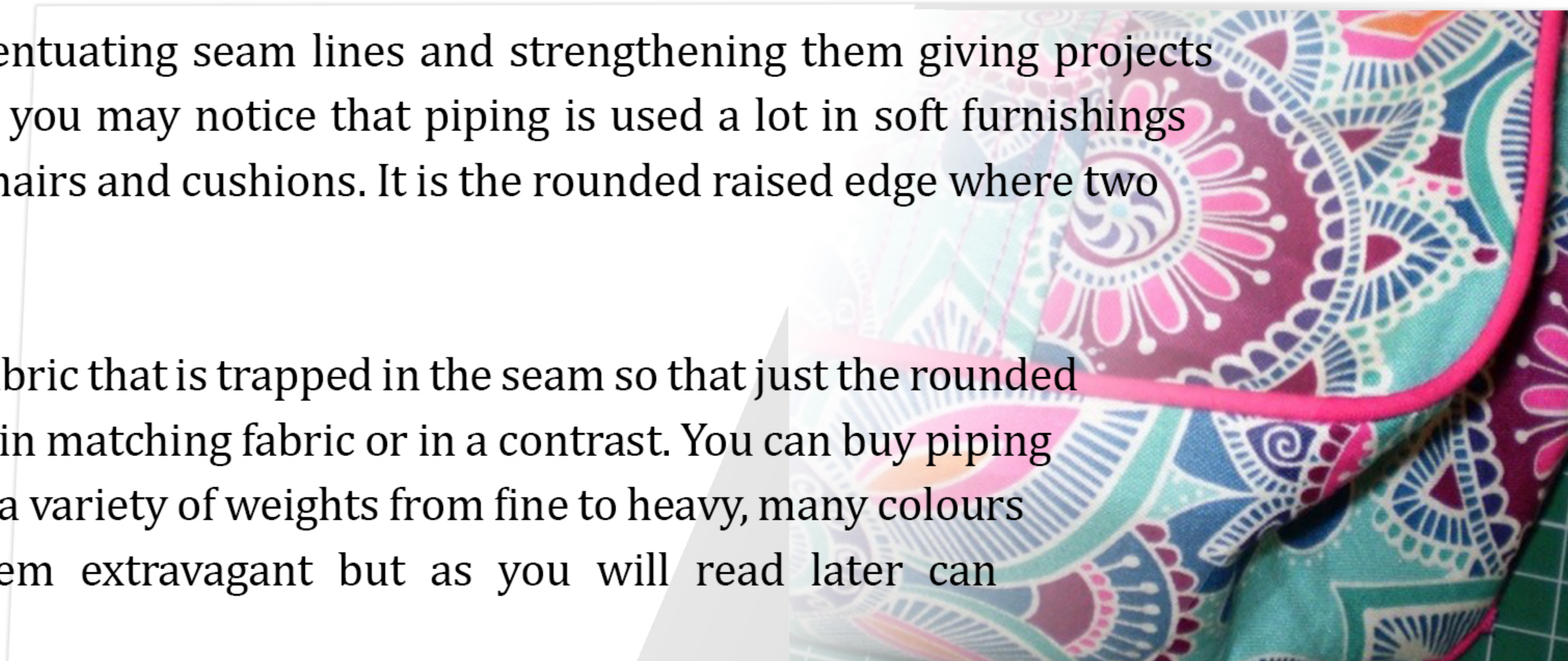




Introduction

Piping is a very effective way of accentuating seam lines and strengthening them giving projects more shape. If you look around you, you may notice that piping is used a lot in soft furnishings most notably on upholstered sofas, chairs and cushions. It is the rounded raised edge where two seams meet.

Piping is basically a cord covered in fabric that is trapped in the seam so that just the rounded cord portion shows, this can be done in matching fabric or in a contrast. You can buy piping by the metre ready made. It comes in a variety of weights from fine to heavy, many colours and various finishes. This may seem extravagant but as you will read later can sometimes be cost effective.



Betty Bag Piping



Tools and Supplies

Fabric • Piping Cord • Zipper Foot • Quilting Ruler • Rotary Cutter

It is really simple to make your own piping and can be a useful way of using up left over fabric. You will need several strips of fabric cut on the bias of the fabric the bias of the fabric is the diagonal across the warp and weft of the fabric and some piping cord.

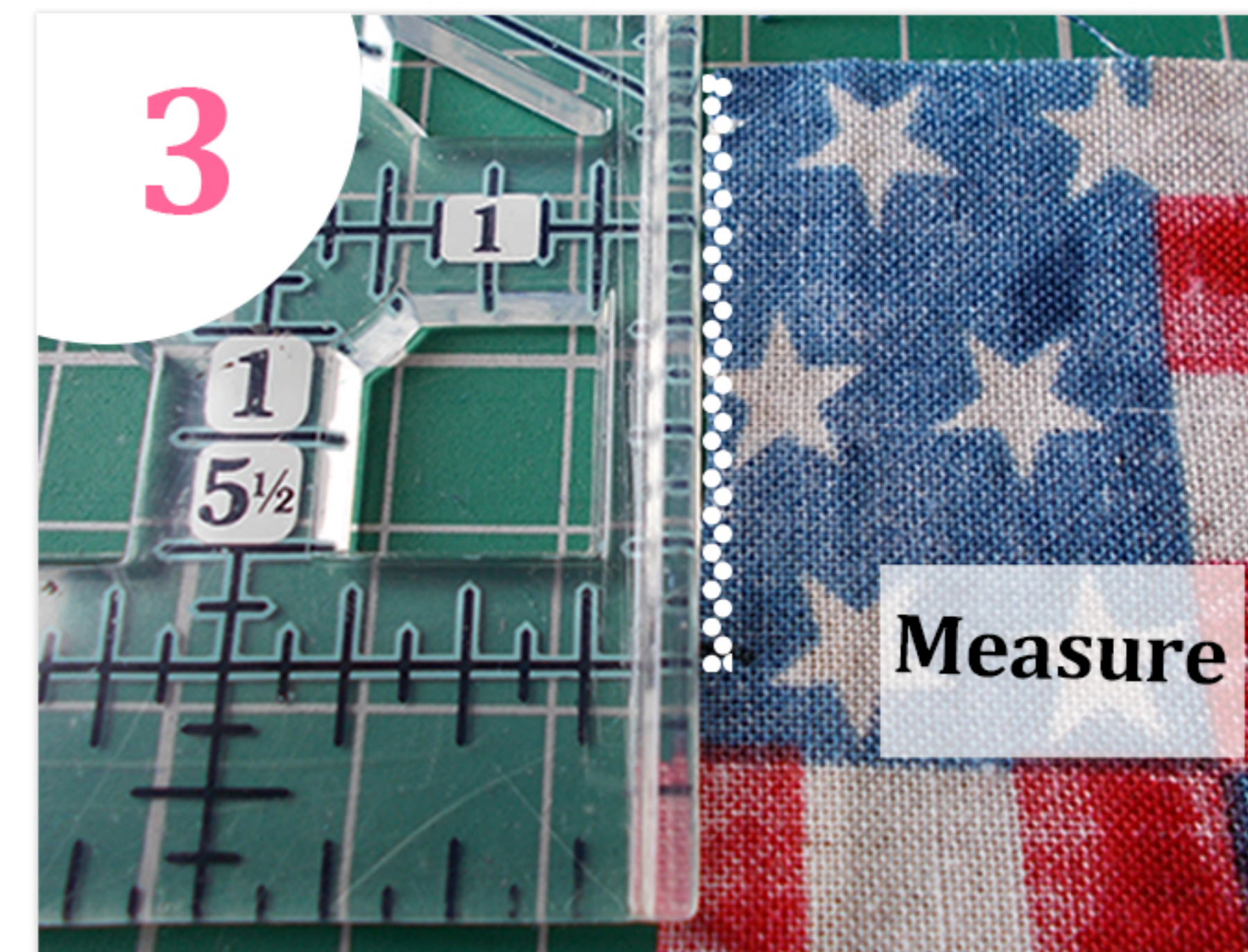
Step by Step Instructions



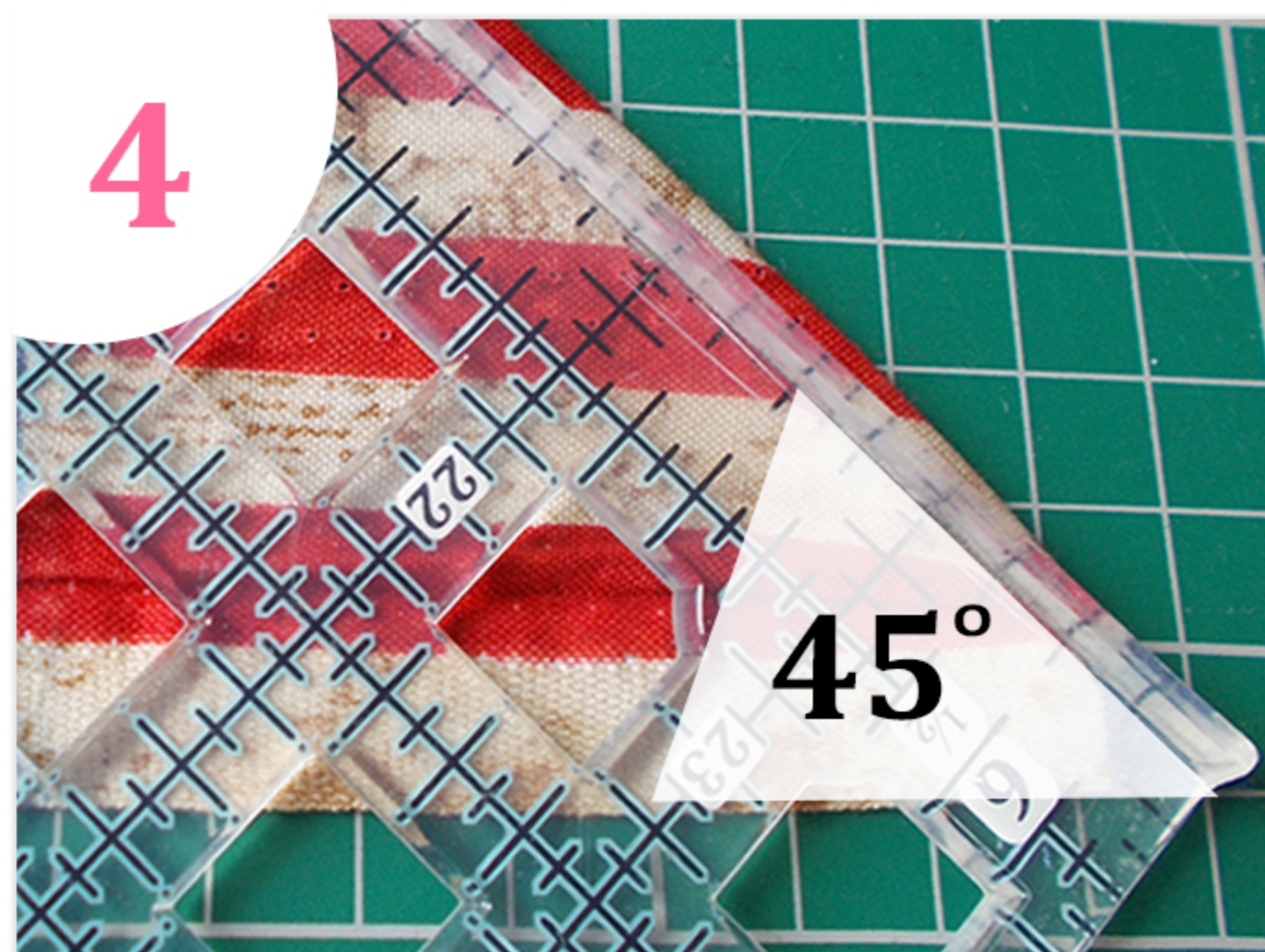
1 There are different sizes of piping cord. We generally use 3mm piping cord, this refers to the diameter of the cord it can be purchased by the metre.



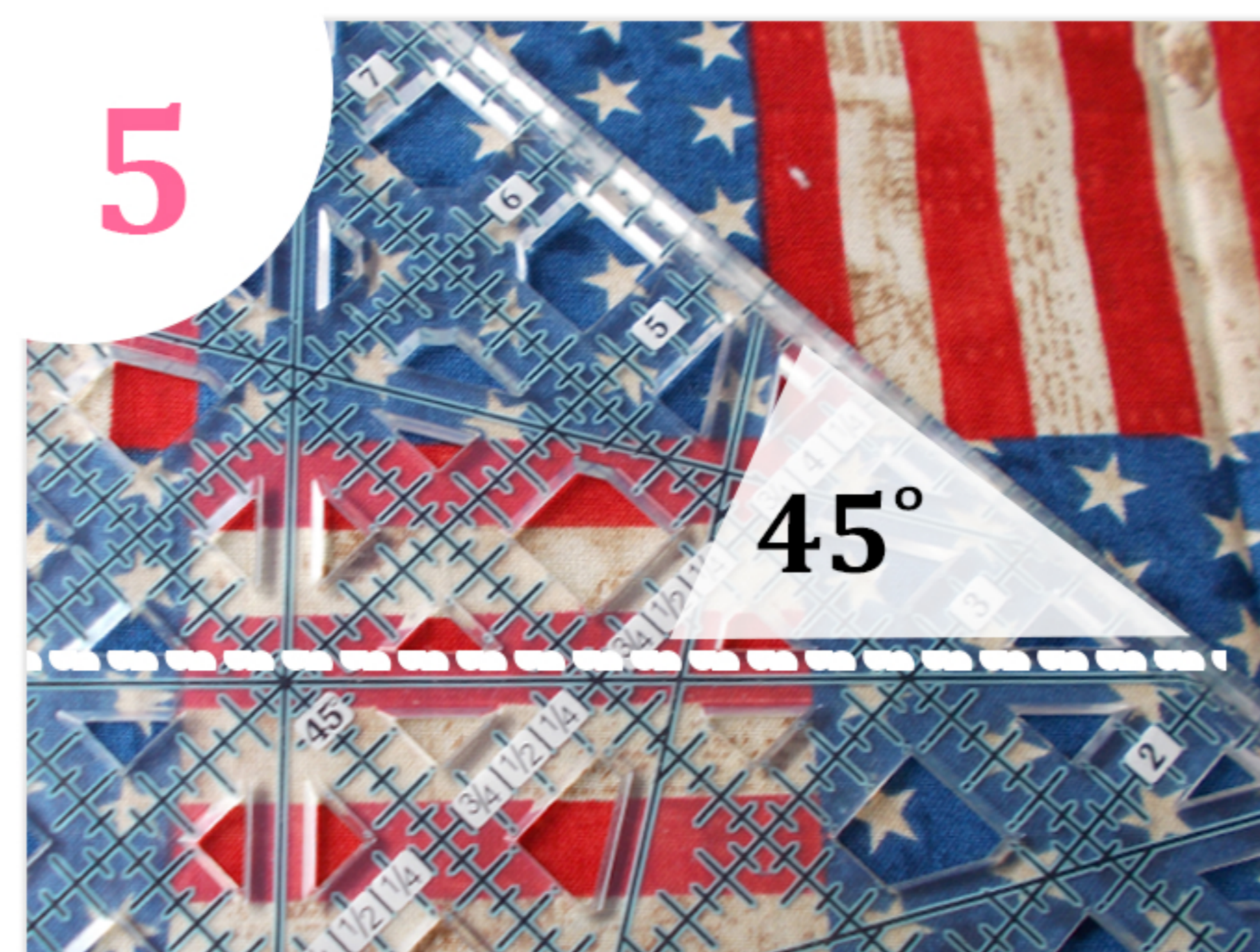
2 Work out your strip size by folding some fabric over the piping. The flat bit needs to be long enough to match your seam allowance. Mark the end.



3 Measure the mark to find your strip size. In the example this is 1.5 in.



4 Fold fabric on a 45° Degree angle and cut for your starting point.



OR 5 Use the 45° degree angle on your quilting ruler for the first cut.



6 Once you have your angle start cutting strips to your desired width. In the example this is 1.5 in.





The joins need to be made by putting the strips at right angles to each other and sewing across. I would recommend that you pin them and open them out and check before you machine, that way when opened out the binding forms a straight line.



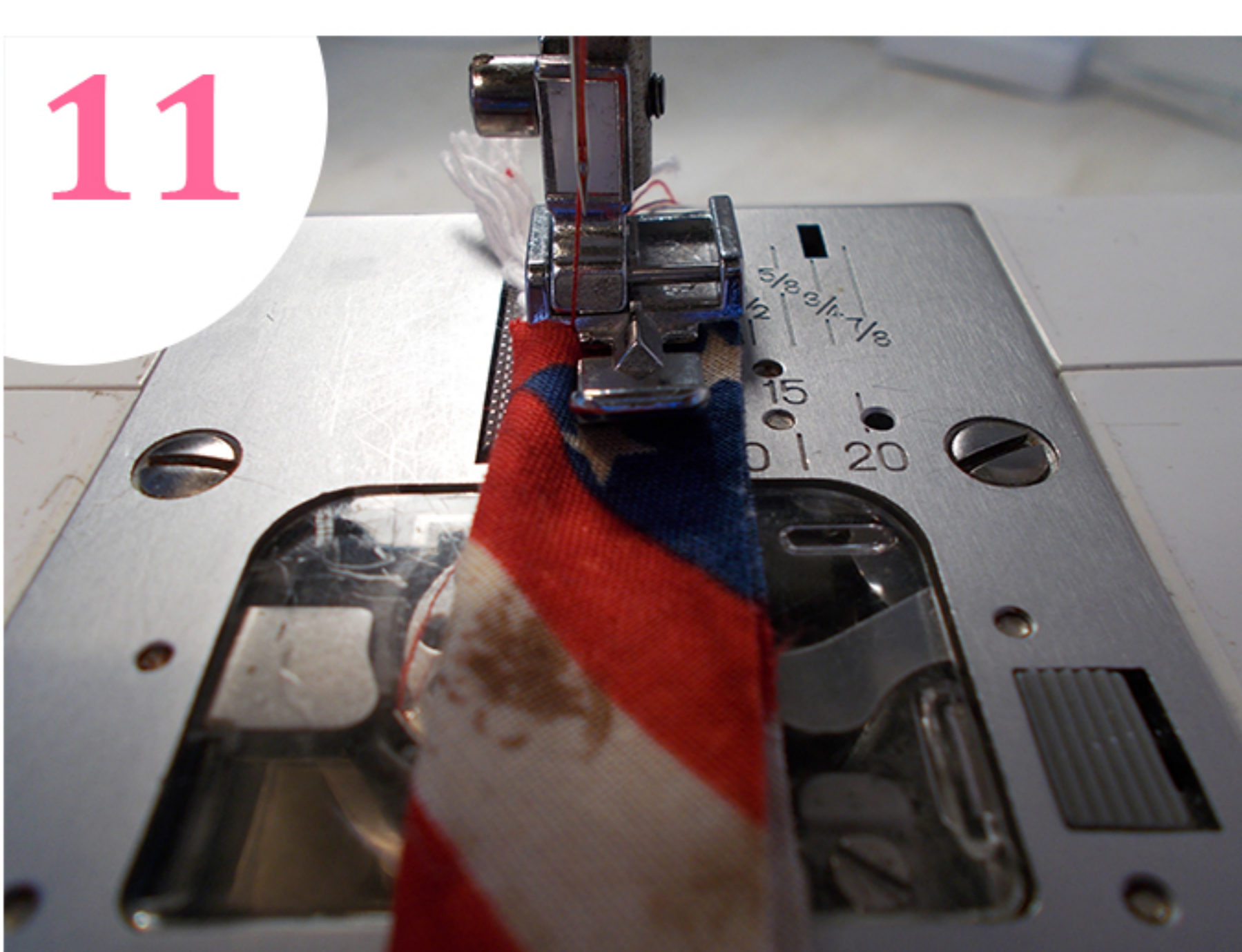
Trim the excess off the joined seams.



Once you have joined the strips press the seams. It may seem odd having joins in the piping fabric but by the time it is inserted into the seam it is fairly invisible unless closely inspected.



The next step is to insert the cord into the fabric to do this you start at one end and fold the fabric in half with the cord running down the middle and then machine alongside the cord.



piping foot



zipper foot



To machine as close as possible to the piping you will need either a piping foot or a zipper foot, the difference between the piping foot and the zipper foot is that the piping foot has a channel underneath it that allows the foot to sit over the piping cord and the needle is then kept in line with the edge of the piping cord. A zipper foot works well though you just have to keep it in line with the edge of the piping yourself.



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clip on curves

When you are using the piping cord on your project you will need to use the same machine foot. You sew the piping onto one side of your seam first and then place the other piece for the seam over the top and sew the two together. Care needs to be taken when turning corners to allow the piping to follow the corner by clipping along the outer edge of the piping. When you open out your seam or turn through your piece you should have beautiful piping.

