

EPISODE 21 CLASS NOTES

FINISHING THE EXQISSITE QUILT!

Welcome to the final episode in our ExQISSite Quilt series. The quilt is now together and ready for the binding.

I appreciate that there was a lot of work in this quilt. It was organised this way to teach you as many different quilting designs and sashings as possible, giving you the confidence to convert any quilt pattern to a Quilt as You Go project in the future. I hope you have enjoyed the journey and learned a lot along the way.

1. How to Get The Quilt Edges Nice & Flat

Before we add the binding, we need to make sure the quilt edges are nice and flat. Sometimes, especially when the amount and density of quilting varies, the borders can stretch or buckle, creating waves. This can happen with any quilt, but there is a simple way to fix it.

• Step 1: Measure Your Quilt & Prepare For Gathering

- Lay the quilt on a flat surface to see if there are any waves.
- Measure the length in three places: the middle and both sides (about 1-2" from the edge).
- Do the same for the width (across the top border, middle, and bottom border).
- Note down your measurements to find the common measurement you need to work with.
- Divide the length of each side of the quilt into quarters and place a pin at each quarter mark.

• Step 2: Hand Sew a Gathering Stitch

- Using a hand sewing needle and a long double thread with a knot in the end, run a small gathering stitch (about ¼" to ⅜") between each quarter, working from one pin to the next.
- When you reach the next pin, cut the thread, leaving a tail of at least 4 inches.
- Rethread your needle and begin a new line of gathering stitches from the other side of the pin.

• Step 3: Gently Gather Your Quilt

- Gently pull the gathering threads for each section to ease any wavy edges in slightly. You don't want visible gathers, just a flat edge.
- Once each section is gathered, secure the thread by wrapping the end around the pin in a figure eight to keep the thread nice and taut while we put the binding on.
- Repeat this process until the top, the middle and the bottom all have the same measurements.

2. Preparing Your Binding

Step 1: Cutting the Strips

- Fold the fabric for the binding into 4, press and pin with [Flower Head Pins](#).
- You can cut the binding strips either 2 ¼" or 2 ½" wide - I use my [Duo Tool](#) for this. You will need to cut 6 of your chosen width.
- Lay the strips with the right sides together and use the Duo Tool to draw the diagonal stitching line to join them together.
- Stitch on the drawn line, trim the seam back to ¼", and press the seams in one direction.

Step 2: Pressing the Binding with a Sasher Tool

- I use a Sasher tool to fold and press the binding for a crisp, even edge.
 - If you cut your binding 2 ½" wide, use the 1 ¼" Sasher tool.
 - If you cut your binding 2 ¼" wide, use the 1 ⅛" Sasher tool.
- To use the tool, fold the first 2-3" of your binding strip in half and press.
- Thread at least 2" of the folded end into the Sasher tool, starting from the bottom, going over the centre bar and back down. Pin the end to your ironing surface with a [Fork Pin](#).
- Place the **side** of your iron against the side of the Sasher and gently push with the iron, holding the top layer of fabric with a little tension. When you have pressed approximately 15-18", move the pin along and continue until the entire strip is pressed.

3. Attaching the Binding to the Quilt

For my quilt, I stitched the binding to the back and folded it to the front for topstitching, with MonoPoly thread in the top and bobbin of my machine. If you prefer hand-stitching, you can machine stitch it to the front, and hand-stitch it to the back.

Step 1: Mark the Joining Gap.

- In the middle of the bottom edge of the quilt, use a fabric marking pencil to draw a small mark at each end of the Duo Tool. This will mark a 12" gap where the binding ends will be joined.

Step 2: Glue the Binding to the Quilt

- **Tip:** For the nicest finish, I recommend gluing one side of the binding to the quilt edge before you sew. It prevents movement and helps keep everything aligned, especially when compared to holding it or pinning it in place.
- For the first side, start by leaving a 10" tail of binding from your pencil mark. Next, apply small dots of glue along the quilt edge and lay the binding on the edge of the quilt, lining it up evenly.
- Press with a hot iron to set the glue, move the quilt along the ironing surface and continue until you reach a seam allowance distance away from the corner.
- **Note:** If using a 2 ½" binding, you may need a seam allowance slightly larger than a standard ¼" (closer to ⅜").

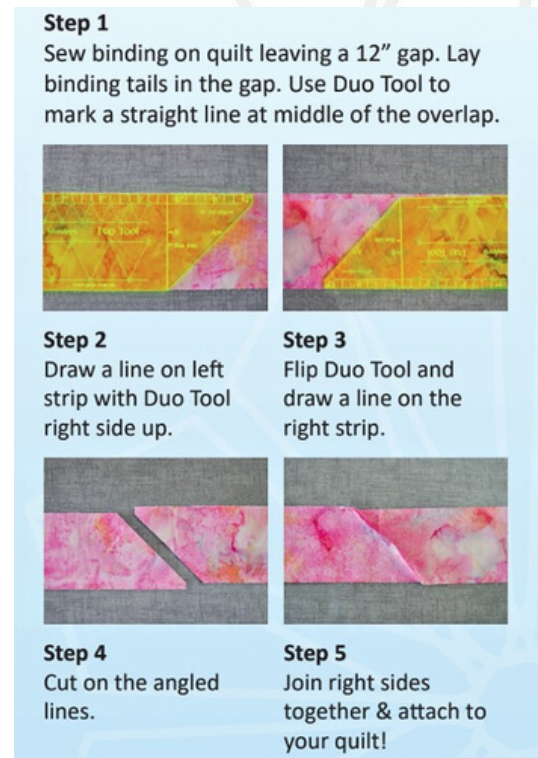
Step 3: Sew the Binding to the Quilt

- Once one side is glued, stitch with your chosen seam allowance.
- If you notice the binding stretching as you sew, reduce the presser foot pressure on your machine.
- Stop stitching once you reach your seam allowance distance away from the corner.
- Pivot and stitch off toward the corner at a 45-degree angle, or reverse off as I demonstrate in the video.
- Fold the binding strip straight up, creating a 45-degree angle.
- Then, fold the strip back down so the folded edge is aligned with the top edge of the quilt and the raw edges are aligned down the next side. This creates a perfect mitre.

Step 4: Joining the Binding Ends

Refer to the video or diagram below to see how to join the ends.

- Lay your binding tails over each other in the 12" gap.
- Use the Duo Tool to mark the cutting lines on both tails for a perfect diagonal join.
- Cut on the lines and stitch the two ends together. The fit will be tight, which is what you want to prevent ripples.
- Stitch the remaining section of the binding to the quilt.



4. Finishing the Binding

- **Tip:** I recommend gluing the other side of the binding in place before the final stitching, whether by machine or hand. It's easier to manage and the glue doesn't affect the needle.
- **Machine Stitching:** If folding the binding to the front, run a line of glue on the original stitch line, press the binding over to set the glue, and topstitch on the very edge of the binding, with MonoPoly thread in the top and bobbin.
- **Hand Stitching:** If folding to the back, glue the binding in place. To get a perfect mitred corner, use the tip of your thread snips to hold the corner fold in place while you press it with an iron, then hand-stitch the binding down.

It has been an absolute delight to take you on this journey! Thank you for joining us and please continue to use the QISS system on any quilt you create. I would love to see what you have achieved, so please send photos of your completed quilts to hello@pqw.com.au

Happy Quilting, Pauline