

Sizing Yourself for a Roxanne™ Thimble



An investment in a Roxanne™ Thimble is an investment in your hands and your quilting. It will allow you to quilt more rapidly and with a higher degree of precision without overtaxing your joints and muscles. In order to reap these benefits your thimble must fit correctly to your unique finger. It is almost the equivalent of fitting a prosthetic device! The Roxanne™ Thimble will fit and feel different than any other thimble you have tried. Although the process of finding your ideal size may be a little more involved rest assured that the effort will produce a lifetime thimble that you will adore!

Please follow these instructions as precisely as possible without adjusting for any perceived oddities about your finger. We realize that many people suffer from arthritis, childhood accidents, calcium deposits, fingernail issues, weight concerns, and even partial amputations. There are essentially five aspects of a person's finger that directly affect a custom fitted thimble. Our measuring system will take all of the following into consideration.

- The length of the distal phalanx which is the last bone in each finger.
- The size of the distal phalanx. How large your bone structure is.
- The degree of curvature across the nail bed.
- The degree of curvature in the pad of the finger.
- The shape of the end of the finger.
- Injuries, certain health/medication effects

We assume that you are fitting the second finger which is the longest one next to the index. (Commonly known as the middle finger) It does not matter if you are left or right handed. Some of you may be fitting your index finger. We do not recommend, for orthopedic reasons, that you ever quilt with the ring finger or pinky.

1. Determine the center of your joint. Open your hand very flat with straight fingers and observe the knuckle at the end of your finger, closest to the fingernail. (Looking at the back of your hand) There will usually be 2-3 'wrinkles' across the knuckle. The deepest, longest one will be the center/middle of your joint. If this method doesn't work for you, due to a lack of 'wrinkles', then flip your hand over and look at your palm. There will be the one deep crease formed at the joint. In order to follow this up correctly to the back side of the hand wrap a piece of thread or string through it around the finger. Carefully place a mark on the top of the hand where the string lands.



2. Measure the exact distance from the middle of your knuckle (determined in step 1) to the cuticle of your fingernail. This is easier to do with using a metric ruler. Millimeters measure short distances more precisely. While measuring your finger please do not round up or down to whole millimeters. (ie. 10.5 mm not 11mm)

3. Using the measurement you acquired in step 2, divide that number in half. For example, if the distance from the middle of your joint to your cuticle measured 10.5 mm, then 10.5mm divided by 2 equals 5.25.

4. Using the new number acquired in step 3 re-measure from you cuticle towards your knuckle. Put a small black ink mark at the exact point of your measurement. Continuing with the example in step 3, you would measure to exactly 5.25mm and put a small visible mark on your finger.



5. This step involves using ring sizers. Your local jewelry store will have several on hand and they are usually happy to let you borrow them on site. We also have plastic ring sizers available to purchase if that is more convenient. If you are borrowing a jeweler's, it is best not to let the jeweler themselves help you, because this process is using the sizers in a very untraditional manner and the jeweler may unwittingly mislead the results. Some jewelers have two types of ring sizers: wide and narrow. If offered a choice, please select the narrow ones.



Begin with the smallest ring sizer in the set. Try to slide it on the finger that you measured. If the ring sizer cannot be pushed to the little mark you made in step 4 then it is too small. Try the next half size larger ring sizer. Work your way up in sizes until you find the one that stops right on the mark you made on your finger but CANNOT be pushed past it, even if you push uncomfortably hard. It is very important that you find the smallest, tightest size that stops right on that mark you made. When you have determined the right ring sizer ask the jeweler to read the size for you. (If you purchased our ring sizers the size is on the top of the sizer where it attaches to the ring. Half sizes are indicated by a dash)

6. When you order your Roxanne™ Thimble, order one size larger than the size determined by step 5. In other words, if you found that a size 3.5 ring sizer stopped perfectly on top of the mark made on your finger, then you would order a size 4.5 Roxanne™ Thimble.

What to expect when your new Roxanne™ Thimble arrives:

- The first time you put your thimble on you will be surprised at how tight it is. Never fear, it is impossible for a Roxanne™ Thimble to interfere with circulation in the finger. It is, however, crucial that it fit like an armored girdle so that you can have absolute control of your needle. Your finger should fit all the way into your thimble with a couple of minor exceptions. The pad of your finger is genetically determined. If yours is more flat than round, or poufy, then you may not fill up the entire inside of the thimble. This is ok. Depending on your cultural heritage you may also have inherited a very square-ish shape to the end of your finger. If this is the case, there may be a small gap at the tip of the thimble. (Up to an 1/8 inch is acceptable)
- The fingers are one of the first indicators of changes in your body. It is normal for the fingertips to swell and shrink in response to weather conditions, activity levels and medications. Interestingly, when the hands are lifted and put to work quilting, circulation increases to the fingers, which warms them up and carries away any excess fluids that settled in the tips. Basically, you will find that your fingers will shrink 15-20 minutes after you begin quilting. Some people change dramatically. This is the time in which traditional thimbles tend to fall off and become very annoying. It is important for the Roxanne™ Thimble to fit snugly and correctly after that change occurs. So you may find that the thimble is uncomfortably snug sometimes when you first put it on. Please don't make any judgements as to sizing until after you have quilted with it for at least 30 minutes
- The Roxanne Thimble is designed to allow quilters to quilt in a natural and orthopedically correct manner. If you find that your thimble only gets tighter and more painful as you quilt this is a classic sign of quilting at angles that traumatize the joints which responds by cushioning themselves with lymph fluids (swelling). Fortunately, learning to go back to a more natural method is easy to do.

Dierdra McElroy, the inventor of the Roxanne™ Thimble, has a wonderful DVD that breaks the mechanics of the hand quilting stitch into precise manageable steps that anyone can master! She is also available for phone consultations if you have concerns about the way your thimble fits. Sometimes just changing the type of metal you have can make all the difference in feel and fit!

Happy Stitching!

