

# *mastering miters*

*by Linda Lee*



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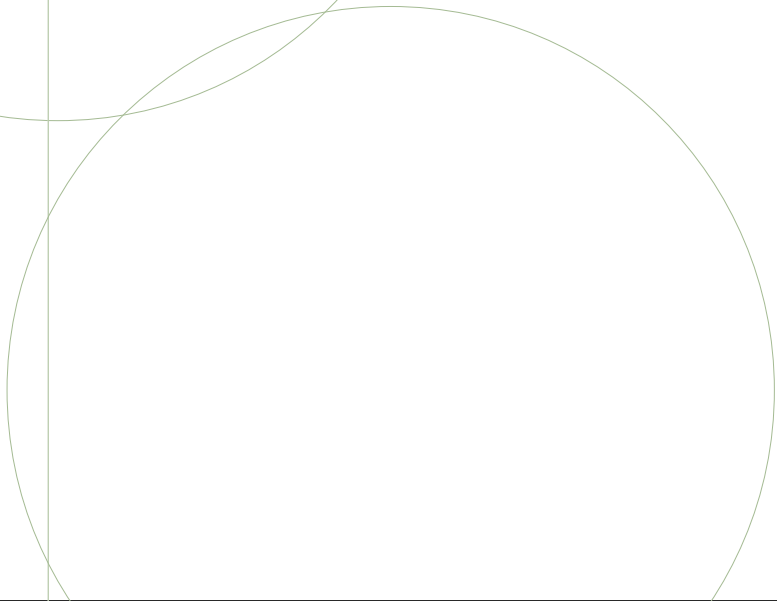
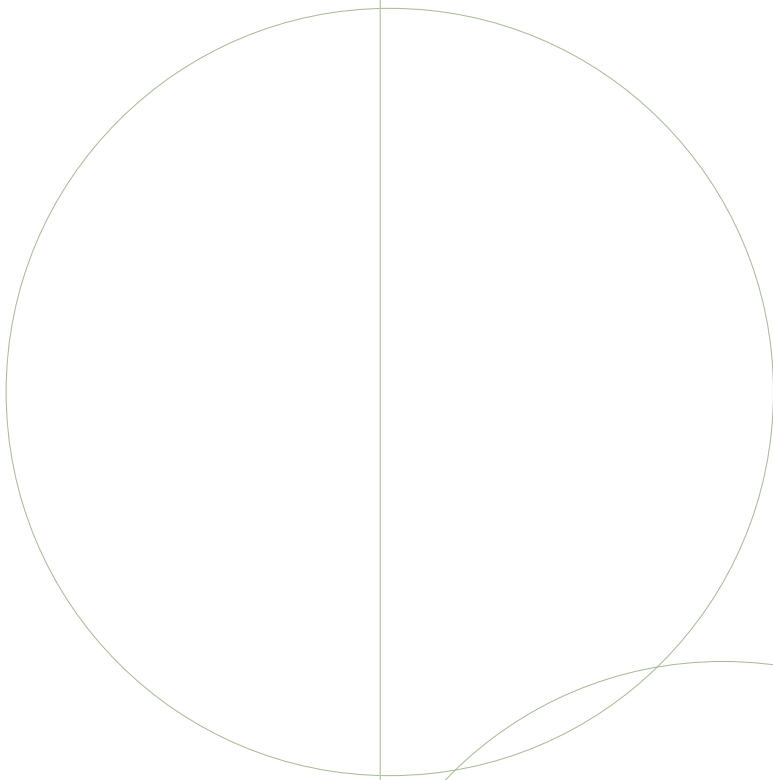
# *introduction*

*Miters are the cleanest and most professional way to finish a corner. It's like woodworking – a kind of joint formed by fitting together two pieces beveled to a specific angle to form a corner.*

*In this book, you will learn to miter symmetric and asymmetric hems, outside bindings, narrow and wide borders, inside and outside corners, and applied bands. Great mitering techniques can be used for edges and corners of garments, quilts and wall hangings, bed and table linens and craft and home decorating projects.*

*Once you get the hang of these techniques, your work will never look homemade again.*

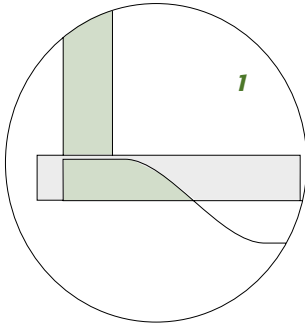
*Have fun!  
Lynda Lee*



# 45° mitered hem

*This technique is used when two adjoining hems are the same width.*

**Preparation** Cut one tagboard template the width of the finished hem. Cut one tagboard template 1/2" narrower than the finished hem.



**1** Place the widest template on the wrong side of the fabric. Press the fabric over the edge of the template, matching the raw edge of the fabric to the top edge of the template.

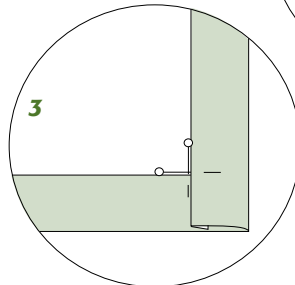
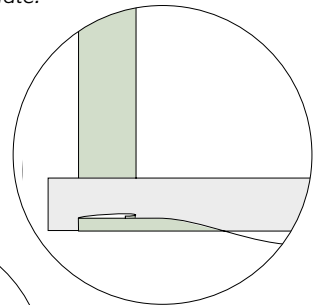
*Press through all layers.*

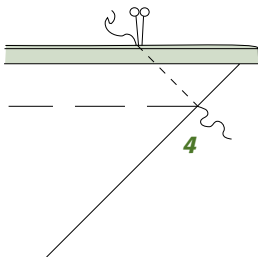
**2** Place the narrower template in the pressed crease and press 1/2" over the bottom of the template.

**a** Repeat for adjacent hem.

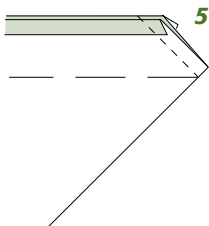
**b** Press two adjacent hems in place.

**3** Place one pin in the hem allowance only, perpendicular to the hem fold. Place a second pin in the opposite hem fold at the intersection of the two hems.





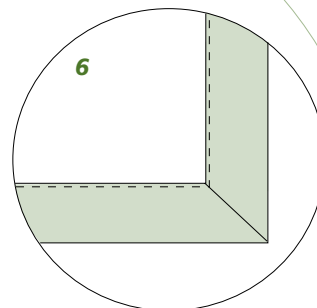
**4** Open out the folds, keeping the 1/2" turn down in place. With right sides together, match the pins at the folded edges. The two edges of the fabrics will line up. Mark a diagonal line from the pins to the point where the creaseline meets the diagonal fold. Sew from the pins to the point, backstitching at both ends.



**5** Trim to 1/4".

**6** Press seam open. Turn right side out and press again. Topstitch hem in place.

**Hint** For perfect topstitching, hand baste the hem in place from the wrong side using long basting stitches and silk thread. Turn the work to the right side and mark a topstitching line with chalk using the basting line as a guide. Topstitch on the right side of the fabric.



# asymmetric mitered hem

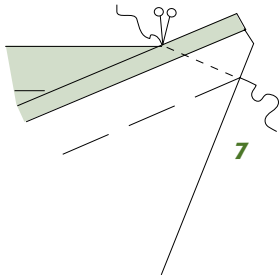
*This technique will work for any angle of miter when the two adjoining hems are different widths.*

**Preparation** Cut one template the width of the widest finished hem.

Cut one template 1/2" narrower than the widest finished hem.

Cut one template the width of the narrowest finished hem.

Cut one template 1/2" narrower than the narrowest finished hem.



**7** *The process of making this miter is exactly the same as the 45° mitered hem except when the pins are matched, the folded edges do not line up. Simply match the pins and flatten the fabric from the pins to the point at the diagonal fold and sew. Complete the finishing steps as described on page 4.*

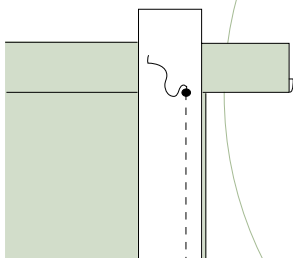
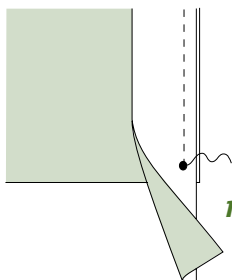
# mitered frame

*This miter is formed when bands of fabric are added to the width of the project, both right angled and angles other than 45°.*

**Preparation**—Cut strips of fabric the width of the finished frame plus two seam allowances times the length of the edge plus several inches depending on the width of the finished band. The wider the band, the more extension is needed. For example, a 2" wide frame requires strips that are at least 4" longer at both ends.

**1** Pin one strip to one edge with the right sides together, matching raw edges and extending the strip evenly beyond each end. Stitch the edge, starting and stopping a seam allowance distance from each end.

**2** Press the band away from the edge with the seam allowance toward band. With right sides together, stitch adjoining band to the adjacent edge, starting at the end point of the previous seam and ending a seam allowance distance from the next end. Press band away from the edge with seam allowances toward band. Complete all sides.





**3** To miter each corner, fold the fabric with right sides together diagonally through the end stitching point. Match the raw edges of the bands. Lay a straight edge along the diagonal fold and extending through the end stitching point. Mark a line through the bands.

**Hint** Open out the seam allowances to expose the end stitching point before laying the straight edge on the fabric.

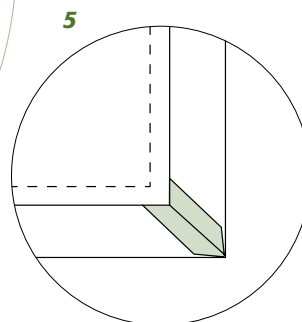
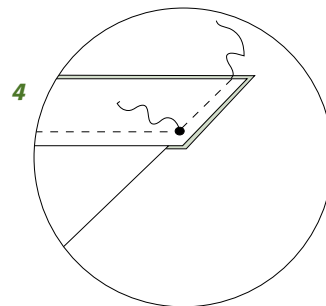
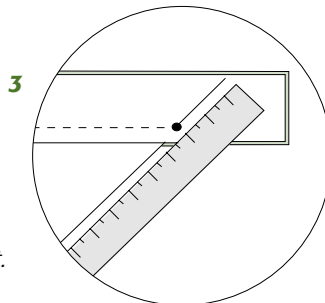
**4** Machine stitch on the marked line, beginning at the previous stitching point. Stitch through two layers of fabric only (the bands), avoiding stitching through the seam allowances. Trim seam.

**5** Press seam open. Repress the edge seam allowances toward the bands. Tuck the diagonal seam allowance under the seam allowances or trim as needed.

There are two choices for completing the outer edges.

**Hem** Turn up the hem and miter the corner as described in the 45° mitered hem technique. Refer to page 3.

**Lining** Cut lining fabric the exact size as the project including seam allowances. With right sides together, sew the lining to the outer edges of the project, leaving an opening. Turn to the outside, press and slipstitch the opening closed.



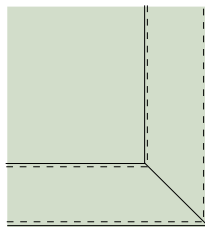
# applied mitered trim

This trim is applied to the top of a finished project that has been hemmed or lined to the edge. The trim can be a ribbon or a band of fabric with the raw edges turned under and placed on the outside edge of a project (**a**) or some distance from the edge (**b**).

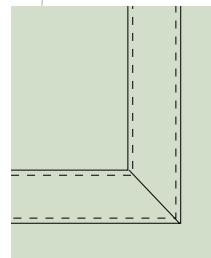
**Preparation** Cut a length of trim long enough to border entire project plus several inches. Plan the seams so that they are hidden in the corners.

**1** Starting on one edge, place the trim on the surface of the project, extending the trim several inches beyond the starting point. Beginning several inches from the top edge, stitch the trim along the inner edge of the trim, through all layers, stopping at a point from the first adjoining edge that is equal to the width of the ribbon.

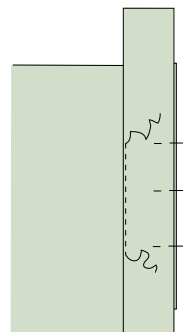
**a**

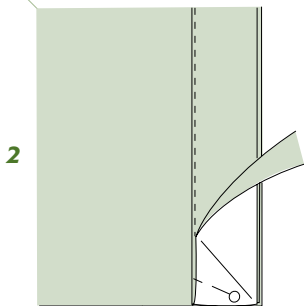


**b**



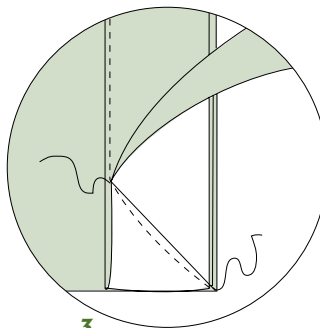
**1**





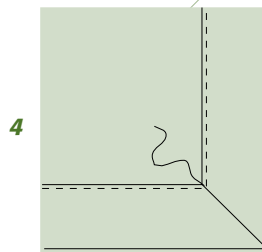
**2**

**2** At the corner, fold the trim back on itself, aligning the fold with the bottom edge. Draw a diagonal line from the first stitch on the inner edge to the corner point of the trim.



**3**

**3** Using the drawn line as a guide, stitch a line with about a 1/16" bow to it, through all layers. Trim the excess trim to 1/4".

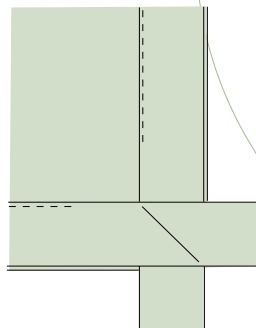


**4**

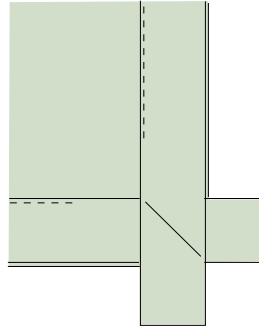
**4** Continue sewing the inner edge of the trim to the next corner and repeat the previous steps.

**5** To complete the final corner, place one piece of trim over the other at a right angle. Draw a line from the intersection of the inner corner to the outside corner of the trim.

**5**



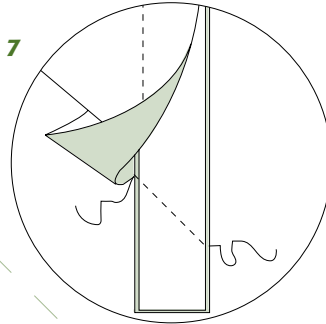
6



6 Reverse the strips and mark a line from the inner corner to the outer corner.

7 With right sides together, match the drawn lines and stitch through the trim only. Trim the excess and press the seam open.

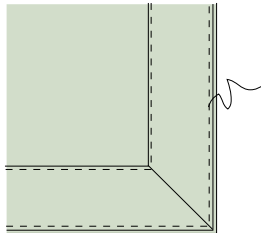
7



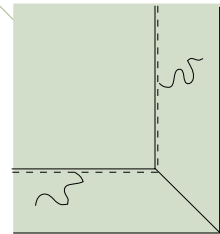
8 Complete the stitching along the inner edge of the trim

**Option** The outer edge of the trim can be edge stitched to the project or left unstitched.

**Option**



8

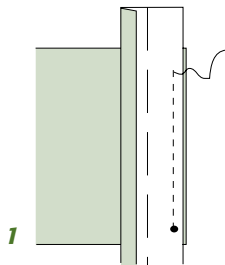


# mitered binding

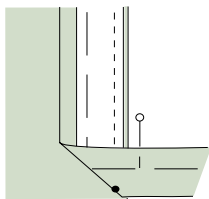
## Outside Corner

*This method works for any width of binding including binding that is the same width as the seam allowance.*

**Preparation** Cut one piece of continuous binding long enough to border the entire project plus several inches and twice the finished binding plus two seam allowances.



**1** Press the binding in half lengthwise with the wrong sides together. Press the seam allowances to the wrong side along each long edge.

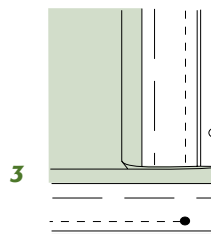


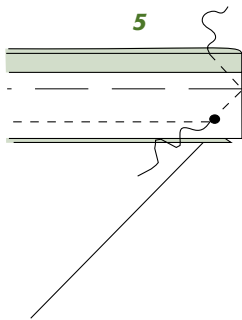
**2** Fold binding diagonally against the last stitch, forming an "L". Place a pin on the binding the same distance away from the stitching line as the finished width of the binding.

**3** Using the pin as a guide, fold the binding back on itself. Stitch the adjacent edge to the project along the seamline.

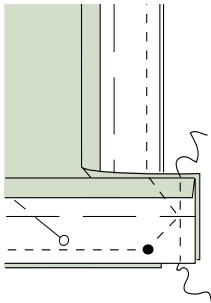
**Hint** Sew from the wrong side so you can start stitching exactly at the previous last stitch.

Open out one folded seam allowance and pin to the outside edge of the project. The other seam allowance will always stay folded. Stitch the binding, beginning and ending the stitching exactly the same distance as the width of the seam allowance.

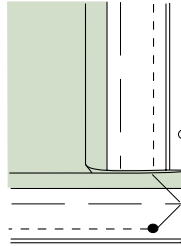




**Hint**



**4**



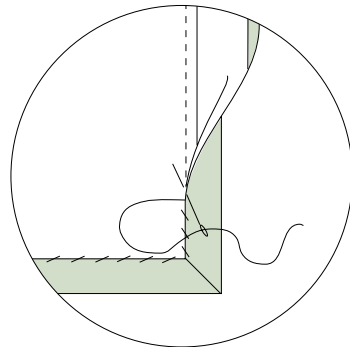
**4** Draw a line across the binding from the stitched seamline to the center of the binding at the crosswise fold and down to the point where the adjoining seams intersect.

**5** Stitch the marked lines through the binding only. Trim the excess and press the seams open.

**Hint** The binding can be joined with a stitching line where the crosswise fold normally is, if necessary.

**6** Turn the corner to the outside and slipstitch or top stitch.

**6**



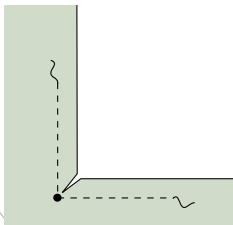
# mitered binding

## Inside Corner

An inside corner occurs less often than an outside corner, but it can also be machine-sewn on the top and bottom in one process for a professional look.

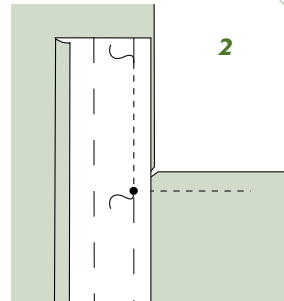
**Preparation** Cut one piece of continuous binding long enough to border the entire project plus several inches and twice the finished binding width plus two seam allowances. Press the binding in half lengthwise with the wrong sides together. Press the seam allowances to the wrong side along each long edge.

1

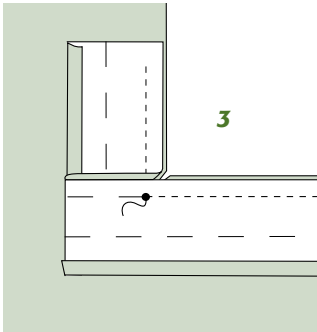


1 Reinforce the corner by stitching along the seamline, then clip to the corner.

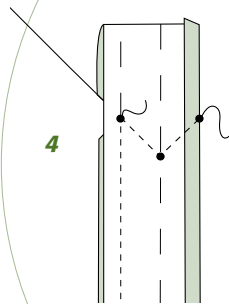
2 Open out one folded seam allowance of the binding to expose the raw edge (the other folded seam allowances will always remain folded). With right sides together, align the raw edge of the binding to one raw edge of the project. Mark the seamline crossing point (the clip point) on the binding's first seam allowance foldline. Stitch along the seam foldline to the crossing point, then backstitch.



2



**3** Fold the binding diagonally at the seamline crossing point away from the inside corner and toward the project. Next, fold the binding back on itself and parallel to the unbound edge, aligning the raw edges of the binding and the project. Starting at the crossing point, stitch along the first foldline to attach the binding to the adjacent project edge.



**4** Bring the binding away from the project. With the right sides together, fold the project fabric to create a diagonal fold projecting out of the corner point, matching the seamlines. Open out the binding flat (keeping the right hand seam allowance folded), then lay a ruler parallel to the project diagonal fold and extending through the binding. Starting at the inside corner point, draw a continuous line down to the center foldline then back up to the outer foldline. Each line should be at a right angle to its adjacent line. Starting at the corner point, stitch on the marked lines. Do not sew through the project seam allowances. Trim away the excess beyond the stitching lines.

**5** Press the project seam allowances towards the binding. Press the binding seams open. Turn the binding to the wrong side and slipstitch it to the seamline.





# *biography*

Linda Lee is the owner of The Sewing Workshop Pattern Collection, a group of patterns for distinctive garments using innovative sewing techniques. She is a licensed interior designer and member of ASID since 1974. Linda is the contributing editor to *Cutting Edge* magazine and is featured in the Bernina "Portrait of the Artist" national advertising campaign. She travels the country teaching fine sewing techniques and the art of combining beautiful fabrics and distinctive design in garment and home decorating creations. She has written thirteen books. *Sew Sensational Pillows* won the Independent Book Award in the Craft and Hobby Category and *Sew Easy* won Honorable mention by the Independent Publisher Book Awards for Most Original Design in their "Ten Outstanding Books of the Year" awards.

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