



Sleepy Heads Pillowcase

Construction Time:
2-3 Hours

What will you learn?

How to:

Select coordinating printed fabrics
Pre-wash fabrics before using them
Sew straight seams
Zigzag or serger finished seam allowances to prevent raveling (loose threads)

What will you need?

A sewing machine and basic sewing tools
3 coordinating quilting weight cotton fabrics, 44-45 inches wide to make a standard size* pillowcase:
7/8 yd. for the large section or body of the pillow case
1/3 yd. for the wide band or border
1/8 yd. for the narrow accent trim
Thread to go with your fabric



Seam Allowances: ¼ inch or use the right edge of your presser foot as a seam guide (a standard presser foot on most sewing machines makes a 3/8 inch seam allowance)

Directions to make this project:

1. Pre-wash all your fabrics in warm water on a gentle cycle with laundry detergent, rinse with cold water, and dry on warm until dry. High heat and over-drying your fabrics will cause wrinkles to form that will be difficult to remove.
2. Carefully press your fabric flat. Use steam if necessary. With right sides of fabric together, line up the selvages of your fabric and smooth toward the fold. If there are wrinkles, keep the selvage edges together but shift your fabric sideways until there are no wrinkles.

3. Square up the raw edges of the fabric for your pillowcase body and wide band so they are straight and perpendicular (at right angles) to the selvage edges. Unless the selvage edges are puckered and they became smaller than the rest of the fabric during washing, do not cut them off. They will be trimmed later.
4. Cut the small accent trim 2 ½" inches wide. If you can sew really straight, you may want to try cutting the accent trim narrower. If you cut it 1 ½ inches wide, it will look like the trim on a ready-made pillowcase.
5. Fold the accent and the border of the pillowcase in half lengthwise with the right sides to the outside. The accent will be 1 ¼" wide (or your choice) and about 42" long and the border will be about 4 ¾" by about 42" after folding. Press well with steam.
6. Now, arrange all of the fabric pieces next to the sewing machine so that the selvage edge with little or no printing is at the top and the cut edge is on the right. The large body section of the pillowcase should be placed on the sewing table first wrong side up, the wide border next, and the narrow accent trim piece on top. You are going to always start sewing with the smallest selvage edge at the beginning of the seam. The wide printed selvage will be different on each fabric. If you sew from the smallest selvage to the largest, you will be able to trim all the wide uneven selvages off at once without wasting any of the fabric.¹

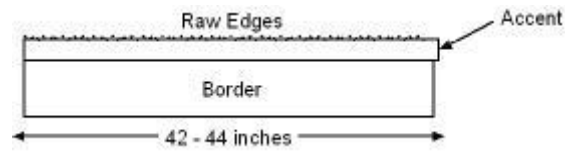


In the above samples, there was no difference in the selvages on either edge of the red and gray prints. The WSU print has a narrow and a wide selvage. The WSU fabric also has directional pictures but when it is placed as desired for the appearance of the pictures, the smaller selvage is at the top as shown by the picture on the right (the picture on the right also shows the stacking order of the fabric as it should be next to the machine).

7. Place the folded accent fabric on top of the folded border, with the cut edges of each lined up together and the narrow selvages on the end where you will begin your

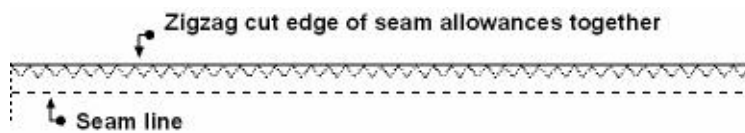
¹ **Note to Helpers:** We are using the selvage edges like a quilter uses a starter or anchor scrap to start stitching. If there are directional picture fabrics, you may have to help determine how they will be placed to have the pictures appear as desired in the finished pillowcase. This may not allow all of the smaller selvages to be placed at the beginning of the seam. If there are 2 or more picture fabrics involved, trim off all selvage edges but don't make the fabric pieces the same width. The pushing action of the presser foot makes it difficult for inexperienced sewers to match them without sewing in puckers and tucks.

seam. Don't worry if the other ends of these pieces don't line up. They will be trimmed later.



8. With the accent strip on top, sew it to the border using a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance or follow the right edge of your presser foot. You don't need to backstitch because the selvage edges are going to be cut off later. Check to make sure you caught all 4 of the cut edges evenly in the seam and that the accent strip has no tucks or ripples. Press with steam.

9. With the accent strip sandwiched between the border and the pillowcase body, place the border/accent strip under the right side of one of the 42" sides of the body fabric. Line up the narrow selvage ends where you will begin sewing and the long cut edges. If you can change the position of the sewing machine needle by moving it to the left to take a slightly larger seam allowance than you did in step 2, you can avoid having any of the previous line of stitching show. Sew a straight seam (no need to backstitch as the selvage ends may not match and will be trimmed later). To prevent fraying, finish this seam edge. Zigzag or serge the seam allowances together.



10. Put the pillowcase on the ironing board wrong side up. Press the seam allowance flat. Open the pillowcase so you can see the right side of the fabric. Push against the seam edge so the seam allowance is pressed toward the body of the pillowcase and the narrow accent strip is pressed flat on top of the border.

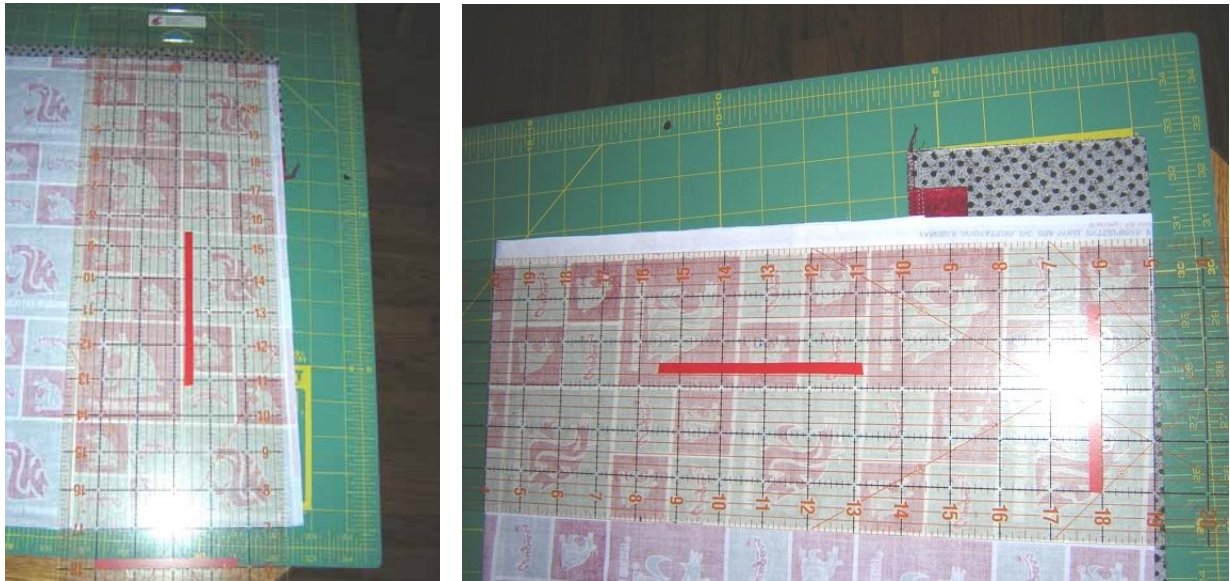


Right Side

Wrong Side

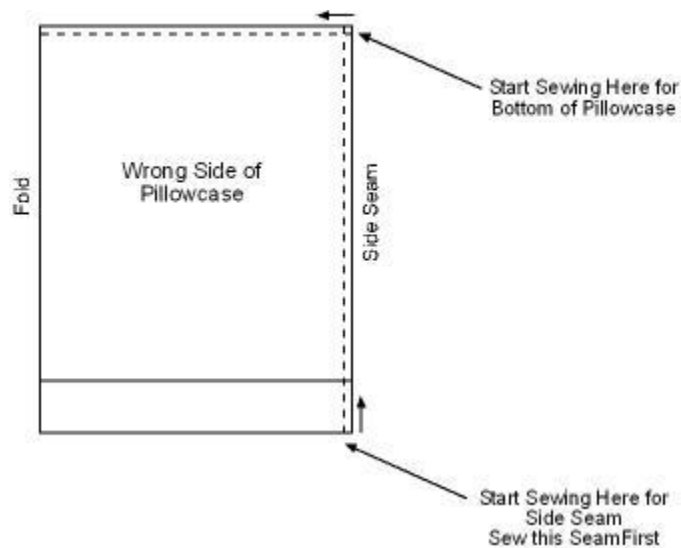
11. Carefully square up the uneven edges by trimming off all selvages and excess fabric that may result from differences in fabric width. Cut off just enough to make the edges straight. You can make this easy to do if you fold the pillowcase body on the cross-grain so that the selvage edges come together on the side you began your seam.

Make your cut(s) to trim the selvages and uneven ends perpendicular (at a right angle) to the fold.



Line up one of the lines on the ruler with the fold of the fabric on the cross grain.
Trim with a rotary cutter or draw a line and trim selvage with sewing shears.

12. Now that the lengthwise grain of your pillowcase body is straight, fold the pillowcase body in half with the right sides of the fabric together, matching the edge of border and the seam between pillow case body and border/accent. Pin at the border edge and the seam where the accent trim is sewn. Sew the side seam first, starting at the folded edge of the border so the edges will match nicely. Then sew the seam for the bottom of the pillowcase. Start from the side seam and sew towards the fold. **Backstitch at the beginning and end of both seams.**



13. Zigzag or serge seam allowances to prevent fraying during use and laundering.

14. Turn right side out and use a point turner to push out the corners of your pillowcase. Slide the point turner along the seam and push out gently on the corners.
15. Press your pillowcase. You are finished!
16. Try making another pillowcase in a different size or do the **[Benjamin Smiles Pillowcase](#)**** project for community service.

Notes:

Pre-washing your fabric will take out chemicals left from manufacturing, remove excess dyes, and shrink the fabric.

* If you want to make a bigger pillowcase, buy a larger amount of fabric for the body of the pillowcase:

1 yard for a queen size pillow
1 1/8 yard for a king size pillow

There are small rectangular travel pillows at the fabric store. Can you figure out what the measurements for your fabric should be if you make a pillowcase for one of these pillows?

** ***Benjamin Smiles Pillowcase*** project for community service:

https://www.nancysnotions.com/NNVia/CustomPages/Ben_smiles.htm