

Adding Binding to a Quilt the Jinny Beyer Way

Double-fold binding can be made from either straight grain or bias strips. My preference is bias binding because I feel it provides a smoother finished edge. It is also more durable because straight grain binding is folded along one continuous thread, creating a weakness that can cause it to wear and fray much more quickly. To make double-fold binding, cut strips of fabric four times the finished width of the binding, plus the seam allowance. Most quilters cut their binding somewhere between 2 and 2½" wide.

Preparing the Strips

Step 1. Begin with at least ½ to 1 yard of fabric. Remove the selvage from both sides, fold it in half on the diagonal and press.

Step 2. Cut along the fold, but leave the two pieces aligned. Using a see-through ruler and a pencil or tailor's chalk, mark cutting lines along the diagonal on the top piece of fabric, as shown in *Diagram 1*. Cut through both layers.

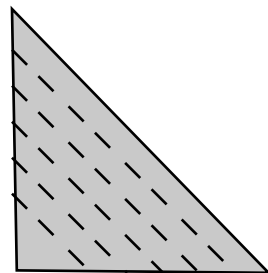


Diagram 1

Step 3. With right sides facing, use a ¼" seam allowance to sew the binding strips together at their ends, as shown in *Diagram 2*. Since the strips have been cut all the way to the edge of the fabric, their ends should be at the correct angle.

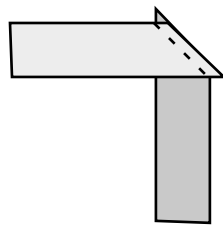


Diagram 2

Attaching the Binding

The conventional way of adding binding is to sew it to the front of the quilt and then bring it to the back and stitch it down. When a border print is around the outside of a quilt, I do the opposite. In order for the seam to look even, it is important to sew the binding directly to a line along the border print. Therefore I sew the binding first to the back and then bring it to the front. I use a small blind stitch and sew it alongside the edge of a line on the border print.

Whether sewing by hand or machine, begin by trimming the excess batting and backing to make it even with the quilt top. For double-fold binding, fold the long binding strip in half lengthwise, wrong sides together, and gently press.

Step 1. Beginning along one side of the quilt, align the raw edges of the binding along the edge of the wrong side of the quilt. Pin the binding to the quilt, leaving an approximate 5-inch "tail." Working from the front side of the quilt, sew the binding on ¼" from the edge, stitching just outside a line on the border print design.

Step 2. As you approach a corner, stop stitching ¼" from the edge and take a back stitch. Fold the binding strip up at a 45 degree angle as shown in *Diagram 3*. Fold the strip back down to there is a fold at the upper edge, as shown in *Diagram 4*. Insert the needle through the base of the fold and continue sewing to the next corner.

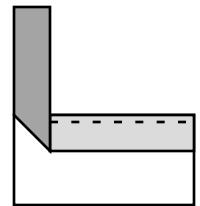


Diagram 3

Step 3. When you are approximately 8 inches from your original starting point, take the piece you are currently sewing and bring it over to meet the 5-inch tail. Cut off the excess binding, allowing enough length to connect the two ends and have a 5-inch overlap. (It is better to cut it too long than too short). Cut the binding to match the angle of the original tail. Fold under ¼" of the cut-off end and press. Slip the raw edges of the 5-inch tail inside the folded edges. Blind stitch the ends together.

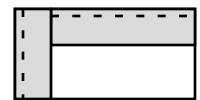


Diagram 4

Step 4. Carefully pin and sew this last bit of binding down.

Step 5. Turn the binding to the front of the quilt and blind stitch the folded edge in place along the line of the border print, covering the first set of stitches with the folded edge. At the corners fold in the adjacent sides to form a miter. Take several stitches in the miter on both sides of the quilt, as shown in *Diagram 5*.

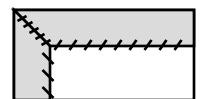


Diagram 5