

Tips from a Quilt Judge

Ann Turley, our February 2012 speaker, graciously granted us permission to reprint her advice on entering a quilt show, and her tips on creating perfect mitered corners.

What to Consider When Entering a Judged Quilt Show

1. VISUAL DESIGN

What makes your quilt appealing—is it a well-coordinated color palette? Is the pattern handled in a new and/or refreshing way?

2. DESIGN

Complexity and degree of difficulty of the pattern. Occasionally the quilting design may be considered at this point.

3. GENERAL APPEARANCE

Quilt should have a unified look to it—are all the parts well integrated? Do the fabrics and blocks or units look like they belong together? Is your quilt free of pet hair, lint and dirt, and has no smell of smoke?

4. TECHNICAL ASPECTS

Primary Technique—are pieced blocks uniform in size? Do the corners meet and are all points sharp? Do all appliqued units have smooth curves and sharp points? Is the thread color consistent? Are there small, tight and strong stitches?

Joined Blocks—should all meet in the same place and all intersections should align. Seam lines should be straight and on grain.

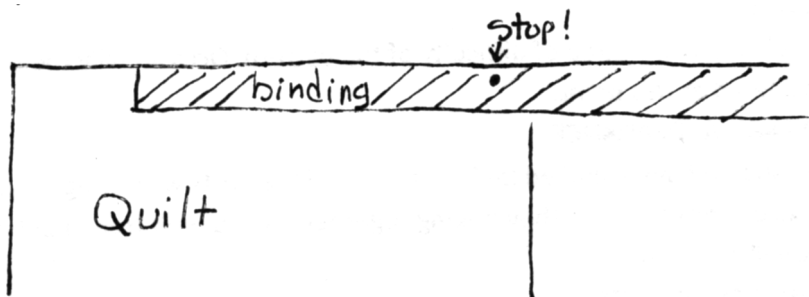
Borders—should be harmonious with the quilt center in regards to color and width. Rippling should be avoided; a quilt should lie/hang flat upon completion.

Quilting Design and Technique—is it appropriate to the overall piece? It should enhance and full the quilt. Stitch length should be consistent (machine or hand). Length *usually* takes a back seat to *consistency*. Tension should be even front to back with no distortion or knots showing front or back. Machine quilters—be careful with stops and starts as they should not be obvious.

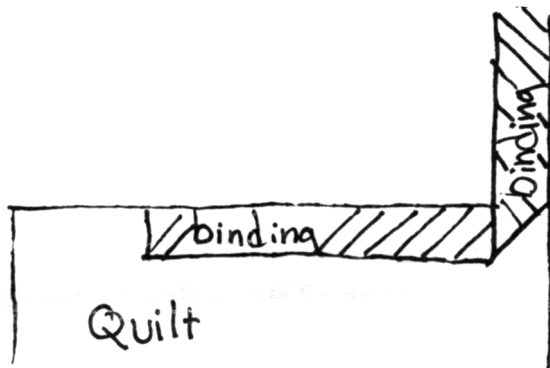
Finishing—edges should be straight, binding attached securely with strong, even stitches. Bindings should be completely filled. Corners should be 90°, sharp, and stitched closed.

Mitered Corners

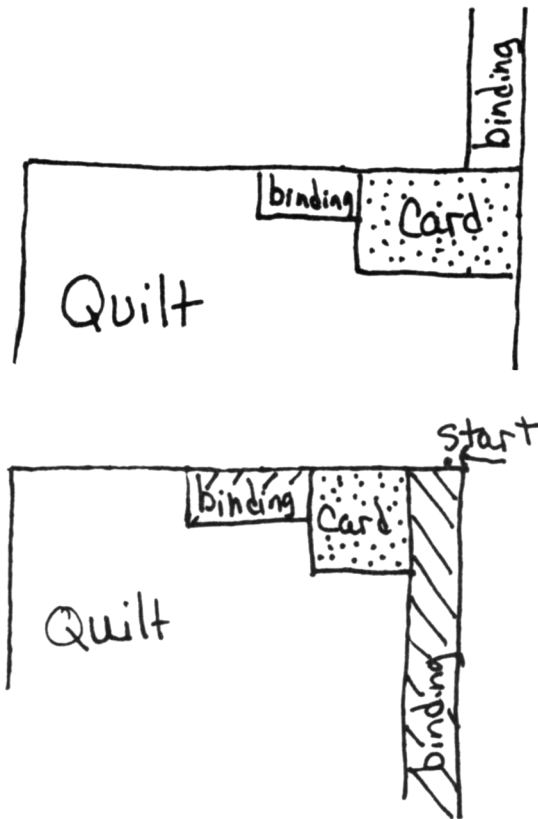
1. Cut strips 2 1/4" wide, piecing on the diagonal when necessary. Fold in half and press.
2. Start sewing your binding about 1/3 the distance between two corners. Stop sewing before you reach the corner of the quilt, ending the same distance from the edge as the width of the seam allowance. This is critical if your seam is wider than 1/4", and makes for clean and neat miters. Sew a backstitch or two, then clip the threads and remove the quilt from the machine.



3. Flip the unsewn binding up so that the raw edge is parallel with the next side of the quilt. The strip should form a 45° angle at the lower edge.



4. Lay an index card at the corner, aligning the edges with the quilt. Flip the binding down over the card and align its raw edges with the edge of the quilt. The card will help you do this without losing the angle. Pull out the card and sew starting where the last seam ended.



5. Continue sewing the binding around the quilt, treating each corner the same way.

6. Mitered corners should be stitched closed, front and back. This helps the corners to lay flat.

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