



## Zeffie's Quilts

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### How to Make a Hanging Sleeve to Display Your Quilt

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When you display your quilts, it is very important to evenly distribute the weight over the width so that it does not distort or damage the textile. 100% cotton muslin is a fine choice to make any sleeve, but some may want to make a matching sleeve using the same fabric as the back to "hide" the sleeve. Also, you may want to consider using the leftover fabric scraps from the top of the quilt to sew together a piece of fabric the size you need for the sleeve. This is a good idea because the sleeve can provide original fabric if at sometime in the future the quilt needs a repair.

The sleeve should not be considered a permanent part of the quilt and therefore should never be stitched into the binding. The exposure of the sleeve to the wooden dowel over time will eventually cause the cotton to deteriorate and it will have to be replaced. This is the same reason that your sleeve should be made to completely encase the wooden dowel so that the wood never touches your quilt; the sleeve can deteriorate and be replaced, but damage to your quilt will be heartbreaking!

The instructions you find here are for a 6 inch finished sleeve. You can adjust the width to make it smaller by cutting a smaller width of fabric to start. A good rule of thumb is to cut a strip that is twice as wide as what you want the finished sleeve width plus one inch. You will lose about an inch in the seaming process. So if you want a four inch sleeve, cut your fabric nine inches ( $4 + 4 + 1 = 9$ ).

1. Measure your quilt's width at the top and cut a piece of fabric this measurement by 14 inches.
2. Turn under the edges on each (short) end of the long piece and hem to finish the edge. This works best if you turn under 1/4 inch and then again 1/4 inch so that the end is nicely finished without any stray threads.
3. Fold in half lengthwise with the WRONG sides together and press a crease in the fold.
4. Now, lay the piece out on a flat ironing surface and position the crease so that you can refold, bringing the long unfinished edges (WRONG sides together) to meet at the center crease (do not overlap) keeping the right sides on the outside. Now press these two folds so that you have a new crease at the top and another at the bottom.
5. Top stitch along these two creases a scant quarter inch from the crease.
6. Now bring the two unfinished edges together with the WRONG sides together and sew using a quarter inch seam allowance.
7. Press the seam open (Yes, WRONG sides to the inside; your seam allowance will be showing with the right sides out.) It should now look like a long tube with the right sides out; the seam allowance running down the long edge on the outside of the tube, and the end edges turned under and hemmed to the inside of the tube.
8. Now your sleeve is ready to be applied to your quilt back
9. Fold your quilt in half to find the center of the top edge and do the same with the sleeve.
10. Lay the quilt on a flat surface, and using the center marks, pin the top crease of the sleeve to the quilt about an inch down from the top edge. The seam allowance should lay against the quilt and once you have finished stitching the sleeve in place, it will be hidden from view. If you are entering your quilt in a show, read carefully the guidelines for placing the sleeve for display. Some shows have a maximum height where the sleeve must be placed and you will have to measure according to their instructions to get proper placement. Pin along the top crease of the sleeve across to each edge to secure for hand stitching.
11. Hand stitch the top crease to the quilt back with stitches about a quarter inch long. These stitches are not part of the quilt, and may have to come out at a future date. Make them neat and use a matching thread, but don't beat yourself up trying to make them invisible.
12. Now, in the same manner, you will hand stitch the bottom of the sleeve using that crease.
13. Now whip stitch the short sides of the sleeve down to the backing fabric where they touch it so that someone cannot unwittingly insert a dowel behind the sleeve and next to your quilt.
14. Your quilt should now have a nice hanging sleeve on it that is a bit full to allow for the rod to be slipped in easily; the seam on the inside of the sleeve should not show the seam allowance because the seam allowance is hidden; and the ends should be nicely finished with a double folded 1/4 inch hem. It's time to put it up on your wall!