

Mitered Corners

The first two steps below are essential for making mitered corners. They set up the needed border fabric in a way that readies the quilter's ability to move easily through the process.

Border Steps:

1. Take measurements of both the width and length of the piece and to each measurement add the width of the border piece twice as well as an additional 3 inches at both ends to work the mitered ends. Say your quilt top is 12" wide and 16" long and your border for the four sides is 3" wide your equation would be $12" + 3" + 3" + 3" + 3"$ for a total of 24" for both widths of the quilt top. Now do the same for the lengths of your top or $16" + 3" + 3" + 3" + 3"$ for a total of 28" each side.
2. Working right sides together pin the centers of the border to each side of the quilt top and sew as usual leaving $\frac{1}{4}"$ unsewn space at both ends and on all four sides of quilt. I use the wrong side of the quilt top for this step because I can visualize where the ends of my seams need to be. I sew all four sides this way and iron the seams before moving on. Note: there will be a very small space between the corner pieces which will be needed for Step #3 below.

Mitered Steps:

1. Place your quilt top face up on a flat working surface. At each corner of the quilt top you will have extra material extending. In this case the first 3" will become the mitered corners of your border and the other 3" will be used to maneuver the mitered corner. If the width of the borders increase or decrease that needs to be part of your cutting equation and you will work that accordingly.
2. I always move the quilt top around so that the corner I'm working on is at the top right on my cutting table. Now extend the horizontal ends outward and flat. Then move the perpendicular piece up over the horizontal piece (the right side of both pieces should be facing you) and flatten as well.
3. Using the horizontal piece as a guide and placing your index finger at the pivot point where the two sides meet gently fold the top perpendicular piece under itself and then smoothly extend over the horizontal piece. In doing so you are creating a 45 degree angle with the top folded section of border fabric. Once you are satisfied with the angle iron the fold to identify the sewing line you will sew on. I add three pins to secure the fabrics before moving to the sewing machine. One where the outer edges of the mitered corner will be, open and add a second along the sew line and a third near the pivot point to assure I don't sew below that point.
4. Simply sew from the outer edge inward along the sew line to the pin near the pivot point.
5. Open up, fold back the extensions and you have a mitered corner. I don't cut off the extra fabric until all four sides are completed to my satisfaction. Enjoy!