

Hand Sewing Binding Tips for Community Service

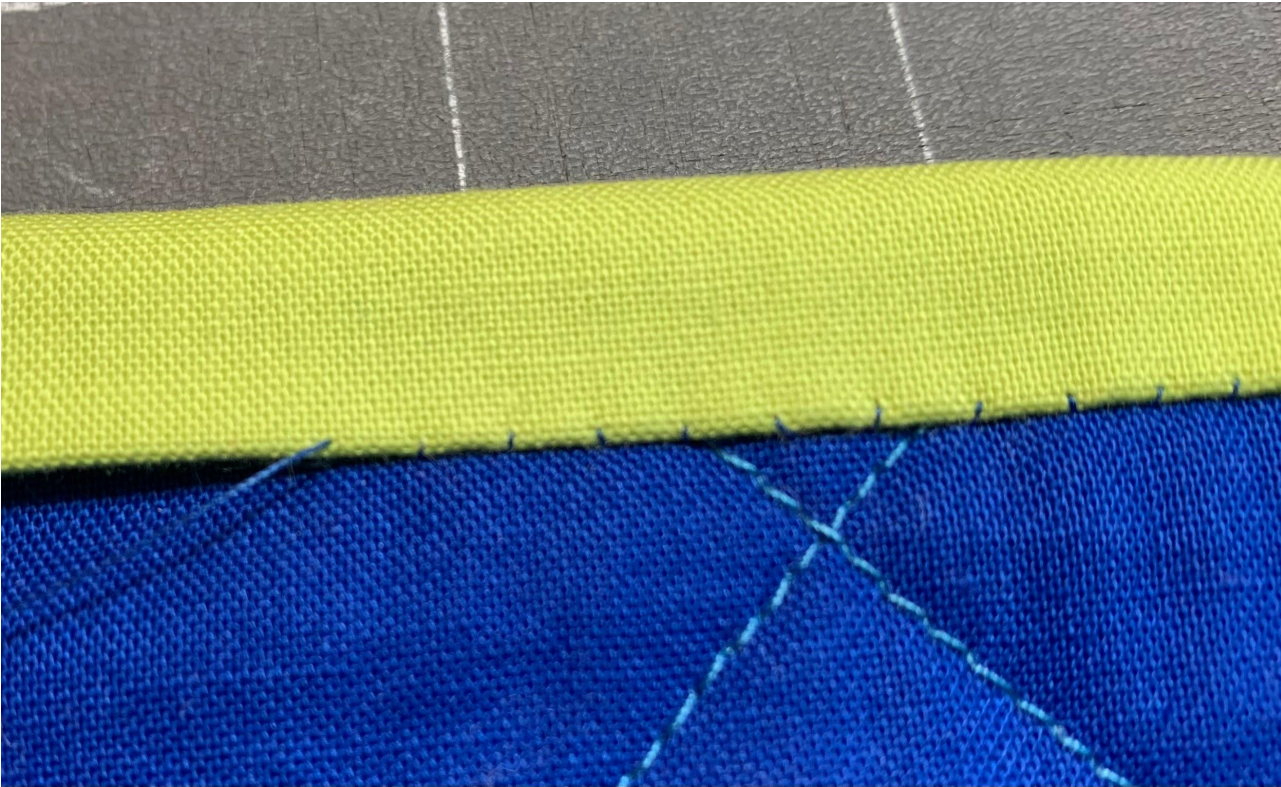
SECTION 1: Choosing thread

Choose thread to match the binding fabric, not the backing.

- If the binding is multicolored or scrappy, use a thread that will blend with most of the fabric - a taupe or gray can work.
- When faced with the choice between a shade lighter and a shade darker, choose the lighter shade as it will often appear darker when sewn.
- Use a thread thin enough to blend well, but strong enough not to break easily, such as Aurifil 50 weight, and use a single thread (not doubled).

In the photos below you can see how the blue thread, in the first photo, is significantly more visible than the green thread, in the second photo.

INCORRECT: THREAD WRONG COLOR



CORRECT: THREAD COLOR MATCHES BINDING



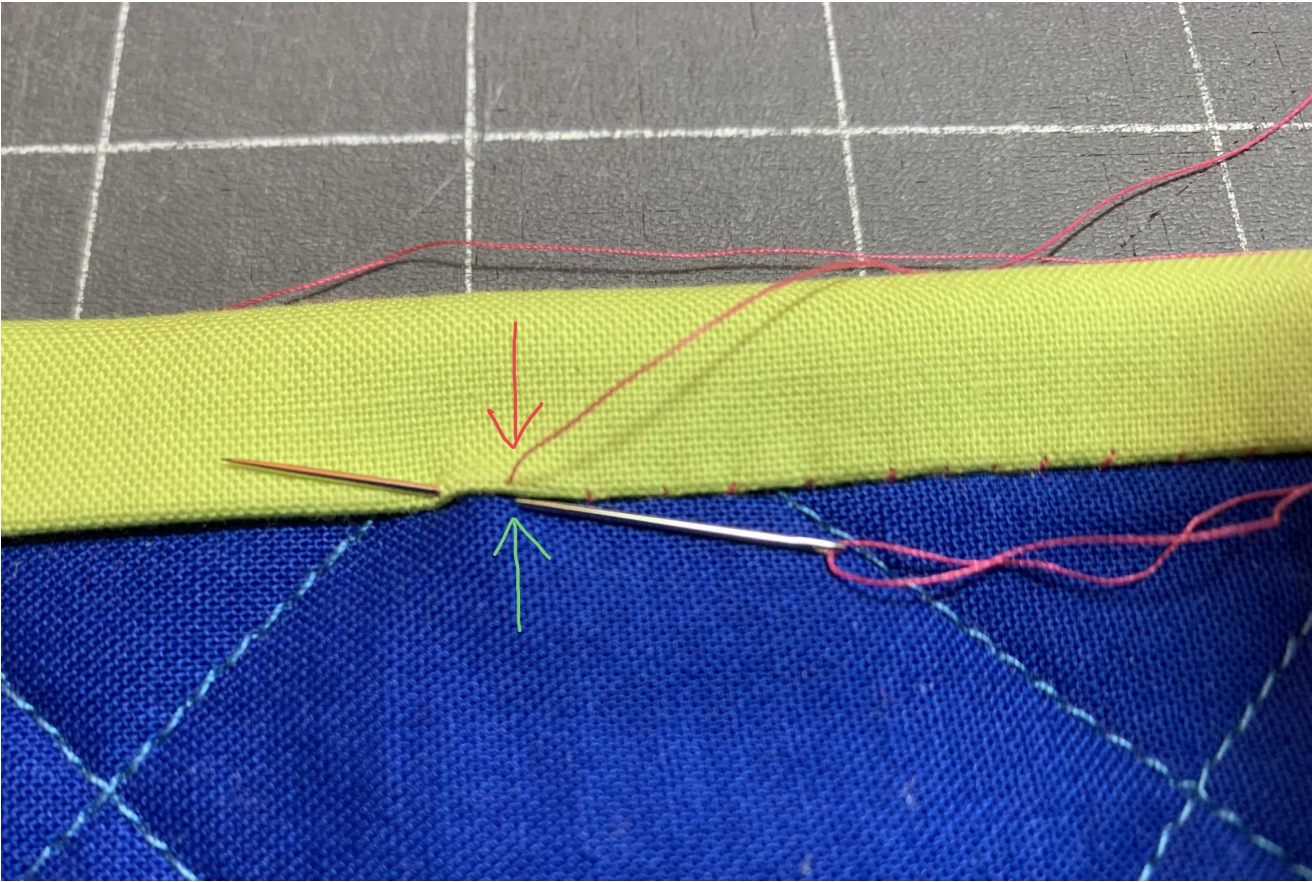
SECTION 2: Taking your stitches

- Fold the binding from the front to the back, snug against the edge of the quilt, and pin or clip in place while you hand sew the binding down on the back. The machine stitch line from sewing the binding onto the front of the quilt should be completely covered by the binding on the back.
- When you take a stitch into the binding, grab just a tiny bit of the edge, and go straight down (not forward) into the backing. Glide your needle under the backing $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch away from your current stitch to take your next stitch. Your thread length should “travel” underneath the backing, and not be visible, only coming up just enough to grab the binding for each stitch. See the next two photos which illustrate this.

In these next photos, ***I am using pink thread only so you can see the stitches.*** (The thread should be green to match the binding).

In the first photo the correct method for taking stitches is shown. You can see how the needle goes into the backing (at the green arrow) just below the stitch (which is at the red arrow) and the needle comes out again $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch ahead, making most of the thread not visible because it is underneath the backing. The goal of a good binding stitch is to be invisible.

CORRECT STITCH STYLE AND LENGTH (BUT SHOWN WITH PINK THREAD FOR VISIBILITY)



The photo below shows an example of an incorrect stitch where the thread is not traveling forward under the backing, and therefore the exposed stitch is longer and less durable. The needle is re-entering the binding (at the green arrow) $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch ahead of where the last stitch is (at the red arrow), making a more exposed stitch.

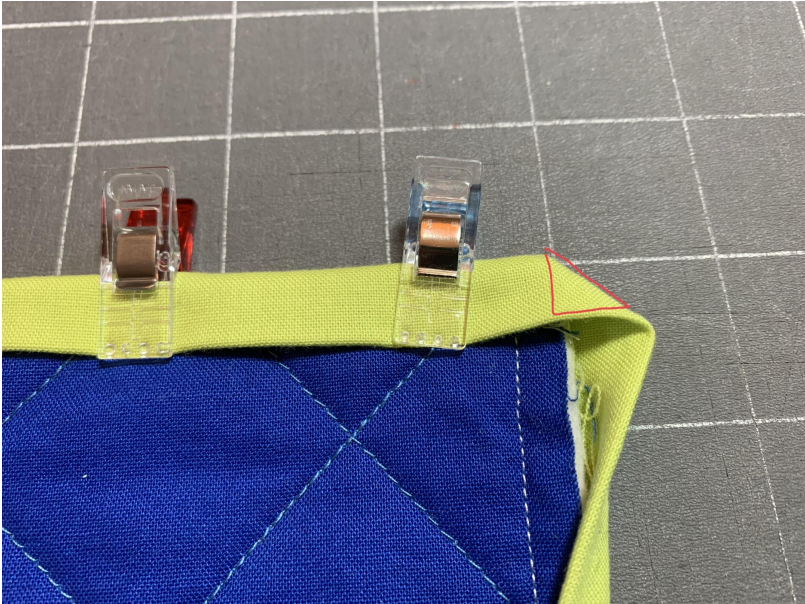
INCORRECT STITCH STYLE



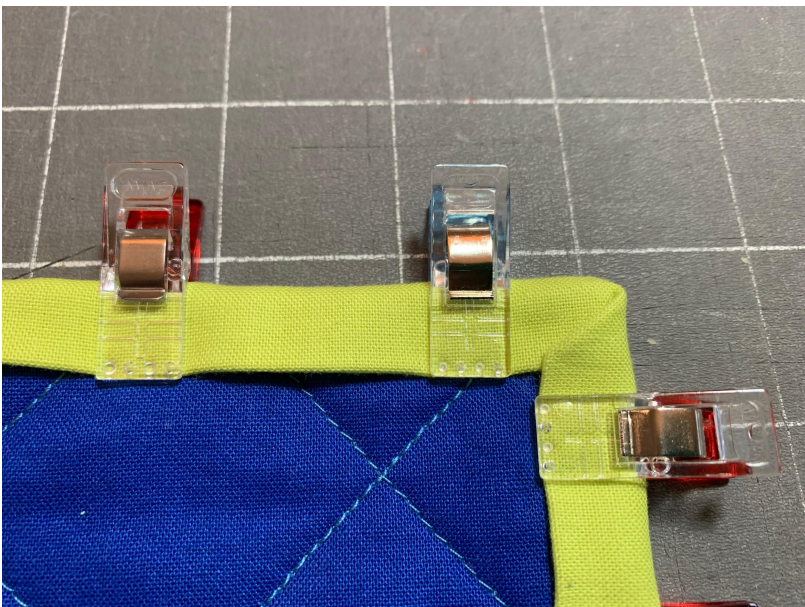
SECTION 3: Making Mitered Corners

Fold the corners to miter and ***stitch those mitered edges closed on both the front and the back.***

The photo below shows the correct method by first folding down one side and making a crease in the part hanging over the other side with a triangle shape, outlined in red.

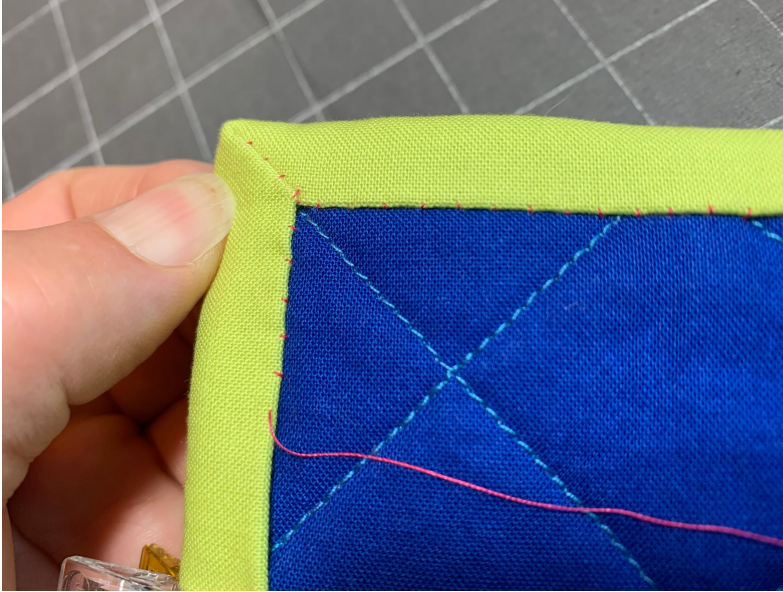


Then fold that triangle shape back onto the back of the piece making a mitered corner.



When you hand stitch around the corner, stitch the mitered corners closed on both the front and the back, with about 2-4 stitches as needed. This stabilizes the corners and prevents them from rounding.

Using pink thread only so the stitch is visible in the photo, the photo below shows the corner stitched closed on the back side with about 4 stitches.



And on the front side with 3 stitches.

