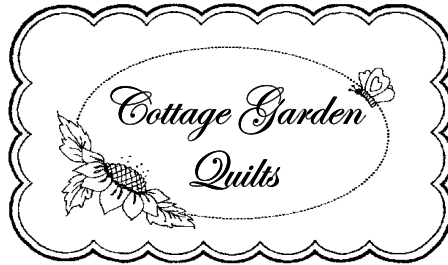


APPLYING QUILT BORDERS - *PROPERLY*

Even seasoned quilters from time-to-time seem to have difficulty applying even, flat borders. The “speedy” quilter prefers to cut border strips, sew them to the quilt, and trim the excess length of border fabric at the end of the process. Chances are this method of adding borders will cause havoc during the quilting process. Improperly applied borders can ruffle or sag, both of which will result in a lumpy surface, uneven edges, and sometimes pleating when the binding is attached. For best results, follow this procedure:

1. Measure the length of the quilt across the middle (not the edges!) in 3 places. Take the average of these measurements.
2. Cut two border strips to this measurement. Fold each strip in half and mark the center with a pin. Now fold the strip in half again and mark the half-way point between each edge and the center. When you unfold the strip it should have three pins marking it into equal quarters. Mark the side of the quilt into quarters with pins the same way. Pin the border to the quilt, matching each of the pins and aligning the edges.
3. Sew, easing in any fullness. The easiest way to do this is to have the "baggy" side facing down. The feed dogs will take up the fullness.
4. Press towards the border.
5. Repeat for the top and bottom borders, measuring the quilt width in several places, averaging, and so on.
6. Your quilt should come out square and flat. If you use the services of a professional quilter, she will thank you!
7. Also, if you are working with a pieced border that has many seams, I suggest you add a row of stitching around the edge of the quilt (stay-stitching) to prevent the borders from stretching when the quilt is loaded onto a frame for quilting. The stay-stitching will be hidden once the binding is added.
8. If you find that your fabrics want to stretch even with measuring quarters and pinning, try lessening the presser foot pressure and sewing at a slower speed. Another option is to sew borders onto the quilt with a walking foot which feeds the quilt top and border fabric with equal pressure.



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