



## Preparing Your Quilt Top for Longarm Quilting

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- Straight borders cut from the length of the grain (parallel to the selvage) lay much flatter than those cut cross-grained.
- If you are adding borders use the squaring the borders instructions that follow.
- Make sure outside seams are secure. *(You can do this by locking or backstitching all seams that end on the edge. If you have many seams on the edge stay stitch 1/8" around the outside edge of your quilt to help prevent seams from coming unstitched during the quilting process.)*
- Press completed quilt top.
- Backing and batting must be at least 8 to 10 inches longer and wider than the quilt top**, regardless of the size of the quilt. This allows for attaching leaders and clamping to the machine. This process allows your quilt to be placed on the frame and prevents puckers or tucks in the backing.  
*Note: If the quilt back is too small we can add scrap fabric for a fee or you will be asked to take it home and prepare a back that is the required size.*
  - Quilt measurements \_\_\_\_\_ width by \_\_\_\_\_ length
  - Backing measurements \_\_\_\_\_ width by \_\_\_\_\_ length (8-10 inches bigger)
- All selvage edges must be removed. Remove selvage edge because the selvage edge can distort the quilt and cause puckers in the fabric.
- Do not use bed sheets or muslin as backing this is typically a lower quality cotton and can distort your final quilt.
- Square up and press quilt back. See instructions that follow.
- Trim and remove all loose threads.
- Place a safety pin in the top of the quilt for reference purposes. Place a safety pin in the top of the backing especially if it is directional.
- Just Sew Studio has a variety of batting available for your quilting needs.
- All layers must be separate – do not baste or pin tops and backs together. Hang quilt and backing over hanger to prevent wrinkles.

*Note: Be aware that fullness and puckers that have been pieced in cannot be quilted out. Embellishments such as buttons and ribbons should be added after quilting. Avoid handling your quilt by the borders once they have been attached, this can cause them to stretch. Excess stretching is one of the main causes of puckering and may not be able to be quilted out.*

## Squaring the Borders

A square quilt will hang straighter, lie flatter and look better. These instructions assume each individual block was squared before combining into a quilt top. If more than one border is to be added, the steps below must be repeated as each border is added to the quilt top.

1. Measure the width of your quilt top in three places; across the top, across the middle and across the bottom. Add the three width measurements together and divide by 3. This will give you the average width of your quilt top.
2. Measure the length of your quilt top in three places; down the left side, down the middle and down the right side. Add the three length measurements together and divide by 3. This will give you the average length of your quilt top.
3. Use these measurements when calculating the length of the border strips that will be needed for your quilt. Borders on opposite sides of the quilt should be the same length. Again keep in mind that borders cut from the length of the grain (parallel to the selvage) lay much flatter than those cut cross-grained.
4. Attach the borders to your quilt top by marking the center of the border strips and the center of the quilt. Match the center and ends. Pin and sew the borders to the quilt easing in as necessary, then press towards the borders. Repeat for the remaining sides.
5. If another border is to be attached, repeat from step #1 above to determine the new average width and average length of the quilt top which now includes the new border.

## Squaring the Backing

1. The best way to have a square backing is to start with square fabric. If your backing is going to be pieced, square each piece before combining.
2. Remove the selvage edges and press out the fold.
3. Refold the fabric aligning selvage edge to selvage edge.
4. Adjust the corners until the fold of the fabric lies flat or drapes evenly and then pin.
5. Trim the ends parallel and at right angles to the edges.
6. This piece of fabric is now square and can be pieced or used as the quilt backing.

*If you have any questions please contact Just Sew Studio, St. Louis Park, at 952-285-9927.*

*We will be happy to provide a tutorial for your convenience. You have put great effort into your pieced top and these final steps will ensure your quilt will be the best it can be. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to be your quilting partner.*