

Tips for Better Borders from Helen Frost

- Whenever possible, cut outer borders on the lengthwise grain of the fabric. Lengthwise grain can't stretch or ripple and there won't be any distracting seams.
- Don't measure the outer edges of the quilt because those edges may have stretched. Measure across the center of the quilt instead, in both directions.
- Even better than measuring, try on the borders. Spread a small quilt on a table and use painters' tape to keep the quilt flat. For bed quilts, spread them on a carpet and pin the quilt to the carpet in the center of each side.
- Mark the center of the border and place it on the center of the quilt. Spread the first two border pieces to the edges and mark the ends.
- Pin the border to the quilt at the center, then the ends, then in between. Sew with the border piece on top. Repeat for the other border.
- Tape or pin the quilt as before to find the correct length for the second two borders.

Tips for Mitered Borders

- Sew the various border fabrics together to make a border piece for each side of the quilt. The length should include the quilt measurement, the width of the border, and a few inches extra.
- Sew to the quilt (after measuring or trying on), starting and stopping 1/4" from the corners of the quilt. Press to the border. Repeat for all the borders.
- Fold the quilt **wrong** sides together (this is different from most directions), with the borders toward the quilt. Line up the seams and the extending border pieces and pin.
- Mark a 45° line from the end of the stitching to the edge of the border.
- Pin and sew on the line. Trim the excess fabric, leaving a 1/4" seam allowance, and press the seam open.

