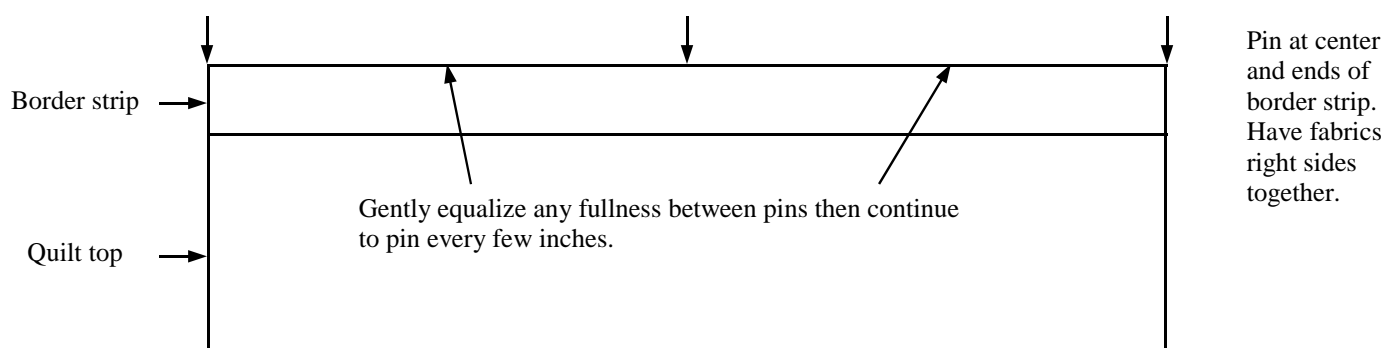
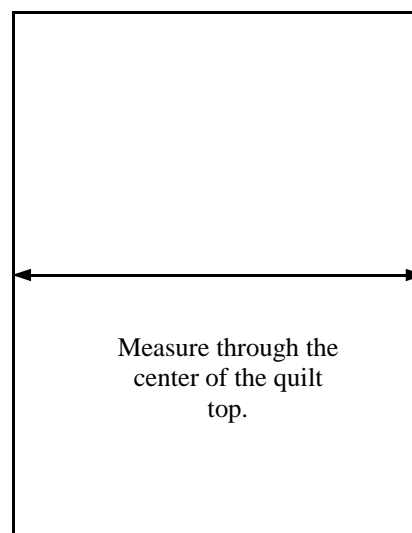


Applying Borders To a Quilt

You spend a lot of time creating a quilt top, whether it be pieced, appliqued, or some combination of the two. You want to finish the borders with the same attention as you've paid to the center of your quilt. Many quilters, at this stage of construction, simply want to "get the thing done" and proceed to sew border strips to their quilt and just trim off the excess. This method of applying borders usually results in quilts that have uneven measurements, excess fabric in some areas, and rarely lay flat, especially when mounted on a square quilting frame. You will do yourself and your quilter a great favor by following these simple steps to measure and apply your borders.

Fabric strips for borders should be measured and cut to size before attaching to the quilt. The goal is to fix any irregularities in dimensions present in the quilt center by applying the same size strips to top and bottom, and again the same size strips on right and left sides. Measure once through the center of the quilt along the dimension of the borders to be cut. The example at the right shows the measurement for cutting both the top and bottom border strips. Cut these two strips to equal this center measurement then apply them to the quilt.



Frequently the measurements of the strips are slightly different than the edges of the quilt top that they are to be applied to. You must ease any excess fabric in along the full length of the border strip. To do this find the center of the edge and the center of the strip. Match these and pin right sides together. Align and pin the left and right ends of the quilt edge with the ends of the strip. Now equalize any excess fabric between the pins, giving gentle tension to eliminate waviness.

Pin every few inches along the length of the border strip, then take to the sewing machine. If you have one piece or the other that has a little excess fabric, it is often easier and yields better results to sew with that side down against the feed dogs of your machine. Flip, and press border according to your pattern instructions. Repeat with bottom border.

To measure and apply your side borders, you follow the same process, only you will be doing your measurement vertically through the center of your quilt top, this time including in the measurement the top and bottom borders just applied.

