

Blocking a Quilt Before Adding Binding:

**** Warning: Only do this with colorfast fabrics! If you did not wash your fabrics before putting them into the quilt, do not get the quilt wet!!****

1. Lay the quilt out flat – not on a bed, but on a floor or ping-pong table – a hard surface that is larger than your quilt.
2. Study the quilt to see if there are major areas of “less than smooth, flat” surfaces.
3. Study the quilt to see how the edges look. Do they ripple?
4. Study the quilt to check the corners – do they line up? Are all 4 corners even? If you were to fold the quilt in four even quarters, will all the corners and edges line up evenly and squarely?
5. Prepare the blocking area. You will need an area larger than the quilt with room to move all the way around. You should have at least one fan to aid in circulating air to dry the quilt. You can use sheets on the garage floor or a large piece of insulation foam board or a thick colorfast rug. (You can use pins with the insulation foam board or with a thick rug.)
6. Wet the quilt: you can
 - a. Dunk the quilt into a tub of water, press the water out with towels and carry the quilt in a sheet to protect the wet seams (threads) from bearing the extra weight of the wet quilt.
 - b. Spritz the quilt with a water bottle (best if the quilt seems relatively flat and even).
 - c. Put the quilt through a short rinse cycle in the washing machine.
7. Place the quilt on the blocking surface.
8. Using a ruler or string (to act as a straight line), straighten one side of the quilt close to the edge of the sheet.
9. Work your way across the quilt, gently smoothing fullness outward as you go.
10. Move to the opposite side of your quilt and measure to find the middle of the quilt, make sure that it is directly across from the middle of the other side and smooth out from the middle to the corners.
11. Repeat this for the other two edges of your quilt, smoothing out any fullness as you go.
12. Measure diagonally from corner to corner both ways. Are your measurements the same? If not, smooth and gently push the wet quilt into shape so that the measurements are equal.
13. Move to the corners and using a square ruler, smooth the corners into square.
14. Turn on the fans, block off the area around the quilt to keep foot traffic away and expect to let the quilt dry for a couple of days.
15. Once the quilt is dry, you can put your mat under the edges and cut the sides and corners straight and square with your rotary cutter.
16. Be careful putting your binding on so that you don't pull either the binding or the quilt.

Hints: Practice on a small quilt first.

Bias binding is kinder to your newly blocked raw quilt edges!