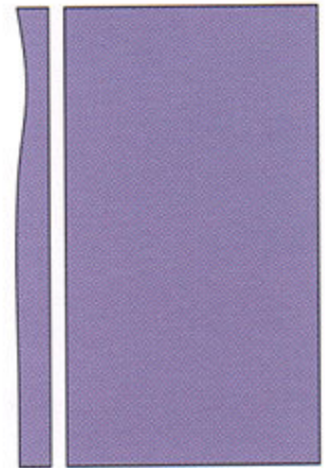
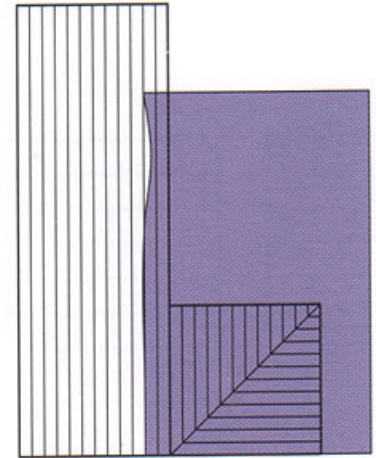


Squaring Fabric & Rotary Cutting Strips

Although there are times you'll choose to rotary cut strips along the lengthwise grain of fabric, most strips used for quick-pieced quilts are cut from selvage to selvage on the fabric's crosswise grain. No matter how you work with grain, you cannot cut your strips until you square up one end of the fabric so that it's at a 90-degree angle to the fold.

Rotary Cutting on the Crosswise Grain

1. Fold the fabric along its length, selvages together. The bottom fold should be straight, with no puckers. Sometimes this means that cut edges will not be perfectly aligned.
2. Place the fabric on your rotary mat with the fold near the bottom edge of the mat (closest to you) and the side to be squared on the left. Align a rotary ruler with the folded edge of the fabric, near the left edge.
3. Place a long rotary ruler to the left of the first, edges flush against each other. Check to make sure horizontal lines marked on both rulers are parallel to the folded edge. (If you are left handed, work from the opposite side of the fabric, placing rulers in mirror-image positions.)
4. Remove the right-side ruler. Place your hand on the long ruler to hold it firmly in place and roll the rotary cutter along the right edge of the ruler, beginning at the folded edge. Spread your fingers out to hold the ruler securely, but take care to keep them out of the path of the cutter. Pause when your rotary cutter extends slightly past the hand holding the ruler and walk your ruler hand forward on the ruler. Continue to do this until you have completed the full length of the cut. The fabric edge should now be at a 90-degree angle to the folded edge.
5. Cut the total number of strips required for your project. For instance, if you must cut 3" strips, align the 3" mark on the ruler with the left edge of the fabric. Align a horizontal line on the ruler with the fold. Before each cut make sure that both edge of the fabric align with vertical and horizontal markings on the ruler. If they do not, square up the end again before cutting more strips.



Check Accuracy Open a strip to its full width and look at the area near the fold. If the strip has a bend in the middle it means the fabric's left edge was not a 90-degree angle to the fold--so it is not an accurate cut. Check strips periodically to be sure the edge remains square.

