# Five-Minute Sleeve

*Q: Is there a way to attach sleeves to quilts without hand stitching?*

*A: I'm a machine queen, and I love figuring out ways to avoid handwork. The one task that always tripped me up was stitching a sleeve to the back of a quilt. Then I remembered the blind hemstitch!*

Brenda Groelz • QM Editor-in-Chief

## 1 Make and Align the Sleeve
After the quilting is completed but before the quilt is bound, make a sleeve. (For instructions, refer to "Basic Lessons" at the center of this issue.) Align the raw edges of the sleeve with the top raw edge of the quilt and pin or baste in place *(photo 1)*. Bind the quilt as you normally would, encasing the raw edges of the sleeve in the binding.

## 2 Prepare for Blind Hemstitching
Set up your machine for blind hemstitching, with the 'zig' stitching to the left. If you can adjust the stitch, choose a very narrow zig. This will achieve your goal of taking a tiny bite from just the quilt backing and batting.

*A blindstitch foot or edgestitch foot is helpful, but not critical, for this technique.*

Fold the quilt top back on itself so that the folded lower edge of the sleeve juts about ¼" beyond the folded quilt back. Pin in place *(photo 2)*.

## 3 Stitching the Sleeve
Begin stitching along the fold, locking the first few stitches *(photo 3)*. The straight stitch portion of the blind hemstitch is stitched only through the sleeve. The zig stitches into the quilt back and batting, but not all the way through to the front of the quilt *(photo 4)*. Stitch all the way across and lock the ending stitches.

*A practice run is recommended for your first attempt at this technique. Make a small sample and adjust your stitches as needed.*

## 4 Finishing Up
Remove the quilt from the machine and smooth the sleeve and the front of quilt, coaxing the blind-stitches to lie flat *(photo 5)*. Presto! No hand stitches!
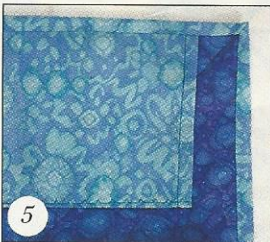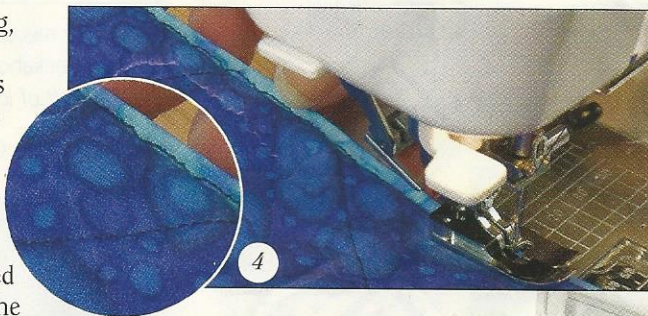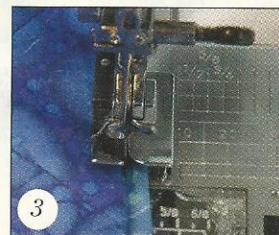
Fabric: Andover. Machine: Janome Memory Craft 6600.

## tip
**Tiny Is Better.** *A smaller needle works best for taking a "tiny bite" in the back of the quilt. Brenda likes to use a Schmetz Microtex Sharp 60/8 needle for this technique.*