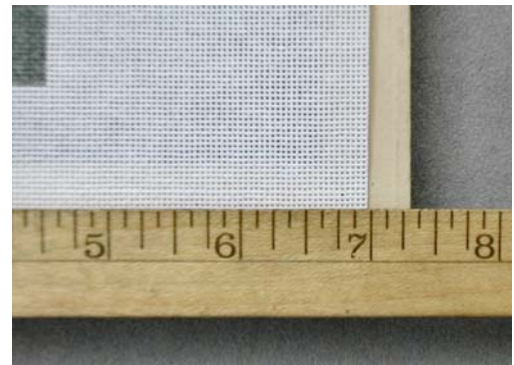


# Mounting A Warped Canvas

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If you have a canvas that is off grain, you can get it back on grain by steaming it onto a set of rigid stretcher bars to prior to stitching. The process takes only a few minutes, giving you a working canvas that is taut, firmly mounted and true to grain.

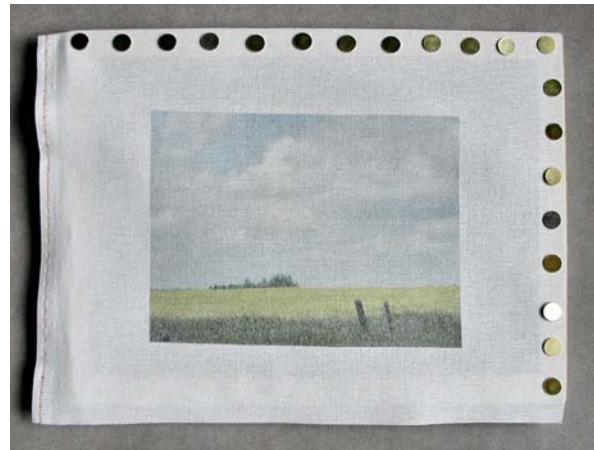
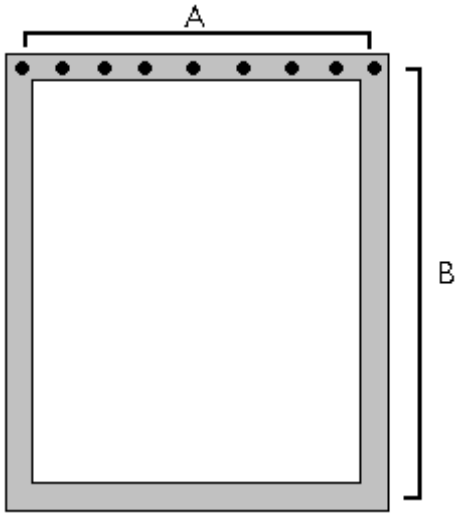


To determine if the canvas is off grain, place two sides of the canvas flush with two sides of the stretcher bars. Be sure that the stretcher bars are at true 90° angles. If the canvas is on grain, it should lay evenly against the edges of the stretcher bars. If however, the canvas is off grain, it will not follow the straight edges of the stretcher bars, as shown in this image. The canvas can be off grain by varying amounts ranging from a slight 1/4" off grain to 1" or more. In the illustration above, the canvas is almost 1/2" off grain.

If you find that the canvas is indeed off grain, you can realign the threads by following a few simple steps. Before you begin it is helpful to cut the canvas 1/2" larger in the horizontal and vertical dimensions. For example, an 8" x 10" piece of canvas should be cut approximately 8 1/2" x 10 1/2". Having the extra canvas margin extending over **two** edges of the stretch bars gives you something to grip, allowing you to stretch and mount the canvas more firmly than cutting the canvas to the exact size of the stretch bars.

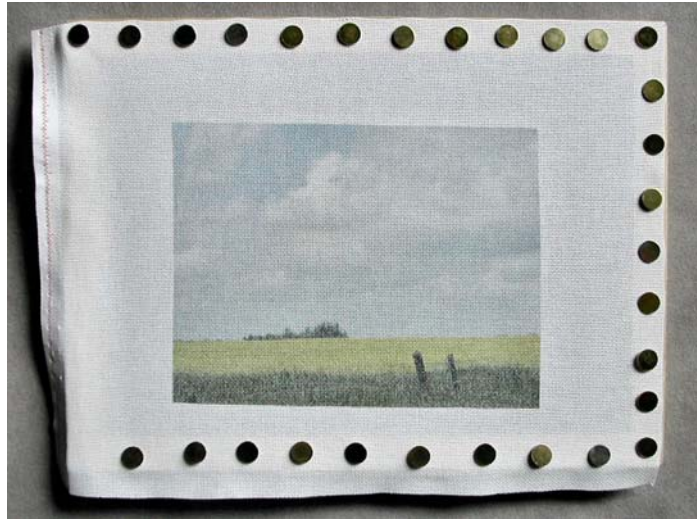
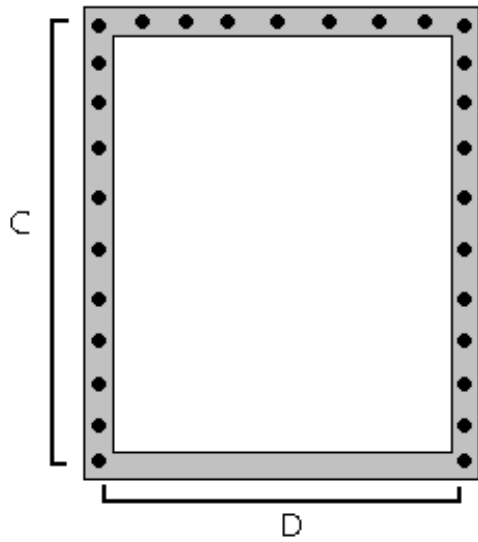
Begin by aligning the top edge of the canvas along the outside edge of the stretcher bars (A), as shown in the images below. Tack at one corner, then stretch slightly and tack at the opposite corner, aligning a canvas thread along the inside edge of the stretcher bar. Place a tack in the center of the canvas. Next, work outwards from the center to the corners, placing a tack every ½”.

When the top edge has been secured, repeat with side B.



After two sides have been securely attached to the stretcher bars, you may see an obvious bubble or warp running on a diagonal from the top left corner to the lower right corner. Steam the canvas to soften the bubble, steaming just enough to make the canvas slightly clammy, but not wet. If you are not familiar with steaming, refer to the article on Steam Blocking.

Once the bubble begins to soften, immediately start tacking the **long** side of the canvas (C). Turn the canvas so that the edge to be stretched is horizontal to you, pulling the canvas away from you as you work, placing the tacks ½” apart. Begin at the top edge and work towards the bottom, once again aligning a canvas thread along the inside edge of the stretcher bar.



If the canvas has dried or feels stiff, steam slightly before tacking the remaining side D. Once the canvas has been securely mounted on the stretcher bars and the grain realigned, lightly steam and allow to dry thoroughly before stitching.

