UK COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
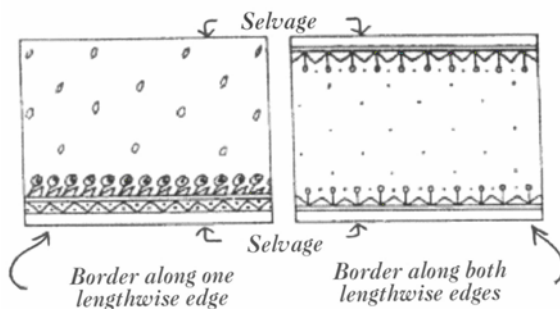UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY — COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
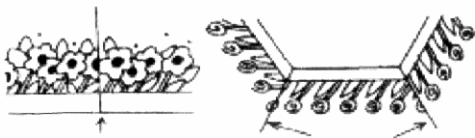
Border Prints

Border prints are a special fabric with a design. This design is usually along one lengthwise edge (parallel to the selvage). Some border prints will have this design along both lengthwise edges of the fabric. Many come with a coordinating print.

Border along one lengthwise edge   Border along both lengthwise edges

THINK BEFORE YOU BUY

If you are considering buying a garment with a border or purchasing a fabric to make a garment, you need to "think" about the following:

- The border being scaled to your size.
- The placement of the border, since it calls attention to the area where it is placed.
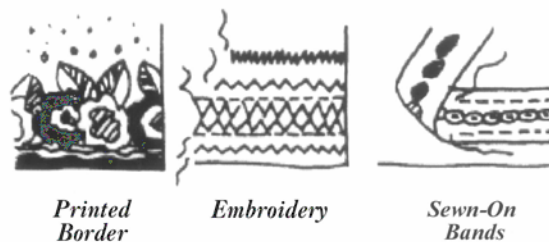- The matching of the border at the seamlines.

Some designs can't be matched

- Making sure there are straight lines where the border is used, such as a hem.

- Whether or not the border design can be matched on straight seams.
- If the hemline follows the border design "line."

A border can be printed, embroidered or created by applying sewn-on bands.

Printed Border   Embroidery   Sewn-On Bands

- If the border is a heavily embroidered piece to be applied or a complicated design, fit and cut the border with the right side out. This allows the design to be easily matched.
- Extra yardage is needed so you can match the design, usually 2-3 repeats of the design.

PLANNING HOW TO USE-
THINK ABOUT

- Placing the design so it looks good on you.
- How much of the border to use – it can be overdone.
- Creating a border by adding a band of print or stripe fabric.
- Finding a pattern that suggests using a border fabric, since this will give you a layout to follow. It also eliminates the guesswork in determining the amount of fabric needed.

WHERE TO USE A BORDER

Horizontal borders are ideal for hemlines, bottom of sleeves, collars, yokes, and neckbands. Think about the kind of illusion created by the placement of the border.

Vertical borders tend to add height. They are used for the "centers" of sleeve, bodice or skirt. You may also see these used off center on a bodice and skirt.

CHECK QUALITY

The most important step is to plan before you buy. Select a simple design that has few details and lines. Remember to use the border along a straight edge so there will be no curved areas to negotiate.
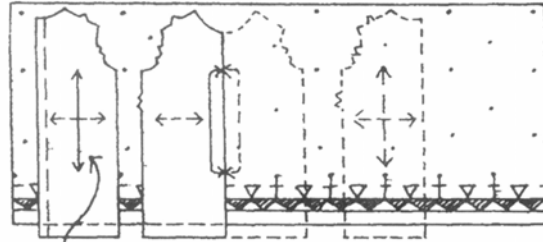

A-line skirt
Border can't be curved

Since borders are frequently printed or created lengthwise, the layout for the garment will need to be crosswise. That means the grainline marking will be placed with the crosswise grain rather than the lengthwise grainline.

Use the single layer layout view. This requires that each pattern piece be cut twice (once for the left side, once for the right side of the garment). Before laying out the pattern, predetermine all hemlines identifying where the border will be placed. If using a border fabric, place the pattern pieces that are to have a border along the border segment of the fabric first.

Pattern layout - Single layer is easier

Put lengthwise arrow on the crosswise

Remember to center the dominant print on the pattern/garment piece center.

Plan now for matching at the stitching of the seams, if the design is one that can be matched. Then fit the remaining pattern pieces on the fabric. Be sure all pieces are on the same grain.

After you complete the layout, carefully check your pattern placement in relation to the design and hems. Double check the layout *before* cutting. Your garment should be easy to construct. If you discover your hemline is uneven, do an adjustment at the waistline.

SUMMARY

Border prints are unique and should be a nice addition to the wardrobe. This is an opportunity to bring out the designer in each of us. Have fun being creative and expressing your individuality.