

beginners quilting



WATCH THE VIDEO TUTORIAL:



Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIZyfcLNZ_o

1. WHAT IS QUILTING?

Quilting refers to the technique of combining at least three fabric layers using hand-stitching with a needle and thread, a sewing machine, or a specialized longarm quilting system. This process involves running stitches through all the fabric layers, resulting in a padded three-dimensional texture. These layers typically consist of the quilt top, an insulating batting, and a backing layer.

While quilting can serve a basic purpose of joining fabrics, it can also be an intricate art form, producing decorative three-dimensional designs. Quilting encompasses a broad spectrum of textile items, from bedspreads and home

decor to clothing, artistic displays, and significant cultural pieces.

A quilter has the freedom to experiment with various elements to influence the final quilt's appearance and functionality. This includes choices in fabric type, thickness, stitch patterns, design layout, and cutting techniques. The visual appeal of a quilt can be enhanced by playing with colors, textures, and prints, creating two-dimensional effects like optical illusions. Additionally, three-dimensional features can be accentuated with embellishments such as appliqués, embroidery, and the addition of decorative items like mirrors, pearls, beads, buttons, and sequins.

Historically, quilting can be seen as an early form of upcycling, with quilters often utilizing fabric scraps and remnants to craft new, unique pieces.

2. QUILTING ESSENTIALS FOR BEGINNERS

Quilting involves various tools and supplies. Below are essential tools that are fundamental for quilting beginners.

Sewing Machine:

When choosing a sewing machine for quilting, several features enhance the quilting experience. If you haven't purchased a sewing machine yet, consider the following features:

- Integrated Dual Feed System
- Variable Speed Options
- Unlimited stitch length and width settings
- Variety of Blanket Stitches for Applique work
- Mirror Imaging Capabilities
- Needle Up/Down button
- Top Loading Bobbin (for easy bobbin thread visibility)
- Larger throat space than entry-level machines
- Ability to drop feed dogs
- Auto Needle Threader
- Auto Tension
- Auto enforce stitch
- Auto thread cutting
- LED Lighting
- Knee lifter
- Presser Foot Pressure Adjustment

- Included 1/4" Quilting Foot
- Included free motion quilting foot
- Included Walking Foot
- Included Wide Table

Our Machine Suggestions:

- Brother A150

What's in the Box?

The A150 Computerised Sewing Machine ships with the following:

- Accessory bag
- Blind stitch foot
- Bobbins x4 (one on the machine)
- Bobbin case (on machine)
- Button Fitting Foot
- Buttonhole Foot
- Cleaning brush
- Disc-shaped screwdriver
- Extra horizontal spool pin
- Eyelet punch
- Foot Controller
- Monogramming foot
- Needle set
- Operation manual
- Overcasting foot
- Quick reference guide
- Screwdriver (small)
- Screwdriver (large)
- Seam ripper
- Spool caps (1x small, 1x medium-on the machine, 1x large)
- Spool net
- Stitch pattern plate
- Stitch pattern plate holder
- Twin needle
- Zigzag foot (on the machine)
- Zipper foot

Key Features

- 150 Built-in sewing stitches
- 10 Styles of buttonholes
- Key Pad Stitch Selection
- 9.3cm LCD Screen
- New Longer J Foot
- Safety Detection Sensor
- Advanced Needle Threading
- Lock Stitch Button
- LED Sewing Light
- Twin Needle Selection Mode
- 4 Built-in Lettering Styles
- Automatic Thread Cutter
- Speed Control Customised for ZigZag Width



- Brother F420

What's in the Box?

The Brother F420 Computerised Sewing Machine ships with the following:

- Accessory bag
- Blind stitch foot
- Bobbins x4 (one on the machine)
- Bobbin case (on machine)
- Button fitting foot
- Buttonhole foot
- Cleaning brush
- Disc-shaped screwdriver
- Eyelet punch
- Foot controller
- Grid sheet set
- Horizontal spool pin
- Knee lifter
- Monogramming foot
- Needle set
- Operation manual
- Overcasting foot
- Quick set up guide
- Screwdriver
- Seam ripper
- Spool caps x4 (one on the machine)
- Spool net
- Thread spool insert (mini king thread spool)
- Twin needle
- Zigzag foot (on the machine)
- Zipper foot

Key Features

- 180 Sewing stitches
- 5 Built-in fonts
- 10 Styles of buttonholes
- LCD screen
- Adjustable presser foot pressure (electronic)
- Lock stitch button
- Adjustable thread tension (manual)
- Bobbin winder
- Advanced needle threading system
- Automatic thread cutter
- Electronic slide speed control
- Combine stitches
- Speed control customised for zig-zag width
- Repeated single sewing
- Automatic reverse/reinforcement stitch
- Mirror imaging
- My Custom Stitch
- Knee lift



While most domestic sewing machines can quilt, the above suggestions come with built-in tools that simplify the quilting process.

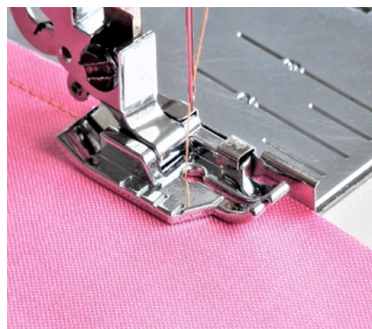
¼" Quilting Foot:

Maintaining exact seam allowances is crucial in quilting. A ¼" quilting foot aids in achieving this precision. There are different types of ¼" feet, such as:

- Brother ¼" Quilting Foot



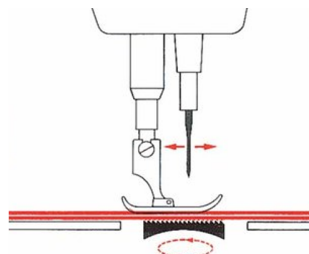
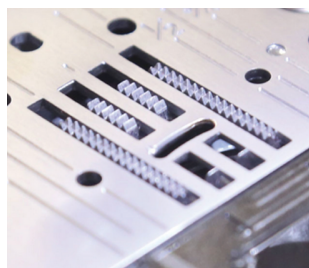
- Brother ¼" Piecing Quilting Foot with Guide / Generic ¼" Piecing Quilting Foot with Guide



The second option is preferable due to its helpful fabric guide.

Walking Foot:

All sewing machines are equipped with what's known as the Feed Dog. This component, identifiable as the small silver teeth beneath the needle plate, operates in an orbital motion. Its primary function is to grip the fabric with its "teeth," facilitating the material's movement through the machine. Standard Feed Dogs focus on advancing the bottom fabric layer, relying on the pressure from the Presser foot to pull the top layer along. This mechanism can sometimes lead to discrepancies in the alignment of stretchy fabrics or quilting, resulting in a mismatched length of the top fabric at the seam's end.



Enter the Walking Foot. This tool acts as a feed dog for the top fabric layer, addressing the uneven feed issue. It's especially beneficial when working with heavy materials that standard feed struggles with, stretchy fabrics, or when sewing multiple layers simultaneously. The Walking Foot can adeptly navigate varying fabric layers, ensuring a smoother sewing experience.

Walking feet come in various types, and it's crucial to select one compatible with your sewing machine. When in the market for a walking foot, be aware of your machine's maximum zigzag width, as this determines the appropriate foot size. Entry-level sewing machines typically have a 5mm maximum zigzag width, while advanced machines can range between 7-9mm. An Open Toe Walking Foot variant is also available, offering better visibility for stitching and needle threading.

- [Brother Walking Foot 5mm Max ZigZag](#)
- [Brother Walking Foot 7mm Max ZigZag](#)



- [Brother Open Toe Walking Foot](#)



Free Motion Quilting Foot (Darning Foot):

Free motion quilting is a distinct method of sewing machine quilting that can be executed on a standard domestic sewing machine. The free motion quilting foot is specifically designed to float or hover above your quilt, allowing you to maneuver the quilt in any direction. This is unlike a regular foot, which holds the fabric down when engaged. This flexibility offers you the liberty to craft your own stitching designs and patterns on your quilt. It's crucial to remember to lower your machine's feed dogs before sewing when using a Free Motion Quilt Foot.

- [Brother Spring Loaded Free Motion Quilting Foot](#)
- [Generic Spring Loaded Free Motion Quilting Foot](#)



- [Brother Open Toe Free Motion Quilting Foot](#)



Tape Measure:

One significant challenge South African quilting beginners face is the prevalent use of Imperial measurements or inches in quilting. It's advisable not to convert patterns and measurements into Metric or centimeters, as it can be time-consuming and confusing. Moreover, quilting fabrics are typically measured and cut in inches, making it more practical to use inches from the outset.

The ideal tape measure for quilting would have inches on one side and centimeters on the other. I recommend acquiring both a 150cm and a 3m tape measure. The 3m version is particularly handy for assembling larger quilts.

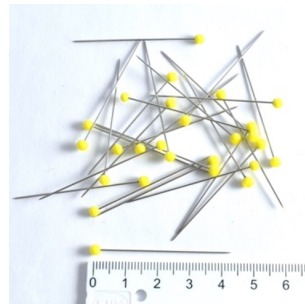
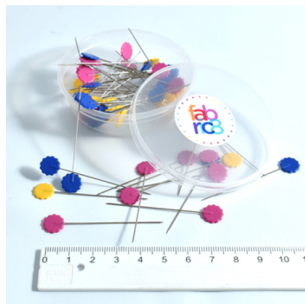
- [150cm Tape Measure \(Inches & Cm\)](#)
- [3m Tape Measure \(Inches & Cm\)](#)



Quilting Pins:

Quilting Pins stand out from other pins due to their length and consistent high quality. Their extended length is particularly useful when incorporating batting and backing fabric into your quilt. It's crucial to invest in quality pins to avoid any that might rust in your fabric during the block-making phase.

- [Quilting Pins](#)
- [Glass Headed Pins](#)
- [Flathead Quilting Flower Pins](#)



Quilt Safety Pins:

Quilt Safety Pins are specifically designed for quilting. They are ideal for pinning the front, batting, and backing of a quilt together.

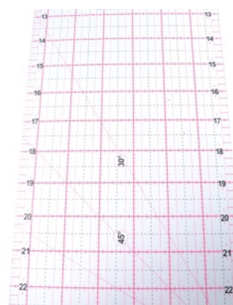
- [Quilters Safety Pins \(150 pack\)](#)
- [Quilters Safety Pins \(27mm\)](#)
- [Quilters Safety Pins \(38mm\)](#)



Quilting Ruler:

Quilting Rulers are crafted for use with rotary cutters and self-healing cutting mats. Made from transparent acrylic, they facilitate easy measuring. They are indispensable for cutting uniform fabric strips and perfect squares.

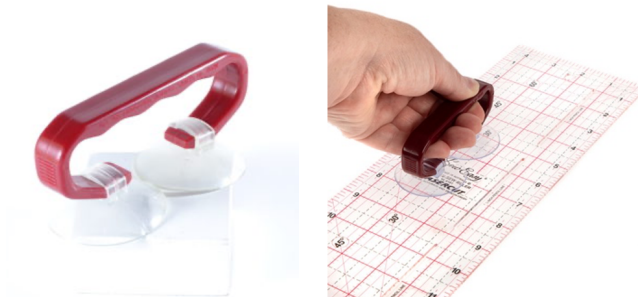
- [Quilting Ruler](#)



Quilt Ruler Handle:

While quilting rulers are excellent for measuring and cutting quilt fabric pieces, a Quilt Ruler Handle enhances the experience. It allows for swift ruler pick-up without disturbing the fabric layout.

- [Ruler Handle](#)



Fabric Shears - Small Scissors/Nippers:

Undoubtedly, fabric shears are an essential tool in sewing. Investing in the best quality within your budget is vital. Small scissors or nippers are convenient for trimming the numerous thread ends that arise during quilting.

- [Victorinox Fabric Shears](#)
- [Fiskars Fabric Shears](#)
- [Fabric Scissors](#)

Small Scissors are handy to keep close to your machine to cut all those 100's of thread ends produced when quilting.

Rotary Tools – Self Healing Mat:

Accurately cutting hundreds of fabric pieces with scissors is a daunting task. This is where a Rotary Cutter paired with a Self-Healing Cutting Mat becomes indispensable. While there's a learning curve, they're faster and more precise than traditional scissors once mastered.

- [Rotary Cutter](#)
- [Self-Healing Mats](#)



Prym Mini Steam Iron:

While most of us have a standard-sized steam iron and ironing board, which are ideal for quilting, there's an added convenience in not having to leave your table for every minor seam you need to press. For this, I highly recommend the Prym Mini Steam Iron. It's genuinely a fantastic tool for quilting enthusiasts.

- [Prym Mini Steam Iron](#)



Table Top Ironing Board:

I know I've been singing praises for many tools, but pairing a Table Top Ironing Board with your Mini Steam Iron is essential. It's excellent for quick ironing tasks, both small and medium-sized, right on your table. I even use it to pin my quilting pieces. It sits conveniently next to my sewing machine, along with the Mini Iron.

- [Table Size Ironing Board](#)



Tailors Clapper:

While not a necessity, the Tailors Clapper is a great addition, especially if you prefer your quilting seams crisp and flat. Used alongside a steam iron, it ensures your seams are perfectly flattened.

- [Tailors Clapper](#)



Fabric or Chalk Markers:

I'm confident many of you already possess these. If you're looking for brand recommendations, PRYM or Clover products are top-tier choices in my experience.

- [Fabric marking](#)

3. QUILTING STEP-BY-STEP

Step 1: Preparing the Primary Fabric

- After assembling all your different materials, cut and trim all your different blocks or strips to dimensions stated in your pattern, using a rotary cutter, aided by a ruler and cutting mat.
- If you're hesitant about using a rotary cutter, opt for fabric scissors on your table top to ensure straight cuts by keeping the fabric flat.

Step 2: Stitching your Pattern together

- Stitch your separate blocks as prescribed in pattern you are using, maintaining a ¼" seam allowance.

Step 3: Ironing the Fabric

- Lay the stitched fabric blocks/strips on an ironing board, ensuring the fabric's reverse side faces upwards. Iron the seams towards the darker fabric side. (Quilters always iron to the DARK SIDE)

Step 4: Combining your finished blocks

- Lay out your finished blocks in a aesthetically pleasing combination, to form the shape and size quilt you want to make.
- Mark your blocks in such a way that it is easy to assemble at your sewing machine.
- Start by sewing blocks together in rows, then sewing the rows together to form one big piece of fabric, your Quilt Top.

Step 5: Cut Batting

- Cut your batting to be at least 2" larger than the quilt's top.

Step 6: Preparing the Quilt Backing

- Cut backing fabric, if fabric is not wide enough decide where you would like the join to be.
- Stitch pieces together to ensure the backing covers the entire quilt. Ensure that the backing is also 2' larger than the Quilt Top.

Step 7: Assembling the Quilt

- Layer the quilt top, batting, and backing fabric.
- Pin them together or use a quilt adhesive for added stability.

Step 8: Quilting Process

- Quilt as per your preference.
- For guidance you can mark lines or pattern using a heat-erasable pen. Erase these markings with an iron afterward.

Step 9: Creating Binding Strips

- Cut 2½" wide strips using a rotary cutter.
- Cut and join enough to go around the whole Quilt.

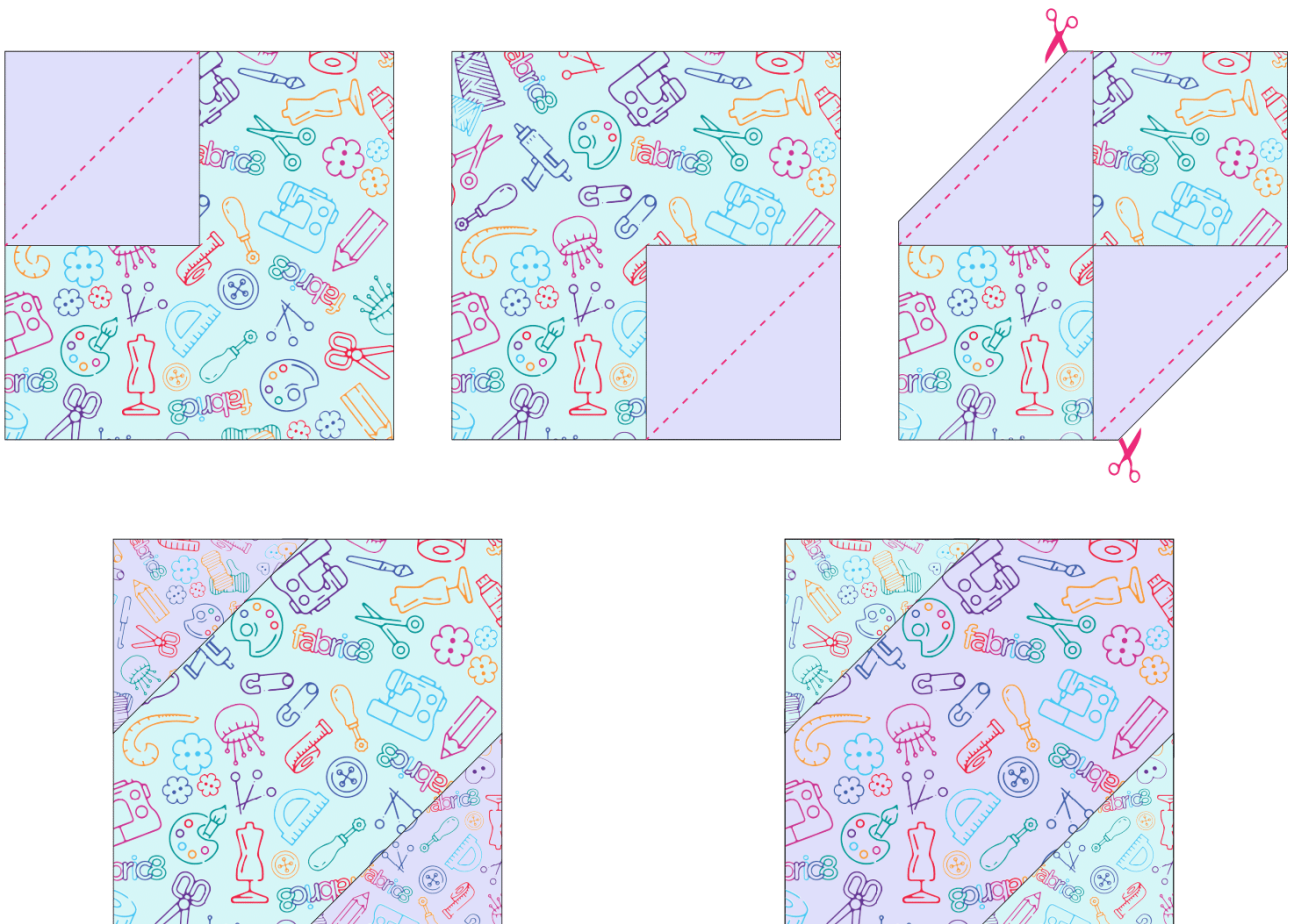
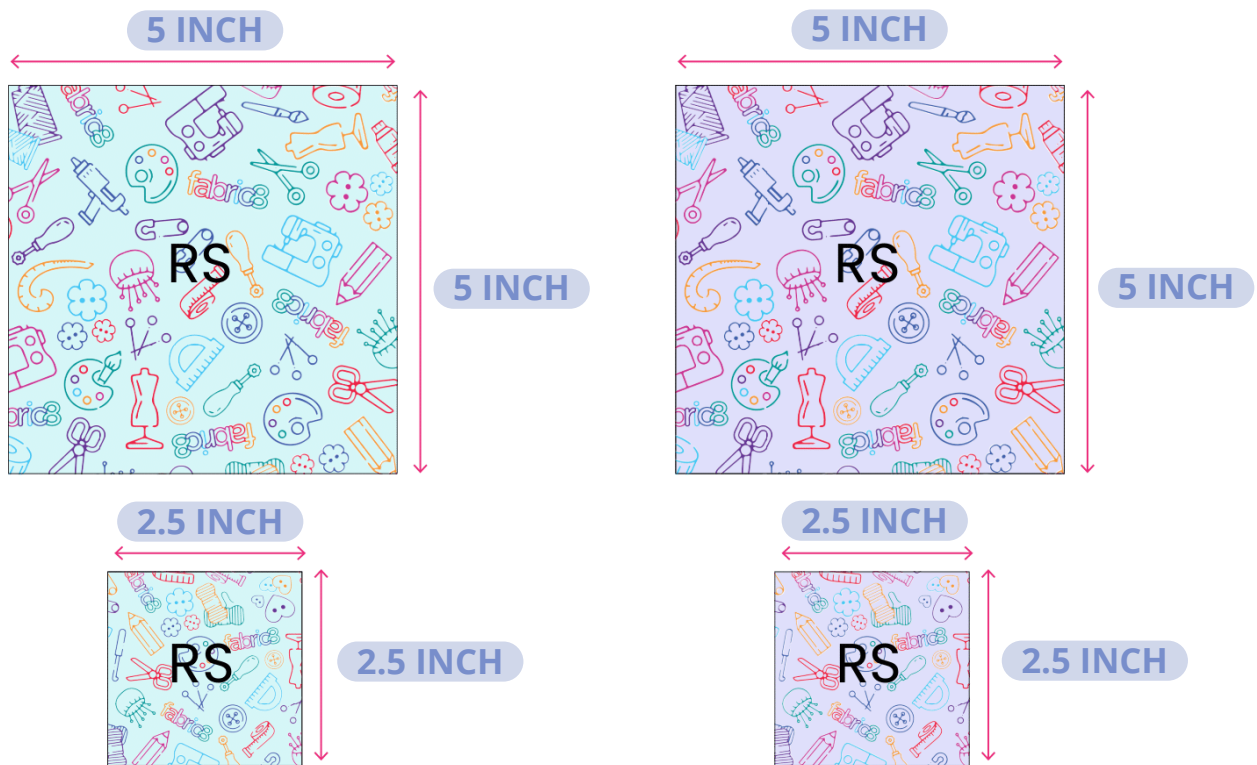
Step 10: Ironing the Binding Strips

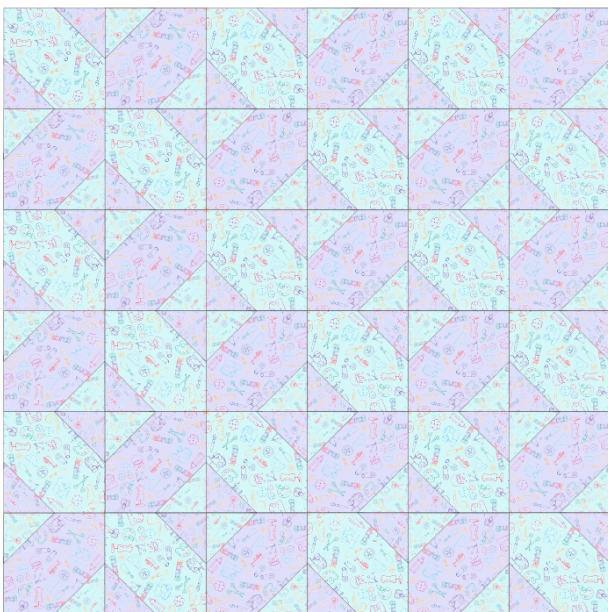
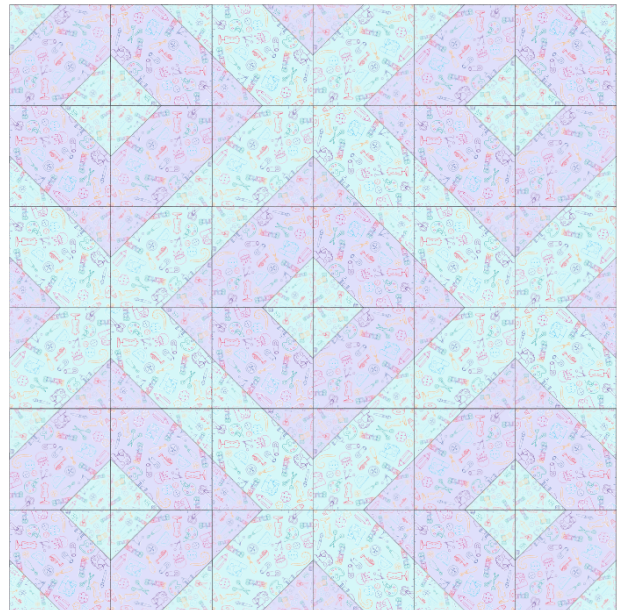
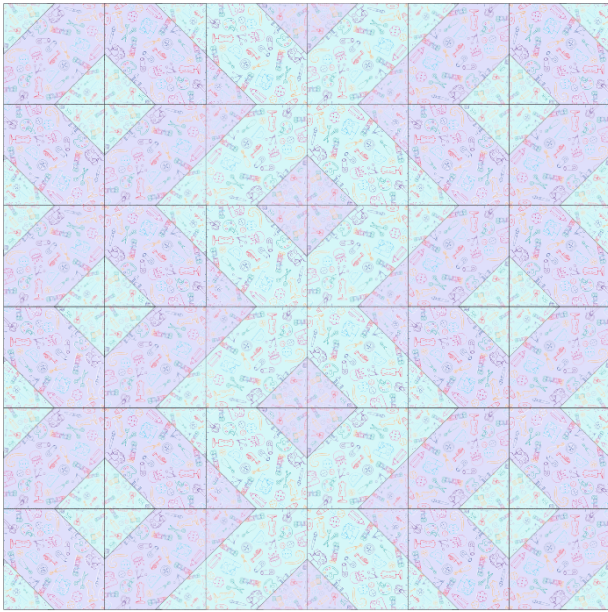
- Press the binding strips in half along their entire length.
- Align the binding's raw edge with the quilt's raw edge.
- Begin sewing the binding to the quilt's right side, using our **Bias Binding Tutorial** and the **Mitred Corner Bias Binding Tutorial**, sew bias binding all around.
- Use our **Mitred Corner Bias Binding Tutorial** to sew perfect corners.

Step 11: Finalizing the Quilt

- Trim the batting down to same as Quilt Top using table shears.
- Fold the binding and hand-stitch it to the quilt's reverse side.

4. CRYSTAL QUILT PATTERN





5. LOG CABIN QUILT PATTERN

