

# How to Use a Bias Tape Maker

The Bias Tape Maker is an ingenious little tool. (Tools actually, since they are available in multiple sizes.) If you have ever tried to fold and press bias tape without one, you'll know what we mean. How did we ever live without it?

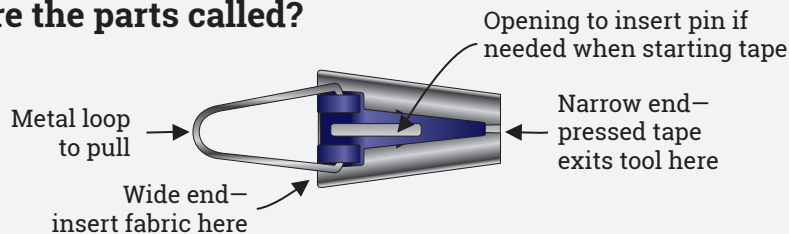
**What is it?** The Bias Tape Maker is a tool through which bias-cut fabric strips are fed to make bias tape. What does all this mean? Here is a bit of background info.

**What is Bias Tape and what is it used for?** Bias Tape is made from strips of bias fabric. The edges are folded under once for single-fold tape, and twice for double-fold tape. Single-fold bias tape is great for surface embellishment. Double-fold bias tape is used to bind the edges of quilts and other craft or sewing projects. And the Bias Tape Maker does most of the work for you!

**You will need the following:**

- Bias tape maker—1/2" or 1", #3146, #3147 or #11747
- Fabric (See below):  
For 1/2" wide double-fold: 1/2 yard of 45" wide fabric makes 11–12 yards of tape  
For 1/4" wide double-fold or 1/2" wide single-fold, 1/2 yard of 45" wide fabric makes about 22 yards of tape

## What are the parts called?

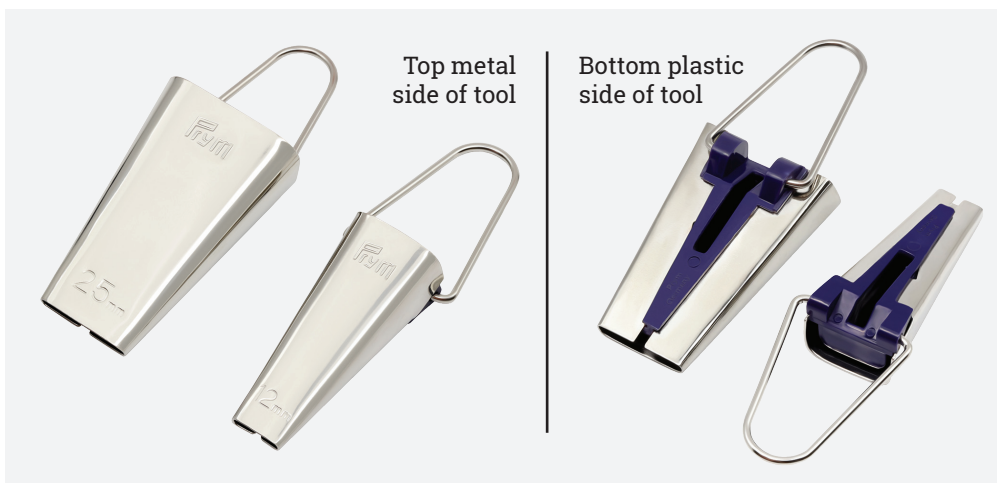


**Optional, but recommended:**

- Rotary cutter
- Grid-marked ruler
- Cutting mat

## How much fabric do you need?

Start with 1/2 yard of 45" wide fabric. For a small project you will need less and for something like a quilt, you will need lots more. But, less yardage means smaller pieces, which equals more joining seams and more work!



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### What is the bias grain and why is it important?

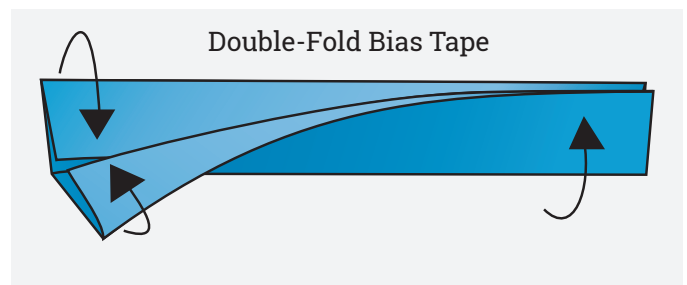
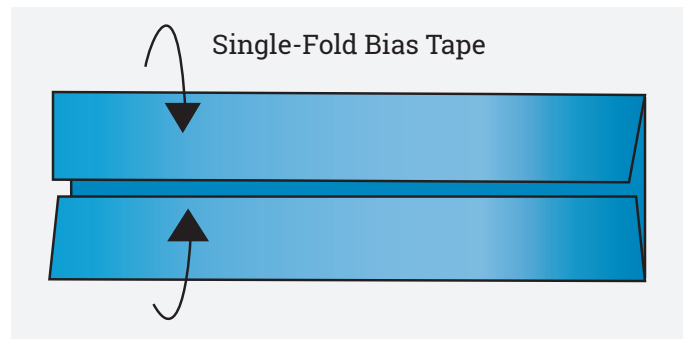
Bias is the diagonal grainline of fabric. To find the bias grain, fold fabric diagonally, lining up lengthwise grain (selvage edge) with cross-wise grain (perpendicular to selvage). The fold is the bias grainline. See our tutorials “What is a Grainline” and “How to Cut and Sew Bias Strips” for more info! Fabric cut on the bias has more give, so it turns corners and curves easier. Therefore it is the grainline most used for bias binding.

Bias tape can be single- or double-fold. A bias tape maker makes only single-fold tape. If you want double-fold, simply fold and press tape a second time on the ironing board or as you attach it to the project. Easy, but—and this is important—double fold bias tape will be half the size indicated on the tool. It is always a good idea to test a small piece to see how it works before making an entire length of tape!

### Which tape do you need?

**Single-fold bias tape:** What you see is what you get. Use single-fold tape as it comes out of the tool – one fold on each edge. The 1” tape maker makes 1” wide single-fold tape ready to use; the 1/2” tape maker makes 1/2” wide single-fold tape ready to use.

**Double-fold bias tape:** This tape is made by folding single-fold tape in half lengthwise. What comes out of the tool is half the finished width of double-fold tape. 1-inch single fold bias tape folds a second time to become 1/2-inch wide double-fold tape. 1/2-inch single-fold tape folds again to become 1/4-inch wide double-fold tape.



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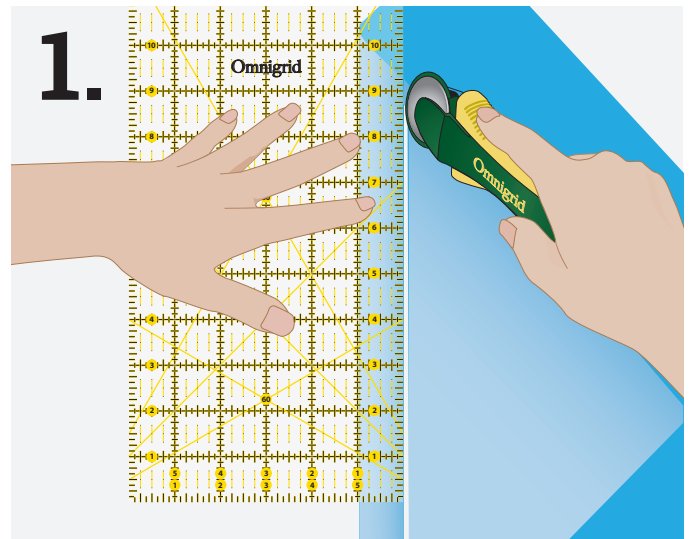
## Create bias strips:

1. Use a rotary cutter with a grid-marked ruler and a mat to cut bias strips of fabric. For the 1/2" bias tape maker, cut strips 7/8" wide to make 1/2" single-fold or 1/4" double-fold tape. For the 1" Bias Tape Maker, cut strips 1-3/4" wide to make 1" single-fold or 1/2" double-fold tape.

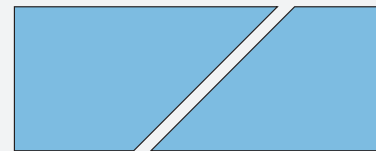
### Why use a rotary cutter?

*A rotary cutter will create a much cleaner edge than hand cutting, so it will pass through the bias tape maker more smoothly for the most evenly folded tape.*

2. Join short ends of bias strips as in the tutorial "How To Cut and Sew Bias Strips." Stitch right sides together using a 1/4" seam allowance. Press seam allowance to the side.



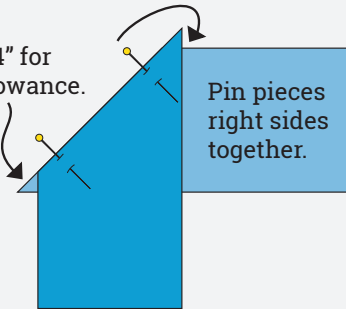
## 2. Joining Fabric Ends To Make Bias Tape



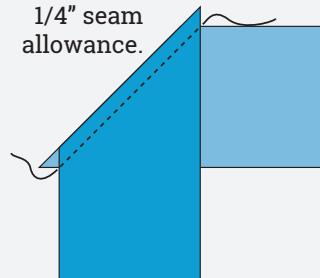
Cut ends of bias strips of fabric.

Offset 1/4" for seam allowance.

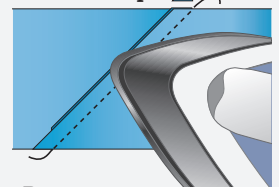
Pin pieces right sides together.



Stitch with 1/4" seam allowance.



Trim tips.



Press seam allowance to the side.



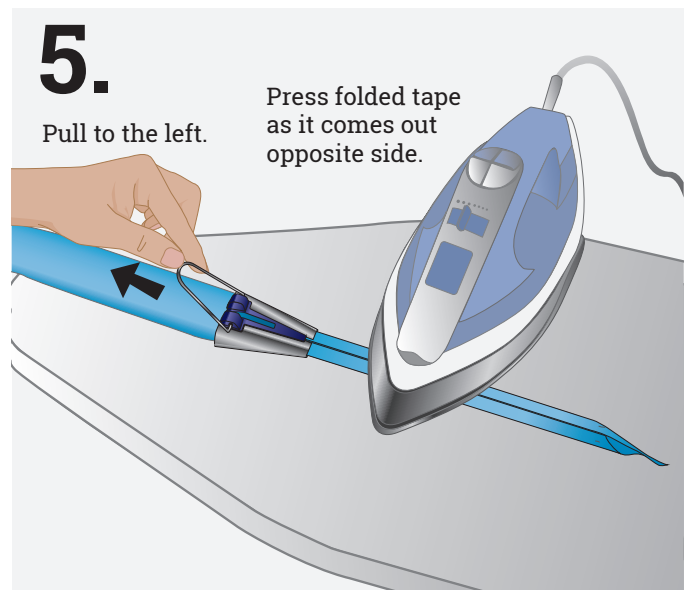
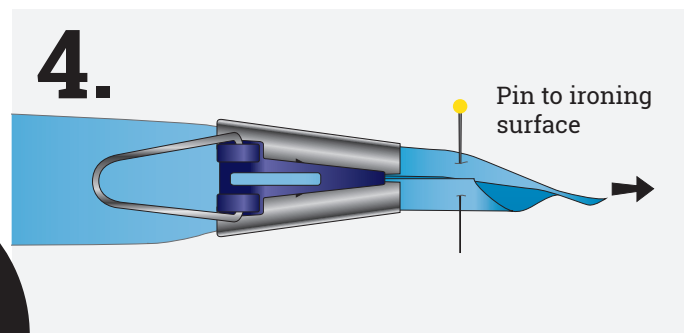
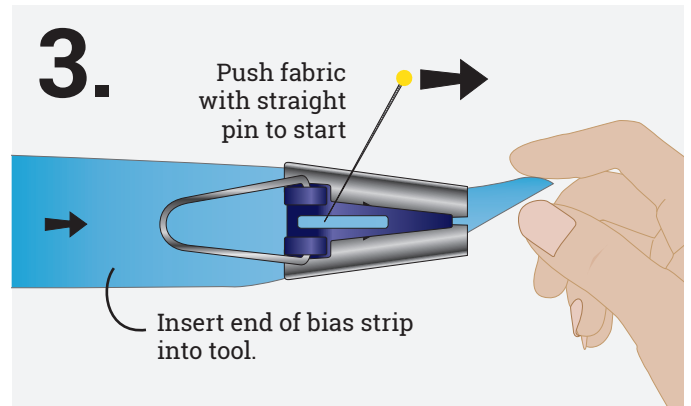
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3. Insert one end of joined bias strip into wide end of tool with fabric facing wrong side up. Seam allowances should point away from tape maker. Notice opening at top center of tool on the plastic side. If you are having trouble getting the strip into the tool, place the tip of a straight pin through this opening to help push starting end of fabric out narrow end of tool.

4. When fabric appears at narrow end of tool, pull fabric strip out about 1-inch. Pin it to ironing surface to hold fabric in place while getting started.

**TIP: Pin folded fabric end to far right end of ironing surface. This will leave you plenty of room as you press and pull tool toward the left.**

5. With end of bias strip secured with a straight pin, hold metal loop of tool with one hand, slowly pulling tool away from pinned end. Hold iron in opposite hand, pressing folded tape as it appears from end of tool.



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### To create double-fold tape:

6. Remove bias tape from bias tape maker. Fold bias tape lengthwise, aligning folded edges. Press. It's that easy!

