

How to Join the Black Belt Quilt Trail

Research, Brainstorm, and Design Your Concept

- Review the “Black Belt Quilt Trail Registration Application”
- Review current BBQT Registered Blocks – both for ideas and to be sure not to duplicate any current designs.
- Review other quilt trails for ideas and inspiration. A few to look at are:
 - Louisiana Quilt Trail
 - Helderberg Quilt Barn Trail
 - Geauga Barn Quilt Trail
 - McDowell Quilt Trail
 - Quilt Trails of Western North Carolina
 - Appalachian Quilt Trail
- Important things to remember when you design your block.
 - **No Words** or **Logos** are allowed (Logo imagery *without* text may be allowed with prior *approval*)
 - Blocks **must be SQUARE**
 - Block must be at least **2’X2’ or larger** – there is no maximum size limit!
 - Confirm size of block.
 - Confirm subject and/or theme
 - Design must “Read” as a **quilt** – patchwork, applique, pieced, etc...
 - Confirm location on site for your block. Previous locations have included: painted quilt block on wood screwed into outside brick storefront; free standing glass mural block, adhered to MDO board, on wood post, on a nature trail; painted block on side of a building. There are many possibilities.

Sketch, Design, and Color

- Create a “**to scale**” Quilt Block Design
 - Keep in mind the **story** that you wish to portray (you may choose a tradition quilt block pattern if it fits your story).
 - BBTCAC is available to discuss ideas, share advice, and offer suggestions during any stage – consider sharing design ideas or questions early!
 - Using graph paper or computer quilt design software, create a “to scale” sketch of your quilt block design.
 - Revise and create final design.
- If design assistance is needed contact BBTCAC Staff – we have artists and quilters who have volunteered to assist with designs.
- **Color** your design (paper design? use colored pencils, crayons, or markers). The color choice is up to you, but also remember that colors can be symbolic and add layers of meaning to your story.

- Remember that the more colors you use the more paints you will have to purchase or mix. Look at the *Black Belt Barter Bin* (not yet available) on BBTCAC website before making purchases.
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Tell Your Story

- Applications require you to submit the “story behind your block.” Please include as much detail as possible, and feel free to add extra pages of information.
 - Your Story should include the following (where applicable):
 - History or Significance of you site/building/group/business
 - Interesting story or facts about the location
 - Description of the Quilt Block
 - Include: physical description, explanation of symbols and pattern, significance, any other information.
 - Feel free to attach or include any additional information that can be used in print, website, tour information: newspaper clippings, photographs, stories, quotes, etc.
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Review & Register with BBTCAC

- **Black Belt Quilt Trail Committee** will meet to review your design.
- Applicants will be notified of acceptance status within six (6) weeks of application submission. Applications will either be:
 - APPROVED for Registration AS-IS;
 - APPROVED for Registration AFTER the following corrections/additions have been made; or
 - NOT Approved. Application MUST be resubmitted for approval. Please list suggestions, corrections, comments in detail.
- **Registering** ensures that no one else on the BBQT can use your design.
- **Submit Registration Fee**
 - \$50 bi-yearly **registration fee must be included with Application for Registration**
- ****Blocks should not be constructed (or displayed) until written approval from BBTCAC is received.***
- Once your design is **approved** (in writing) and you pay your \$50 registration fee, then you can purchase your materials and begin making your block.
- Applicants are responsible for the construction AND maintenance of the block.
- If the block needs to be moved, refurbished, or ownership of the building/land changes, BBTCAC must be notified.
- Registration (valid for two years from date of application approval) fee covers:
 - The cost of reserving your design so that no one else can use it
 - 500 printed brochures to be given out at your site (*additional brochures available for an additional fee*)
 - The inclusion of your block on the Black Belt Quilt Trail website, audio tours, social media, and promotional materials.
 - Education signage identifying your block as a part of the Black Belt Quilt Trail
 - Access to promotional resale items at cost + 15%

- Construction of your Quilt Block may be achieved in a myriad of ways, depending upon your choice of medium, size, placement, and design.
 - Types of Quilt Blocks created thus far: One Shot Paint on MDO Board (One Shot Paint and MDO board have been used by several quilt trails and have proven to be long lasting with very little to no fading, warping, cracking, or usual wear); Paint on Metal Sheets; Glass Mosaic on MDO Board; Mural Paint directly on the side of a building; Digitally reproduced on metal signs; and quilt blocks have even been created to be viewed aurally (flower arrangements, garden paths and stones. There are no restrictions to your creativity and ideas, as long as it meets the guidelines of the Black Belt Quilt Trail.
- If creating the standard painted design on MDO board, suggested steps have been included for your assistance from the following:
 - Louisiana Quilt Trail at: <http://www.louisianaquilttrail.com/the-process.html>;
 - Geauga Barn Quilt Trail at: http://www.geaugabarnquilttrail.com/Barn_Quilts_Creation_Step_by_Step.pdf;
 - Helderberg Quilt Barn Trail at: <http://www.hqbt.org/barn-quilt-instructions.html>

- Remember to plan for mounting the BBQT educational signage, centered directly under your quilt square (exceptions to this standard may be presented for approval to the BBQT Committee). BBQT signage measures 24" (width) x 8" (height), includes the Stop Number of your quilt block, and links to the BBQT web page and online tour information.
 - Please inform BBTCAC Staff of installation date AT LEAST 2 weeks prior to give time for printing and delivery of BBQT Informational Sign.
- When picking your Quilt Block location, consider how the block will be viewed.
 - Will the block be easily visible above parked cars or bushes?
 - Is it clearly visible to the public, or hard to locate?
 - Do visitors have to enter private property to view the quilt block?
 - Is there a safe place for public to park and view/photograph the quilt block?
 - If your block will be nailed to a wooden structure, the installation will be stronger if the bolts continue through the outer substrate and reach a stud in the wall.
- INSTALLATION OPTIONS (see above links for installation tips)
 - Mounting on a post – By mounting your block onto a 4X4 pre-treated post, it may be erected in a yard or in front of a building, where it will be more visible or stand out.
 - Mounting directly on an architectural structure
 - Painting directly on an architectural structure
 - "use your imagination"
- Consider Lighting
 - Blocks that are illuminated at night attract attention.

- Consider mounting a light that is wired to a sensor that automatically turns on at dusk and off at daybreak.

Document the Process

- Be sure to document the entire process for future use (by you or sharing with others).
 - Photograph process
 - Record materials used (i.e. type of base, paint names and distributor)
 - Record artist(s) name(s)
 - Keep sales receipts and/or budget for your own records and for sharing with BBQT or other sites.
- Photograph your quilt block once installed and send a copy to BBQT & BBTCAC for publicity and marketing purposes. BBTCAC may still do a site visit to photograph.
- Save and share any publicity, newspaper clippings, articles, about your quilt block with BBQT & BBTCAC.
- Be sure to record a copy of your application, registration fee payment, and acceptance letter for future use. You will need to renew your membership in the Black Belt Quilt Trail every two (2) years.

Unveil Your Quilt Block

- While it is not required, most sites host an “unveiling” event. This may be as simple as sending a press release to your local newspaper, or as elaborate as hosting a formal unveiling and reception for special guests and the press. Please invite the BBQT volunteers and BBTCAC to any unveiling event.
- Send a Press Release to area newspapers AND BBTCAC. If you need assistance writing a Press Release, please contact BBTCAC Staff, we will be glad to assist.

Please contact Black Belt Treasures Cultural Arts Center with any questions or concerns. We welcome and encourage comments, tips, photographs, and “lessons learned” from our partners for growing/strengthening the Black Belt Quilt Trail.

