

# BORDER BASICS

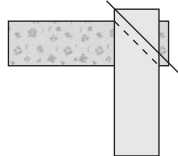
## MEASURE YOUR QUILT BEFORE CUTTING BORDERS

This is a necessary step if the quilt center is comprised of pieced or appliqued blocks. If your quilt

uses a whole cloth center (solid, unpieced), it is probably not necessary to verify border sizes before cutting. Measure your quilt in at least three places, the top, center and bottom. If there is a variance, and there usually is, average the figures for your actual size. This will distribute any difference to several areas of the quilt rather than keeping the burden in one spot, possibly causing puckering in a seam.

## STRAIGHT BORDERS

The most common border approach is straight borders. This simply means the borders are not using a pieced or appliqued block. The strips are best cut in one continuous piece. Some quilters do not mind using several short lengths and piecing them end to end to accomplish the desired length because this will often require less yardage. The seams will show the most in a solid or a print with open, solid areas. A calico type print will hide seams the best. If you wish to piece border lengths, diagonally piece the strips at a 45° angle as needed then trim seam to 1/4" and press seam open.

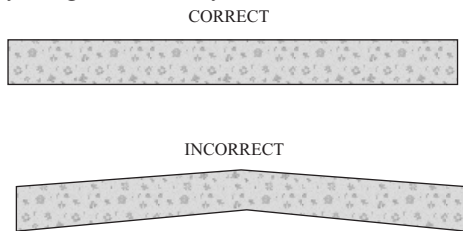


**Fabric grain** is also a consideration. Fabric has three basic grains or weave directions: bias, crosswise and lengthwise. Bias is the grain running at a 45 degree angle to the straight grains. The two straight grains are crosswise and lengthwise. They are the best options for borders. The crosswise grain runs opposite the selvages and will have some stretch. The lengthwise grain runs parallel to the selvages and has the least amount of give, or stretch. Try tugging on the different grains using an approximate 1 yard length of fabric. You will notice a vast difference in stretch from grain to grain. The most stable grain, lengthwise grain, is the optimum grain for cutting borders. This is most important for use in the outer or final border of a quilt. It will help stabilize the final dimension of the quilt and bring any inconsistencies during piecing back to a final shape and size. Often, for conserving yardage, patterns will call for crosswise grain use in inner borders. This works well, so long as piecing of a border length will not be necessary.

## CUTTING BORDER STRIPS

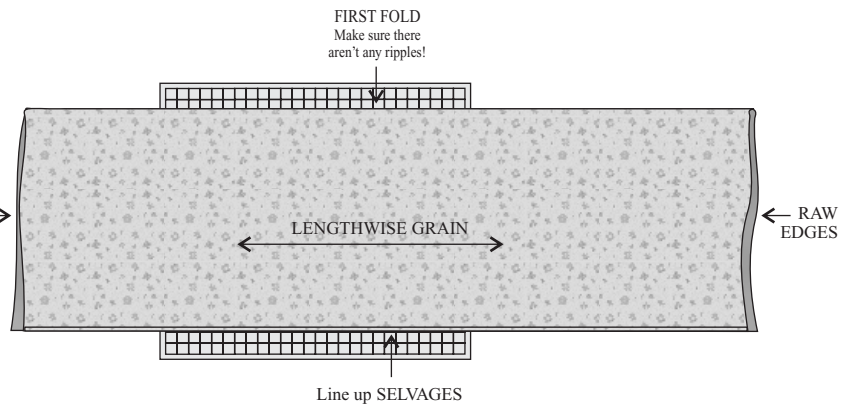
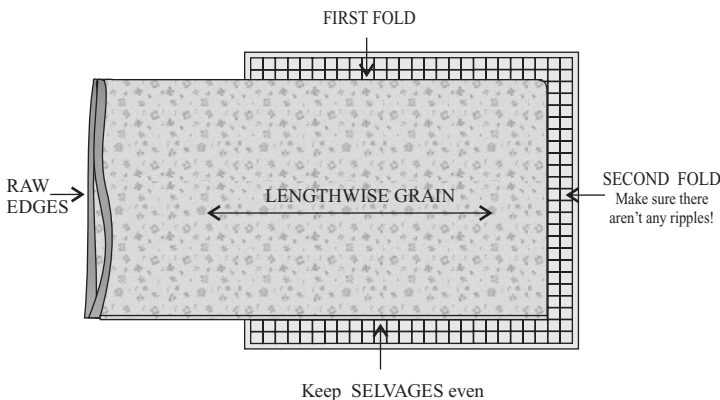
If care is taken while prepping your fabrics before cutting them into strips for borders, you can avoid the dreaded "V". If the fabric is not set up properly on your cutting board, the strips can end up in a slight "V" shape. This is not a useable

shape for borders or for strip piecing. Once your fabric is pre-washed (if you choose), make sure there are no wrinkles, press the yardage if necessary.

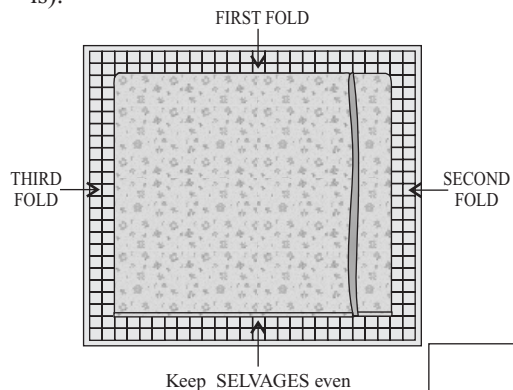


1- Fold the fabric in half lengthwise. Line up the selvages and make sure the fold is smooth.

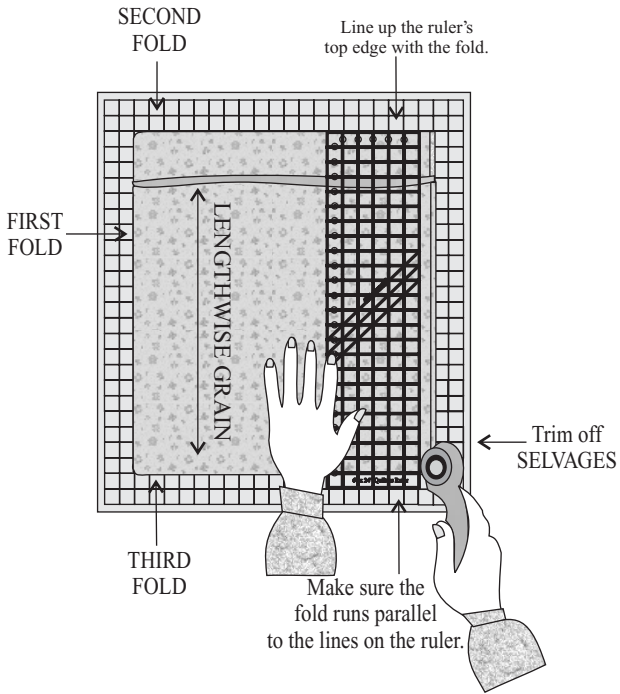
2- Fold the fabric bringing the raw edges together. Do not worry about lining up the raw edges. They will be trimmed later. Make sure the selvages are still lined up and the folds are smooth.



3- Fold the fabric bringing the third fold onto the mat. Make sure the selvages are lined up and folds are smooth. Rotate the board 90 degrees, counter-clockwise (leave the fabric as it is).



4- Line the ruler up with the folds at the top and bottom of the fabric. Trim the selvages off and discard.



5- Rotate the board 180 degrees (leave the fabric as it is). Cut the border strips using the width measurement as stated in the pattern.

6- Using a tape measure, trim the strips to the length desired.

