

Finishing Binding Strips On a Quilt

Leave an overlap about 12" to 18" open.

Overlap

The binding has been sewn all the way around the quilt. Now to sew the ends together. Leave at least 12" to 18" open with about 12" of each tail unsewn.

Consider at least 8" overlap of each tail.

Find the center of the open area - pin it to identify it. Fold each tail back on itself leaving a very small gap of about 1/8". Considering pressing it to mark that fold.



Carefully cut the left tail at that fold. Open the cut tail and lay on top of the right right tail. This is the measurement to determine how much strip you need on the right tail for sewing the ends together.

See the picture below.

Very carefully lift up the top of the folded right tail. To make sure it stays aligned, consider pinning it before you cut just that part of the tail.

There will only be a small piece left of the right tail.



Bunch up the quilt so you have more room to work with the tails closer together.

Open each tail flat so the right sides face up.



Lay the right tail over the top of the left tail with right sides together and the ends are perpendicular to each other.

A line is drawn for reference. Insert two pins from each corner to the center to mimic sewing on the line. Gently pull the tails straight to make sure the pinned strip isn't twisted.

If it's twisted, try again, it's only pinned. Don't change the left tail, orient the right tail differently until it's correct.

When the strip is straight, sew on the drawn line. Consider using a basting stitch first if you are unsure.

Sew a regular line of stitching right over the top of the basting stitches.



Trim the seam allowance to 1/4" and press open (you can finger press it).

Finger press the original fold in the binding.

When the quilt is flat, the binding will snap back into its fold and is a flat connection like all the other seams in the binding.

Carefully sew the binding to the quilt using the 1/4" seam allowance. Because there was a gap in the strips, the binding is a bit tighter than the quilt. Sewing slowly will ease the quilt side onto the binding side.

Consider pressing the binding away from the body of the quilt so binding lays flatter as it's wrapped around to the other side.



Hand or machine sew the binding on the other side.
And you are finished.

A helpful tip - use the "walking foot" for sewing the binding to the quilt.

Often the binding is sewn to the front and wrapped to the back and hand sewn to the back.

Consider sewing the binding to the back, wrapping it to the front and machine stitching it on the front.

I hope you find this handout useful. Go Forth And Sew. Su Scott. April 2025