

## SCRAP-SF QUILTING BASICS June 7, 2023 with Lorraine Woodruff-Long

Binding a quilt is the process of adding a fabric edge to the quilt's perimeter to finish it off. Start by deciding what look you wish for and how your quilt will be used to ensure longevity with wear and use.

### BINDING (VISIBLE EDGE)

With this method you add fabric to the edge which will be visible on the front of the quilt. This method is highly recommended for bed, throw, or other quilts that you'll be washing regularly so that you have added protection on the edge of the quilt that tends to wear.



Visible binding



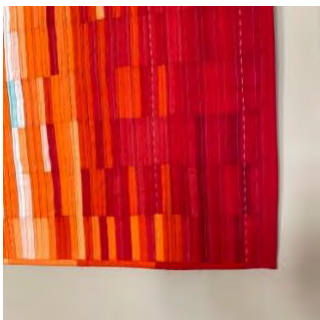
Visible binding



Visible binding



Visible binding – curved edge requires binding cut on the bias



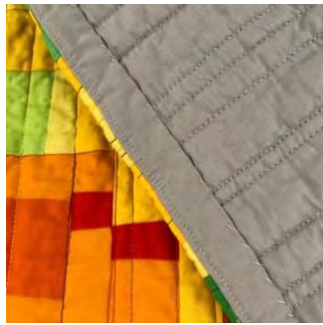
Visible binding (front)



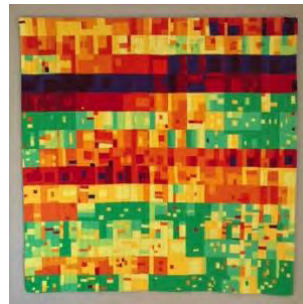
Visible binding (back)

## FACING (NO VISIBLE EDGE, QUILT “BLEEDS” to edge)

For art quilts or quilts that will be hanging on a wall and not be used/washed regularly, you might consider “facing” the quilt. The quilt on the front floats or “bleeds to the edge” and finished at the edge and folded on the back. This leaves the front edge of the quilt more vulnerable to wear and tear – not a problem if it’s generally stationary, but not advised for a bed or throw quilt.



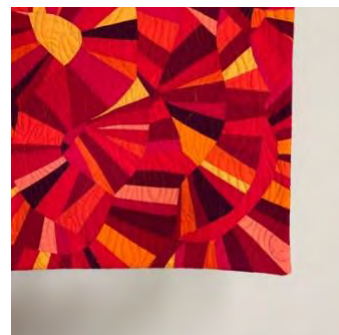
Quilt with Facing (back)



Quilt with Facing (front)



Quilt with Facing (back)



Quilt with Facing (front)

## BINDING STEPS:

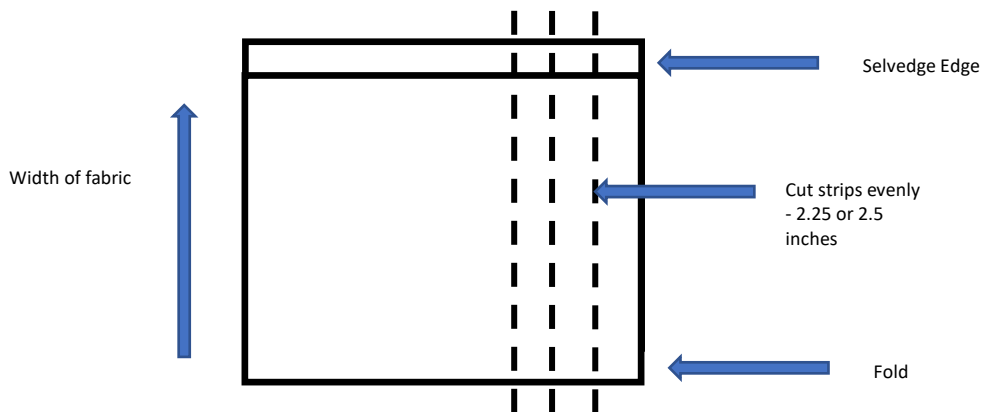
The following is a step-by-step guide on how to bind a quilt using the VISIBLE DOUBLE-FOLD BINDING. This is the most traditional and widely used method. It involves creating a narrow fabric strip, folding it in half lengthwise, and attaching it to the edges of the quilt with machine or hand stitching. This method provides a durable and clean finish. I’LL FOCUS ON DOUBLE FOLD BINDING ON THE GRAIN AS THIS IS WHAT I USE THE MOST.

## STEP 1: PREPARE THE QUILT/ MEASURE HOW MUCH BINDING IS NEEDED

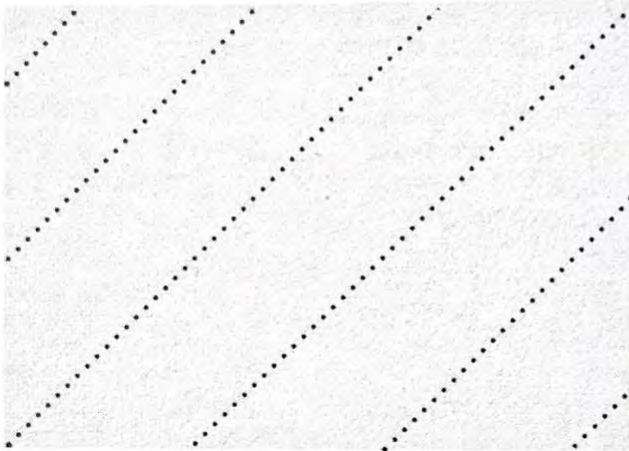
- Trim your quilt so that the front, batting and back are all the same on the edges and you have a clean edge. Try to “square up” your quilt with a ruler and cotton mat, or an acrylic quilt block ruler. Your clean edge will be your guide to sew along the edge  $\frac{1}{4}$ ”.
- Measure all the way around to see the length of binding you’ll need for the perimeter.

## STEP 2: CUTTING YOUR BINDING PIECES

- **Straight Grain Binding (for either bound or faced quilts):** For straight edged quilts, you can cut your fabric with the grain of the fabric. I like to cut my strips 2.25 – 2.5” each and cut the LOF (length of fabric – usually 44”-60” wide off the bolt) or whatever the length is of the fabric I have on hand to use.



- **Bias Binding for curved edge quilts:** Bias binding is made from fabric strips cut on the bias, which allows the binding to have more stretch and flexibility. This is particularly useful when binding curved quilt edges. It can be single-fold or double-fold, depending on your preference.

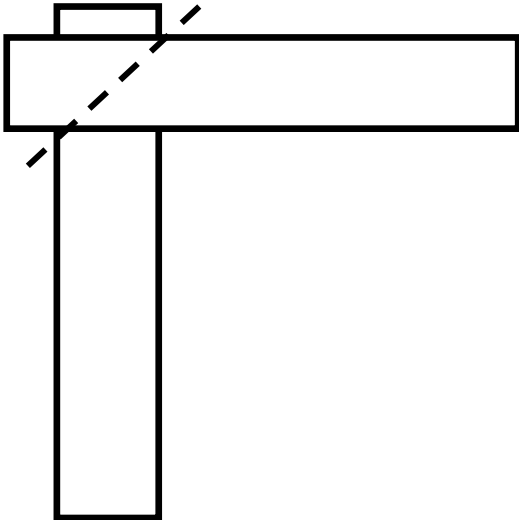


**To make bias bindings,** cut strips of fabric along the true bias of the fabric. For single binding, cut strips four times the desired finished width. For double binding, cut strips six times the desired finished width.

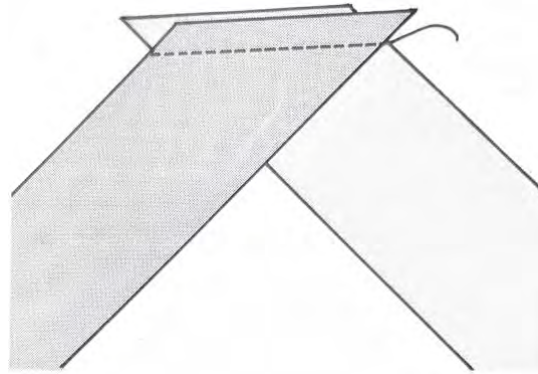
Source: Readers Digest Complete Guide to Needlework 1979

## **STEP 3: JOINING YOUR CUT STRIPS**

Lay one strip down and pin another strip at a 90-degree angle to the first. Pin and sew from one edge to the other. Draw a line if needed to make it easier.



Once joined, the strip will look like this.



Source: Readers Digest Complete Guide to Needlework 1979

Continue to add your cut strips until you have one long strip that is long enough to go around your quilt – ADD ANOTHER 8-10 INCHES FOR OVERLAP.

## **STEP 4: FOLD BINDING STRIP IN HALF AND IRON THE LENGTH OF THE BINDING**

- Start by folding the binding strip in half lengthwise and press it to create a crease (NOTE: IT'S VERY IMPORTANT TO IRON TO MAKE THE DOUBLE FOLD CLEAN AND FLAT).
- I often wrap my nicely pressed flat double fold binding around a piece of cardboard.

## **STEP 5: ATTACH THE BINDING**

- Place the raw edges of the binding strip against the raw edges of the quilt's FRONT SIDE, aligning them. Pin or clip the binding in place, leaving a few inches (8-10") unsewn.

- Sew the binding to the quilt: Using a sewing machine, stitch the binding to the quilt with a 1/4-inch seam allowance.
  - Sew the binding down to the FRONT of the quilt. When you're done, you'll fold over the binding and finish it (hand or machine) on the BACK.
  - I like to start in the middle of one side to give me runway at the end to join the pieces.
  - Leave a "tail" at the beginning of 4+ inches so that you can neatly join both ends once you attach the binding all the way around.
- Miter the corners:
  - Stop stitching about 1/4 inch away from the corner, backstitch to secure, and remove the quilt from the machine.
  - Fold the binding strip up at a 45-degree angle to create a diagonal fold. Then fold it back down, aligning the raw edge of the binding with the quilt's next edge. Pin or clip in place and continue sewing. Repeat this step for all four corners.
- Join the ends of the binding: When you reach the starting point, overlap the binding strip, and mark the overlap. Trim off the excess binding, ensuring a snug fit. Open up the binding ends, fold and press the excess fabric, and then fold the binding back in half. Sew across the marked line to join the ends together.

### **STEP 6: IMPORTANT FINAL PREP FOR LAST STICHING DOWN -- PRESS AND CLIP IN PLACE**

- Once the binding is attached/sewn to the quilt, fold the double edge over the quilt's raw edge to the backside.
- Using a steam iron, press to make the binding lay flat, clip, or pin it down and let it cool this way for sewing around the perimeter for the final stretch.
  - This is very important and will make the final stitching down of your quilt much easier and neater.
  - I love Wonder Clips to clip the binding down as I go around the quilt edge and press it down (but you can always use pins, just be careful.)

### **STEP 7: FINAL SEW-DOWN**

- Once you've attached the binding with your sewing machine, you can take the final step to tack down the final part of the binding two ways:
  - Hand sewn binding: For a cleaner finish that doesn't show the stitching on the front of your quilt, hand sew the binding down using a blind or whip stitch.
  - Machine binding: If you prefer a faster method, you can attach the binding to the quilt with a sewing machine instead of hand stitching. This can save time, but it may require practice to achieve a neat and even finish.

- TIP: While the edge is on the back, sew from the front of the quilt/binding to ensure you have a nice clean sewing edge for the binding when you look at it from the front.
- As you sew, check to see you are actually sewing it down on the back.
- Ultimately, the choice of binding method depends on your preference, the desired look, and the functionality you want from your quilt.

### **STEP 8: MOST IMPORTANT STEP! MAKE A LABEL FOR YOUR QUILT!**

- Seriously! Make and attach a label to the back with your name, date, hometown. Also, add the name of your quilt, who it's for, and any special message.
- Do this whether it's for you or it's a gift. The world is fully of nameless works of fiber art someone back that are Anonymous. Don' be that!
- You can simply write it on a scrap of fabric and sew it on the back. There are lots of wonderful labels you can buy from Spoonflower or online that you can use.
- I ordered personalized labels from Wunderlabel.com and also often print or write using iron-on labels on fabric with quilt information



## OTHER RESOURCES – TONS ON THE INTERNET!

**DOUBLE FOLD BINDING:** This is the most traditional and widely used method. It involves creating a narrow fabric strip, folding it in half lengthwise, and attaching it to the edges of the quilt with machine or hand stitching. This method provides a durable and clean finish.

- Cluck Cluck Sew:  
<https://cluckclucksew.com/2013/01/machine-binding-tutorial.html>
- Canoe Ridge Creations:  
<http://www.canoeridgecreations.com/2013/02/double-fold-binding-tutorial-part-one.html>
- We All Sew:  
<https://weallsew.com/bind-quilt-using-double-fold-binding/>
- Wonderfil Threads:  
<https://www.wonderfil.ca/blog/how-to-double-fold-machine-bind-a-quilt/5/28/2020>
- Deanna Eisenman/Snuggles Quilts:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0AyyaRX4ojw&t=720s>

**SINGLE FOLD BINDING:** (Personally, I'm not a fan – I want my quilt to be super sturdy after putting in so much work!) This method involves attaching a single layer of fabric to the quilt's edges without folding it. The raw edges of the binding are typically folded under and stitched in place. Single-fold binding is quicker to apply but may not be as sturdy as double-fold binding can often be found at SCRAP-SF or purchased from any sewing store such as Joann's.

**FACING:** I continuously refer to this tutorial to make lovely, neat facings for my wall hangings and art quilts. You can 'purchase' a lovely pdf download with wonderful photos and diagrams for free from Cotton and Bourbon (@cottonandbourbon) at:

- Cotton and Bourbon  
<https://www.cottonandbourbon.com/quilt-patterns/facing-tutorial>

**PILLOWCASE OR ENVELOPE FINISHING:** Great for a small piece (mug rug, coasters, small wall hanging, placemat.) Not so much for a large quilt.

- Chatterbox Quilts  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bwBv2vjPCHc>

Check out the Binding Class Resource Page

<https://quiltinginthefog.com/binding-class-resource-page/>

Sign up on my email list (SIGN UP SHEET IN CLASS) for future offerings, tips, shows, ideas!

Or email me: [Lorraine@quiltinginthefog.com](mailto:Lorraine@quiltinginthefog.com)