

### *What is a Lasagna Quilt Border?*

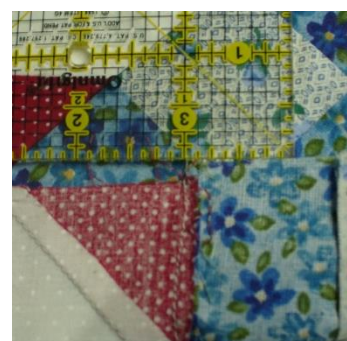
Ruffled borders on a quilt are “Lasagna” borders because they have ruffled edges like the pasta. Ruffled borders and quilt edges are difficult to quilt because the excess fabric is too much to lay flat against the flat batting and backing. There are a few techniques to prevent and control the excess fabric at the edges and borders. Use these techniques both before and during the piecing process.



### *Issue #1 – Inconsistent Seam Depth*

Consistent seams keep the sides of piecing flat. The quarter inch seam is the foundation of quilt piecing. Most pattern pieces rely on a consistent quarter inch seam to fit together. As the pieces are sewn together, the presser foot on the machine will tend to push away the fabric and the result is a smaller seam towards the end of the piece. To control this, pay close attention to the fabric pieces as the edge approaches the presser foot. Use a foot with less friction or a guide to keep the fabric under control with a consistent seam throughout. If the edge of the quilt top is wavy, look to the seams to verify they have consistent seams. Even a few seams that are smaller than the others will add a great deal of length to the side of the quilt.

Remedy this by re-sewing the seams to the correct size.



## *Issue #2 – Fabric Stretches Out of Shape*

Depending on the quilt pattern, some fabric edges may be on the bias. Fabric has three grains; lengthwise, crosswise and bias. The bias grain is on the true 45-degree diagonal of the fabric. It has the most stretch of all three grain lines. When the bias grain of the fabric ends up on the edge as with triangles the fabric stretches and creates a wave. Once a fabric has stretched out on the bias, it can be difficult to return it to the original size.

Remedy this by careful handling and pressing of the edge will control bias stretch. Use a product such as Best Press 2 or starch to add body to the fabric. Stay stitching is a line of stitching through one layer of fabric only that adds a physical structure to prevent the fabric from stretching.

## *Issue #3 – Quilt Cannot Be Re-Sewn*

When a quilt top cannot be re-sewn or the task is too intimidating, minor ruffling can be controlled enough to get through the quilting process. Blocking is a process of returning a textile to its original shape just as with a sweater after washing.

Remedy this by blocking the quilt top. The blocking process involves laying the quilt on a flat surface and adding a small amount of moisture before arranging it into position and pressing it flat while it dries. Block only the quilt top, the layered quilt or both. Quilting rulers are ideal for holding the quilt in position because they are transparent and the markings make squaring the quilt easy. Add weights to increase the pressure. Use this method only with fabrics that are washable and the colors do not bleed. Usually only a few hours of pressure are necessary. Remove the rulers and weights to allow the quilt to dry into position. Press the sections to reinforce the blocking. For large quilt, block sections of the quilt (or at least the edges) until it lies as flat as possible. If after blocking and the



edges, still have tucks, choose an open border quilting design and opt out of straight lines.

#### *Issue #4 – Border Fabrics are Too Long*

After piecing when the finish line is in sight, the temptation to just sew on the borders and “get it done” are strong. If the border is not measured and placed evenly on the quilt extra fabric will be pulled into the seam by the action of the feed dogs and pressure on the fabric by the presser foot. Either the border or the quilt will “creep” and add extra fabric. Extra fabric will ruffle along the edge.



Remedy this by measuring the quilt and cutting the border to size. Measure not only the edge, but through the center of the quilt. Be aware that the sides may not be the same length. Determine the center and quadrants of both the border and the quilt and secure the matching points with pins or clips. Use an anti-friction foot, walking foot or Digital Dual Feed foot to reduce creep in the seams.

#### *Issue #5 – Quilting Shrinks the Body of the Quilt*



Quilting “shrinks” the quilt and heavy, dense quilting really shrinks the quilt. Just the act of quilting will draw a quilt in. Wherever the quilting begins (in the center or at one side for edge to edge quilting) the remaining quilt will be slightly larger than the quilted section. Long arm quilters avoid this issue by holding the quilt securely in the frame.

Remedy this by choosing a consistent density of quilting throughout the project. Periodically stop and assess the top for “shrinkage”. Block the quilt as described above during the quilting process to make it flat for quilting.