

The Guide for Finishing Your Quilt

Got the quilt top done but...what's next?

Step 1: Backing and Batting Considerations

The size of your backing and batting will vary depending on how you plan to finish your quilt.

For the domestic sewing machine:

If you will be doing the quilting on your domestic sewing machine, then your backing and batting need only extend approximately 2" on each side of your quilt top. That is, take the quilt top measurement and add 4" to both the width and length measurements and that is the size that you need for your backing and batting.

For the longarm quilter:

If you are planning to send your quilt to a longarm (i.e. professional) quilter, then you will need the backing and batting to extend 4" around every side of the top. That is, add 8" to both the width and length measurements and that is the size that you need for your backing and batting.

...and that is it for this option! No need to baste the three layers together as they are loaded individually onto the machine's rollers.

Step 2: Basting Your Quilt

This step is for those doing the quilting themselves. Iron your backing and quilt top. Place your backing right-side down on a firm surface – typically the floor or a tabletop – and secure in place using masking tape. The backing should be smooth but not taut.

Quick note: *Do not use a precious surface (e.g. your mahogany dining table)...or you might find yourself being served with divorce papers!!*

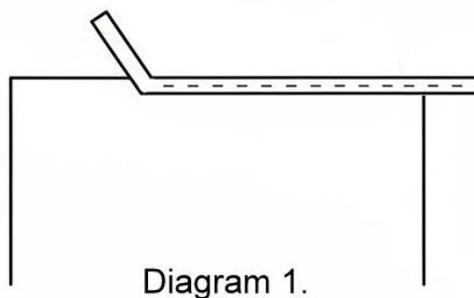
Centre the batting over the backing and smooth out any wrinkles with your hands. Similarly, lay the quilt top over the batting and smooth. Use safety pins to secure the three layers, being sure to space them no larger than 4" apart and pinning down all edges. Medium-sized safety pins are best.

If you prefer to use a basting spray, then follow the directions provided on the can.

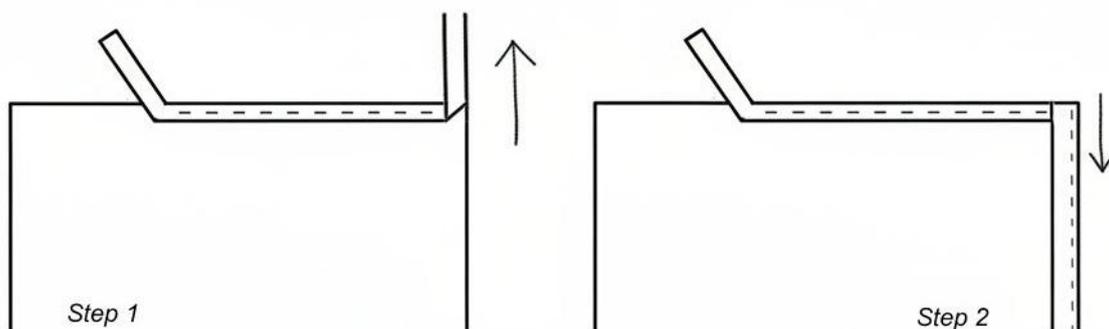
Step 3: Binding

Once you have completed the quilting, trim the batting and backing within a $\frac{1}{4}$ " of the edge of the quilt. Take the binding strips, join them end-to-end, and press the seams open. Press the entire strip in half lengthways with the wrong sides facing together.

To attach to your quilt, start in the middle of one side. Place your binding so that the cut edge lines up with edge of your quilt. Leave a tail approximately 6" long. **(Diagram 1)** Begin stitching using a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam and stop $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the corner of the quilt. Backstitch.

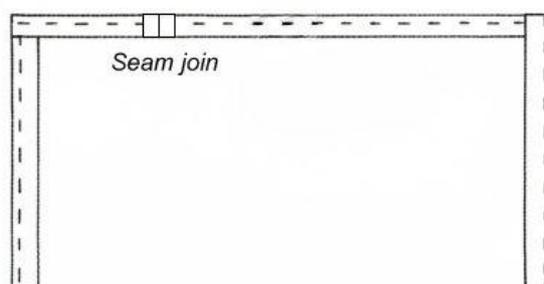


Remove the quilt from the machine. Fold the binding upwards and away from the quilt creating a diagonal fold and then fold straight down. Stitch from the top edge to continue attaching the binding to the next side. **(Diagram 2)** Repeat for all four sides.



On the last side, stop approximately 10" from where you started and join the ends to fit. Cut off the excess strip, finger press the seam open, and finish stitching the binding. **(Diagram 3)**

Once the binding has been fully attached, fold to the back and hand stitch in place.



by Terasa Munnerley