

Border, Binding and Stitching a 45° angle

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Borders

Adding borders accurately and correctly can make or break the finish of a quilt. The quilt to this point, hopefully has been pieced with care for accuracy to result in a flat quilt top with a consistent measurement in the length and width of the quilt. Small difference in the measurements can be corrected for in the attachment of the border if a few steps are followed.

Cut the border fabric lengthwise to prevent piecing (may need to purchase additional yardage)

OR

Cut the width of fabric and piece on the 45° angle (see attached instructions piecing on the 45° angle)

Measure **your** quilt top in at least 3 places at the width/length, average those numbers to know the size to cut the border. **Do Not** cut the borders until your quilt top is complete. **Do Not** use the measurements for cutting given in a pattern ... your quilt will have its own measurements

To add all borders, follow this process:

First measure (3 places and average) the border (length or width) you want to add

Cut the border fabric to that size/or piece enough strips on the 45° angle and cut to size

Pin (ends and center then center out between the established pins) – this is the step where a small difference in the measurement of the quilt can be corrected by easing in to fit

Stitch the 2 borders onto the quilt (1/4" seam)

Press the seams, usually toward the border fabric

Repeat the process to add the next 2 borders (length or width)

To add a second or third round of borders follow the exact same process, measure, cut, pin, stitch, press

Binding

The binding is the final finish to the edge of the quilt. The binding can be completed by many different techniques. I will share my favorite French, double fold binding. I use a straight of grain binding for all my quilts expect for those with curved edges which need bias binding.

With the double fold binding, the fabric strips are connected on a 45° angle, the corners are mitered, and the final seam is also completed on a 45° angle.

The decision as to what width to cut the binding strips is really a personal choice based on how wide the binding will finish, the look you prefer, and how you plan to attach and finish the binding. I use a 2 ¼" cut strip for all my quilts, except for miniatures I cut the strips at 2". I attach my bindings to the back of the quilt with a ¼" seam and turn to the front for a machine finish.

To determine how much binding you need, add the measurements of all 4 sides of your quilt and add 8-10"". Cut the number of fabric strip needed to obtain this number. You will lose about 2" of each strip you cut. Following the diagram, join the fabric strips on the 45° angle. Press the pieced binding wrong sides together

Length + Length + Width + Width + 10" = Total amount of continuous binding needed

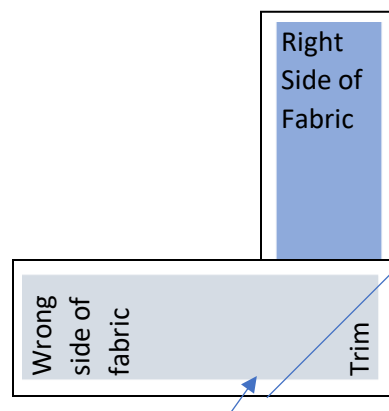
Hand finish – attach the binding to the front of the quilt by machine, turn to the back, pin and hand stitch with a whip stitch or ladder stitch. Stitch closed the mitered corners.

Machine finish – attach the binding to the back of the quilt by machine, turn to the front, pin, and machine stitch about 1/8" from the finished edge. Hand stitch closed the mitered corners.

How to join fabric on the diagonal or 45° angle:

(See the diagram below)

1. The bottom fabric is horizontal and right side up.
2. The top fabric is vertical and right side to the right side of the horizontal fabric
3. Make the picture below, forming a square with the two fabric ends right sides together.
4. Draw a diagonal line from the left bottom to the top right corner. Pin on either side of the lines to secure the fabric.
5. Stitch on the drawn diagonal line, secure the ends with a back stitch. Open and look to see the pieces are joined correctly.
6. Fold back the fabric right sides together and trim to the right of the stitch line, leaving 1/4" to 1/2" seam. Open and press the seam open from the back, and then from the front.



Stitch on the line.

To Attach the binding to the quilt:

1. Start at a point off center on any side of the quilt. I like to check to be sure a binding seam is not going to lay on a corner of the quilt.
2. Lay your binding on the edge of the quilt, leave about a 5" tail and begin to stitch with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam
3. Stop stitching a $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the corner (mark with a pin if needed). Remove the quilt from under the needle and pressure foot and rotate the quilt a quarter turn. Fold the binding straight up, away from the corner forming a 45° angle. Bring the binding straight down in line with the next edge to be sewn, leaving the top fold even with the raw edge of previously sewn side. Begin stitching at top edge, sew through all layers.
4. Repeat around all 4 corners. After the 4th turn stop sewing about 10"-12" from where you began the stitching.
5. Trim straight the edge of the beginning tail. Pin flat both the beginning and end tails, working toward each other. With the end tail next to the beginning tail, mark an additional length equal to the width of your cut binding strip, (for ex. $2\frac{1}{4}$ " to the end tail). Cut on this line.
6. Now following the diagram for 45° angle pin the beginning and end tails of the binding together as in the diagram, stitch, open and fold to ensure the binding is a perfect fit to the quilt. Then adjust your seam if needed or trim the seam, press open, and finish stitching the binding to the edge of the quilt.

