

## How to bind your quilt

I have had a couple of requests for tutorials on binding so here we go. For this one I will show you how to sew the binding on to the back first, then fold it over and machine sew it down on the front. I do this because I have arthritis in my hands and although I have friends who will do hand sewing for me there is no way I am going to ask them to hand sew every Aussie Hero quilt that I bind - that would be too much! It is also quicker if you are trying to do a lot of quilts.

First I cut my binding 2 3/4 inches wide. Normally, if handsewing, I do it 2 1/2 inches but the extra quarter of an inch makes it easier to turn it on and not have the machine foot sitting on the bulk of the seams. I am assuming everyone knows that we use a double binding, ie the binding folded in half lengthwise and pressed, raw edges sewn on one side of the quilt and then the folded edge turned over and sewn on the other side of the quilt.

Cut your strips edge to edge rather than along the length of fabric - there is a reason for this and it has to do with the strength and integrity of the binding long term but I am not going to go into it here. You will just have to trust me or google it. Cut off the selvages of the strips and then join them together. Normally I would join binding strips on the diagonal (see [here](#) for how). That makes the join less bulky on the edge of the quilt but if that is too hard then just join end to end with a straight seam. I have done both for AHQ and no one has complained yet.

Fold your strip in half and press. My suggestion is that you store your binding rolled up in whatever you like and keep it rolled up, unrolling a bit as you go. You are much less likely to be plagued by tangles like this!



Now to sew your binding on with a scant quarter inch seam - pick a spot roughly in the middle of one side and start sewing the binding to the **back** of the quilt. Start about 6 inches in from the edge of the binding - this tail will be needed for joining the ends later.



When you get to the end of the first side, stop a quarter of an inch from the edge. Now I know people who measure this but I have done it enough that I know I can eyeball it safely enough. Fold the binding up like this - the fold should be at 45 degrees .....



Then fold it straight down over the fold ...start sewing again from the top edge and keep going to the next corner. Repeat each time you get to the corner. I hope that is clear - if you are not quite sure then google tutorials on quilt binding and you will even find some youtube tutorials that might help you!



Once you get back to nearly where you started keep sewing your binding till you get to about 6 inches from where you started stitching!



Lay the two ends over each other and cut them so that there is a **scant** half inch overlap.



Unfold both ends, pin both ends together - right sides together and stitch with a quarter inch seam.

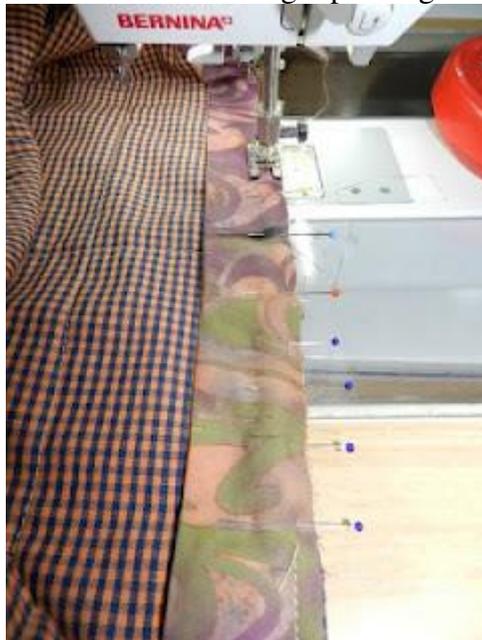
Hmmm, maybe I need a hand model!



Finger press this seam open.



Fold the binding in half again and if you like pin it in place. If your binding doesn't sit flat you have probably allowed a little too much of an overlap or have sewn the two ends together will too narrow a seam. Stitch the seam again, check for fit and if it is okay you can unpick the first seam and finger press again.



Now it is time to stitch the binding down on the right side. This is when you mitre the corners and I think a picture tells the story. Fold over one side first, then fold the other side down. I like to fold the right hand side down first and then the left hand side as this means that when I start to machine I am sewing over the little fold and am not likely to get the sewing machine foot caught in it if that makes sense.



I pin my binding all the way round (my least favourite part of the whole process) and then stitch as close the edge as you are comfortable doing. I like a straight stitch but you can use a zig zag and you can also use a fancy stitch if you have them. Keep your eyes on other people's blogs and you will see what they do.

No idea why this pic is so dark!



Can I just take a minute to say how much I love this binding and how well it goes with the quilt backing and I think the quilt top as well. The top, the backing and the binding were all donated and not by the same people! Just meant to be!



And here is the resulting quilt made by [Maria](#) - her lucky number 7th!



The photo does not do the colours justice - suffice to say that I am not a brown loving person but this quilt has converted me and I think this would be great for a guy or a girl.