

Step by Step: How to do a Braid Template Demo

Prep

It is so easy to demo the template. You just need a fabric strip and a few braid pieces already cut out. If you are doing a demo to a large crowd, you might want to cut the strips 3" wide so they are easy to see.

Also, if you are doing a demo to a crowd, you may want to use a design board so you can lay your pieces out and then to hold up the board to show the group what you are doing. The 18" design boards by Lori Holt are a fun addition to your demo.

OR you can make a really easy design board with a piece of foam core board cut to whatever size you want and then just wrap batting around it. Tape the batting to the backside of the board.

Inexpensive and easy peasy!

For the cutting part of the demo, have your strip already cut.

Cut the strip twice using the template and then you can just lay it out and demo the template without needing a cutting board. It also allows you to reuse the demo many times!

For the sewing part of the demo, take a few strips or scraps of fabric and cut some braids pieces so they are ready to go. You might want to cut them the full size of the template (8 ½" long) so they are easier to see.

Sew the first 2 pieces of the braid together.

If you want to show them how to trim the braid section, create one braid so you can show cutting it with a small ruler. I like to use a 6 ½" x 12 ½" ruler, so I make sure my piece is long enough to have room to trim on all sides. If you cut your braid pieces at 6 ½" long, this works perfectly.

IF you have time, it is nice to create a few braids using strips of different widths and using pieces of different lengths. I usually have a few that are 10-12 strips each. A nice addition but the demo is great even without this.

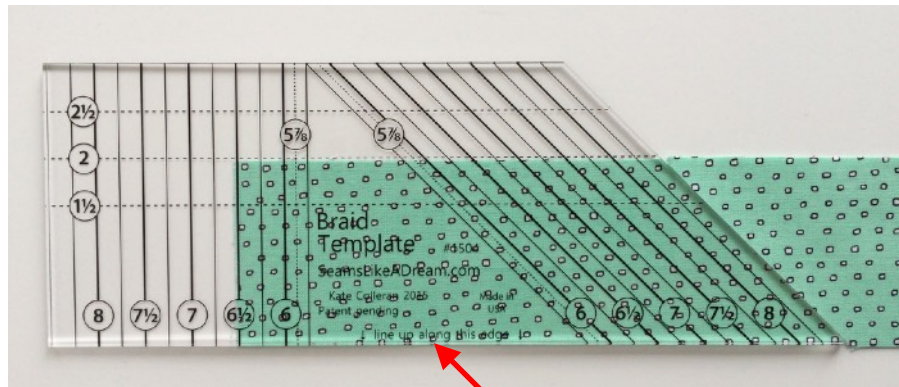
*NOTE: Don't forget the new **MINI Braid Template!** The process for cutting and sewing is the same, the pieces are just smaller!*

Note: People often ask, "Can't I just cut strips and not cut the angled edge?" Of course! But you waste more fabric that way and you can't get as many pieces cut from a strip. Also, it is harder to tell where your sides should be to trim. Another question is: "Can't I use my regular ruler and an angled line?" Again- yes! But the Braid Template already has the math built in and makes it so much easier!

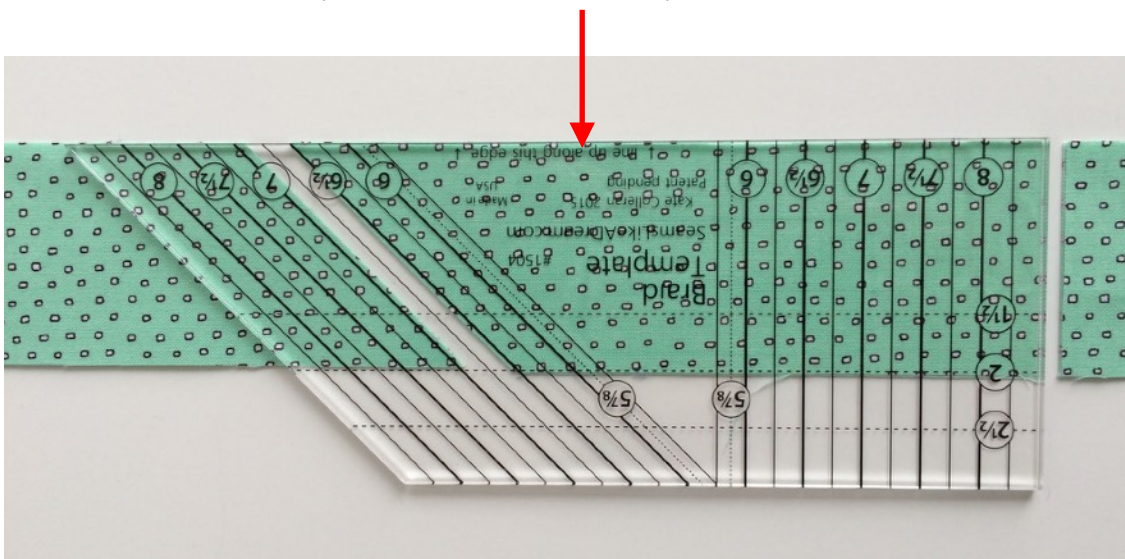


The Demo- cutting

1. Start by explaining that you work with a strip that is **folded in half, wrong sides together**. OR right sides together. Works either way but you need the strip folded in half.
2. First step is to trim a straight edge.
3. Find the size you want to cut. You can refer them to the additional customer handout I created that tells them how big their braid section will be depending on how long they cut their braid pieces.



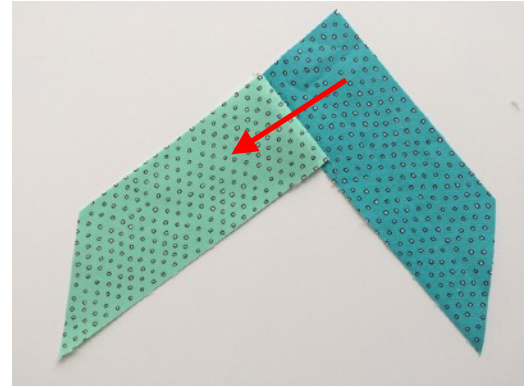
4. Align the line of the size you want to cut with the trimmed straight edge. Important: make sure the bottom of the strip is aligned with the bottom edge of the Braid Template- where it says "Line up along this edge".
5. Trim along the angled edge.
6. Find the angled line on the template that is the size you are cutting. Rotate the template (DO NOT turn over!) and line up the angled line with your cut edge. Important: make sure the TOP of the strip is aligned with the bottom edge of the Braid Template where it says "Line up along this edge".



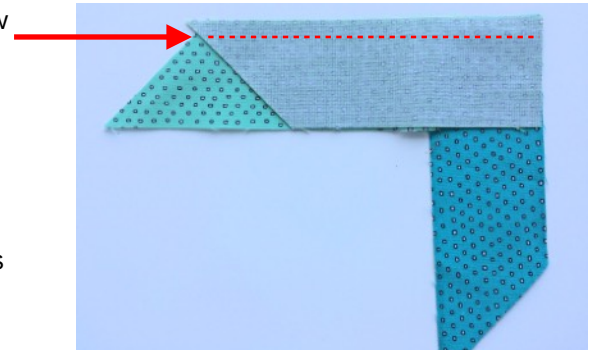
7. Trim along the straight edge. If there is enough of the strip left, you may be able to cut again 1 or 2 more times.

The Demo- sewing

1. Show them how to start building their braid- I do a really easy method, building from the bottom up. I don't worry about the uneven ends, I will just cut those off later. You should have pieces 1 and 2 already sewn together. I flip the seam over to show how I lined them up and the short seam that I sewed.



2. Then I position the next piece to be added, and mimic the sewing line with my finger. I just turn the piece back in place and position the next piece. You don't have to sew them; just show how to sew them. Sew easy!



3. I like to tell them how this technique is so forgiving- if your pieces are not lined up perfectly, it does not matter. We will be trimming the sides and the top and bottom later, so no worries! There are no points to match! It is almost goof-proof!

4. The other thing that is fun to show, is how to create different looks- maybe show them using 2 of the same color twice, then the next color; then a scrappy look; maybe a rainbow look; talk about how many other strips each strip touches so they want to think about that as they build their braid... a great time to talk color, value etc.

If you just have either a braid already sewn, or pieces that you can swap in and out to demo, other options are fun to get their creative juices flowing!

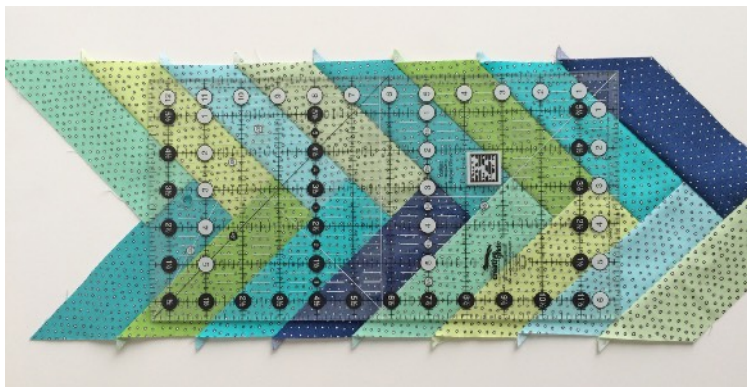


Note: the two main things they can do to mess it up- I did say it was ALMOST goof-proof!- is either add a strip meant for the other side or press aggressively and end up with a curve to their braid.

A felted wool pressing mat is super to help with the pressing and keeping the bias edges from curving.

The Demo- trimming

1. Next up, how to trim. If you have created a braid section that is longer and wider than your ruler, you can just lay the ruler on top and show how to trim off one end, measure the length you want and trim off the other end.
2. Then trim the sides of the braid piece, trimming off about the same amount on each side. Again, this is a forgiving technique so they can eyeball the "center". *Note: I usually don't actually cut my piece, I just demo HOW to cut, that way I can use it again, and again...*



Demo for the Pattern Leftovers

If you also want to demonstrate how to use the Braid Template to cut the shapes for the table runner **Leftovers**, I would prep my pieces the same way. Using a 2 1/2" wide strip of fabric, I would precut the shape twice. Note that you don't have to rotate the template to make the second cut; just move the template along the strip using the 5 3/4" line.



To see my Braid Template demo, go to to the Tips and Tutorials page on my website and click on the video. Refer also to the handout included with the template as well as my supplemental handout- for your customers. The customer handout is on the website and they can download it. Or you can make copies for them.

I hope this helps you create a successful Braid Template Demo! If you have any questions, feel free to email me at kate@katecollerandesigns.com.

happy quilting,

Kate