

FACING A QUILT

A facing is similar to a binding on a quilt, except that it's turned completely to the back so there is no visual line around the edge of a quilt. I prefer a facing because the hand stitching required at the end is easier as there is more fabric turned to the back and it doesn't have to be exact. Also I find this method of making corners easier than traditional binding.

The beauty of this method is that once you've marked the outside edge of the facing, you can just sew. You can eyeball the measurements of the strips you'll use. It's quick, and it's forgiving. You might want to try a sample or a mug rug before tackling a larger quilt.

Materials to Make a Quilt Facing

Quilt ready for edge finishing

2 ½ inch strips for facing, length to match the perimeter of the quilt

3, 4 or 5 inch squares for each corner

Thread to match facing strips

- Trim quilt to size.
- You need one facing strip for each edge of your quilt. I use 2 ½ inch wide strips, pressed wrong sides together along the length to yield a double-layered strip 1 ¼ inches wide. Sew using ¼ inch seam allowance. If you need to sew two lengths of strips together for a larger quilt, sew strips together on an angle.
- Press each square on the diagonal, wrong sides together. These triangles will cover the raw edges of the facings at each corner of the quilt.
- With the right side of the quilt facing you, place the triangles on the top of the quilt in each corner, with the raw edges matching the raw edges of the quilt.
- Place one long strip along each edge. Don't go all the way to the very corner, but leave a little space (less than 1 inch). This will help cut down on the bulk of fabric layers in the corner, and the triangles will

cover the raw ends of the facing strips.

- I like to gently pin the strips and triangles to the quilt. Don't pull on the strip, just lay it down gently.
- Now begin sewing your strips. If I am working on a small mini quilt I just use my normal presser foot but on a larger quilt I like to use a walking foot. Start at one corner and stitch down the side. Go slow, it's easier to take your time and get it right than to go back and rip it out. Gently feed the quilt under the foot, let the machine do the work. Don't pull or push the fabric through. If you didn't trim the end of the strip yet, trim it right before you get to the next corner, allow that little bit of the square to show. Turn the quilt 90 degrees and start stitching the second side, then the third and then the last.
- Go back to each corner, and sew across the corner at an angle to help strengthen the corner for turning. Backstitch a few times back and forth.
- Fire up your steam iron and press all the facing strips towards the outside edge on each side.
- The edgestitching step is optional, but it looks nice and makes it easier to turn the edge to the back of the quilt. Top stitch all the way around the quilt, running the presser foot as close to the fold as possible. The stitching should be going through the facing and the quilt. Start at the edge of the quilt at each corner.
- Trim the corners: lop off the corners about 2 mm away from the stitching. Taper the edges of the quilt coming towards the corner starting about an inch away.
- Fire up your steam iron and start pressing the edges. You want to use the facing to pull the quilt edge around. I like to have about 1/16 of an inch of quilt front showing on the back. Steam it up as you go.
- Flip the folded square to the back and use a blunt instrument like a chopstick or a forceps to help smooth out the corners. Don't use scissors or anything sharp that may cut or punch a hole in the corner.
- At this point you can hand sew the facing to the back of quilt making sure it does not go through the front of the quilt.
- Enjoy this new finishing method!