



4H Fabrics & Fashion

Pillowcase

CONSTRUCTION - Beginning Level (9-11 yrs)

The size of the pillowcase is very important. A tight case makes the pillow hard, and a loose case gives it a loose, wrinkled appearance. Measure your pillows to get the correct size before you buy your fabric.

A pillowcase should be between two and three inches wider than the measurement around the pillow. It should be between four and six inches longer, plus the amount desired for the hem. Foam rubber pillows may sometimes have tighter cases.

Standard pillow and pillowcase sizes are as follows:

Pillows: 40 inches around
26 inches long

44 inches around
28 inches long

Pillowcases: 42 inches around
36 inches long

45 inches around
36 inches long

Any firmly-woven fabric may be used for making pillow cases. A permanent-press finish makes a smooth case that does not wrinkle easily. If you use 100 percent cotton, be sure to wash and dry the fabric before you wash. This allows for any shrinkage.

Making the Cases

Measure the pillow length, and add between four and six inches, plus 2 ¼ to 3 ¼ inches for a hem. Wide hems are desirable on large cases, while smaller hems look best on small ones. Draw a thread, or tear the fabric to insure straight lines. With right sides together, stitch the end, using a ⅜-inch seam allowance. Finish the raw edge with an appropriate seam finish (i.e. Zigzag, Serge, Fray Check, Pinked, etc.) to prevent raveling.

Optional: To eliminate bulk in the corners, you may want to clip the corners. Use fray check or serge corners to keep threads from fraying.

Hem the open end of the case. Fold the raw edge toward the inside, creating a ¼ inch hem. Press. Fold the hem toward the inside a second time. This hem allowance will be between two and three inches, depending on the size of the pillowcases. Pin-baste the hem into position.

When machine-stitching, regulate the machine stitch to allow 12 to 14 stitches per inch. Set the machine needle into the fabric at the inside edge of the hem at the side seam on the pillowcase.

Lower the presser foot, and stitch around the hem. The stitches should be close to the edge to prevent the edge from turning back. Backstitch to secure ends of stitching.

