

How to STRETCH CHAIN LINK FENCE with a Bias Cut



When woven, chain link fence fabric is 'square,' meaning the sides are perpendicular to each other. When unrolled and laid out, it makes a rectangle. This works perfectly on a flat surface, but every fence contractor knows that ground terrain is very rarely flat, level or even straight, regardless of where you are working. This can lead to problems when setting chain link fence posts, framing top rail, and stretching chain link fence mesh. It takes experience and skill to raise and lower posts to

accommodate grade changes, however sharp slopes of terrain will leave the top, or bottom of the fence loose. To accommodate sharp slopes, the chain link fence fabric can be bias cut to shorten either the top or bottom of the fabric in width, allowing it to be stretched tightly.

Chad Hoover at Hoover Fence Company offers some guidance in the bias-cut technique. "The first – and most important – step is laying out the chain link fence fabric across top rail of fence. This is the constant for a good looking chain link fence installation. Side ends and even the bottom can always be cut to fit, however, the top rail is one of the most noticeable areas which will show a poor fit chain link fence."

He says after lining up the chain link fence fabric to the top rail, tie it off to hold in place. Then estimate how many links or chain link pickets that may need to be cut. "Removing two or three pickets in even increments, essentially 'stair-steps' down the length of the fence, is common," explains Hoover. "Cutting out more chain link pickets than this is a significant bias cut."

Once cut, he says you may find bending the remaining fence link slightly to help hold in place helpful. Next, slide a 3/16" x 5/8" (or 3/4") tension bar in at angle. "Take care to force the tension bar at an appropriate angle and catch each transition point in the fence," cautions Hoover. "You may find the tension bar to come up short, and you'll need a longer length to cover the angle versus a straight run. Use a longer one or cut two to overlap if necessary. Tension bars for chain link fence can be overlapped to make longer without causing any problems."

Lastly, Hoover says to connect the chain link fabric and tension bar to the fence terminal post with 5/16" x 1-1/4" galvanized carriage bolts and nuts, along with appropriate-sized chain link fence post fittings. Use aluminum or galvanized steel chain link tie wires to secure the chain link fence to frame.

Some stretches of chain link fence fabric will have a bias cut on one end only. More rarely, but possible, are stretches of chain link fence that require a bias cut on both ends. These are often shorter stretches where the tightness or looseness won't be spread out over a longer stretch of fence. Hoover says to repeat the steps on the other end if necessary, until all slack is removed.

Hoover Fence Company is a family owned and operated business based in Ohio, serving customers across the United States. Learn more about Hoover Fence Company at www.hooverfence.com.

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