

Hints & Tips Jan 2020

FMQ

Suspension



Systems

For Domestic and Sit-down Quilting Machines

By Lennea Wolfe for Fun With Free Motion Quilting and Babylock Tiara Facebook groups.

Suspension systems are a great help for free motion quilters. I have heard them called “game changers”. A suspension system is a system of clamps or pulleys that hangs over a sewing machine and supports the weight of a quilt while you are quilting.

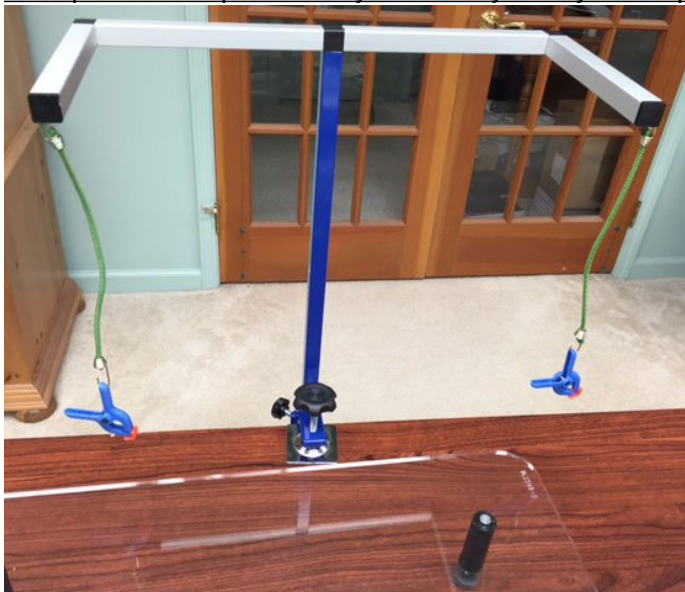
Why use a suspension system? It suspends the part of the quilt you are not working on in the air, reducing the amount of weight you are moving with your hands and supporting with your arms and shoulders, making it easier to move the part you are working on. It prevents a section of quilt from falling over the table edge and causing drag or a jerking movement while you are quilting. A clamp and cord allows you to position the quilt easily and quickly as you progress through the free motion process.

Where do I get a suspension system? Systems can be purchased in their entirety, or you can make a DIY system from easily obtainable items. I have seen a number of different ideas, including using a clothes rack, PVC tubing and suspending cables from the ceiling. I am going to concentrate on the two most popular systems.

Purchased systems, Patsy Thompson Designs:

Patsy Thompson makes two systems that can be used on a variety of tables. The first system, Called Quilt Suspension System 1, is for use on tables like the popular Koala table. Link and photo included here.

<https://www.patsythompsondesigns.com/shop/Patsys-Favorite-Notions/Machine-Quilting-Aids/p/Quilt-Suspension-System-1-by-Patsy-Thompson-Designs-LTD-x17642368.htm>



Patsy Thompson Quilt Suspension System 2 is for tables where a double side table clamp system is preferable.



<https://www.patsythompsondesigns.com/shop/Patsys-Favorite-Notions/Machine-Quilting-Aids/p/Quilt-Suspension-System-2-by-Patsy-Thompson-Designs-LTD-x20288596.htm><https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B001VPA9OK?>

A YouTube is also available for both of these systems. Here is the video for the Quilt Suspension System 2 : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xeneOkXkiJg>

DIME Weightless Quilter

This system is over twice the price of the Patsy Thompson system and is available from a wide number of online retailers including Sewing Machines Plus.

Rather than using clamps and bungee cords, it uses a floor support. It can be used in tight places and easily transported. While I have not tested this system, it looks more appropriate for smaller quilts.

You Tube has a video to demonstrate this system.



DIME
SKU: DW-WQUILT

DIME Weightless Quilter

List Price: ~~\$399.99~~

Sale Price: **\$299.99**

You Save **\$100 [25%]**

Klarna Financing

Pay in 4 installments of \$75.00.
No fees. **Klarna.** [Learn more](#)



Item ships from another facility. Expected to the Continental USA!

 Condition: Brand New


 Have you seen this item for less?

DIY Systems using Dog Grooming Arms:

This DIY system uses aluminum pet grooming arms with clamps very similar to the Patsy Thompson system. This is the system that I am using. Be sure to order two of the grooming arms. This system can be made for under \$100.

<https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B001VPA9OK?fbclid=IwAR0jUZs3zPSRthSIIC-8yXqAu1U3GSBRC8fzEellyldhAiuCZbNj1b4boXM>

Dogs › Grooming › Shower & Bath Accessories



Roll over image to zoom in

Master Equipment Aluminum Pet Grooming Arm with Clamp




by Master Equipment

★★★★★ 622 ratings | 45 answered questions

Price: **\$33.85** ✓prime & FREE Returns

Thank you for being a Prime member. Get \$70 off instantly: Pay \$0.00 upon approval for the Amazon Prime Rewards Visa Card.

Color: **Silver**

 \$37.99 ✓prime	 \$38.99	 \$33.85 ✓prime
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- **Sturdy Grooming Arm** – The heavy duty aluminum clamp opens to 1.25 inches, allowing it to attach sturdily to most grooming tables
- **Adjustable in Height** – The grooming arm extends in height up to 36 inches, but the height of the arm is also adjustable, simplifying the process of grooming dogs of different sizes
- **18-Inch Grooming Loop** – The loop includes with the clamp grooming arm includes a swivel snap to keep the animal secured during the grooming process
- **Three Colors Available** – To match your existing grooming table, you can select the silver color listed here, though purple or blue colors are offered too
- **Meets Organizational Standards** – This add-on grooming arm meets or exceeds the standards set by the Professional Pet Groomers and Stylists Alliance

[Compare with similar items](#)

New (5) from **\$33.85** ✓prime FREE Shipping

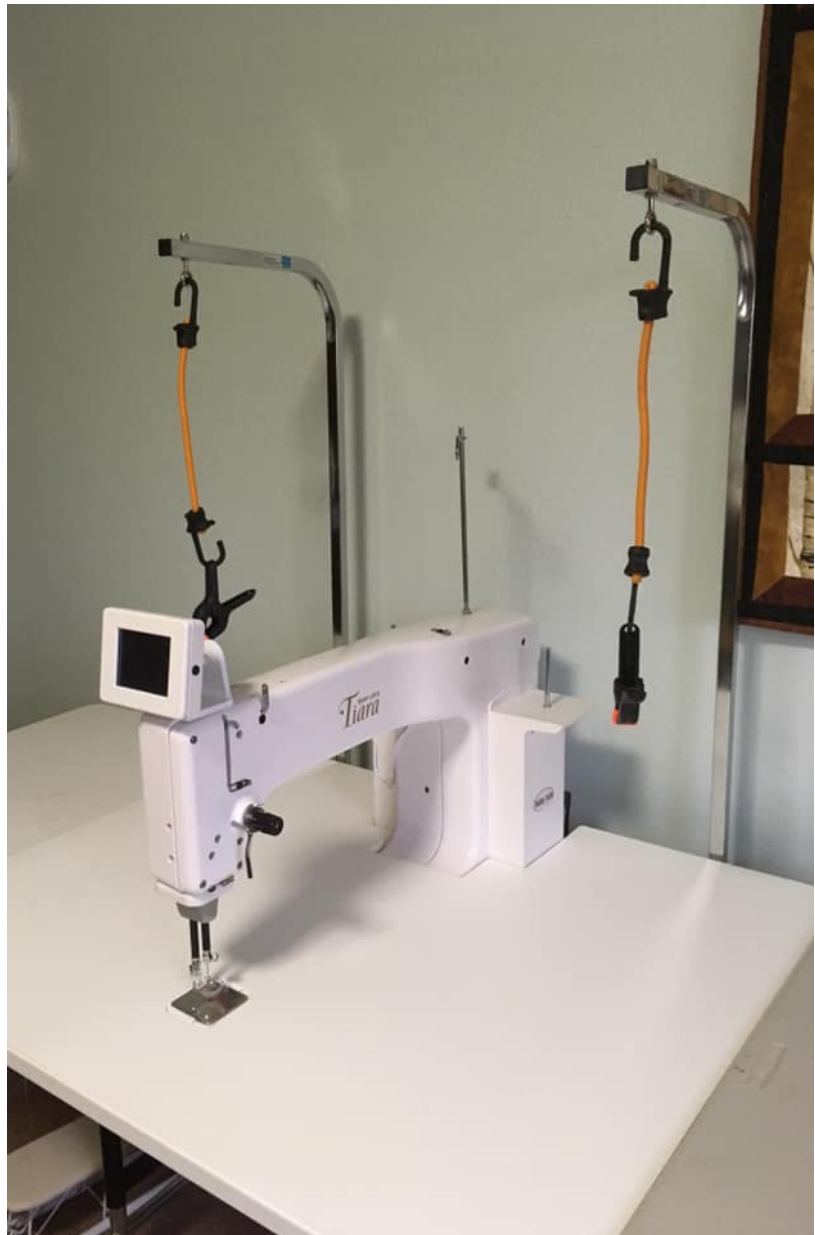
[Report incorrect product information.](#)

The grooming arm clamps are attached to the Tiara table lower shelf, which is about three inches below the table top.

You will also need 2-4 bungee cords and clamps. A packages of a variety of different sized clamps was also purchased from Amazon for \$6.50, bringing the system total price under \$80.

The size of clamp you use depends on what you are comfortable with. Larger clamps take more muscle to open. Smaller ones are better for smaller or lighter weight projects.

We used bungee cords that we had in the garage. I tried a couple and like the 15" to 18" lengths the best. The arms are height adjustable, so you can experiment with what works best for you.



You can use either one cord per clamp, or two. Quilters with very limited space may find it helpful to use two cords per clamp or add a second bungee hanger.

Double bungee cords are also helpful when quilting a queen or king sized quilt.



Any internet search will turn up suspension systems using a variety of materials. The ones shown here are simply the most popular and easily put together. Whichever system you choose, your ease with FMQ will improve. A suspension system is one of the simple ways to improve your quilting and make your quilting journey more comfortable by reducing stress on shoulders, elbows, and hands.