

# Attaching Borders with a New Technique

By Kelley McKenzie

In this article, Kelley will teach you how to attach borders to quilts without having the ripple affect or as Kelley likes to call it, ocean waves. When Kelley was taught how to attach borders, it was the traditional, old school way and she did not like it. So she did not re-invent the wheel, but found an easier way.

## Step One:

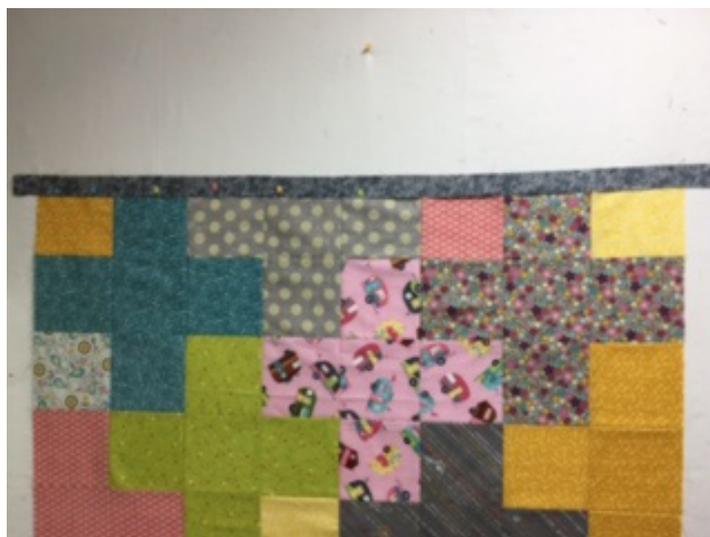
Always start out with a square middle, or near perfect square middle. The reason why she says near perfect is because many times Kelley might be a 1/4" to a 1/2" off, but no more or she will take a little off here and there to make it square.

## Step Two:

Measure your longest side and then cut your border fabric lengthwise about 6" longer. Kelley cuts all of her borders lengthwise even if it is an inch-wide border. If you piece your border, you are opening up a can of worms of the possibility of having wavy borders. Sometimes this requires you to purchase more fabric than you need, so what Kelley typically does with the extra fabric is save it to make a scrappy backing.

## Step Three:

Once you have cut your borders, lay the quilt top on a flat surface with the borders right side together. Pin the border from the center of the border out while gently smoothing it in between pinning to smooth out any fullness that could possibly be pinned in.



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## Step Four:

Press each seam and border. (Pressing the seam before opening the border prevents the border fabric from not opening up to the seamline on front, therefore causing it become unsquared.) Do not cut off the excess fabric on the ends. Take a square ruler (doesn't matter what size) and a chalk pen that contrasts the border fabric. Place the ruler at the end of the border fabric and square it up by drawing a line where it would typically be cut off on the border fabric, but do not cut it. By doing this, you lose the chance of cutting your excess fabric off at a slight angle which causes the quilt top to cinch in or flare out. This is a common mistake.



## Step Five:

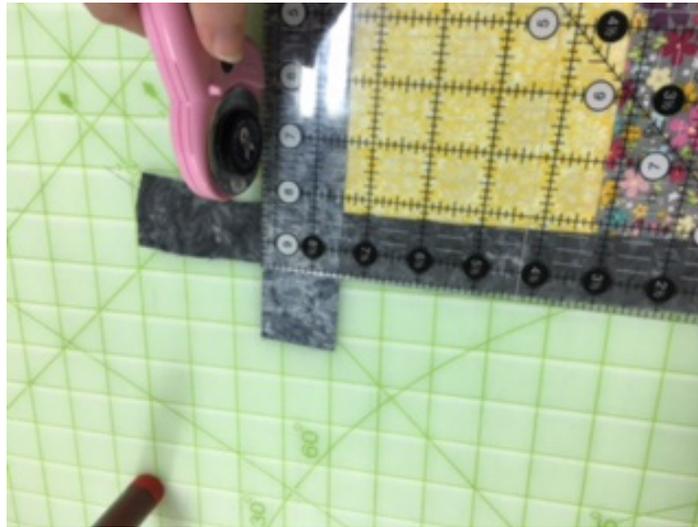
Now repeat step 3 attaching your top and bottom border fabric. Sew the borders on using a 1/4" seam. Now when sewing to the end of the border, you will be also sewing on the chalk line that was drawn. Finally, press the seam and then press the border.



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## Step Six:

Now cut off the excess fabric from the side border fabric, however do not cut off the excess from the top and bottom. Once again, take a square ruler (doesn't matter what size) and a chalk pen that contrasts the border fabric. Place the ruler at the end of the border fabric and square it up by drawing a line where it would typically be cut off at the border fabric, but do not cut it.



## Step Seven:

Repeat these steps until all borders are attached. For this method to be successful, pinning and smoothing the fabric as you pin is crucial. Kelley finds this method much easier than the traditional way where you need a calculus degree.

