

EASY SPLIT SEAM

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An adaptable hanging method for art quilts usable for different venues (quilt show, art show, gallery, and museum), hanging situations (rods, against wall, free hanging), and with various hardware (wire, saw tooth hanger, picture hook, screw eye, screw hook, nail).

The directions are for split sleeves attached 1" distance from top and each side of the quilt and with a 3" gap between the two sleeves.

The directions will result in a sleeve tube that is 4 ½" wide and allows for enough give to allow easy insertion of a thicker hanging rod or slat.

Some oversea venues use thicker rods, hence the roomier sleeve tube.

Width of sleeve material:

For a finished 4 ½" tube, cut the fabric 11" wide.

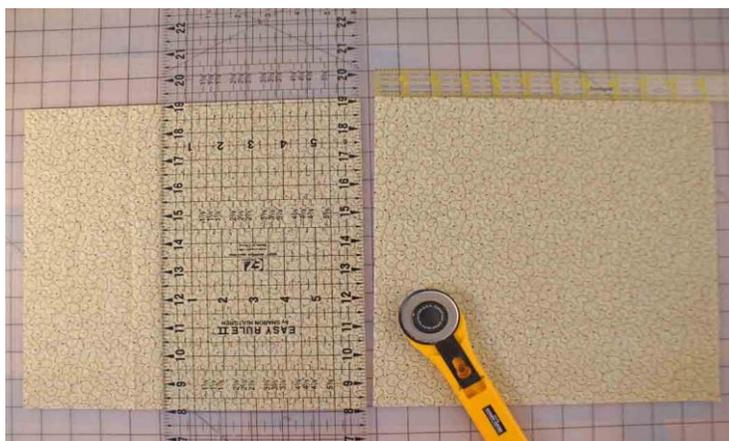
(For a narrower 4" tube, cut the fabric 10" wide.)

Length of sleeve material:

Measure the quilt's width and subtract 1" from this measurement.

For example:

If the quilt is 37" wide, cut a fabric strip 36" x 11".



1 - Split the sleeve:

Divide strip in half to create two similarly long sleeves.

For example:

Cut 36" x 11" strip in half to for TWO 18" x 11" split sleeves.

NOTE: If your quilt is between 21" and 25" wide, the 11" WIDTH will be very close to the LENGTH of your strips. It helps to mark the placement of the hem to avoid confusion.



2 - Sew the hem:

Take the first strip and fold one end over twice ($\frac{1}{2}$ " and $\frac{1}{2}$ " again).

NOTE: Create the hem on both ENDS of the sleeves, and not along the 11" WIDTH!

Press between each fold. Pin this hem in place with a few pins.

Repeat with the other side of this strip.

Repeat with the second fabric strip.

Topstitch each hem in place staying close to the open fold.

Use a matching thread.

Each of the two fabric strips should now be 2" shorter, but still 11" wide.

3 - Fold sleeve tube:

Fold the first strip so the WRONG side of the fabric is together.

NOTE:

The hemmed sides are folded and the raw edge sides are laying on top of each other.

The width of the folded strip is now $5\frac{1}{2}$ ".

Secure it with 2 or 3 pins.

It helps to press the folded strip at this stage for easier handling.

Stitch along the raw edge of the first strip using a $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance.



NOTE:

Remember to backstitch when you start and finish this seam.

Use the marking of your machine bed, tape a guide on the side of your machine bed, or draw a $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance on the fabric. This line will later be hidden.

Repeat with the second strip of fabric.

You have now created two hanging sleeve tubes.

4 - Creating the extra "give":

Using a $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance again, BASTE along the folded edge of both tubes.

To baste use the LONGEST stitch length of your sewing machine.

Do NOT backstitch!

Stich slowly when you baste to get a straight seam.

NOTE:

The tuck created with the basting seam will give the sleeve the extra wriggle room needed to easily accommodate the wide hanging rods of shows or a thicker dowel or rod.

The basted seam will be removed AFTER the split sleeves are attached to the back of the quilt (see step 10)





5 - Check if the seams are correctly placed!

Raw edge seam



Basted seam

6 - Preparing the sleeve tube before attaching:



Place the first sleeve tube on the ironing board. Rearrange the tube so the raw edge seam and the basting seam lay on top of each other.

The basting seam is placed against the ironing board and the raw edge seam faces up. Open the raw edge seam, finger press it and then press it lightly with the iron. Lightly press the two outside edges to stabilize them.



Turn the tube over and check if the area around and under the basting seam is fully pressed open. Give the tube a final press and repeat with the second tube.

Each split sleeve tube should now be about 4 ½" wide.

7 - Placing both sleeves on the backing fabric:

Place the first split sleeve tube along the TOP LEFT edge of the backing of the quilt.

NOTE: turn your quilt over to check if this is indeed the TOP and not the BOTTOM of your quilt 🤔

To place the sleeve correctly, use the following distances:
Measure 1" from the top edge of the quilt. This spacing is needed so the sleeve does not show above the quilt once the basting seam is opened and the quilt is hung.



Measure 1" from the left side of the quilt. This spacing is needed so any hardware (eye hooks, wires) does not show once the quilt is hung.

Use rulers to help guide the placement.

Carefully pin the first sleeve in place with 4 pins in each sleeve corner, without shifting the sleeve.

Check all measurements again after pinning.



Place the second sleeve along the TOP RIGHT edge of the backing of the quilt.

Measure 1" from the top edge and 1" from the right side of the quilt.

Carefully pin the second sleeve in place with 4 pins in each sleeve corner.

Check all measurements after pinning.

There should now be a 3" gap in-between the two sleeves.

Either shift the sleeves to your liking or secure both sleeves with more pins.

8 - Sew sleeves to backing:

Using small stitches and matching thread securely sew the split sleeves to the back of the quilt BY HAND. It is helpful to do a back stitch or an extra stitch every 2" to reinforce your sewing. This will help to keep the sleeve from becoming loose if the quilt is shown at multiple venues before it is returned to the owner.

Sew all FOUR sides of each sleeve tube down (top, bottom and both short tube edges laying flush against the backing). Once these short sides of the tube are sewn down the risk that a rod is inadvertently shoved between the backing of the quilt and the sleeve is greatly reduced. Metal rods can be sharp and can damage the backing of a quilt. It is easier to replace a sleeve than repair the backing of a quilt.

Note: Avoid sewing through all layers of the quilt as the small stitches will either show on the front or slight puckers will appear. Try to keep your stitches anchored in the batting, not just in the backing for strength.

9 - Try to stay away from the temptation to anchor the sleeve in the binding seam. It gives the impression to be the faster way, but a frequently traveling quilt which has rods and dowels inserted and removed often, might not only have the seam attaching the sleeve to the backing opened when handled roughly, but the binding seam as well!

10 - Remove the basting stitch:

The long basting stitch (added in step 4) on both split sleeves can now be removed at this point.

This creates some extra give in your sleeves, allowing easier threading of rods and slats.



In addition, it will allow the quilt to hang nicely without excessive bulging on the front of the quilt.

11 - Measurements for dowels and slats:

Cut dowels and slat 1" to 1 1/2" shorter than the width of quilt. That way any hardware used at the ends will be hidden behind the quilt.

Screw eyes can be attached to both ends as well as to the cut edges of the dowel or slat.

A saw tooth hanger or a hole for a nail can be added to the center of the dowel or slat.



12 - Attaching dowels and slats to split sleeve:

Once the dowel or slat with the required hardware is inserted into the split sleeve, secure it with two thumbtacks to keep it from sliding out.

Push the dowel or slat towards the top of the quilt and push one thumbtack through each sleeve into the slat or dowel beneath.

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