

Piecing a Quilt Back

Take the length of your quilt and double it, adding a half yard to your total. The extra half yard is allowance for shrinkage and uneven cutting.

It's tempting to sew the two pieces together and call it good, but that leaves you with an aesthetically unpleasing seam right up the middle of your quilt. What we're going to do is sew the backing so you have three pieces and can place the two seams on either side of the center of the quilt. It just looks better.

If your quilt is going to be wider than 88" you are probably going to need three times the backing fabric rather than two. The three panels of fabric get sewn side-by-side and should be wide enough that you won't have to do any additional piecework. The instructions here are for making three equal pieces out of two, and you won't need to do that.

Begin by cutting your yardage into two equal lengths, making sure both lengths are longer than your quilt top, especially if you are going to use the backing wrapped around to the top to be the binding.

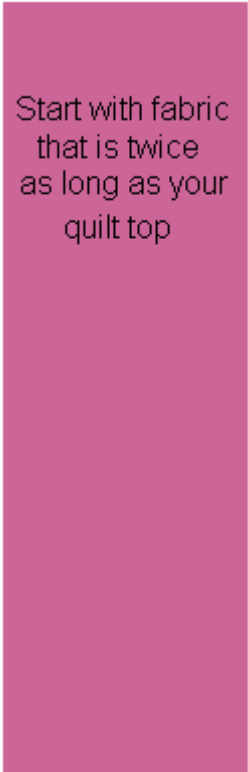
Line up the two pieces, right sides together, matching any directional printing (plaid probably does not make a good quilt back) and sew the long seam down one side.

Turn the two pieces over and sew the other side in the same direction (otherwise the fabric may stretch or shift just enough to give you a puckered seam). You should now have a giant tube of fabric.

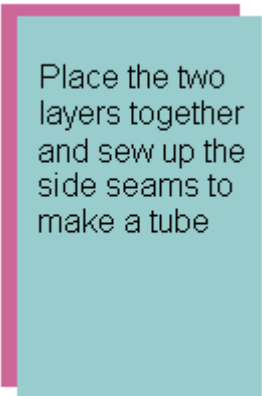
Iron your seams flat to set the thread in place.

Lay the tube out flat on the floor or your workspace, and fold it in half from seam to seam.

Fold the fabric in half the long way, being sure to get it even all the way down. Use your hand to crease the fold just a little bit, so you can see it when you open it up.



Start with fabric that is twice as long as your quilt top



Place the two layers together and sew up the side seams to make a tube

Open up the fold. You should now have a straight line halfway between your seams, from top to bottom. You're going to cut along this line.

Hold the top layer of fabric up away from the bottom layer and cut along the crease. **DO NOT CUT BOTH LAYERS!**

Open up the fabric. You should now have a pieced backing large enough for your quilt, with about 22" of fabric pieced on either side of a central panel. Iron the seams flat and open. This will be your last chance to smooth out any puckering.

