

# How To Determine The Grain Of The Fabric

**By Laurie Pessetto**

One thing you must determine to successfully sew is the grain of the fabric. There are at least three methods to determine this.

You can measure from the selvage edge if it looks straight and not deformed. The selvage edge is the self-finished edge of a piece of fabric where the longitudinal warp threads are secured by the perpendicular weft threads looping back at the end of each row. This edge will typically not fray, and may not have the same appearance as the fabric body.



Fold the pattern over on the grain line guide on the pattern. Use a ruler and line up the fold evenly with the selvage edge of the fabric in two or three places.

The second technique is ideal when the fabric has a visible weave. Bright light makes the grain easier to see.



If the weave of the fabric is visible, place a ruler on the edge of the fabric.



Rotate the ruler until the threads are parallel to it.



You also can align the folded grain line guide on the pattern with the weave.

The third method damages the fabric so you have to have an area where this can be done that will not be needed for the project. It is, however, extremely accurate.



Pull out one or more threads at the edge. Be careful not to go too far in from the edge. The open line left in the fabric by the lost thread exposes the grain.



If there is an interior area that is not needed, you also can pull a few threads from there. Many fabrics are not woven true, so take a look at the edges and the drape to get an idea if your fabric is high enough quality for your project.