

Backing and Binding Tips & Calculations

Backing - When working out your backing meterage you need to measure across the width and length of your quilt.

The standard width of quilting fabric is a workable amount of 106cm (42"). This allows for the removal of the selvedge. You then need to calculate how many 'drops' of fabric you will need to cover the back of the quilt, in a similar way to calculating curtain fabric. Unless you are making a lap or smaller sized quilt you will need to join the fabric either lengthwise or across the width. Use a ½" seam and press open. I'd advise to not run a join down the middle of the back. This may weaken over time so it can be worth offsetting the seam or cutting down one of the 'drops' down the middle and joining it either side of a central 'drop' giving two offset seams. If you wish to pattern match you will need more fabric to allow for the pattern repeats of your particular fabric.

There are wider fabrics which can be more economical to use, look for 100% cotton.

Double Binding – There are many ways to finish the edge. The most common is a Double Bound edge.

To calculate your binding amount you need to know the total circumference of your quilt. Measure the width and the length, double both and add together.

Remember those days in school when you said "When will I ever need algebra!"

$(\text{width} \times 2) + (\text{length} \times 2) = \text{total distance around quilt}$

$\text{total distance around quilt} / 42 = \text{the number of strips of fabric for the binding.}$

The number of strips of fabric for the binding (round this figure up to a full number) x width of the binding = number of inches of fabric you will need to cut the binding strips from.

Example:

Quilt is 60" wide by 80" long. Width of binding you want to cut is 2½"

$(60 \times 2) + (80 \times 2) = 280$

$280 / 42 = 6.66$ round this figure up to 7

$7 \times 2\frac{1}{2} = 17\frac{1}{2}$ You will need 17½" (45cm) of fabric to cut out 7, 2½" strips for your binding.