

## HOW TO ADD BORDERS:

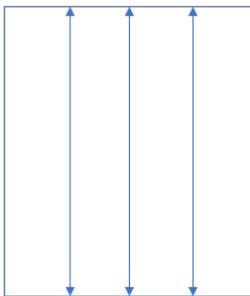
Don't cut your border fabric until your quilt top is ready for them. If you cut your border fabric before you start sewing your quilt top together, you may find that your quilt top is larger than the pattern said it would be, and then your border fabric will have been cut too short. Wait until it is time to sew the borders on before you cut them to size.

### Prepare the Fabric

**Iron** the quilt top and the border fabric, to remove any wrinkles and to flatten out any seams. Do this **before** you cut your border fabric to the size you need for your quilt.

### Cut Side Borders

1. Find the length of your quilt top by measuring through the quilt center (not along the edges), from top to bottom, since the edges may have been stretched while piecing your quilt top.
2. Measure along the center line, then again on either side of the center, somewhere between the center line and the outer edges. The **shortest** of these measurements will be the length of your quilt top.



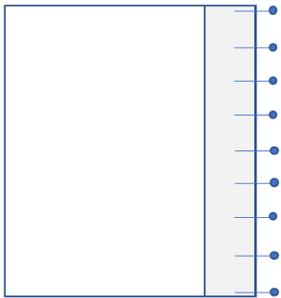
3. Cut 2 side borders to this length.
4. Don't measure for the width of your quilt top until after you've added the side borders.

The reason we take the shortest measurement, and not the average, is that you don't want to over-stretch your quilt top to make it fit your borders. This could cause a seam to become ripped open by accident, without enough fabric to fix it later.

The reason we **cut** the side borders to the exact **length** needed **BEFORE** we sew them onto the quilt top, is to prevent ending up with wavy borders. Wavy borders are caused by the feed dogs moving the bottom fabric through at a different speed than the top fabric.

## Sew on Side Borders

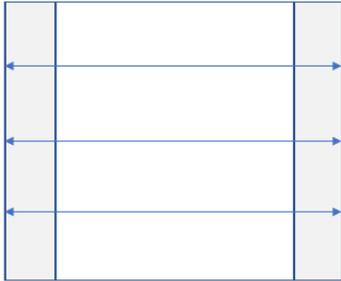
1. **Fold** the side **border** strips in half, end-to-end, to find the center. Put a **pin** at that spot.
2. Fold in half again, and put another pin at that spot.
3. Keep folding in half and marking the spot with pins, until you have a pin every 6 inches or so.
4. **Fold** the quilt **top** in half along the side edge, to find the center. Put a **pin** in that spot.
5. Repeat the folding and pinning on the quilt top, same as you did for the side border.
6. Lay the side border onto the quilt top, right sides facing each other, **matching** up the pins from the border to the pins from the quilt top. **Pin** the border to the quilt top where the pins meet, and add some extra pins in between, **easing** in the fullness anywhere that the quilt top has a little more fabric than the border fabric. The more pins you have in place, the more exact your borders will be sewn onto your quilt top, and the better the chance that you won't have wavy borders. Trust me on this, your longarmer will appreciate it, and you'll like the look of your quilt better, too.



7. Sew the border and quilt top together, stopping to remove each pin as you approach it.
  - Some quilting pins are thin enough that you can sew right over them without hurting the pins, your needle, or the fabric. I use the pins with the blue flower heads for this, so that I don't have to remove the pins until I am through sewing the whole seam.
8. Press the seam towards the borders.
9. Iron the quilt top + side border on the seam, to make sure the top is flat.
10. Make sure you don't over-iron or cause the seam to become warped and un-straight.
11. Repeat for the other side border.

## Cut Top and Bottom Borders

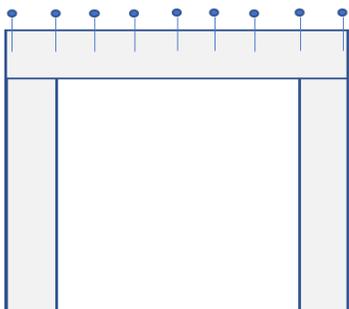
1. Find the width of your quilt top by measuring across the quilt center, which now includes the 2 side borders.
2. Measure along the center line, then again on either side of the center, somewhere between the center line and the outer edges. The shortest of these measurements will be the width of your quilt top.



3. Cut the top and bottom borders to this length.

## Sew on Top and Bottom Borders

1. **Fold** the top **border** strip in half, end-to-end, to find the center, same as you did for the side borders. **Put** a pin at that spot.
2. Fold in half again, and put another pin at that spot.
3. Keep folding in half and marking the spot with pins, until you have a pin every 6 inches or so.
4. **Fold** the quilt **top** in half along the top edge, to find the center. Put a **pin** in that spot.
5. Repeat the folding and pinning on the quilt top, same as you did for the top border.
6. Lay the top border onto the quilt top, right sides facing each other, **matching** up the pins from the border to the pins from the quilt top. **Pin** the border to the quilt top where the pins meet, and add some extra pins in between.



7. Sew the top border and quilt top together, same as you did for the side borders.
8. Press the seam towards the borders.
9. Iron the quilt top + top border on the seam, to make sure the top is flat.
10. Make sure you don't over-iron or cause the seam to become warped and un-straight.
11. Repeat for the bottom border.

### **Check your Quilt Top**

1. When you are done adding all 4 borders, re-measure the quilt top for the new width. Take 3 measurements like you did before. You should find that you get the same measurement in all 3 places.
2. Repeat for finding the new length measurement. Take 3 measurements, and you should find that they are all the same length.
3. If you need to add another set of borders, it should be easier now, since your quilt top is now nicely square, and the next set of borders should fit without any easing needed.
4. The key to beautiful borders is in the measuring and pinning. Anyone can have beautiful borders if they take a little extra time to follow the steps above.