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Continuous Bias for Welt Cord

When making custom slipcovers for furniture, I've found myself having to cut and sew yards of bias strips to cover the welt cord for my projects. The original way of making bias strips- which my mother taught me- was simply too time consuming. With most of my work being performed on-site in my customer's home, and having limited space to do my work, I needed to come up with a quicker method. After scanning books and watching a few slipcover videos, I have devised a way to make continuous bias cord in a quick, more efficient manner.

1. Cut a piece of fabric 18" long from a piece that is 54" wide. See Illustration 1.
2. Fold the fabric in half with the wrong sides out. Sew on all three sides using a $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance. Snip two opposite corners and draw a line diagonally from corner to corner. Cut on this drawn line, from corner to corner, making sure to cut ONLY the top layer of fabric. See Illustration 2.
3. Flip fabric and do the same thing on this side. Draw the diagonal line, connecting the two UNSNIPPED corners, and again, cut ONLY the top layer of fabric. You will also nip these two corners, as you did in step 2. See Illustration 3.
4. Pull open fabric where it has been cut. Lay fabric flat (as shown in the drawing) with wrong sides out. This will actually be a tube, which must lie flat. Trim the raw edges of the fabric square with the folded edges. See Illustration 4.
5. Draw lines $1\frac{1}{2}$ " apart to make $\frac{5}{32}$ " welt cord with a $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance. If the welt cord is bigger ($\frac{3}{16}$ " or $\frac{1}{4}$ "), you will need to make the strips wider. ($1\frac{3}{4}$ " or 2"). Draw lines from top to fold, but stop 3-6" from one of the folds, as designated by the dots in Illustration 5. Cut on these lines to make strips. DO NOT cut past the dots on the fabric. If you cut all the way through, from one fold to the other, you will have just cut out circles!
6. Open the fabric that you have cut. There will be a section that has not been cut. Lay this as flat as possible on the table. Take a straight edge and draw a line DIAGONALLY from one line to the next. You will actually be skipping down one line. DO NOT draw a straight line; you will have circles as a result. After all lines are marked diagonally, and then cut. Make sure you cut ONLY the top layer.

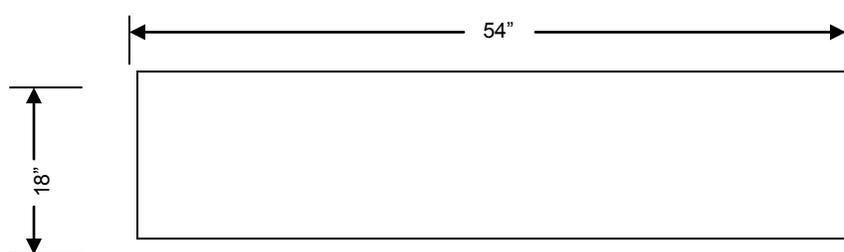
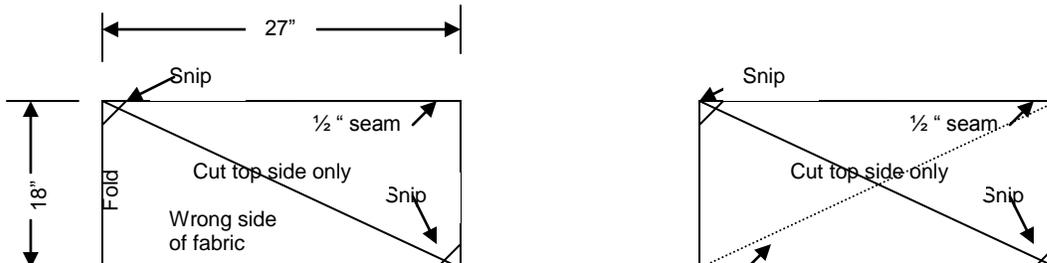


Illustration 1



Presto! Like magic, there should be nearly 18 yards of continuous bias strip to sew around 5/32" welt cord.

Hints: With this method, one can make continuous bias out of rectangular scraps by sewing four sides of the fabric. Or, this can be done with smaller pieces of fabric for only one or two yards of bias.

Products I like to use when making continuous bias cord:

- Clear plastic ruler (6" x 12") for straight edge
- For drawing lines, I like to use a flat carpenter's pencil
- Scissors are 11" long (or use a Chickadee cutter)
- Fiber welt cord (500 yard put up)

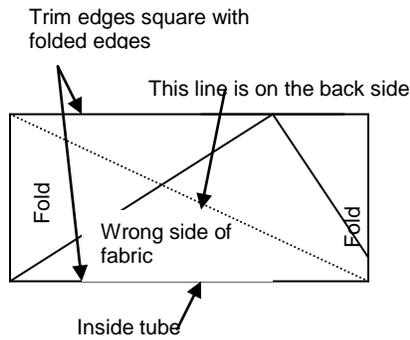


Illustration 4

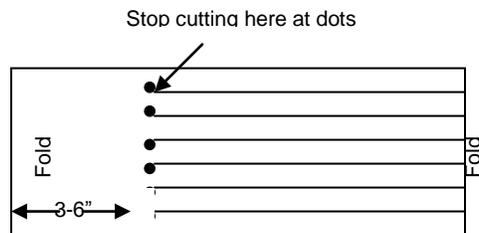


Illustration 5

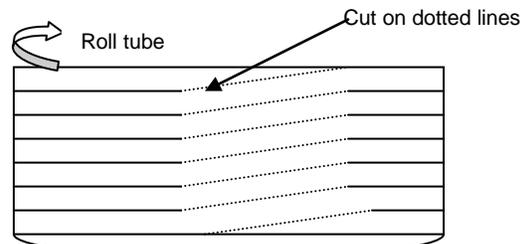


Illustration 6

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