

SO SIMPLE PILLOWCASES

CONTENTS

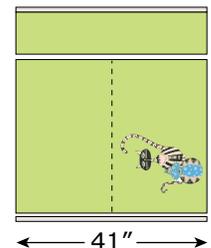
- ❖ Patterns for pillowcases with one, two or three fabrics, sewn with regular or french seams
- ❖ Directions for standard, queen and king size cases
- ❖ Directions for using directional or non-directional fabrics



FABRIC REQUIREMENTS *

Number of Fabrics	Standard 20" x 30"	Queen 20" x 34"	King 20" x 40"
1 	body: 1 yd	body: 1 1/8 yd	body: 1 1/4 yd
2 	body: 7/8 yd band: 1/3 yd (=12")	body: 1 yd band: 1/3 yd (=12")	body: 1 1/4 yd band: 1/3 yd (=12")
3 	body: 7/8 yd band: 1/3 yd (=12") accent: 1 1/2" strip	body: 1 yd band: 1/3 yd (=12") accent: 1 1/2" strip	body: 1 1/4 yd band: 1/3 yd (=12") accent: 1 1/2" strip

* The table assumes that your fabrics are non-directional. If they *are* directional, with the motifs running parallel to the selvage (like the cat fabric in the sample pillowcase), you'll need 1 1/4 yards for the pillowcase body, regardless of the size.



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WHAT THEY ALL HAVE IN COMMON

This pattern has directions for three different size pillowcases, with or without directional fabrics, with various types of seams, and different numbers of fabrics. Despite that, they're all pretty similar...

PREWASH

I strongly suggest that you prewash your fabrics and dry on high heat. Cotton shrinks, and you don't want it to shrink *after* your pillowcase is made.

THE BODY

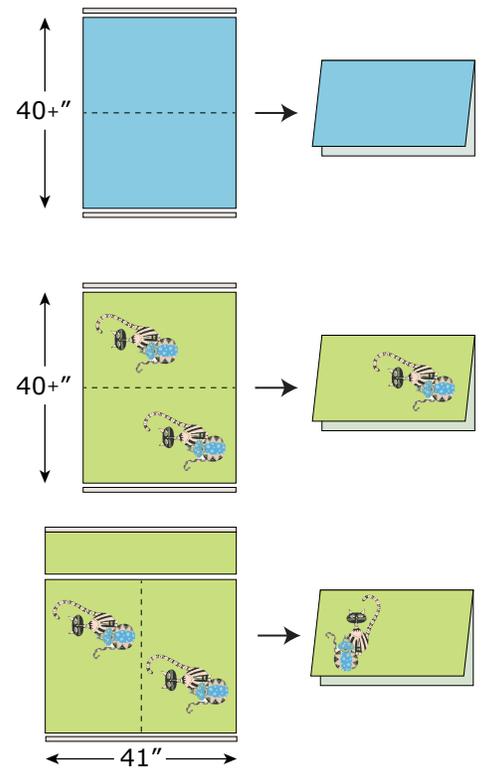
Whether you make a standard, queen or king size pillowcase, the width is about 20" while the length varies. That means that all of the pillowcases need a piece of fabric about 41" wide, which gets folded in half. Since most quilting fabrics are 40-43" selvage to selvage, that works out well.

Directional Fabrics

Some fabrics have motifs with a definite up-down orientation. In most cases, those motifs run parallel to the selvage, which can be a problem. If you cut and fold the fabric the usual way, the motifs will end up lying on their side.

If you want them right side up, you'll need to cut the fabric differently. You'll also need to start with $1\frac{1}{4}$ yards, in order to cut a piece 41" long.

The directions on the next pages give directions for cutting both directional and non-directional fabrics, for each pillowcase size.



THE SEAMS

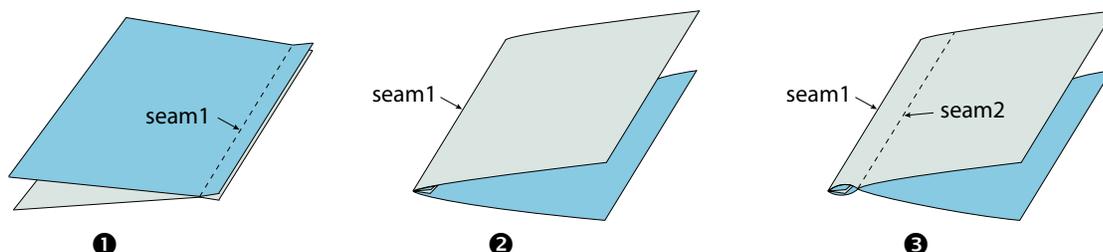
You'll need to sew two seams to make the pillowcase, and there are three possibilities. With a sewing machine, you can make a standard or french seam. Or, you can use a serger, which is how most commercial pillowcases are done.

What is a french seam, and why do I care?

If you've ever made a hem, where the edge of the fabric is folded and then folded again, to put the raw edge inside, you have the idea behind a french seam. Essentially, the seam is sewn twice, in a way that encloses the raw edges. For a pillowcase, which is likely to see heavy use and lots of washing, it has obvious advantages.

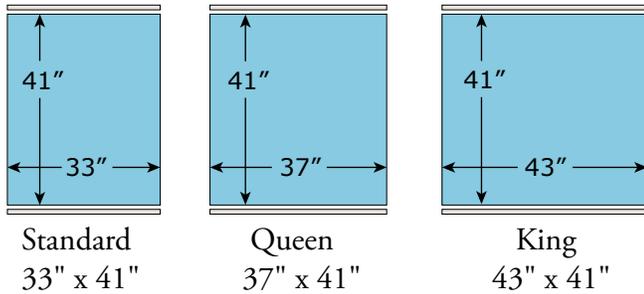
Making a French Seam

1. Put the fabrics *wrong* sides together and sew a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam.
2. Turn the fabrics, putting the right sides together with the seam at the fold. If necessary, use something to push the seam out straight—a cuticle stick, crochet hook, knitting needle, or butter knife works well. Press.
3. Sew a second seam, a bit larger this time—the idea is to enclose the raw edges. (Alternately, you could trim the first seam to $\frac{1}{8}$ " and then sew another $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam.) When you turn the fabrics again, so the right sides are on the outside, the inside seam will have no raw edges that could fray.



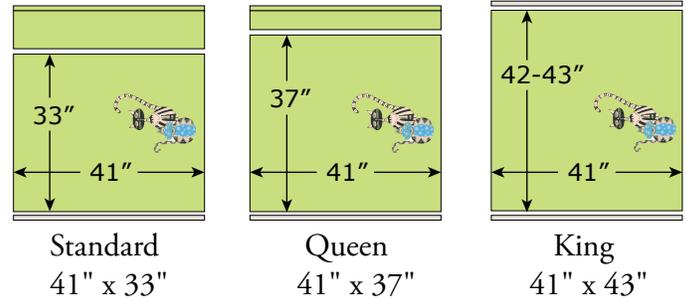
PILLOWCASE 1: A SINGLE FABRIC

Non-directional fabrics



1. Cut the length needed for your pillowcase size.
2. Cut off the selvages, leaving 41". If you have slightly less than 41" that's OK.

Directional fabrics (motifs parallel to selvage)

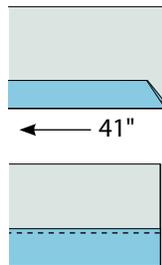


1. Cut a piece 41" long.
2. Cut off the selvages, plus enough fabric to leave the required width for your pillowcase size. If you're making a king size, and your fabric is less than 42" wide, use two fabrics as shown on the next page.

All three sizes are made the same way.

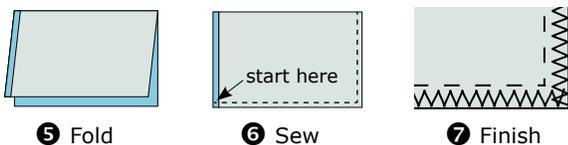
To Start (all options):

3. Fold up 1" of fabric along the 41" side. Press. Fold again, and press.
4. Topstitch along the edge with a matching thread.



Option 1: Standard seam

5. Fold the fabric in half, right sides together.
6. Sew a 1/4" inch seam on two sides, leaving the side with the hem open.
7. Sew a zig-zag stitch around the edges to prevent fraying.



Option 2: Serged seam

5. Fold the fabric in half, right sides together.
6. Serge two sides, leaving the side with the hem open.
7. Bury the ending tail, or stitch over the end to secure the threads and then cut. A dangling tail is an invitation for someone who doesn't understand sergers to cut it, and unravel the pillowcase...

Option 3: French seam

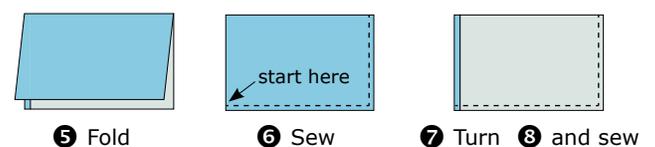
5. Fold the fabric in half, *wrong* sides together.
6. Sew a 1/4" seam on two sides, leaving the side with the hem open. Clip the corners to reduce the bulk.
7. Turn the pillowcase inside out, right sides together. Press the seams.

Note: This step is a bit harder than it seems.

You need to do a good job of pushing the seam out, so it lies flat, with the thread at the outside edge. If you don't, the second seam won't enclose it properly. I turn the pillowcase, then run a cuticle stick or butter knife on the inside to push on the seam, following it with an iron. Other options might be a crochet hook, knitting needle, etc. Use something that won't melt if hit by the iron.

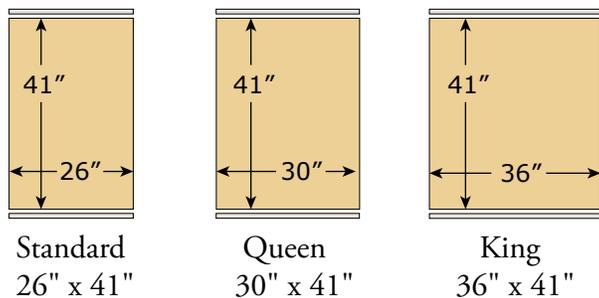
8. Resew the same two sides, but make the seam larger, to enclose the original seam inside.

Tip: I do this by moving the needle position between seams. On my Janome, I sew the first seam at a position of 4.5, and the second at 3. This barely encloses the first seam—you might prefer making the second seam a bit larger.



PILLOWCASE 2: TWO FABRICS

Non-directional fabrics



1. Cut the length needed for your pillowcase size.
2. Cut off the selvages, leaving 41". If you have slightly less than 41" that's OK.

Cut Band (all sizes)

3. From a coordinating fabric, cut a piece 10" x 41".

All three sizes are made the same way.

4. Put the band fabric on a table, right side up. Put the body fabric on top, right side down.



more fabric hanging off table →

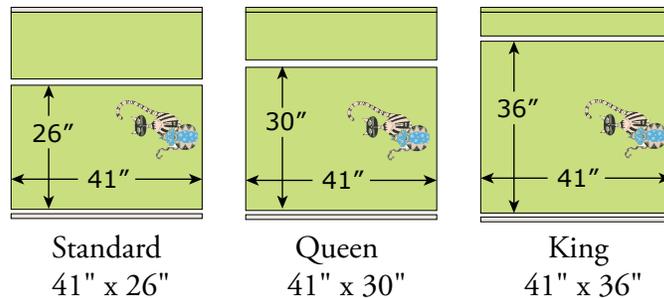
5. Fold the top fabric up, to about 3-4" below the top edge.



6. Roll up the remaining fabric, until the bottom of the roll reaches approximately the center of the band.



Directional fabrics (motifs parallel to seluage)



1. Cut a piece 41" long.
2. Cut off the selvages, plus enough fabric to leave the required width for your pillowcase size.

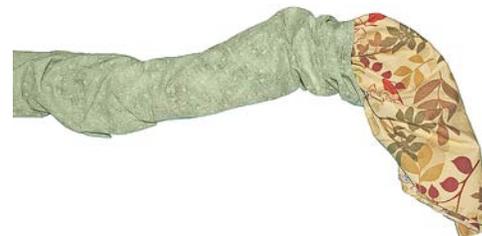
Cut Band (all sizes)

3. From a coordinating fabric, cut a piece 10" x 41".

7. Fold the bottom of the band over to meet the top, forming a tube. Pin, making sure that all the edges are lined up, and then sew them together.



8. Reach into the tube and turn it inside out. This is similar to turning a sleeve though somewhat harder to manage.



9. Press, moving the iron from the body into the band, being sure not to leave any pleats. Press the seams on both sides first, and then the top.



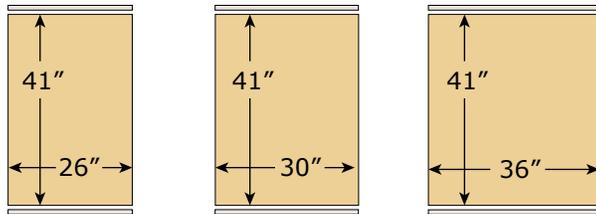
Sew the pillowcase together using one of the options described on page 3, starting at step 5.

PILLOWCASE 3: THREE FABRICS

There are two ways to add an accent stripe: (1) sew in a narrow strip, or (2) create a flange.

Both methods are shown. However... I personally dislike the flange because I tend to sleep with one hand under the pillow, and the flange is annoying. This may or may not be a concern for you.

Non-directional fabrics



Standard
26" x 41"

Queen
30" x 41"

King
36" x 41"

1. Cut the length needed for your pillowcase size.
2. Cut off the selvages, leaving 41". If you have slightly less than 41" that's OK.

Cut Band (all sizes)

3. From a coordinating fabric, cut a piece 10" x 41".

All three sizes are made the same way.

Option 1: Sewn-In Accent

4. Cut a 1¼" x 41" strip from the accent fabric. This makes a ¾" wide stripe in the finished pillowcase.

5. Sew the accent strip to the band with a ¼" seam. Press the seam open.

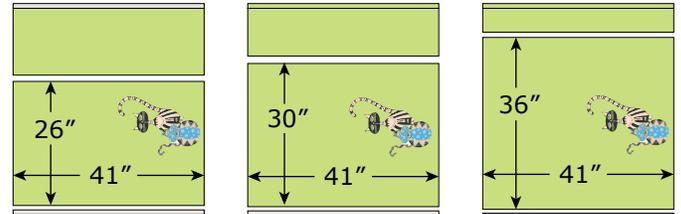


6. Put the band on a table, right side up, with the accent strip at the top. Put the body fabric on top, right side down.



From here, the steps are the same as for the two fabric pillowcase. Continue on page 4, step 5.

Directional fabrics (motifs parallel to selvage)



Standard
41" x 26"

Queen
41" x 30"

King
41" x 36"

1. Cut a piece 41" long.
2. Cut off the selvages, plus enough fabric to leave the required width for your pillowcase size.

Cut Band (all sizes)

3. From a coordinating fabric, cut a piece 10" x 41".

Option 2: Flange

4. Cut a 1½" x 41" strip from the accent fabric. Fold it in half lengthwise, wrong sides together, to make a ¾" x 41" strip. Press.

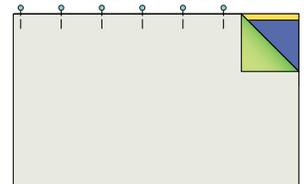


5. Put the band on a table, right side up. Put the accent strip on top of it, with the open end at the edge of the band.



6. Put the body fabric on top, right side down. Pin the layers together, making sure the pins catch the flange strip—it's really hard to keep all four edges lined up otherwise.

Note: When you get to step 7 on page 4, remove one pin at a time and repin through all the layers.



From here, the steps are the same as for the two fabric pillowcase. Continue on page 4, step 5.