



the front of a finished quilt if the seam sits on the lighter side of the seam. To avoid this, trim  $\frac{1}{16}$ in from the raw edge of the darker fabric only before sewing the next seam, then no matter on which side the seam is resting, the darker fabric can't be seen as it's behind the lighter one.

## 6. SELECT AN APPROPRIATE BATTING

The type of batting you choose will depend on the intended use of the quilt. For example, if it's going to be a much-loved and used item, polyester batting is a good choice as it machine-washes well and the loft remains resilient. If a natural fibre is preferred, then cotton is

also an option – this drapes beautifully and gives a quilt a lovely old-fashioned look because it generally shrinks slightly after washing. However, if it's not washed beforehand, it will reduce in the quilt, making the quilt's fabric crinkle slightly. Wool batting should be considered if warmth is critical and hand-washing isn't a challenge for the quilt's owner.

## 7. TAKE CARE WHEN BINDING

The first place a quilt starts to wear is usually the edge of the binding with fraying. To give your quilt the best finish, bind it with double the thickness

of fabric and take care not to trim the batting too close to the quilt top, so it fills the binding right to the edge. If possible, keep a second set of binding strips for a special quilt you know is someone's favourite and then when the binding wears, you can replace it.

## 8. SHOP AROUND

Don't forget that besides the many superb patchwork stores, you can also buy supplies at quilt and craft events – both big and small – throughout the year. Take a moment to find out where the closest ones are and try to get there. You could discover new products and tools to try, buy and add to your collection! ❖