

## **Raw Edge Appliqué, Courtesy of Quilting Board**

Raw edge appliqué is a fast and fun way to finish quilts. Raw edge appliqué is simply appliquéing the patch, without the use of a fusible product, leaving the raw edges unturned.

Any shape can be raw edge appliquéed. There are many traditional quilt blocks that utilize curved piecing such as drunkards path or orange peel. Many of these blocks could be constructed by using raw edge appliqué technique.

For raw edge appliqué simply lay down a fabric shape on a piece of background fabric. Then machine stitch 1/8" to 1/2" inside the raw edge of the shape. To decide the width of the seam allowance needed for raw edge appliqué decide how much fraying you prefer. If you prefer a fuzzy look use the larger seam allowance. If you wish appliqué pieces to be more defined, stitch shapes with a 1/8" seam allowance. You will have to adjust your seam allowances according to the width you choose for your seam line.

### **Quilt Options**

You can stitch the entire quilt top together as usual and then layer the top with batting and backing. Quilt in your usual manner and bind.

Or you may choose to stitch and quilt the raw edge appliqué at the same time. Simply layer the quilt top background fabric with batting and backing. Then place the raw edge appliqué pieces on the quilt top. Stitch the appliqué pieces to the quilt top and quilt the sandwich at the same time.

### **Wash the quilt**

After you have finished assembling your quilt, wash and dry it. The washing and drying process will give your quilt the necessary fraying to soften the raw edges. Repeat washing and drying to achieve the amount of fraying you prefer.

### **How To Cut Bias Strips From A Fabric Square**

In a recent newsletter I mentioned cutting bias binding from a square. By cutting bias binding or bias strips for appliqué vines from a square you will save fabric. If you compare the amount of fabric needed to cut bias from a square and to cut straight grain strips, you will find the same area of fabric is used for each method.

Binding strips cut on the cross grain would simply be cut the width of fabric and be stitched together. If they are stitched on the diagonal, there would be a small amount of waste on each strip. When cutting bias binding from a square the strips are already angled for stitching together and there is very little waste.

For example if you cut several bias strips from the center of a large cut of fabric obviously you will have two fairly large triangles that will be remaining. While scraps are not a waste to a quilter it is still disconcerting to cut a few strips out of the center of a large cut of fabric and have such large triangles remaining.

If you cut your bias from a square it is very easy to calculate the amount you need does use a smaller amount of fabric then simply cutting strips from the center. Remember your bias binding will take the same number of square inches of fabric as if you simply cut strips.

So let's decide what size of square we need to make bias binding for any size quilt. Take out your inexpensive pocket calculator. First measure the perimeter of the quilt. Or calculate the yardage of bias needed for appliqué vines. This is very simple. The length of the quilt times two plus the width of the

Add the measurements of the four sides of the quilt together. Multiply by the width of the bias you will be cutting and push the square root button. (The square root button looks like a check mark with a flat tail.) Round up one full number plus any fraction.

Example -- the size of your quilt is 72" x 90". That would be  $72 + 72 + 90 + 90 = 324 \times 2.5$  (width bias will be cut) = 810. Now push the square root button = 28.46. Round up one full number plus any fraction so your total will be 30. You will need to cut a 30 inch square to cut your bias.

The simplest way to cut a large square is simply fold fabric in half and in half again. Take your largest square ruler. Place the fifteen inch line along BOTH folds of fabric and cut along the edges. If you don't have a large square you may need to draw a few chalk or pencil lines and use your 6" x 24" acrylic ruler.

When your square is cut, place it on the cutting table and slice on the diagonal once to form two large triangles. Your new cut is on the bias and your square is cut on the lengthwise and crosswise grain.

Simply pick up the crosswise grain side of the triangle and with right sides together flip it over to the crosswise grain side of the other triangle. (The crosswise grain has a small amount of stretch, the lengthwise grain is firm.)

Place a few pins and carry to the sewing machine. Remember to offset the seam 1/4" - stitch the seam. Press seam open. You now have a very large parallelogram. Simply cut strips, using your predetermined width, parallel to the bias edge. Stitch strips right sides together remembering to offset the quarter inch at the beginning and end of the seam. This seam is stitched on the straight grain to minimize stretch.

When all strips are stitched together you have just made bias binding from a square. Press seams open and prepare as needed for bias binding or appliqué vines.