



# Bryerpatch Studio

Fine Art Quilts by Caryl Bryer Fallert-Gentry

## Quilt Suspension Thingy

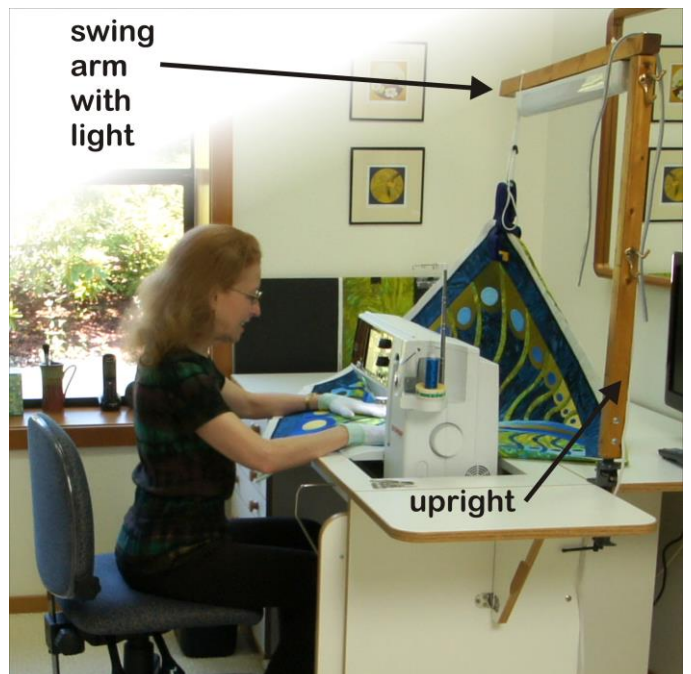
One of the most frequently-asked questions I hear is about the system of clamps and pulleys that hangs over my sewing machine. I use it when I do free-motion quilting. It suspends the part of the quilt you are not working on in the air, reducing the amount of weight you are moving with your hands, and making it easier to move the part you are working on. A cord lock allows you to position the clamp at any height and easily raise and lower it as you work.

Many years ago I met Carole Leroy at the AQS show in Paducah. She was an expert on ergonomics and had written a book called *Pain-Free Quilting*. She had also developed a “quilt cradle” which she and her husband were building and selling. Later they sold a kit and a set of instructions from their website, [painfreequilting.com](http://painfreequilting.com). In the past, when I got questions about my suspension system I referred everyone to that website. Now, they seem to have taken down their website and I can no longer find them, so I’ll share some pictures of my apparatus and you can develop your own version to fit your needs.

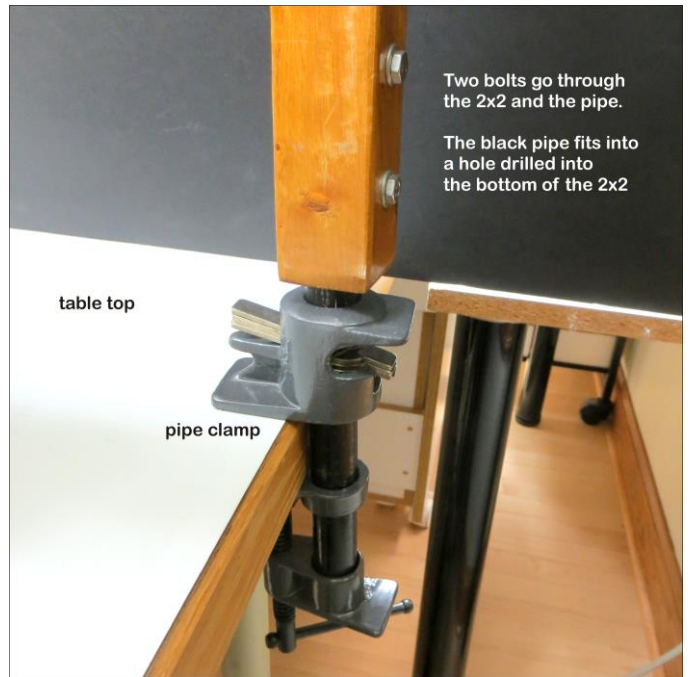
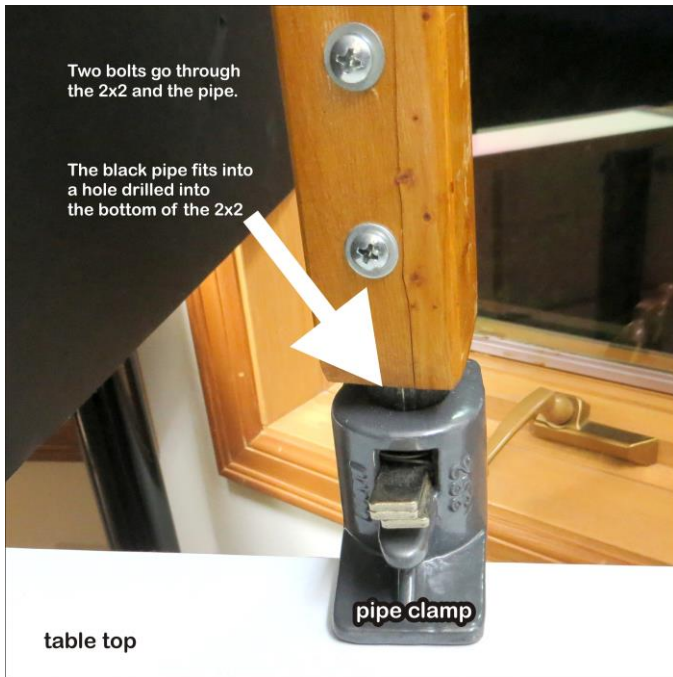
My quilt cradle was built by the Leroy’s and I have modified it differently in each of my studios to fit my personal set-up. Almost everything is made from basic supplies that you can buy at any hardware store.

### FRAME

The frame is made from two 30” 2x2s, one is the upright support and the second one becomes a horizontal arm that swings over your sewing table. My current table is 5 feet wide, so I have extended the arm by clamping on another strip of wood. You could also just make the swing arm longer. In my Paducah studio I eventually abandoned the frame altogether and just hung the pulleys and clamps from the ceiling. In my first Port Townsend studio, I needed more light, so I attached a light strip to the swing arm. I also added a couple of closet hooks to the upright. They provide a convenient place to hang glasses and magnifiers.



The upright is attached to the table with a pipe clamp (a tool used for furniture repair). The clamp holds a section of steel pipe. The pipe fits into a hole of the same diameter drilled into the bottom of the upright 2x2. To prevent wobbling, two big bolts run through the pipe and the 2x2.



### SWING ARM

The 2x2s are joined at the top by a big, hex-head screw, which allows the horizontal 2x2 to swing. A hole is drilled in the handle of a quick release clamp and parachute cord is pushed through the hole and knotted. The cord is fed through a cord lock, and a loop of cord is hung from an open-ended eye screw in the swing arm. Position it where you want to lift your quilt. Just push the button on the cord lock to adjust the height. Parachute cord and cord locks are available online from many sources including [Strapworks.com](http://Strapworks.com).

