



January 2021 Border of the Month

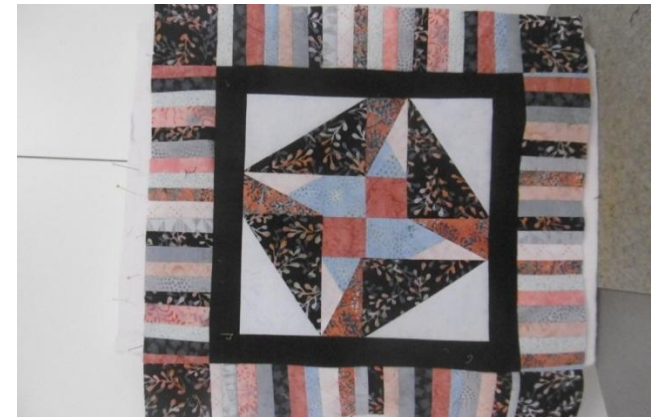
String Borders

Presented by Brenda Dagg

String Borders

String borders are a very simple way to create any length/width border, using up scraps to complement your quilt.

A string border, like a string quilt, involves using strips of fabric, stitching them together, then crosscutting to get the width that you want. Essentially, you are creating new fabric by sewing strips together, and you can then cut that “fabric” to make any shape you want for your string borders, including triangles, half square triangles, flying geese etc.



Working With Your Strips

Gather up all of the strips you want to use. You can choose strips of similar colours, or use multi colours to suit your quilt. If your quilt is truly scrappy, then your border can also include as many colours and fabrics as you wish.

Think about ...

- The scale of your strips. If your quilt has small pieces, you don't want to overwhelm it by using really wide strips. This applies to the scale of the print in your fabrics also.
- Whether you want to keep your strips all the same width which gives you a more formal look (often called Piano Keys). If your quilt is scrappy, or you want to add a whimsical look, you can use strips of different widths.
- You may want to angle them a little as you sew to create interesting lines.

Be sure to shorten your stitch length a bit so your seams won't pull apart once you cross cut.

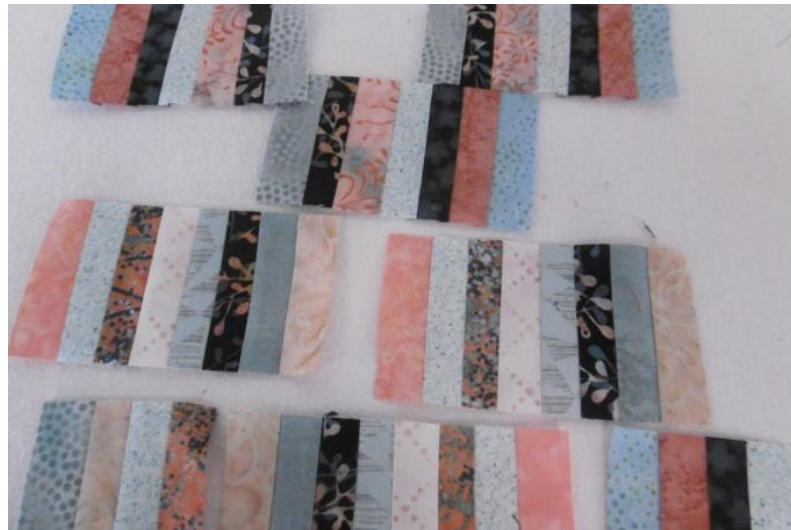


Cross Cutting

Consider how wide you want your border to be and then cross cut your strips accordingly. (Note that it's better to err by cutting them wider than narrower. (You can always trim down the width of your border after it's on the quilt if you think it's too wide.)

Stitch your cross-cut sections together until you get a strip long enough to match your quilt measurements.

If you have to trim to make your longer sections fit, be careful about where the seams fall on each end. Try to even it out so you don't end up with a very thin strip which will end up in the seam when you bind or add another border.



The Corner Question

You will need to decide how you want to handle your corners. You can simply continue your strips as in this sample.



Or you can insert a corner stone.

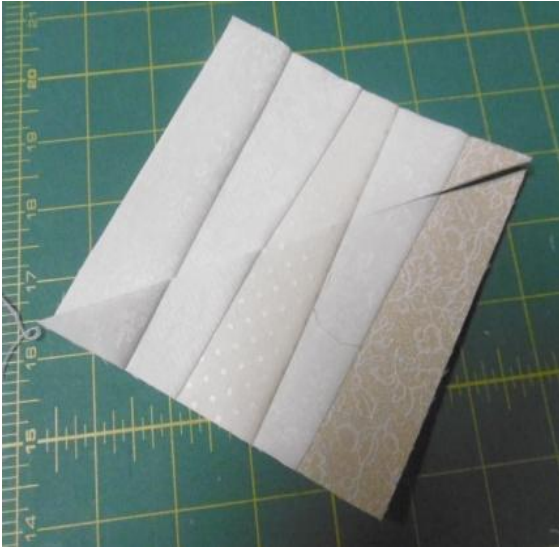


Or play with your strips to create your own corner.



Mitered Corner

You can create a mitered corner in the traditional way, or by constructing 4 square blocks, as below, then cutting on the diagonal, mixing the different triangles and stitching together to create a mitered look.



Here's how the finished corner looks.

Note- this method came from a Bonnie Hunter pattern (Straits of Mackinac) from her book String Frenzy.

Make your squares at least ½ inch larger than your border strips so that when you cut on the diagonal, and resew, the square will be large enough to fit the intersection between your two borders.

Stitching onto a Paper Backing

If you are working with fabrics that will be stitched or cut on the bias, you might want to stitch onto a backing fabric or paper. If you choose a fabric backing, it will of course, add another layer to your quilt. If you stitch onto a paper backing (some people use old phone book pages cut to size), then you will need to remove the paper once your sections are put together.

Cut your paper or fabric backings the size you want (or even slightly larger so you can trim and tidy afterwards.) Place your first strip right side up and your second strip right side down, and stitch through all the layers. Press open then continue to add strips till the paper is covered.



Press open then continue to add strips till the paper is covered.

Stitching onto a Paper Backing ~ Continued

If you angle any of your strips, you can trim off the extra fabric in the seam if you wish.

Flip and trim from the paper side. This is the square that I cut on the diagonal for the corner piece.



Here is another sample of stitching on paper, used because the strips are running on the diagonal. Note that the first strip goes corner to corner, then you work out from there. Again, the first strip is right side up, and the second strip goes on top of the first, right side down.



Other Options

I used these diagonal blocks to make the following border.



Note: Unless you are putting another sashing or border on right away, I recommend stay-stitching along the outer edges of your string binding to keep the seams from pulling apart.

For more ideas about string quilts and string borders, have a look at Bonnie Hunter's books:

[String Fling- Scrappy, Happy and Loving It!](#)

[String Frenzy- Strips, Strings & Scrappy Things](#)

Also of interest is [String Quilts](#) by Elsie M. Campbell.

There are many excellent videos on YouTube as well.



We Want to See Your Borders

Please consider showing us your borders, even if not complete and not yet attached to any project. Have them handy for Show and Tell at the monthly Quilt Guild meetings starting in January.

Let's get back the excitement of our accomplishments and sharing of each individual creation.

Your Program Committee challenges you to join us!

