Creating Rattail or Sari Silk Cording/Yarn Bindings

By Deb Deaton

Rattail Binding:

Rattail is satin cording. It gives a nice finish to art quilts, something different and unique. I love to use variegated thread when I do my bindings as it gives a nice look and texture. You will want to purchase 2mm size of rattail. Any smaller and you don't have stability and any larger you can't get your thread over it.

1. Set your sewing machine for a zigzag stitch. Look for the max width size on your machine and go down one. For example, if the max is 7, go down to 6. Set you length to be about 1.4 or 1.3.
2. Place your rattail on the outside edge of your quilt.
3. Leaving a tail of about 2 inches, start your zigzag stitches. Your stitch should go OVER the rattail. If it doesn't, widen your stitch.
4. Before you get to the end, measure about a 2-inch tail and cut off.
5. Cross your ends towards the back and sew over each other.
6. We will go around 1 more time to fix any issues the first time and to give it a nice satin stitch look.
    a. Widen your zigzag stitch to the max setting and set your length to be about .2 or .3. Go around just like you did the first time. If you had forgotten to cut the tails now's the time. Just trim them as close as you can.
    b. Your piece may be wonky, and you will have to block it. I block using steam and Best Press. When it's a bit damp, I hang it on my design board, stretching into shape and let dry. You're all done!

Sari Silk Binding:

If you use Sari Silk cording, it's the same process as rattail, in general. But with sari silk, you want to see the fiber, and you only have to go around one time!

1. Set your sewing machine for a zigzag stitch. Set your width to be 6.0 or 7.0. Keep your length at about .5. This will allow the sari silk to show through.
2. Place your sari silk cording/yarn on the outside edge of your quilt. If it's really thin, you may have to double it to get the texture you want.
3. Leaving a tail of about 2 inches, start your zigzag stitches. Your stitch should go OVER the sari silk, but its not critical if it doesn't.
4. Before you get to the end, measure about a 2-inch tail and cut off.
5. Cross your ends towards the back and sew over each other.
6. Cut off the tails.
7. Block the same as above if needed.

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