

## AT-A-GLANCE BIAS-BINDING RESOURCE

Rather than using a self-fabric binding and following the same old application method, explore other options. Let your imagination go wild.

Choices, choices, choices! You can use wide, purchased bias tape, but you have a greater choice of colors and patterns if you make your own binding. Your one-of-a-kind vest can feature binding made from many types of fabric.

One of my favorite trims is crossgrain knit, which has as much stretch as bias and requires a fraction of the yardage. Since it's 60 in. (1.5m) wide,  $\frac{1}{4}$  yd. (0.2m) is plenty for several garments. I frequently use wool jersey or cotton knit in plain colors and stripes.

The vests in the photo at left below feature bindings in faux leather, striped knit, and linen. I love faux leather because it stretches in all directions. Faux suede isn't suitable; it has no give, so you end up with ripples along the binding.



### Binding application

**1** Make the strips  $2\frac{1}{4}$  in. (5.7cm) wide. First, cut a short strip of fabric to test the width. Press under  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. (6mm) along one lengthwise edge.

**2** Sew the strip onto the garment with a  $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. to  $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. (1cm to 1.3cm) seam allowance, with the binding next to the feed dog to prevent it from stretching.



STEP 2

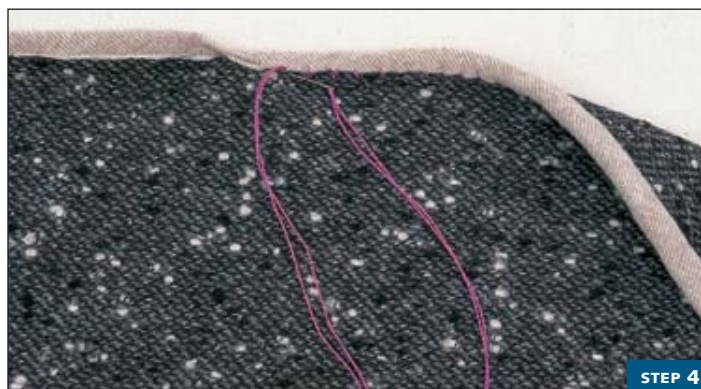
**3** Consider a wider strip and a slightly different application method for very stretchy knit fabric strips. Cut the fabric strip  $2\frac{3}{4}$  in. (7cm) wide and fold it in half



STEP 3

lengthwise. Treat the doubled fabric as a single layer when attaching it to the garment. Sew the two raw edges to the raw garment edge with a  $\frac{3}{8}$ -in. (1cm) seam allowance. Now hand-stitch the pressed edge of the binding on the other side of the garment.

**4** For narrower binding, sew the raw edges of the bias binding and garment at  $\frac{5}{8}$  in. (15mm) with the right sides together. Trim the seam allowances to  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. (6mm). Now wrap the remaining pressed binding edge to the inside of the garment and hand-stitch it in position on top of the seamline. Sew by taking a small stitch, sliding the needle along the fold, then taking another stitch.

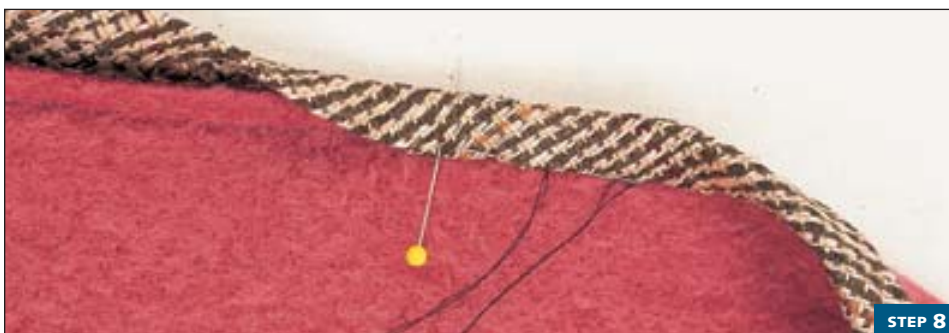


STEP 4



**5** With raw edges even, place the right side of the (single-thickness) strip against the right side of the garment. Sew them together using a  $\frac{5}{8}$ -in. (15mm) seam allowance. Trim the seam allowance to  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. (6mm). Wrap the remaining edge of the strip to the wrong side of the garment.

**6** Stitching in the well, or ditch, is the fastest application for crossgrain knit or synthetic fabric binding. The binding



has an attractive, clean finish after the raw edge is trimmed. It's great if you're in a hurry and the vest isn't reversible. Don't press under an edge of the bias binding or fold it in half lengthwise.

The right side and using an edge-joining foot for accuracy, stitch in the well. If your seams ripple as you stitch, switch to a Teflon or even-feed foot.

**7** From the wrong side of the garment, sew and trim the inside of the bias binding close to the stitching when using a binding made of knit or any other fabric that doesn't fray.

**8** You can fold under the raw edge of the trim and hand-stitch the fold to the garment just past the seamline. A turned-under edge looks great on a reversible vest.

## ON-THE-EDGE BINDING

A jacket or vest that's lined looks fabulous with edging around the neck, armholes, and front opening. The fabric strips add class and a lively touch to the edges and eliminate the need for facings. This is by far the simplest and fastest technique for making a vest.



This treatment is particularly effective on reversible or one-layer garments made from boiled wool, melton, or quilted fabric. Binding strips can be cut on the crossgrain of knit fabric or on the bias of wovens. My favorite vest bindings are faux leather, linen, striped cotton knit, and wool jersey.

**1** Alter the pattern pieces to fit, including making the vest in a flattering length. It's very important to set the length now because it can't be done after you start the assembly process. Cut out and prepare the lining and garment pieces.



**2** Stabilize the neck and armholes, placing the stitching  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. (1.9cm) from the raw edges.

**3** Join the shoulder and side seams of the garment pieces. Join the garment and lining pieces separately. Press all of the seam allowances open. Gaping armholes and necklines can be remedied with a few simple steps before you assemble the vest. (See “Armhole Gaposis Fix” on p. 28.)



STEP 5

**4** Slip the lining inside the vest with the wrong sides together and the raw edges even at the armholes and outside edges. Straight-stitch through both layers around the armholes and outside edges using  $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. (1.9cm) seam allowances.

**5** Trim  $\frac{5}{8}$  in. (15mm) away from the seam allowances. This leaves a stitching line joining the vest and lining  $\frac{1}{8}$  in. (3mm) from the raw edges. Don't cut off the staystitching because it stabilizes the edges. Trimming the seam allowances won't reduce the front overlap of the finished garment (if your vest is designed for a closure). Any lost width is replaced by the bias binding.

**TIP:** If you cut the lining larger to prevent your vest points from curling in, sew with the lining layer against the feed dogs. (See “Better Lining Pattern” on p. 33.) The machine's mechanism draws in the extra length to fit.



## TRICK of the TRADE

### FEED THE DOGS

When applying bias binding to an armhole, place the vest against the feed dogs. This makes the armhole slightly smaller so that the binding draws in at the armhole to fit your body shape.

On the other hand, apply neckline and front-opening binding with the vest on top. The feed dogs draw a little extra binding into the seamline, which prevents the edges of the finished garment from curling in.

**6** Cut and apply your bias strips. Some interesting fabric suggestions and several application methods are shown and explained in “At-a-Glance Bias-Binding Resource” on p. 41.