

Gadgets By Carol

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Stitching Borders with Borders Made Easy™ Patterns

These patterns are great for stitching borders by machine. You can use any type of machine or quilting system such as your home sewing machine, your Handi Quilter™ system, long-arm and short-arm systems.

The borders come in rolls with adhesive strips at the top and bottom edges. The adhesive leaves no residue on the quilt and can be positioned and repositioned several times. Dashed lines along the edges of the adhesive strips are used to center the pattern in the border. Remember to take into account the binding seam allowance for outside borders.

There are dashed vertical lines along the pattern to indicate the repeats. These lines are used to match the pattern in the center. Several corner patterns are included but these do not have the adhesive. These are pinned in place.

If you are a professional quilter you can order the patterns at wholesale and sell them to your clients at retail. Be sure to give them any left over papers because they paid for the entire roll.

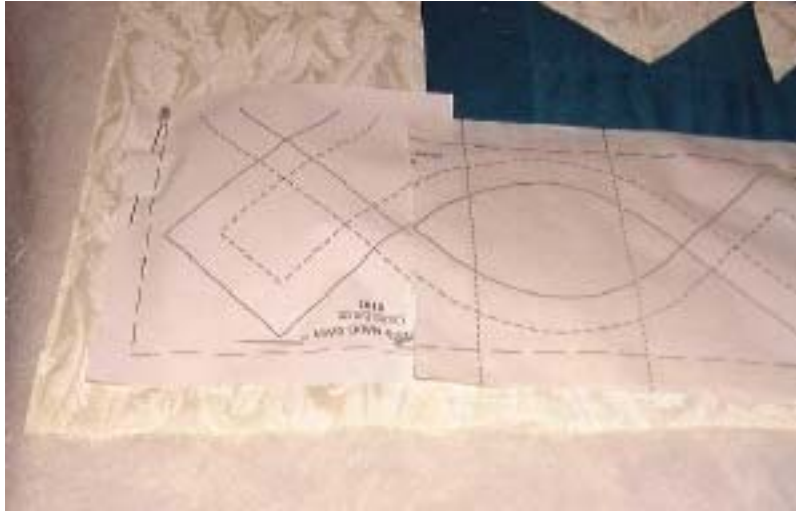
Here are the steps I used to complete the border.

Place the Corner Pattern – Each corner pattern has registration marks to indicate two edges of the border.

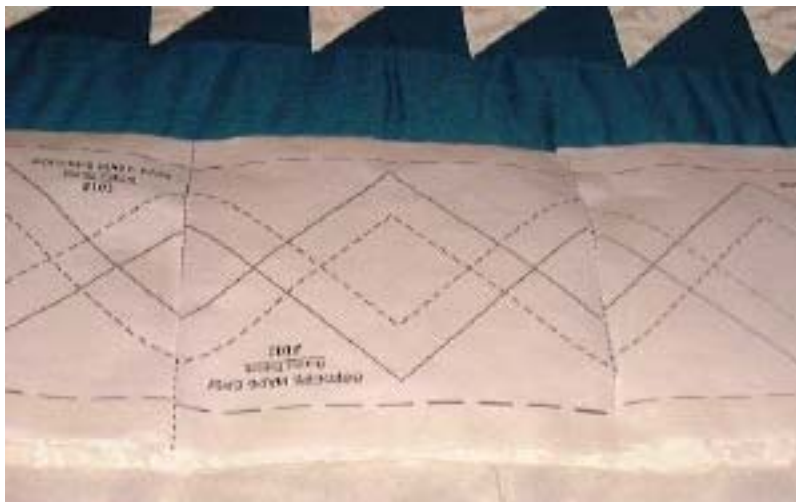


This picture shows the corner marks lined up with the inside corner of the border and pinned in place. Do this for both corners.

Line Up Border Between Corners – Start at one corner. Line up the patterns from one corner to the other. Sometimes you get lucky and the pattern lines up on both sides. If it does line up then continue to the next section



If it doesn't line up on both sides you will need to clip the pattern along one or more vertical dashed lines to create a pleasing design at the center. Start from each corner and work towards the center. In the picture below, the pattern came out just about right. Sometimes there may be spaces between but in this case just connect the spaces as you quilt.

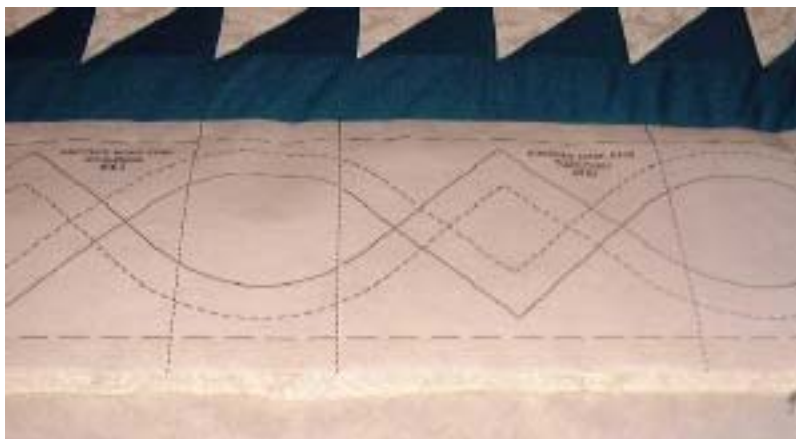


Secure the Pattern – When you know everything is going to line up you need to remove the adhesive cover strip and secure the pattern to the border. I always secure the interior side first. Use the dashed registration line to place the pattern.

Once the pattern is in place, peel the edge of the strip to get it started and press the pattern against the fabric. Now as you continue to remove the strip, keep one hand over the edge of the pattern. This holds the pattern in place and the strip come out easily under the pressure.



Once the interior strip has been removed, remove the exterior strip in the same manner. The pattern is now secured to the quilt top.

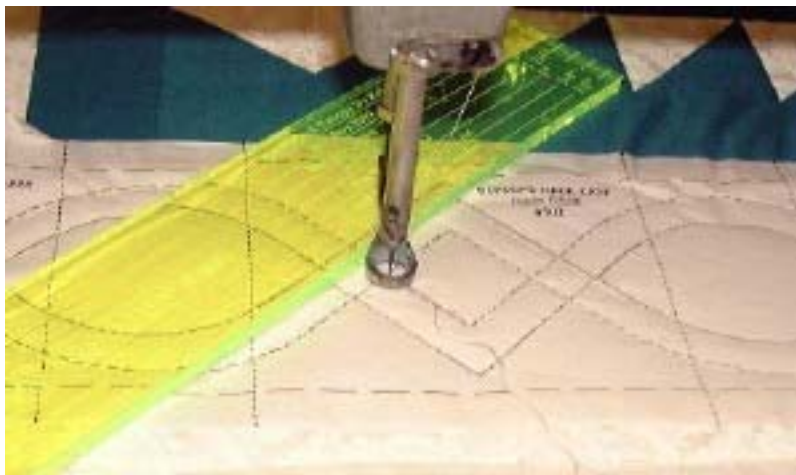


Stitch the Pattern – Once the pattern is secure you are ready to stitch. On the long-arm machine I like to use a ruler or other small stitch guide to help keep the stitches smooth. If you have a stitch regulator, set the stitch length to 12 stitches per inch. This smaller stitch makes it easier to remove the paper later.

If you are using a hand guided machine that does not allow you to use a ruler, try placing your hand on the machine bed to cause a little friction as you stitch. If you are using a home sewing machine set your stitch length and use the feed dogs for smooth patterns. Other patterns might be more easily stitched by dropping the feed dogs and stitching free motion. For free motion quilting, try to keep the stitches even and small so you can remove the papers later.

Whichever machine you are using try to follow the line as closely as possible and keep the stitching smooth.

The pattern in the picture below requires four passes. Generally you can complete all passes without stopping to secure and clip threads. Usually this is accomplished by stitching over a small area of previous stitches.



Remove the Paper – Once the stitching is complete you are ready to remove the paper. Before removing the paper, take a long, strong pin or needle and run the point of the needle over the stitching on the whole pattern. This goes faster than you think. Keep the pin almost laying on top of the quilt, using your thumb to get the point just where you want it. Now remove the paper starting with the adhesive edges first then the other pieces. I find it helpful to have a small trash can right there.

Most of the tiny scraps of paper are gone if you have used the pin to perforate the paper, however there are always a few little pesky flecks hanging around under the stitching. Usually this is at an intersection. I use a Gingher Stainless Steel Seam Picker to get those flecks out quickly and effortlessly. One is pictured below. You can get these at Atlanta Thread & Supply (800-847-1001) or I have seen them in the Clotilde catalog.



Gingher Stainless Steel Seam Picker

Use the sharp pick on the right side to pick out the tiny flecks. The clipping jaws on the left can be used when ripping out seams. Those jaws are able to grab the tinniest hint of thread so you can pull it out. The picker is also handy for getting under a stitch and pulling it until it breaks. A great tool.

I use the extended base on my long-arm machine as a "table" to work on when removing the tiny flecks of paper. It is useful to have some tape or a lint brush to take up those little flecks once you have removed them from the quilt.