

cutting tips for GO!™ dies

Did you know that the type of fabric and the way you put fabric on your AccuQuilt GO!™ dies can affect the accuracy of your cut? We all know that “Better Cuts Make Better Quilts®” and a quick lesson in fabric grain will ensure that your cuts and quilts are accurate and easy to assemble.

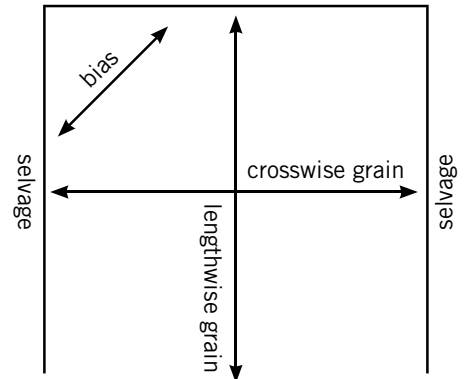
Fabric grain refers to the way threads are woven. Fabrics are woven in two directions. We call these the lengthwise and crosswise grains. Although there's only two directional weaves, we have three grain lines.

The **lengthwise grain** (warp threads) runs parallel to the selvages. It's the strongest grain in your fabric and has very little stretch. This is how your yardage comes off the bolt. Because it is the grain with the least stretch, whenever possible orient your fabric on the lengthwise grain as you place it on your GO! die to achieve the most accurate cuts.

The **crosswise grain** (weft threads) runs at a right angle to the selvages. It has more stretch than the lengthwise grain.

The **bias grain** runs on a 45-degree angle to the selvages. It has the most stretch, so it distorts easily. You must be extremely careful when handling the bias.

The lengthwise grain is also referred to as the Straight Grain or Straight of Grain.



Grain of Fabric

Tips you need to know:

- All fabrics have residual shrinkage.
- Lengthwise grain has minimal stretch compared to crosswise grain. For best cutting results, fabric should be laid on your dies on the lengthwise grain.
- Cutting on the bias grain will distort your cuts. Although perfect for making bias tape and selected bindings (like scalloped edges), it is best to avoid cutting on the bias as much as possible.
- Always test cut your fabric first. If you're cutting many layers, be sure to test cut each number of layers to ensure the integrity of the cuts are maintained before cutting entire quilts or many pieces.
- When cutting on the lengthwise grain, you may still experience some shrinkage or stretch because of the characteristic of the fabric. If you are still experiencing cutting inconsistencies, we recommend trying the following tip:

Sandwich a piece of clean white paper on top of the fabric but before the cutting mat and roll the die through the cutter. See photo at right. (Don't worry! It's perfectly fine to cut some paper with your GO! fabric cutter.) Keep in mind, if you will be cutting many layers, you may have to adjust the number of layers again to ensure accuracy of all layers. Again, always run test cuts prior to cutting an entire quilt.

tipbit:

If using scraps or if the selvage has been removed, here's a quick tip to identify the grain line. Grasp the fabric along one grain with both hands and give it a couple of sharp tugs and listen to the sound it makes. Then grasp along the other grain and tug again. The snapping sound made by the lengthwise grain will be slightly higher pitched than the crosswise grain sound. **Try it! It works!**

