

## Tips for Choosing and Using the Right Ruler

By: Ashley Hough

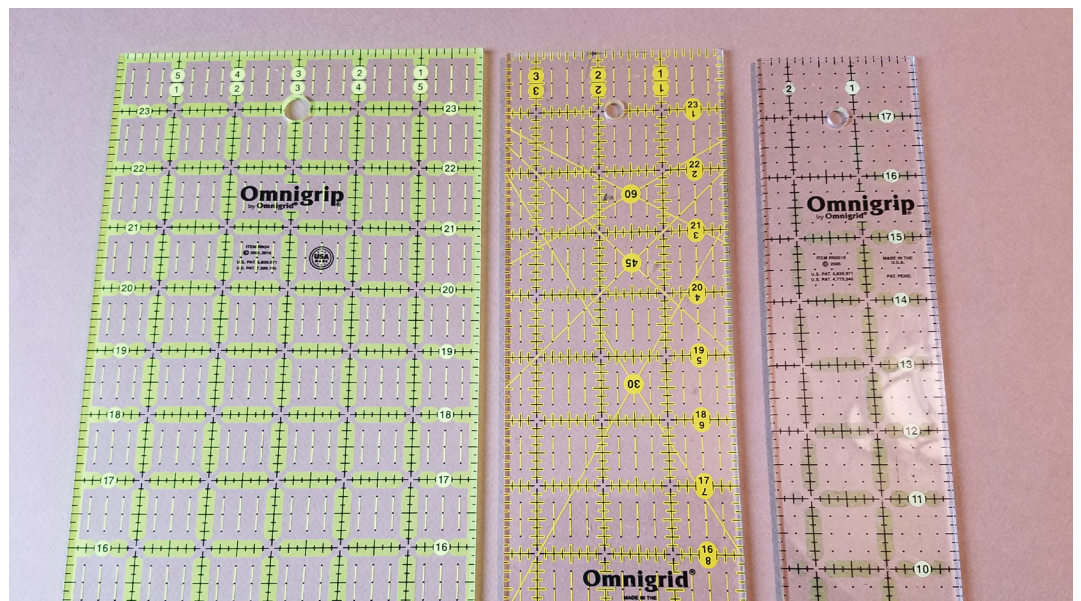
Using a quilting ruler with the proper length, width and other attributes can make cutting fabric and squaring up blocks quicker, easier and safer.

## Ruler Length

Having a ruler that is long enough for your desired cut is important when it comes to getting a straight and accurate cut. A 12" to 18" ruler is good for easily maneuvering around a cutting mat and cutting most fabric pieces and blocks, however if cutting squares in half diagonally, for example when cutting a corner triangle for an on-point layout, a longer ruler, up to a 24" ruler may be required. It is important to ensure that you have a long enough ruler to make your cut all at once, as moving the ruler while cutting can cause uneven edges, lines that aren't straight and can lead to possible finger injuries. A longer ruler, like a 24" ruler is also perfect for squaring up fabric or cutting strips that are the width of fabric folded in half.

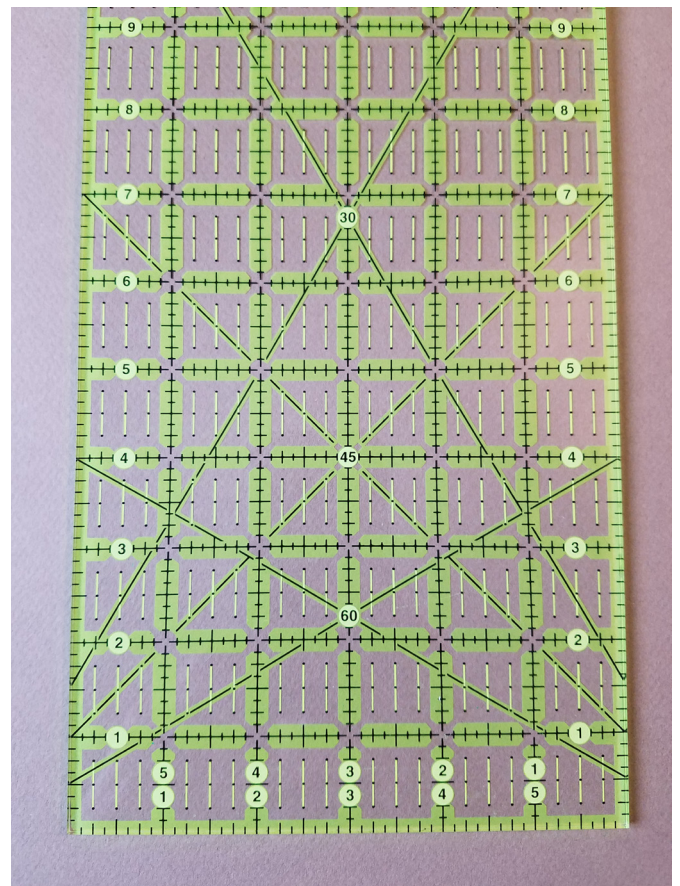
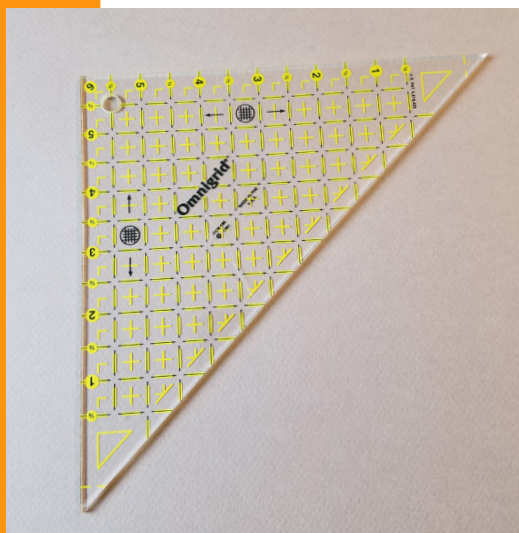
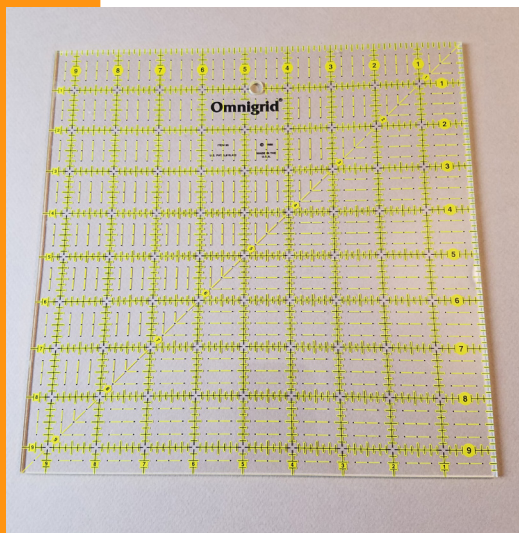
## Ruler Width

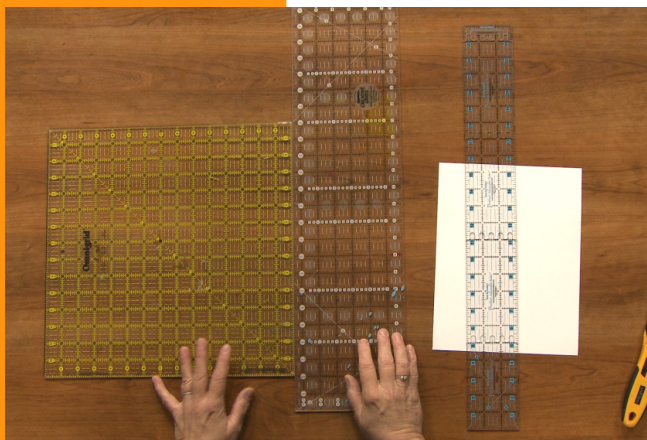
If you are new to rotary cutting and using a ruler, starting with a wider ruler can help with accuracy and safety. A wider ruler, such as a 6 1/2" ruler allows for more space to be able to hold the ruler with your fingers farther away from the edge. Wider rulers also allow you to make more cuts using the gridlines on the ruler to line up the fabric as opposed to having to use the gridlines on the cutting mat.



## Ruler Shape

Having the correct ruler shape can make cutting fabric and squaring up blocks quick and easy. A long, straight ruler is best used for cutting strips or medium to large rectangles. A square ruler is best for cutting squares and squaring up blocks as well as making diagonal or angled cuts as they generally have 30, 45 and 60-degree lines on them. Triangle rulers are perfect for cutting triangles, however they can also be used to make small straight cuts as well as used for other shapes like half hexagons.





### Ruler Grip

If a ruler slips on the fabric while you are cutting, it can lead to finger injuries and ruined fabric pieces. Having a ruler that has something on the wrong side of it to grip the fabric can help hold it in place. Some rulers are made with gridlines that are made from non-slip material, making it so the entire wrong side of the ruler grips the fabric.

If your ruler does not have non-slip material built in you can add small non-slip pieces to the wrong side of your ruler to help it stay in place. Adding a handle to your ruler can also help keep it from slipping and make it easier to hold. Small handles that attach to rulers with suction cups can help you apply more pressure to the ruler to hold it in place while keeping your fingers safely out of the way.

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