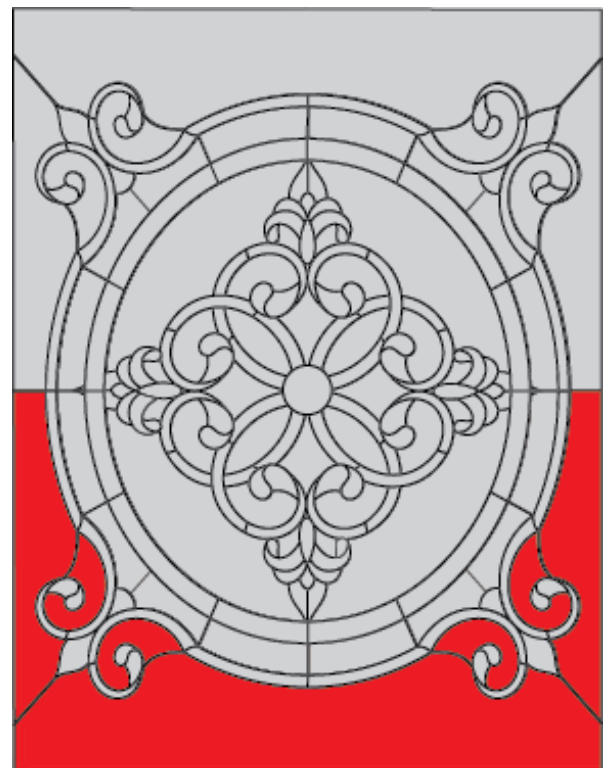
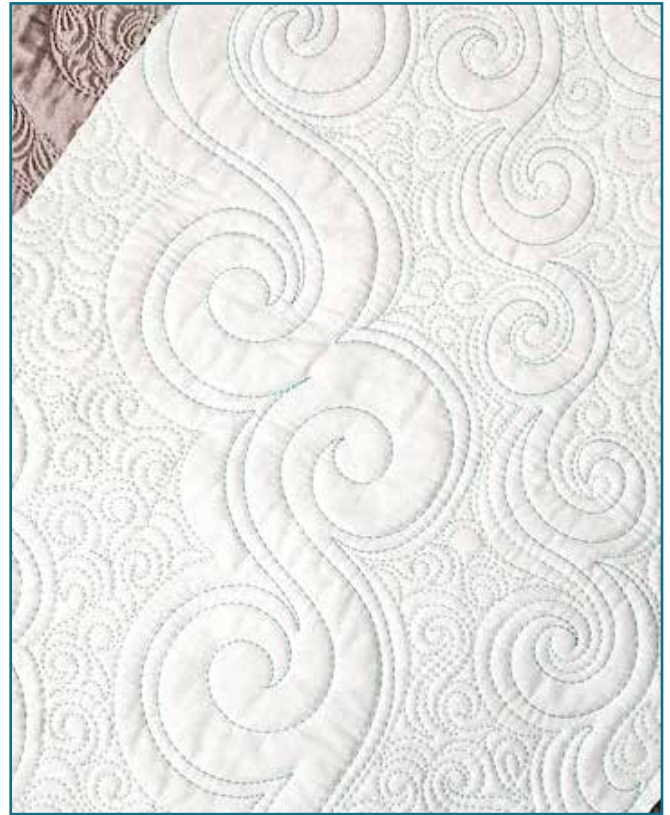
While this design might not get the same attention as other swirls, it's definitely worth learning. If you struggle with quilting echo lines, or perhaps just want something with a more minimalist look, then you are going to love this design.

The Swirl Scroll can be shrunk down and quilted in blocks, especially wedge-shaped blocks. Or you can go big and create a curvy, swirly design that draws attention to a particular area of the quilt.

As you practice the Swirl Scroll design, don't get frustrated if it doesn't "click" right away. The fact that one side is a mirror image of the other can take a moment to wrap your mind around how it goes together. Don't forget, tracing over the quilting diagrams will help you learn how the design goes together.

## Your Challenge

If you're quilting along with me on the custom panel I designed for this video series, fill in the remaining unquilted area. Try quilting a Swirl Scroll design in the background and fill in around it with the filler quilting design of your choice!



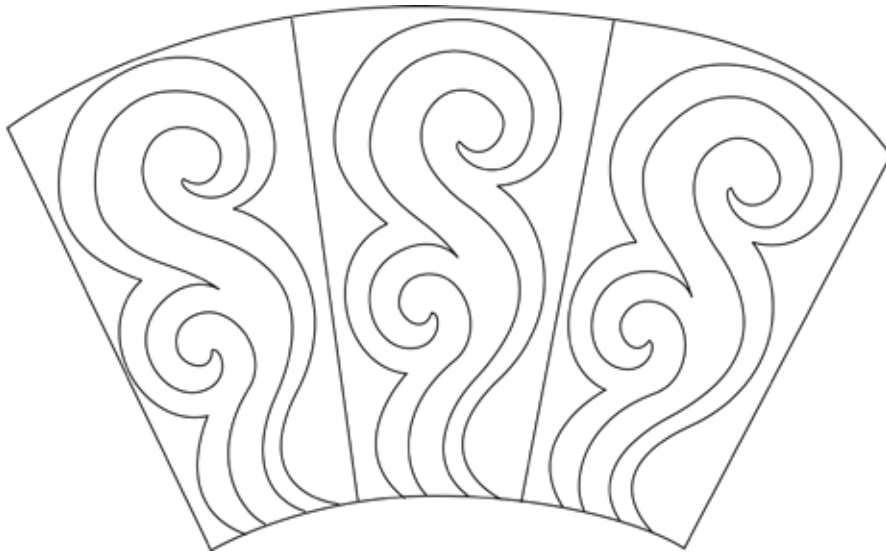
## Quilting the Swirl Scroll

While this design might not get the same attention as other swirl designs, it's definitely worth learning. If you struggle with quilting echo lines, or want a more minimalist design, then you are going to love this design! Try quilting a large swirl scroll in a bigger area or shrink it down to fit in blocks.

## Swirl Scrolls in Blocks

This design can pull double-duty! Not only does it look great as a larger motif, it also looks great quilted in a smaller size to fill in blocks. It's best for rectangular or wedge-shaped blocks and I especially love it for quilting multiple blocks.

Depending on the length of the block, your swirl scroll may have more or less swirls than shown below.



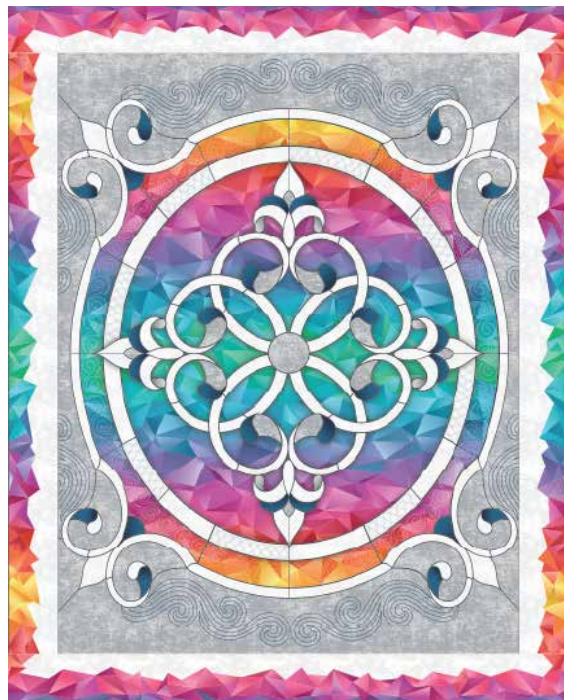


## Bonus: Quilting the Borders

If you purchased the optional border panel for the Mastering Swirls quilt panel, then you have just one more portion to finish! I designed the borders so that they would highlight the same geometric look as the panel, while still leaving room for quilting even more swirls. Below are a couple different quilting options for the borders. Pick your favorite to use on your quilt.....or come up with your own design option!

### Design Idea #1:

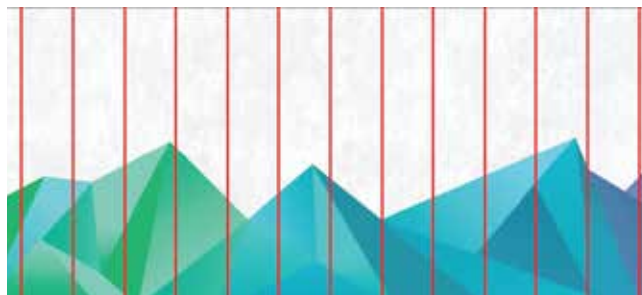
One easy way to quilt the borders is to first outline the geometric shapes in the fabric. This “stitching in the ditch” will help give the illusion that it’s actually pieced! If you find yourself stuck, just quilt over a previously quilted line to get to the next area. Then, for a nice contrast to the straight lines, fill in the rest of the area with a filler design. The swirl meander is obviously one of my “go to” designs, but most meandering designs can work.



*Design Idea #1*

### Design Idea #2:

Sometimes I just need a break! After quilting swirls in so many different ways, it might be nice to quilt something different. For a more minimalist, quicker option, try quilting piano keys. Consisting of just straight lines, it’s a great way to quilt borders where you don’t want to much attention or fuss!

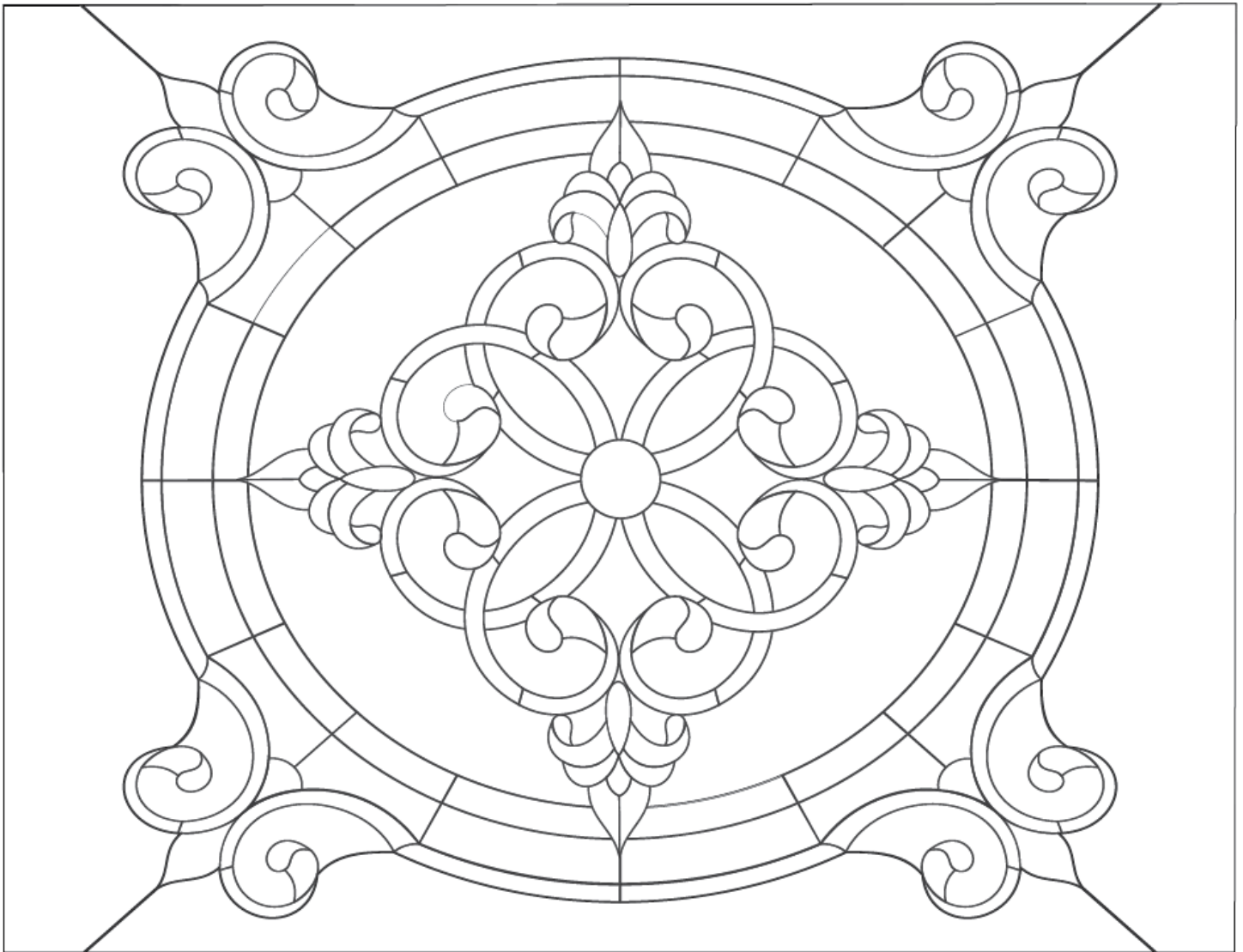


*Design Idea #2*

### Your Challenge:

You are in the home stretch! Finish quilting the borders of your quilt with the designs of your choice. Whether you outline the geometric part of the fabric and fill in the rest with swirls, try the piano keys, or come up with your own design ideas.

Use the diagram below to audition different designs for your FMQ Challenge Panel:



## Congratulations!

At this point, we have covered so many different facets of quilting the swirl design, you should be so proud of all that you have accomplished! I can't thank you enough for quilting along with me. I hope you will share pictures of your finished quilt, either on the Free-motion Challenge Quilting Along Facebook group or on social media.

I'll be back soon with another Free-motion Challenge Quilting Along. In the meantime, you can check out my previous challenges on my website, [QuiltingIsMyTherapy.com](http://QuiltingIsMyTherapy.com).



*Angela Walters*



# Free-Motion Challenge

## QUILTING ALONG

Learning how to machine quilt just takes practice....and it's so much more fun to practice with friends. That's why I started the Free-motion Challenge Quilting Along.

During a Free-motion Challenge Quilting Along series, join me, Angela Walters, as I guide you through a series of video tutorials based on a machine quilting design or technique. You can work through a challenge with the group as they are released or watch past challenges at your own pace. The best part? They are all free!

In the videos, you'll see the designs demonstrated on a longarm and a sewing machine, learn how to avoid common design frustrations, and be inspired to use them on your quilts!



Get the exclusive Free-motion Challenge Products. Available only at Quilting Is My Therapy!

