

QUICK START INFORMATION and FAQs

1. What is the SAQG National Quilt Competition?

The SAQG National Quilt Competition is a competition where all quilt/items entered in the competition are judged by a panel of SAQG Accredited Judges.

2. What are the **categories** at a South African National Quilt Festival?

There are three sections: Core; Compulsory; and Optional Categories

SECTION A: 6 in **CORE**:

IN STANDARD	IN MASTER
1. Traditional Large (TLS)	5. Traditional (TM)
2. Traditional Medium/Small (TMS)	6. Art (AM)
3. Art Pictorial (APS)	
4. Art Abstract (AAS)	

SECTION B: 6 in **COMPULSORY** These are for both STANDARD and MASTERS (except Cat 11):

7. Open Large (OL)
8. Open Medium/Small (OMS)
9. Collaborative (COL)
10. Modern (MOD)
11. Youth (YTH) - only Standard
12. Group (GRP)

SECTION C: 5 in **OPTIONAL** These are for both STANDARD and MASTERS (except Cat 17):

13. Miniatures (MIN) – This is not applicable for 2026 Festival
14. Theme/Challenge (THE or CHA)
15. Wearable Art (WEA) – This is not applicable for 2026 Festival
16. 3/D Item (3DI)
17. Community Projects (CP) – This is not applicable for 2026 Festival
The 2026 NQF will be offering Categories 14 and 16 in Section C under Optional

NOTE: In the SAQG judged competition there is no section for 'Display Only' quilts.

3. What is the difference between **CORE**, **COMPULSORY** and **OPTIONAL** categories?

Both **CORE AND COMPULSORY categories** must be included in the national competition and the NQF organizers can choose/decide which optional categories to include.

CORE categories differ from **COMPULSORY** categories in that Master Quilter Status is only awarded to an individual who has won First place in the Standard Core category/s (1-4)

In **COMPULSORY and OPTIONAL** – Master and Standard Quilters can enter these categories.

4. What is meant by a **Master Quilter**?

The SAQG Master Quilter status is awarded to an individual who has won First place for their entry/s in the **Core Standard** category/s (1-4) or who has won a 'Best of Show' Award.

You will know if you are a Master Quilter. When you are a Master Quilter, you must enter in the Master category/s where applicable (category/s 5 and 6).

You may enter work in the other competition categories in accordance with the stipulated criteria, and which apply, if and where, there is no distinction between Standard and Masters.

NOTE: ONLY paid-up SAQG members are eligible for the SAQG Master Quilter status.

5. What is meant by **Standard Quilters**?

Quilters who do not have Master Quilter status are referred to as Standard Quilters.

Standard Quilters may enter all categories in accordance with the stipulated criteria, except in the Masters category/s (5 and 6).

6. *What does the **Public Domain** mean and what is **Copyright**?*

The term '**public domain**' refers to creative materials that are not protected by intellectual property laws such as copyright, trademark or patent laws. What is in the public domain is free for you and anyone to use.

Be aware, people mistakenly think that what they see on the Internet, on Pinterest, on Instagram, etc., is free for anyone to use because it is out "in the public" but this is not so!

Copyright is a legal term that gives creators of original works the right to control how their work is reproduced and distributed, it is their intellectual property. Copyright clauses cover that the artist/designer/creator of a block/pattern is the owner of that intellectual property until 70 years after they have died! Only then does it fall into public domain where it is free for anyone to use. When you see an image or design that has the copyright symbol and or 'Copyrights may apply' or 'Subject to Copyright', it is not yours, you should seek/ask permission to use it so that you can credit the creator/originator.

Be aware that some people think that if they have bought a pattern, it is then theirs, they have paid for it and therefore own it. Take care as this means that it is for their own use only, unless they contact the originator and get explicit permissions granted for them for further use.

Why must I give credit if it is not my own design?

As a quilter you do not wish to break the law or infringe on other peoples' rights as creators and originators. You must be aware of what is in the public domain and free for you to use, and you must give credit to the originator/s when using a pattern and/or design that is not yours.

7. *What does "**derived from using elements from the Public Domain**" mean?*

'Derived from' means that you obtained something from another source, such as the public domain. It is when you have been inspired by and made use of elements from a previously recognized and/or published pattern – e.g. traditional block patterns and designs such as Log Cabin, Ohio Star, Rose of Sharon, or other artworks, and you produce a design that is not a copy but is your adaptation and has sufficient changes from the original.

This is why the A4 colour photocopy of the design/inspiration is required together with your quilt entry, so that competition officials and judges can see how much of the original has been used/changed and what elements have been derived from the original source.

8. *In which category should I place my **Whole Cloth quilt**?*

A whole cloth is a traditional method of making a quilt.

If it is your **own design** then enter in Traditional, either Category 1 or 2, according to the size.

If it is **not your own design** then enter in Open, either Category 7 or 8, according to the size.

Whole cloth quilts using quilting or embroidery **digitized patterns** must be entered in Open, in either Category 7 or 8, according to size.

9. *What constitutes a **Miniature Quilt**?*

In quilting terms, a Miniature quilt is defined as a scaled-down version of a full-sized quilt, i.e. it is small in all aspects such as size, scale and proportion. A Miniature quilt size is limited to 60 cm, and the maximum block/unit size (if used) within the quilt is no more than 10 cm. In a photo of the finished quilt (with no indication of the scale) the Miniature quilt should look like a full-sized quilt. *Thus, be aware that a small little quilt is not necessarily a Miniature Quilt.*

10. *What makes a quilt eligible/suitable for the **Modern** category?*

Modern quilts are innovative in construction and design, emphasising bold use of colour with high contrast, and expansive use of negative space which results in highlighting the quilting (straight-line and/or alternate gridwork). Modern quilts could incorporate improvisational piecing, minimalism, maximalism, asymmetry and modern traditionalism, but these are all presented in a contemporary way.

11. *What is a **Collaborative** Quilt?*

A quilt that is constructed and completed by up to four (4) individuals. This is where a quilter has collaborated/worked with one to three other people to make the quilt. For example, one may have designed the quilt, two people have worked on it, and another person has quilted it, whereby up to four people have been involved in the quilt.

12. *What is a **Group** Quilt?*

A group quilt is made by five (5) or more actively involved members belonging to the same Guild/Group.

13. *What is meant by “**no kits allowed**”?*

“No kits allowed” refers to when not only the pattern is supplied, but all the fabric, (sometimes already cut), along with the instructions that you follow to make that exact quilt.

Note that kits that were supplied in a class may be used if the outcome of the work is the quilter’s own interpretation of the design, and not a ‘copycat’ duplicate of the original.

14. *Are quilters, who are **not** members of a local, or regional Guild, or are not individual **members of SAQG** allowed to enter a National Quilt Festival?*

Yes, the Competition is advertised on the website and anyone around the globe may enter. Note that in the Masters Categories, only Master Quilters who are on the Master Quilter list and who are paid-up SAQG members, may enter these categories.

15. *If my quilt is made up of **only two layers**, will it be acceptable as an entry?*

Yes, but only if it was made using traditional non-quilted techniques like a Crazy Patch, Yoyos, Cathedral Window and Mola, or using Kawandi, Kantha, Boro and Sashiko quilting techniques. Except for the above-mentioned styles, all other pieced and appliqued quilts should consist of three layers irrespective of the type of fabric used for the backing.

16. *What is meant by “**3D Items**” (3 Dimensional Items)?*

3-D items are art pieces that are meant to be displayed as sculptures or installations.

A 3-D item has substantial body in all 3 dimensions, such as abstract shapes, vessels, figures etc. It can stand on its own.

In art galleries some 3-D art pieces need to be elevated to drape or require some support, usually referred to as a “hanger” (not to be interpreted as a coat hanger).

17. *Can a **Wearable Art** item be placed/entered under the **3-Dimensional** category?*

The answer is NO. Wearable Art is different from 3-D items as it cannot stand on its own unless it has substance to support it (e.g. being hung from a hanger/mannequin). If a wearable art item (like a jacket/dress) can be taken off a hanger or its stand and put on as apparel, it is a wearable item, and if entered into the 3-D category, it will be juried out.

The difference and understanding in **definitions for 3-Dimensional items and Wearable Art for SA National Competitions** should be understood as follows:

3D items are distinct from Wearable Art, with the former being sculptural or installation pieces meant for display, while the latter are generally garments or accessories designed to be worn. A 3D item has substantial body in all 3 dimensions, such as abstract shapes, vessels, figures, etc. It has 3 dimensions, and can stand on its own.

A Wearable Art item cannot stand on its own unless it has substance to support it (that is, being hung from a hanger, or placed on a mannequin). If a wearable art item is submitted to the 3D category, but can be taken off a hanger or its stand and put on as apparel, it is clearly a wearable item and it will be juried out of the competition.

*18. Where must the **Quilt Label** be attached?*

When the quilt is viewed from the back, the cloth label is positioned in the lower left-hand corner.

*19. What **information** must be included **on the label**?*

All quilts must have a cloth label securely sewn to the back of the quilt. In this order, the label must include

- The Unique Quilt Entry Code (emailed to you after you submit your online entry),
- The Quilt Title
- The Quilt-maker(s) names, address, phone number, email, and date (or year) the quilt was made.
- Any other relevant information regarding the quilt may be added.

N.B. All the information, except for the Quilt Entry Code and Quilt title, is to be covered by a piece of dark fabric, tacked onto the label. Should the quilter's name appear in any way or form anywhere else on the quilt, this must be covered.

*20. How must **the 10 cm quilt sleeve** be made, and attached?*

When you submit your Entry Form, full instructions on how to make a sleeve for your quilt will be emailed to you.

*21. **Minimum / Maximum sizes** for quilt entries:*

It was decided that only a maximum size would be stipulated to simplify the list of criteria for each category, allowing the quilter their freedom and leaving the minimum size to the discretion of the quilter. Therefore, there is no minimum size stated in each category.

It stands to reason that a very tiny, or smaller quilt would obviously not be placed in the "Large" category if the maximum size of the quilt fits the "Medium/Small" category. That's common sense, and it is how the sizes will be viewed.