

How to Quickly and Easily Cut Large Fabric Panels

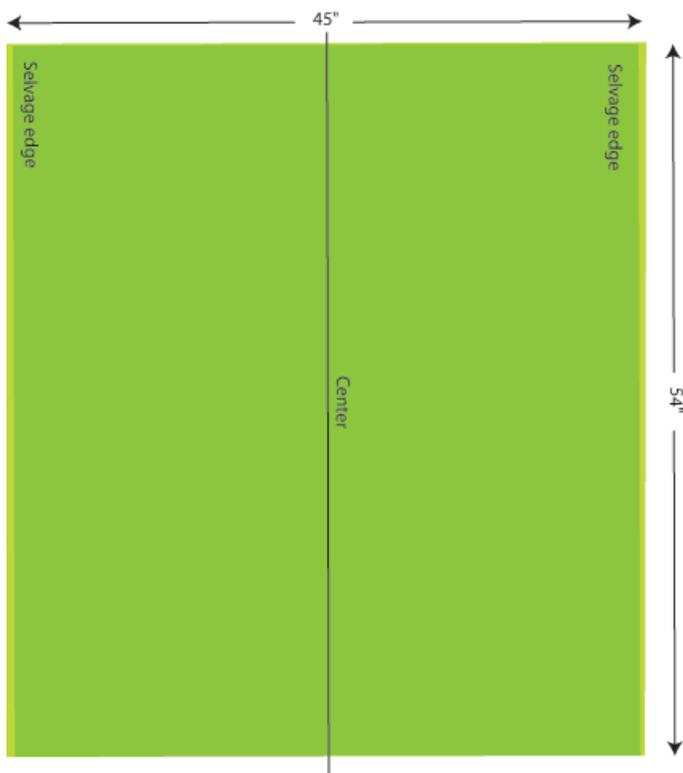
Editor: Liz Johnson

Tuesday, 09 October 2018 1:00

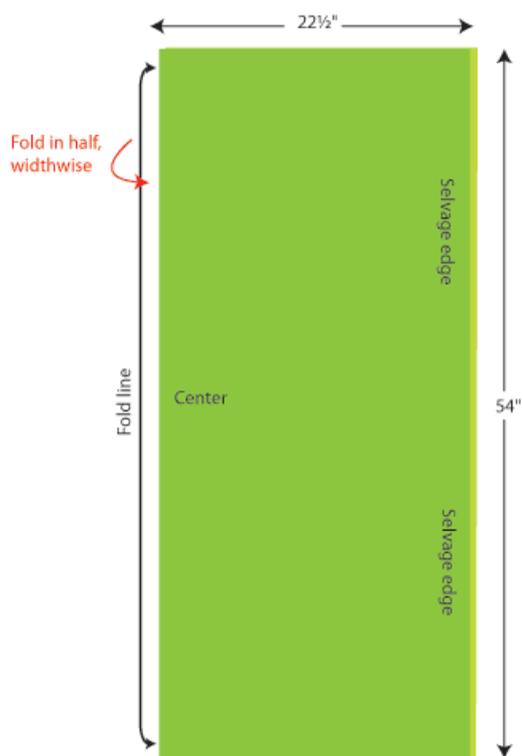


There are a lot of home décor projects that require cutting large panels of fabrics, such as curtains, throws, and tablecloths. When you're short on space, this can be a bit of a challenge. So here's a little folding-and-cutting trick to make it easier, faster, more compact ... and actually, more precise. Remember making paper snowflakes as a kid? You fold, fold, fold, and then cut, cut, cut. Same basic concept, but without the swiss cheese effect. Grab your rotary cutter and mat and let's slice!

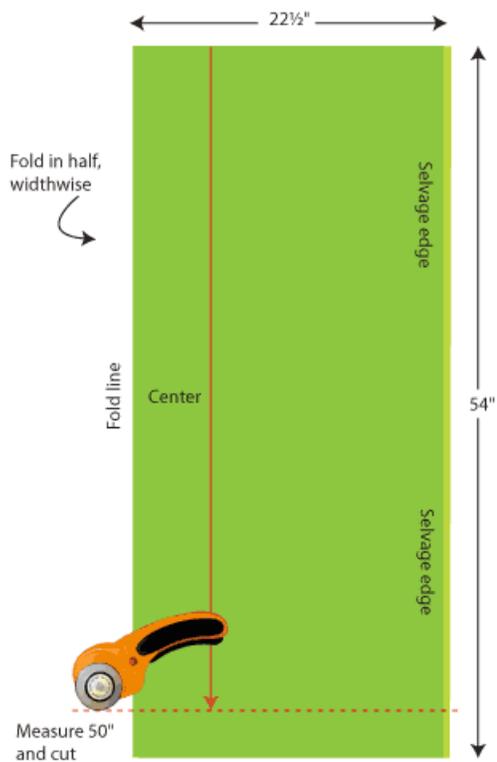
For these instructions, we're going to pretend we need one finished panel 50" long x 40" wide. We've purchased 1½ yards of 45" wide fabric, which translates to 54" x 45".



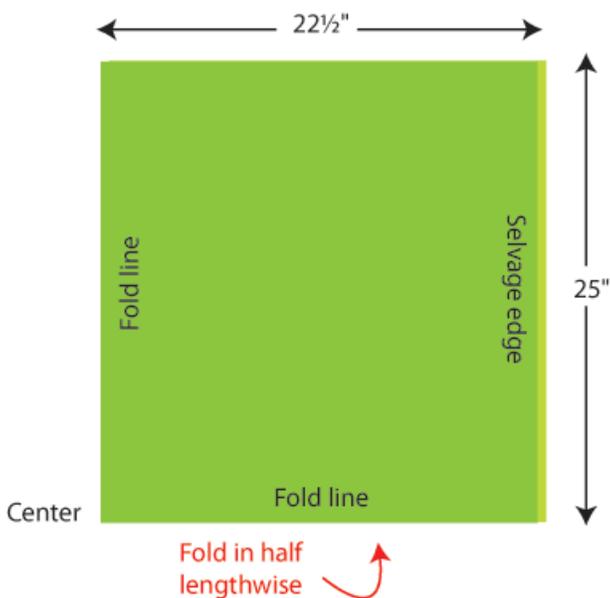
Fold the fabric in half widthwise, selvages together. So the folded piece now measures 22½" x 54".



Measure and cut 50" in length. You could either measure down 50" from the top or up 4" from the bottom. Place your ruler and cut through both layers with your rotary cutter.



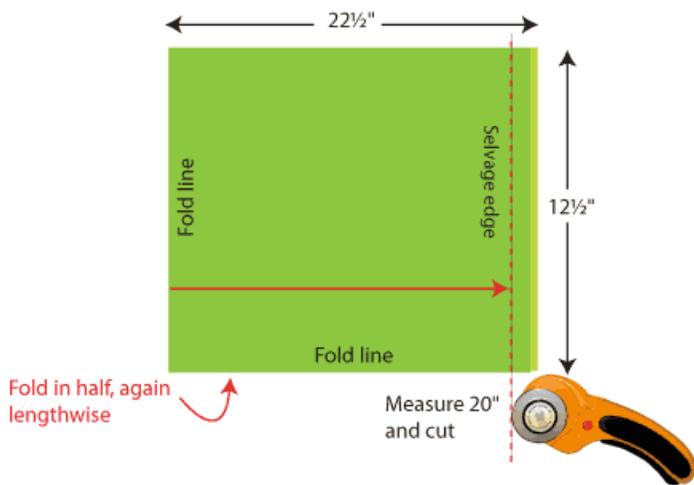
Pick up your folded and cut piece, and fold it in half again – this time lengthwise so it is now 22½" x 25".



And, then in half one more time, in the same direction, so it is now 22½" x 12½". It's almost like you're folding a bed sheet to put it neatly away in your linen closet – in half and then in half again. Be precise about your folds.

Lay your neatly folded fabric piece back down on your cutting surface. As you remember from above, the finished width we originally needed was 40". However, because we already folded the fabric in half and that fold is still there, we actually need to measure *half* that amount, or 20".

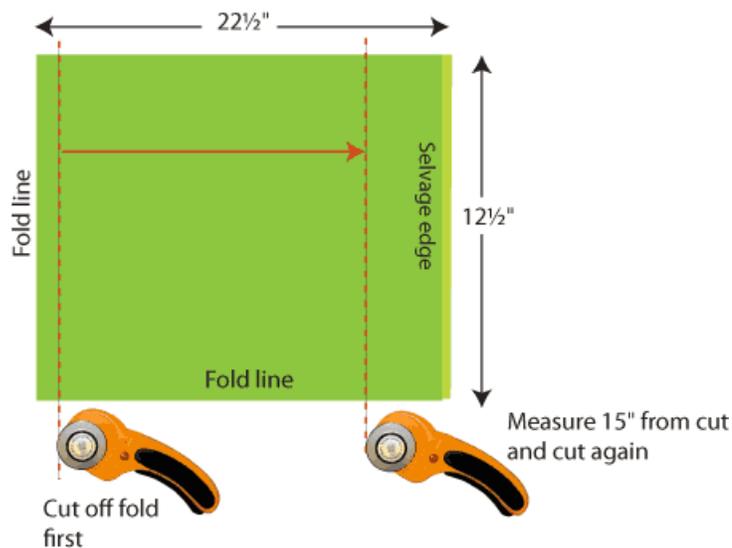
Measure 20" over from the original folded edge, mark a straight vertical line, place your ruler and cut.



Unfold it all, and you have a 50" x 40" panel.

Now ... to push your ability to imagine to the next level, let's say the desired finished result is TWO panels 50" x 15".

Follow all the steps above until you get to the final cut. At this point, slice off the fold first. Just slice off a small amount, like 1/2" to an 1". Then, measure from that cut line 15" over, and make a second slice. Voilà, two pieces 50" x 15"!



Sewing Tips & Tricks

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