

How to Make and Apply Bias Binding

by Alisa at Making More with Less (Busy Quilt Mom)
for Sew Mama Sew

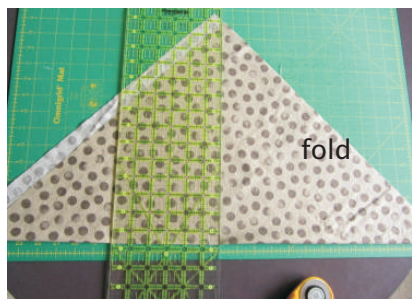
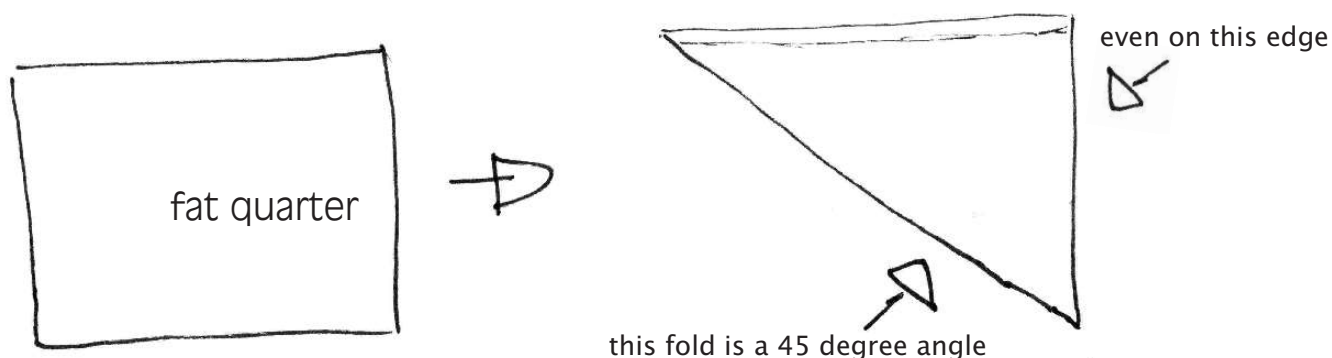
Bias Binding is an easy way to finish off edges and add interesting detail and colour to your sewing projects.

Think bibs, pot holders, skirt hems, blankets and baby items. Try it on place mats, table runners and on curved and scalloped edges. You can buy it in your local fabric store or you can make it yourself in whatever fabric your heart desires. I am going to show you how to make 3 ½ yards of bias binding with a fat quarter.

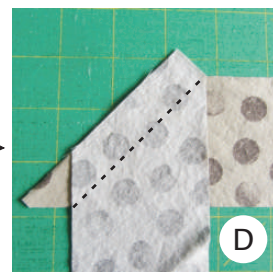
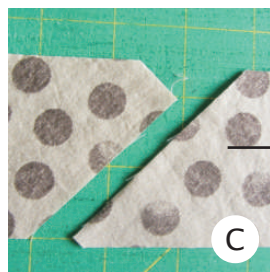
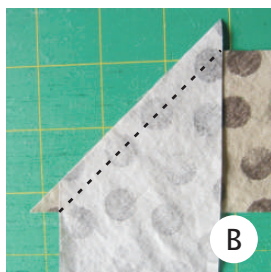
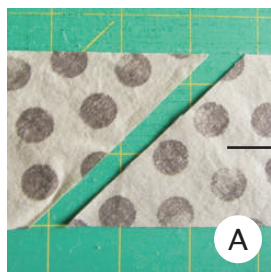
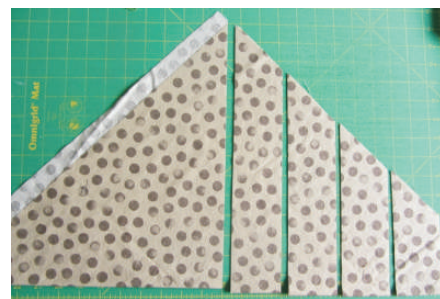
You can use the same technique with a larger cut of fabric.

Cutting it out and stitching it together.

Take your fat quarter and fold it (almost in half) diagonally so that the fold is a 45 degree angle.



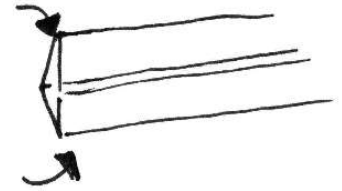
Take your acrylic ruler and cut a straight line from the 45 degree angle fold to the top. Continue cutting 2.5 inch strips to the right. Then cut the left piece into 2.5 inch strips. You will have 8 strips of varying length.



Take these strips and sew them together matching angles (photo A). Stitch them together with about a 1/4 inch seam. Offset them a bit (photo B) so that when they are sewn together it will form a straight strip of fabric. If your angles are cut off a bit (photo C), that's okay just offset them even more and stitch further in (photo D.) You can trim the seam allowance to 1/4 inch after stitching.



You should now have a long, 2.5 inch wide strip of fabric (approximately 3.5 yards.) Press open all of your seams and trim off the little bits that stick out (left photo.) If you have a bias binding maker then feel free to use it to press your strip (right photo.) If you don't have the tool then I'll show you how to proceed without.



Now press your strip in half. The 2.5" width gets pressed to 1.25". (photo A) You'll have a nice crease. (photo B) Open the strip again. Press each side to the centre crease. (photo C and illustration)

Lastly you will press the whole strip in half again. The result will be that the raw edges of your fabric are on the inside of your bias binding.

★ It is important that when you press it in half you allow the bottom to be about $\frac{1}{32}$ " – $\frac{1}{16}$ " wider or longer. This will make the bias binding so much easier to apply.



$\frac{1}{16}$ th inch

Fold



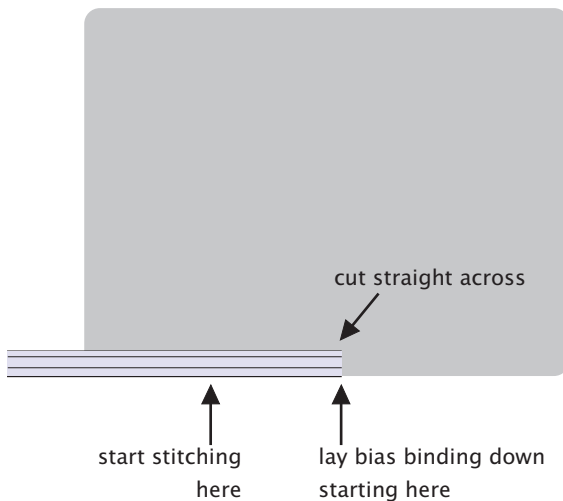
And then you are finished making your bias binding! 3.5 yards of binding and ready for all sorts of fun projects. Next I'll show you how to apply your bias binding to a placemat. If it's your first project you should pick something with a gentle curve, rather than the sharp curves on my placemat.



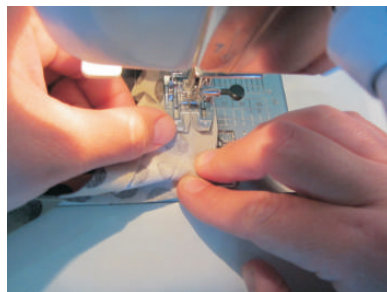
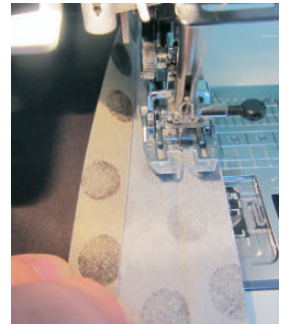
Application.

I am going to show you the application process on this simple placemat. See those rounded corners. They add so much to the place mat. And the binding will too!

If your project is multi-layered like the place mat then use a walking foot if you have one. It'll prevent everything slipping around.



Lay your bias binding down on the long side of your place mat. (Another project will obviously start in another location.) Cut the end of your bias binding straight across. Remember when you made your bias binding you left the one side wider (longer)? Open up your bias binding with your wider side down. Start stitching about 6 inches down (this will leave a 6 inch tail.) Match up the edge of the bias binding with the edge of the placemat and stitch in the crease.



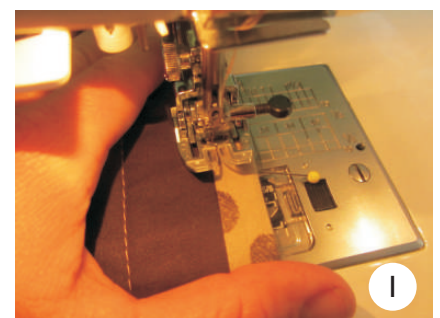
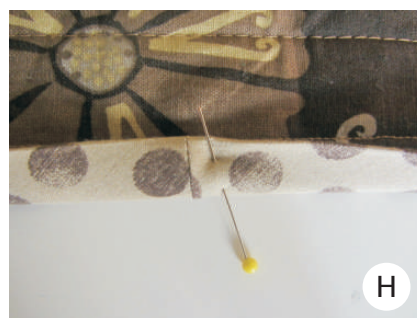
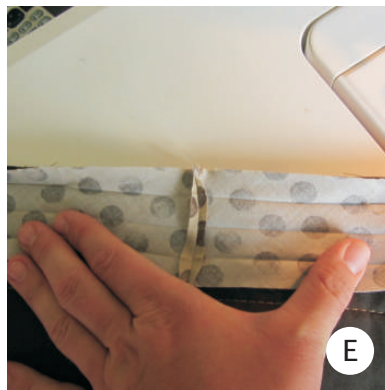
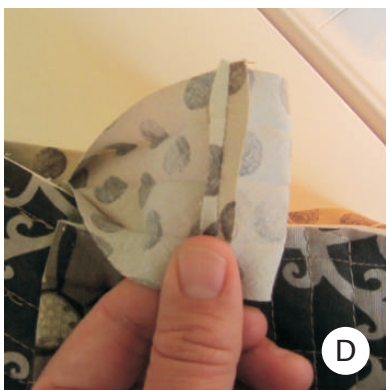
Above is a series of photos in which I attempt to show you how to go around corners. Because it's cut on the bias, bias binding is stretchy which enable you to shape the binding any which way. Go slow, adjusting and stretching the bias binding as you go. And remember it takes a bit of practice for this to become easy. If you get a pucker, just pick out the few stitches around it, stretch the fabric differently and resew.



Stitch all the way around the place mat, stopping just around the corner. You will need to cut off the excess. Lay your first tail flush with the edge of the place mat. Lay the remaining tail (this one will be long) on top of it and cut it off a half inch past where the first tail starts. Forgot to take a photo of this – sorry!

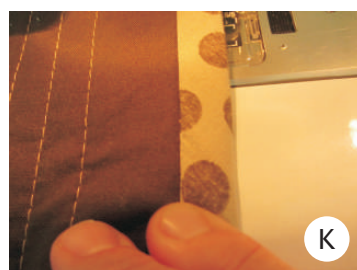
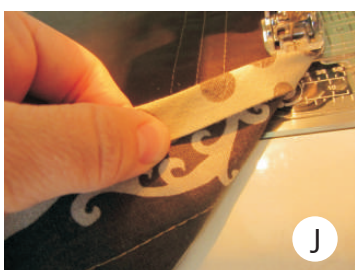


Pull the two tails back. (photo A) Using a pin, bunch up the fabric of the placemat to give you some room to sew the ends of the bias binding together. (photo B) Now pin the ends together. (photo C) Stitch them together with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. Finger press them open. (photo D) Now remove your pin and line up your bias binding along the edge of your place mat. Finish stitching the bias binding down. (photo E) Now your placemat will look like this. (photo F)



Now we'll wrap the binding around to the back and stitch it down. Start at the point where you joined your strip together. (photo G) It helps to pin just that one spot down before you start. (photo H) Get yourself in position – you'll be stitching about an $\frac{1}{8}$ " away from the edge. Then take your pin out before you start stitching. (photo I) The next two photos (J and K) are taken in quick succession. As you stitch you'll keep stopping to check on how things are looking on the back. Hold it in place with your fingers, then put it back and stitch up to where you are holding it, then stop and ensure that the 'wrap' is good again and continue on.

Obviously on the corners or rounded edges you will be stopping more often. If you stitch off of the binding on the back, just keep going and when you are finished you can pick out that part and redo it. I don't use pins, but sometimes on a particularly tight curve I might pin just that part when I come to it.



And there you have it! Whether it be place mats, bibs, pot holders, quilts, receiving blankets, change pads, sleeps sacks or skirt hems. It's only limited by your imagination and it adds so much to your finished project.



This tutorial was created by Alisa from Making More With Less
(<http://makingmorewithless.blogspot.ca/>)
for Sew,Mama,Sew! (<http://www.sewmamasew.com/blog2>).
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