

Lesson 8 Pattern Layout, Pinning and Cutting

Objectives

This lesson will help you to

- identify the various ways fabric may be folded in preparation for layout, pinning, and cutting.
- correctly lay out a pattern.
- give reasons for various layout, pinning, and cutting procedures.
- interpret layout, pinning, and cutting information found on the pattern instruction sheet.

Words to Know

lengthwise fold	double fold	even plaid
partial fold	repeat	uneven plaid
crosswise fold		

Gathering Information

Following the correct pattern layout will help ensure that your garment is cut out on-grain. Pinning and cutting your garment carefully will avoid wasting fabric. This lesson will provide the information you need to lay out, pin, and cut out your pattern pieces.

You will first need to make sure the cut ends of your fabric are on-grain. If they are off-grain, follow the directions in Lesson 4, “Fabric Preparation,” to straighten the grain before preparing the fabric for pattern layout.

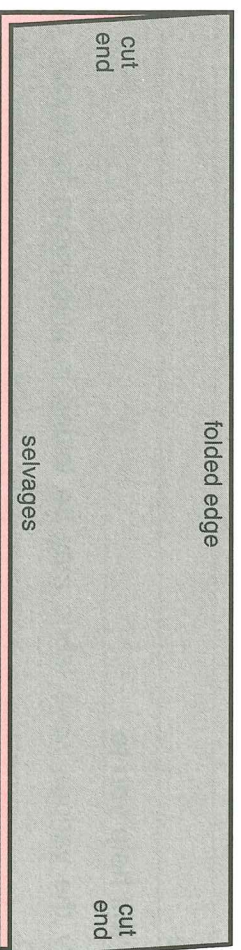
Folding the Fabric

- Fabric can be folded in a variety of ways before pattern pieces are positioned for cutting. The type of fold used depends on
- the number of pattern pieces that must be placed on a folded edge
 - the fold that results in the most economic use of the fabric
 - the width of the fabric
 - the pattern size

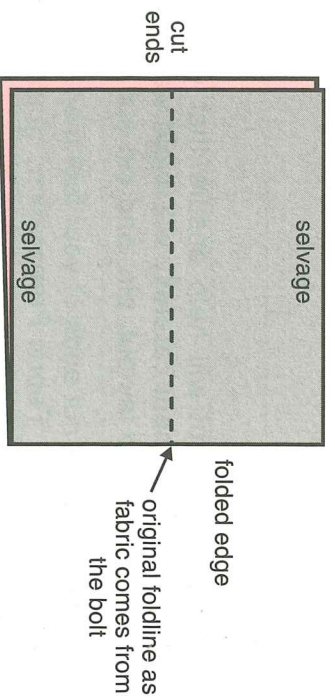
Pattern companies have already taken these factors into consideration for you. Therefore, you should fold your fabric as shown in the diagram found on your pattern instruction sheet.

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Lengthwise fold. Most fabric is folded lengthwise on the bolt. Pattern instructions generally show a **lengthwise fold** with fabric folded in half lengthwise so that selvages match. However, lengthwise folds can also be **partial folds** leaving some of the fabric extended as a single layer.

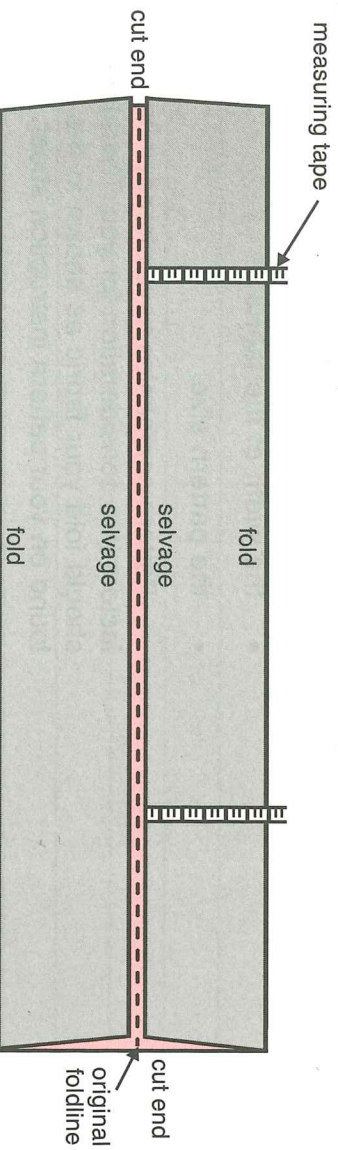


Crosswise fold. For a **crosswise fold**, fabric is usually folded so the cut ends match. However, a crosswise fold can also be a partial fold. A crosswise fold is often used when pattern pieces are too wide to fit on fabric folded lengthwise.



Double fold. When making a **double fold**, be sure the full length of each folded side is the same width. Measure as shown. This will ensure that the folded edges are straight with the grain.

You may use a double fold when you cannot press the original foldline out of the fabric. You may also use it when several pattern pieces are to be cut on a fold.



Folding Knit Fabrics

Try to press out the lengthwise crease on knit fabrics before laying out pattern pieces. Often this crease is permanent in knit fabrics and, if used on the garment, may be unsightly. If you cannot press out the crease, you can avoid using it by folding your fabric with a double fold. Another possibility is to position the crease to work with the pattern design. For instance, place pattern pieces so that the crease will fall down the center of sleeves or pant legs.

Guidelines for Pattern Layout

- Use the following guidelines when laying out your pattern pieces on your fabric.
- Circle the correct layout diagram on your pattern instruction sheet. Choose the correct diagram according to the pattern view, size, and fabric width.
- Make any desired fit or design alterations to your pattern before laying it out. (Refer to Lesson 7, "Pattern Adjustments," for more information on alterations.)
- Lay all pattern pieces on the fabric before pinning any of them in place. This will allow you to make sure that all pieces will fit on the fabric.
- Follow the shading key shown on your instruction sheet. Solidly-shaded areas denote fabric. Unshaded areas denote pattern pieces to be placed with the printed side up. Lines denote pattern pieces to be placed with the printed side down.
- Sometimes a layout diagram will show a pattern piece that is placed halfway off the fabric. This piece will usually be accompanied with an asterisk (*). Find the symbol on your instruction sheet and follow the directions given. This symbol generally means there is not enough room to place the pattern piece on the folded fabric. The instructions will tell you to cut out all other pattern pieces. Then you should open the fabric to accommodate the piece that was placed partially off the fabric.



fabric



pattern, print side up

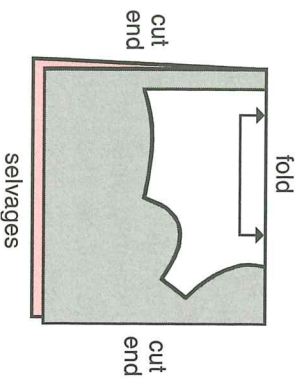


pattern, print side down

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- Sometimes a layout diagram will show two pattern pieces with the same number. This indicates that the pattern piece will have to be cut out twice, such as when you need four cuff pieces. The pattern will only include one pattern piece. Therefore, simply relocate the pattern piece and cut it out a second time.
- Avoid placing pattern pieces on the selvage edges of the fabric. Selvages do not give and can cause seams to pucker. If you must place a piece on the selvage, clip the selvage about every $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to create more give.
- When you are cutting two layers of fabric, the pattern pieces do not have to be placed printed side up. If you are cutting one layer, however, the pattern pieces must be placed printed side up. They must also be placed on the right side of the fabric. Otherwise, you may find that pattern pieces fit the wrong side of your body.
- Be sure to use the “with nap” layout when working with napped fabrics. (Refer to Lesson 2, “The Pattern Envelope,” for more information on napped fabrics.) Also use this layout when working with knits, as most knits tend to have shading in one direction. If this layout is not followed, differences in color may appear on the finished garment. You can also use this layout when working with fabrics that do not have nap. However, “with nap” layouts usually require more yardage.

Placing Pieces on the Fold



Check for pattern pieces that must be placed on the fabric fold. When cutting out these pieces, never cut along the folded edge.

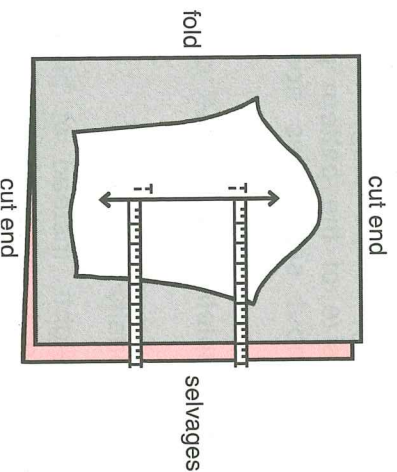
Placing Pieces On-Grain

Accurate measuring will help you make sure your pattern pieces are cut out on-grain. Follow these steps:

1. Place each pattern piece so the grainline arrow runs lengthwise on the fabric. Grainline arrows should run parallel to the selvage edges regardless of the way the fabric has been folded.
2. Pin one end of the grainline arrow to hold it in place.
3. Measure from the pinned end of the arrow to the fabric selvage edge.
4. Now measure from the other end of the grainline arrow to the fabric selvage edge. Make sure it is the same distance from the selvage as the end you have already pinned in place. Adjust the distance if necessary and then pin the arrow in place.
5. Pin the edges of the pattern piece in place.

The lengthwise grain on knits is seen as a rib. Use this rib to place pattern pieces on the straight of grain.

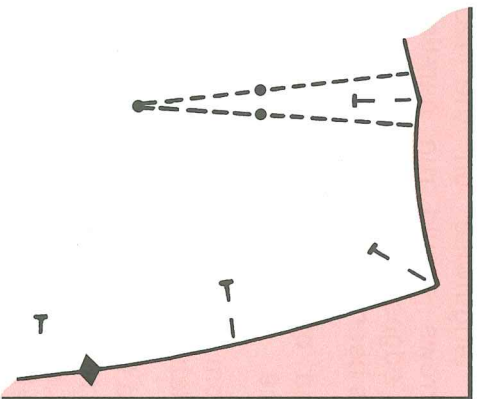
Special techniques are used when placing pattern pieces on off-grain fabrics that cannot be straightened. For solid color fabrics or fabrics with an all-over design, lay the fabric so that the selvages are together. Make sure the lengthwise fold lies smoothly. (You will not be able to line up the cut ends of the fabric.) Then measure from the grainline arrows to the selvages as described above. For off-grain fabrics with a stripe, plaid, or obvious horizontal design, ignore the lengthwise grain. Instead, follow the print as much as possible. Cut the pattern pieces out of a single layer of fabric. Match the design of the second piece with the first.



Pinning Pattern Pieces

Use the following guidelines when pinning your pattern pieces to your fabric:

- Pin with care to prevent inaccurate cutting. A cutting error of $\frac{1}{8}$ inch on each side of a pattern piece can result in a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch difference in the final garment.
- Use only enough pins to hold down the pattern securely. Depending on the fabric and the size of the pattern piece, placing pins about six inches apart is usually enough.
- Place pins completely inside the cutting line.
- Place pins diagonally in corners.
- Use pattern weights instead of pins to hold the pattern in position, if desired. However, be sure to pin grainlines in place first. Position weights, inside the cutting lines, on one pattern piece at a time.



Cutting Out Pattern Pieces

Use the following guidelines, when cutting out pattern pieces:

- Use sharp shears or a rotary cutter to cut out your pattern pieces. Never use pinking shears. Pattern pieces cannot be cut out accurately with pinking shears.
- Do not allow the fabric to hang over the edge of the table when you are cutting. This is especially true when working with knits and other stretchy fabrics. The weight of the fabric hanging over the table edge will pull the fabric and result in inaccurate cutting. Also, be careful to leave the fabric resting on the table as you cut. Lifting the fabric will result in inaccurate cutting.
- Cut notches out away from the seam allowance. Cutting notches into the seam allowance will weaken the seam. This will also prevent you from letting the seam out if a looser fit is needed.

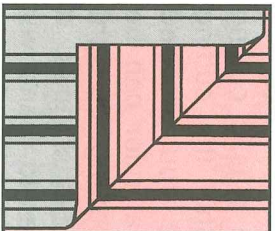
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- When using a rotary cutter, always be sure to place a protective plastic cutting mat beneath the fabric. Shift the cutting mat under your work as you proceed around the pattern. A metal ruler can be used as a guide for cutting straight edges. When cutting complex shapes, a small rotary wheel is easier to maneuver than larger ones. You will not be able to cut out the notches with a rotary cutter. Instead, cut off the notches and mark them using another technique, such as chalk or washable marking pen.
- Before cutting pattern pieces from a multisize pattern, determine which lines you need to follow. To do this, compare your measurements with those on the envelope size chart. Identify which size you should use for different areas of your body. Use a colored pen to trace along the lines you plan to follow before placing the pattern on the fabric. Taper from the cutting line for one size into the cutting line for another size, as needed. You might also wish to cut out the pattern on the desired size lines before placing it on the fabric.

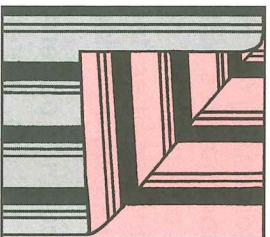
Working with Striped Fabrics

- Keep the following suggestions in mind when working with striped fabrics:
- Stripes should be matched at seamlines to form a continuous line around the body. You may have to purchase extra fabric for matching.
 - Avoid using patterns that are labeled “not suitable for stripes.” Matching stripes on these patterns will be difficult.
 - Interesting patterns may be created with stripes by cutting small pattern pieces on the bias.
 - When using stripes vertically, place the dominant stripe at the center of major garment pieces.
 - Make certain that stripes are on-grain before purchasing the fabric.

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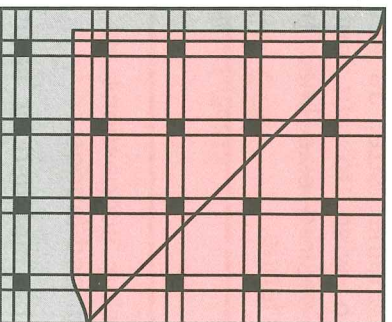
even stripe



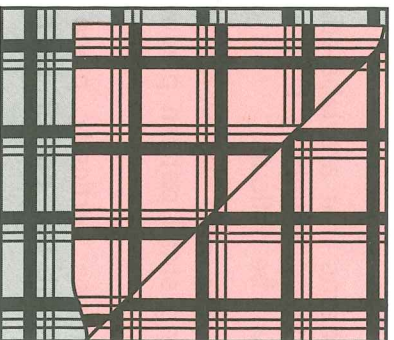
uneven stripe

- You need to determine whether a stripe is even or uneven. To do this, fold the fabric lengthwise along the center of a main stripe. Then fold back one corner. Compare the stripe pattern on the bottom layer of fabric with the stripe pattern on the top layer. If it lines up perfectly, the stripe is *even*. If the stripe patterns do not line up, the stripe is *uneven*.
- When cutting uneven stripes, use a “with nap” layout. Cut each pattern piece from a single layer of fabric. When cutting a pattern piece for the second time, be sure to turn it over. This will give you a left and right garment side. Also, place notches at the same point in the stripe pattern as you placed them for the first cutting.

Working with Plaid Fabrics



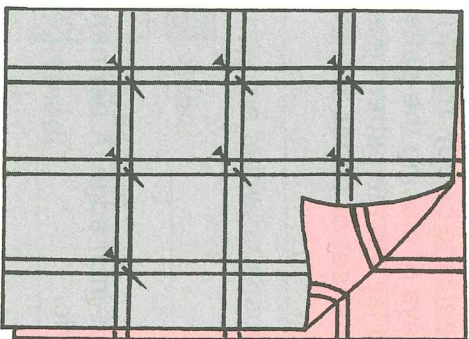
even plaid



uneven plaid

- Keep the following suggestions in mind when working with plaid fabrics:
- You need to determine whether a plaid is even or uneven. To do this, fold the plaid diagonally through the center of a repeat. A *repeat* is one complete, four-sided design in the fabric. An *even plaid* has colored lines and spaces that are the same in both the lengthwise and crosswise directions. An *uneven plaid* has lines and spaces that will not match in either one or both directions.
- Plaids should be matched at seamlines to form a continuous design around the body. To match plaids, pattern pieces need to be aligned on the fabric. The important thing to remember when matching plaids is to match stitching lines rather than cutting lines. Since multisized patterns are printed without the stitching lines, begin by marking stitching lines on your pattern tissue in a few key places. Simply measure in from the cutting line $\frac{5}{8}$ inch and draw a stitching line. Then line up corresponding pieces on the same color bars of the plaid.

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- Some areas of a garment are difficult or impossible to match. For instance, darts, diagonal shoulder seams, side seams above a bust dart. Sleeves cannot be matched at both the front and back armhole. Match the front because that is what people will notice most. Also, try to make fitting adjustments before cutting out the pattern. Adjusting a garment once it has been cut out may mismatch the plaid.
- For even plaids, align the plaid in one layer with the plaid in the other layer of the folded fabric. Do this before laying any pattern pieces in place. To align the plaids, insert a pin in the plaid. Bring the pin through the bottom layer of fabric at the same point in the plaid. Repeat pinning in this manner at intervals that will hold the plaid in position. Leave the pins in place until the pattern pieces have been cut out.
- When cutting uneven plaids, use the same techniques you use to cut uneven stripes.