

# Finishing the Quilt

## BASTING

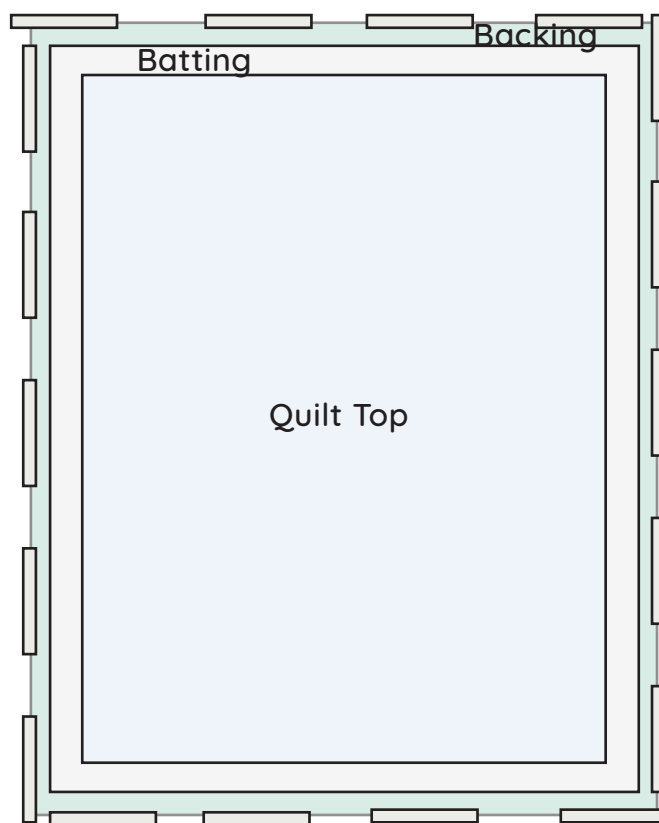
Before quilting, layer the three parts of the quilt: backing, batting, and quilt top. The backing and batting need to be at least 4" larger than the quilt top. The layers must be basted so they stay together during the quilting process without wrinkling or shifting. There are two common ways to baste: pinning or using a temporary water-soluble spray adhesive. Both have the same basic steps.

Iron the backing and spread it out, wrong side up, on a hard surface. For a small quilt, you can use a table, but for larger quilts, a hard floor works best. Smooth the backing and tape it to the floor with masking tape along all of the edges. Pull the backing smooth but not taut.

If spray basting, follow the manufacturer's directions to spray the backing fabric working from one side to the other.

Next, lay the batting on top of the backing. Start at one end of the quilt and smooth the batting over the backing. If spray basting, spray the top of the batting.

Then, carefully center and spread the quilt top on the batting, wrong side down. If spray basting, apply a bit of pressure while smoothing to ensure the quilt layers stick together.



If pin basting, start in the center and use curved basting safety pins to secure the layers together every 4". Remove the tape from around the edges and quilt as desired.

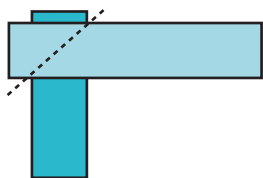
## QUILTING

Both custom and edge-to-edge designs work well with this quilt. If you made the queen-size sampler, I recommend quilting it on a long-arm machine. Contact your long-arm quilter for specifics on preparing your top and backing. However, if you are comfortable quilting a large quilt on your home machine, go for it!

## BINDING

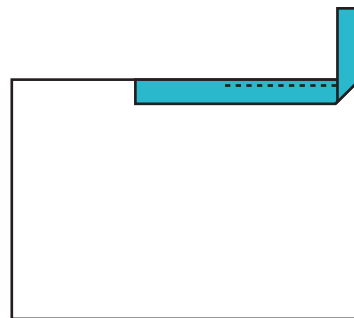
I bind my quilts completely by machine. To do this, I sew the binding to the back of the quilt, wrap it around to the front, and carefully topstitch along the edge. To bind by machine, follow these steps.

After quilting, trim off the extra backing and batting with a rotary cutter and ruler. Use a large square ruler at the corners to ensure they are trimmed square.



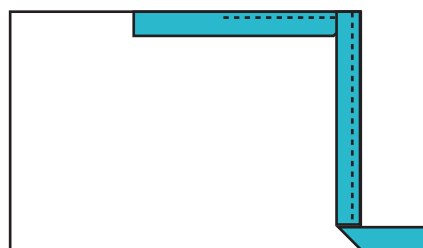
Cut the binding strips 2 ¼" wide by the width of fabric. Sew the binding strips together by placing the ends of two strips right sides together at a 90° angle and sewing across the overlap from corner to corner. Trim off the ends a ¼" away from the seam line, and press the seam open. Repeat until all binding strips are sewn together. Fold the binding in half lengthwise, wrong sides together, and press.

**Tip:** I recommend using a walking foot to attach the binding to the quilt. A walking foot helps feed the layers of fabric and batting through the sewing machine evenly.

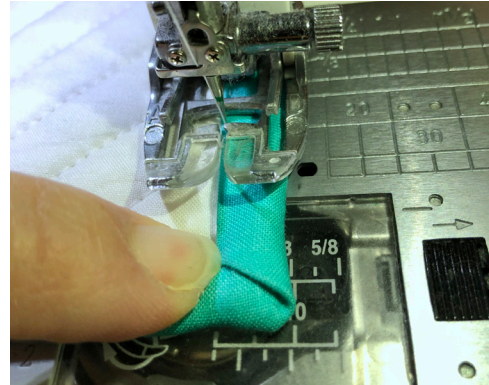
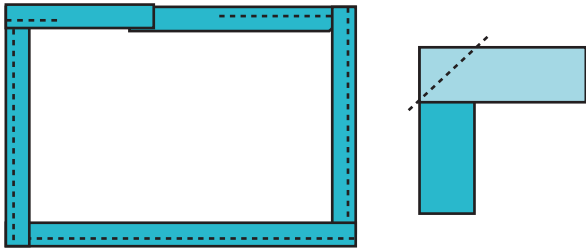


Sew the binding on the back side of the quilt. Start in the middle of one side, leaving approximately 8" of loose binding so you have room to sew the two ends of the binding together.

Align the raw edge of the binding with the edge of the quilt and stitch a ¼" away from the edge. Continue stitching until you are a ¼" from the first corner, then stop with the needle down. Pivot the quilt, so the walking foot is parallel with the second side, and backstitch off the edge of the quilt. Fold the binding up and back, so the unfinished edge is even with the second side of the quilt and the folded edge is perpendicular to itself.



Then, fold the binding back onto itself along the second side of the quilt. Starting at the corner, sew with a ¼" seam allowance along the second edge of the quilt. Continue around the quilt in this manner, stopping when you are about 8" short of the loose binding tail. Backstitch and remove your quilt from the machine.



Place the two ends of binding on top of each other so they overlap. Trim the longer end so they overlap by 2 ¼". Unfold the binding strips and place them perpendicular to each other, right sides together. Pin and stitch from corner to corner. Trim off the excess fabric a ¼" away from the seam line. Press seam open, then fold the binding strip in half and finish sewing it to the quilt.

As you approach the corner, fold the bottom binding edge in. Then, wrap the side edge over the top, creating a mitered edge as shown. Holding the miter in place, continue sewing. When you reach the corner, stop with the needle down, catching the miter. Pivot the quilt and continue topstitching down the second side. Continue around the quilt in this manner. When you reach the beginning, lock the stitches and trim the ends of the thread.

Using an iron, press the binding up and toward the unfinished edge.



Next, fold the binding over the front of the quilt until it barely covers the stitching used to attach it. Using matching thread, topstitch along the inner edge of the binding.

**Tip:** Ideally, the stitching on the back side of the quilt will be in the “ditch” between the binding and backing fabric. In reality, the stitching usually ends up an eighth of an inch over, on the backing fabric. To camouflage the stitching, use bobbin thread that matches the backing fabric. If you are trying machine binding for the first time, consider using the same color fabric for the binding and backing. If you use a matching thread, any wiggles between backing and binding will not be noticeable.