

Working with Panels

Supplies

As a rule, you will need the minimum amount of yardage, plus one or two panels for each size listed below.

Wall Hanging/ Baby quilt - 2 yards

Throw – 3 -4 yards

Twin – 6-7 yards

Queen – 11-12 yards

Basic quilting supplies.

Questions

Who is this quilt for?

Do you want to make a wallhanging, table runner or a quilt?

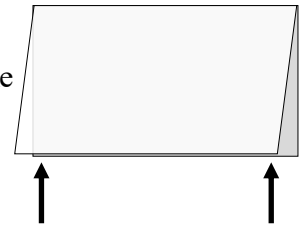
What size?

What type of fabric panel? Project based (books, aprons or dolls)

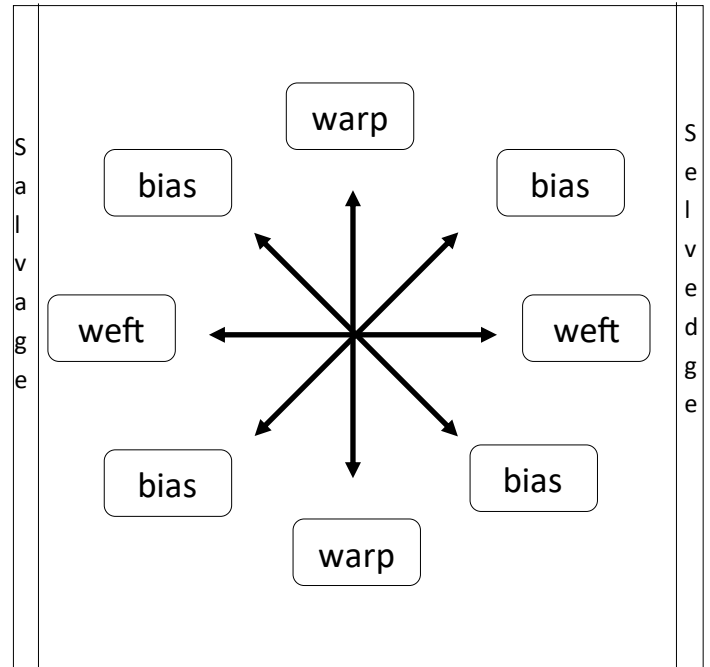
For smaller quilts have at least 3 different fabrics, larger quilts 4-5 different fabrics
Larger quilts you will need to make blocks to make the quilt larger – think about background fabric and purchase a larger quantity or go scrappy with the background and purchase multiple background fabrics.

Squaring up a panel

Iron the panel pressing out the center fold. Refold the panel back in half and align the selvages making sure the center fold is nice and even. Take the two opposite corners from the edges that are shorter, open the panel and give it a little tug.



Adding coping strip



Resources:

Learn to Quilt with Panels by Carolyn Vagts

Panel Play by Barbara Becker

The New Quick & Easy Block Tool C&T Publishing

With all the fabric panels available today, I find I'm frequently designing on the fly. By following a few guidelines you can easily design your own original quilts using panels as a base.

Fabric panels come in all sizes from 9" up to as much as 2 yards. As a general rule the width will always be 44" wide.

Sometimes a panel is one big image, perfect for the center of a quilt. Just add borders, layer, quilt and bind. These are frequently called cheater quilts.

Other times a panel is meant for cutting into smaller squares or rectangles to showcase along with pieced blocks in a quilt.

Sometimes a panel will come with both – a big center image and smaller ones to piece with other fabrics to round out the quilt.

Some fabric lines have both a large and smaller block panel to coordinate.

Besides the obvious appeal of having a large printed image to work with, we'll often choose a fabric panel as a quick way to create a quilt. This is especially true for wall and baby quilts.

But how easy are panels to work with, really?

Panels do present some challenges. A common issue is that generally they're not printed squarely on the fabric. If you've ever run across this you know how challenging that can be.

In quilting grain line or fabric grain is not as important as it is in garment sewing. Panels are another story, since they are typically used whole or as individual blocks.

So what is grain line/fabric grain? Grain line describes the direction the fabric was woven. Panels that are printed off grain or when the actual printing distorts the fabric, grain line can become a quilter's nightmare.

Fabric grain consists of threads running parallel and perpendicular to the selvages. The lengthwise grain or warp threads run parallel to the selvage. Crosswise grain or weft run perpendicular to the selvage.

When a fabric is "on-grain," the lengthwise and crosswise threads are at an exact right angle to each other. Woven fabrics always follow the grain because they are made with the actual warp and weft threads. With woven fabrics, when the grain is off, so is the pattern. With printed fabrics, the design is printed on top of the woven threads. So the grain can be off and the pattern can still look okay.

Bias: While technically not a grain, it's the 45° angle between lengthwise and crosswise grain. Fabric cut on the bias is stretchy, and often used anywhere you need the fabric to "bend" more smoothly around a curve, such as for covering piping, creating bias binding, or in apparel projects where you want a soft, flattering shape.

Sources for free patterns and inspiration:

<https://studiofabrics.net/free-projects/>

<https://www.blankquilting.net/projects/>

<https://www.henryglassfabrics.net/current-projects/>

<https://www.ttfabrics.com>

<https://freespiritfabrics.com/projects/>