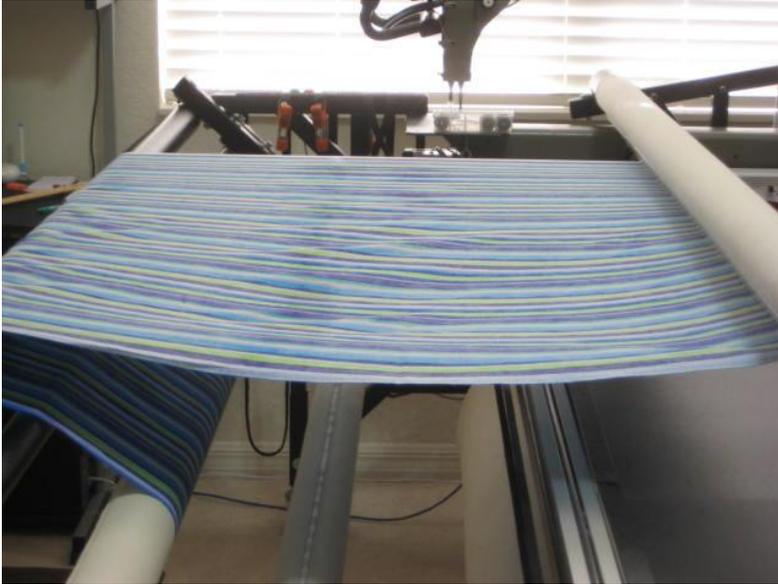


HOW TO SQUARE UP BACKING FABRIC and QUILT PANELS:

Backing fabric needs to be “square” before it can be loaded on the longarm machine. The longarm frame is a big rectangle. If the fabric is not “square”, it will sag on one side of the other, which will cause your quilt to end up un-square, with one side longer than the other.

In the example below, the edge of the fabric closest to the camera is sagging, and the edge furthest from the camera is taught.



In the example below, the fabric is evenly taught and flat.



When the backing is on the longarm frame, we can't see what it looks like after the batting and quilt top are laid over it. So any extra fabric in one section of the backing could end up folding over itself and then stitched down that way when the quilt is being quilted.

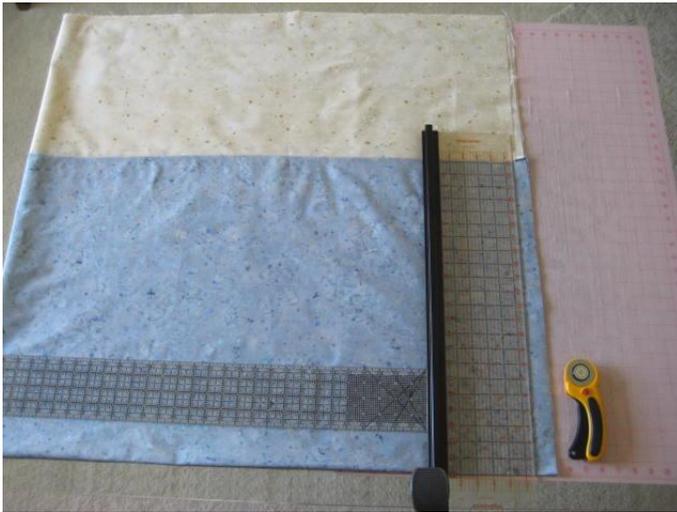
Quilt Panels should also be squared up **before** you add borders to them. If your panel isn't "square" to begin with, it will just get worse when you add the borders.

Here's an example of some backing fabric that has not been squared up:



Here's how to square up your backing fabric or quilt panel:

1. **Iron** the fabric first, to remove any wrinkles and to flatten out any seams.
2. **Fold** the fabric in half (ex. top and bottom ends together). Smooth it out so that it is flat and has no wrinkles.
3. Fold the fabric in half the other way (ex. left and right ends together). Smooth it out again.
4. If your backing is large, continue to fold until it is small enough to fit on your cutting mat, with 2 sides as fold lines and 2 sides with raw edges of the fabric.
5. Don't cut away any fabric from the ends until you are sure that there are no wrinkles in the fabric.
6. Line up your cutting ruler close to the edge that needs to be trimmed. Use another ruler or measuring tape to make sure the cutting ruler's edge is an equal distance from the opposite edge of the fabric, so that you are not cutting at an angle by accident.



7. Check along the expected cutting line to make sure the ruler is positioned so that all 4 layers will be trimmed to the same distance from the fold line on the opposite side of the fabric.

8. **Trim** the edge of the 4 layers of fabric.



9. Re-measure the fabric from left-to-right to make sure the distance from left-to-right along the bottom edge is the same distance as from left-to-right along the top edge.
10. Repeat the above process to trim the other edge, so that you end up with a nice rectangle with four 90 degree angles.
11. After squaring up your fabric, if it's backing fabric, make sure it ends up 6-8 inches larger than the quilt top. If it is shorter than that, you will need to add some fabric to end up with the right length/width.