

PIECING A "CROSS BACK" FOR YOUR QUILT

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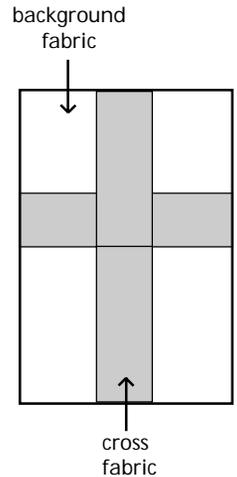
The idea for piecing a cross in a quilt backing came about as a practical solution to a familiar problem: I had only 2 yards of fabric which I wanted to use on the back of a 50" x 80" quilt. Obviously, I had to find a second fabric and do some piecing. In a wave of inspiration, I realized that adding wide contrasting strips both horizontally and vertically would not only make my backing large enough, but these strips could be arranged to form a cross! I love the idea of a silent testimony to my Christian faith on the back of my quilts.

***For quilts up to about 50" x 80"**

Measure both the background and cross fabrics to get the usable width (minus the selvages). Subtract the smaller of the two measurements from the measured width of your quilt top. Add 3-1/2". Cut three strips this wide from the cross fabric (selvage to selvage).

Example:

$$\begin{array}{r}
 50'' \quad \text{width of quilt top} \\
 - 42'' \quad \text{usable fabric width} \\
 \hline
 8'' \\
 + 3.5'' \\
 \hline
 11.5'' \quad \text{Cut 3 strips this width from} \\
 \quad \quad \quad \text{cross fabric}
 \end{array}$$



Next, measure the length of the quilt top. Subtract the width of the cross strips. Add 3-1/2". This is how long a piece of background fabric you will need.

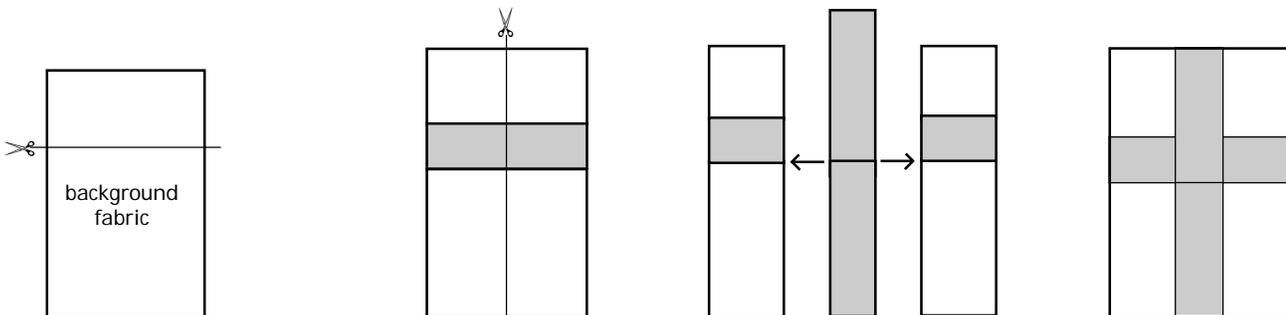
Example:

$$\begin{array}{r}
 80'' \\
 - 11.5'' \quad \text{width of cross strips} \\
 \hline
 68.5'' \\
 + 3.5'' \\
 \hline
 72'' \quad \text{length of background fabric}
 \end{array}$$

Cut the background fabric across the width into 2 sections. You can "eyeball" this so roughly 1/3 of the fabric is above the cross arms and 2/3 is below. For longer quilts (70-80"), use one of the cross strips to measure up from the bottom and cut the bottom section to that size.

USE 3/8" SEAMS! I know you're all used to sewing a perfect quarter-inch, but on tied quilts, these seams will get more stress, and they have a tendency to pull out. Sew one of the cross strips between the two background sections. Cut in half vertically.

Sew the other two cross strips end to end (after removing selvages). Sew this long strip in the center, lining up the seam with the lower seam in the two side pieces.



* For larger quilts, you will need to use 2 lengths of background fabric (one for each side), and additional strips pieced together to form the cross.