

How to Prepare your Charity Quilt Top To Help Our Long-armers

Quilt Top:

1. Press quilt top and remove any loose threads
2. Check all seams for open seams, check that all seams are secure
3. Press seams to one side or open. press seams flat
4. Stay stitch 1/8" around outer edge when there are no borders. This is to help control bias stretching and to keep seams from popping open. Check if the quilt top is square by measuring the length and width at several places. See reverse side for adding borders to decrease wavy borders.

Backing:

1. Backing must be at least 4" larger than top on all four sides- after it (backing) has been squared up.
2. How to square up- Backings must be 8 inches larger than the quilt top AFTER it is squared. If your top measures 70x90 the backing must be 78x98 after squaring. No matter how hard you try, if you cut two lengths of fabric or more to piece a back it WILL need to be squared, even if you "tear on grain" the finished product will not be square. Buy a few more inches to allow for this. Squaring a back is no different than squaring a fat quarter, just larger! Find the center of the back lengthwise, fold in half, then carefully smooth the fabric and fold again as necessary to fit on your cutting table. You will quickly notice that the fabric does not line up when it is smoothed out. Trim these rough edges with a rotary cutter. Repeat this procedure for the other side. Then fold the backing widthwise and repeat the process on each of the width sides. Now press the seams open, trim any loose threads, give it a once over with a good ironing.
3. Seams can be horizontal or vertical (preferably horizontal to avoid buildup in middle of quilt) but the fabric grain should run in the same direction.
4. When piecing backings at the selvages use a 1/2" seam allowance and then trim off selvage. Press seams open.
5. Mark centers of quilt top and back with safety pins at top and bottom. Take care to consider directional fabric.