



DIY Throw Pillow Guide

Printable A4/Letter-friendly guide for choosing fabric, calculating pillow panels and yardage, sewing a zipper, and caring for finished throw pillow covers.

What this guide is

This is a printable measurement and sewing guide, not a full-size pattern. It is designed for both A4 and Letter printers. Print it for reference, then measure and cut your fabric to the listed dimensions.

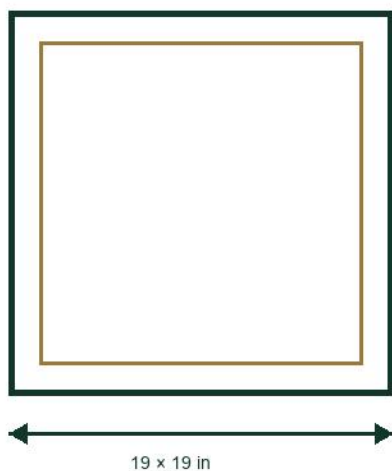
- Use finished pillow size + seam allowance to calculate panel size.
- Choose a pillow insert 1–2 inches larger than the cover for a fuller look.
- Test wash a sample or scrap before laundering custom pillow covers.
- For stripes, velvet, nap, or large repeats, order extra fabric and cut all panels in the same direction.

Pillow Sizes + Cut Measurements

Use these common finished sizes as starting points. Each cut size below assumes a 1/2 inch seam allowance on every side.

Measurement diagram

Cut panel: 19 × 19 in



Finished cover: 18 × 18 in

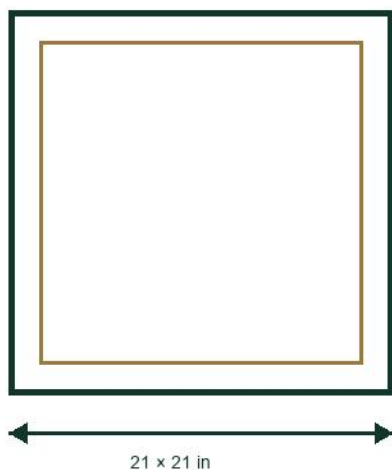
Cut panels: 19 × 19 in each (includes 1/2 inch seam allowance)

Suggested insert: 20 × 20 in for a fuller look

Diagram is not actual size. Measure fabric with a ruler or yardstick.

Measurement diagram

Cut panel: 21 × 21 in



Finished cover: 20 × 20 in

Cut panels: 21 × 21 in each (includes 1/2 inch seam allowance)

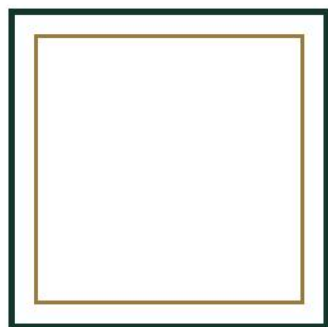
Suggested insert: 22 × 22 in for a fuller look

Diagram is not actual size. Measure fabric with a ruler or yardstick.

Lumbar Pillows + Yardage Planning

Measurement diagram

Cut panel: 13 × 21 in



Finished cover: 12 × 20 in

Cut panels: 13 × 21 in each (includes 1/2 inch seam allowance)

Suggested insert: 12 × 20 or 13 × 21 in for a fuller look

Diagram is not actual size. Measure fabric with a ruler or yardstick.

Quick yardage reference for 54-inch fabric

1 pillow, 18–20 in

about 2/3 yard

2 pillows, 18–20 in

about 1 yard

4 pillows, 18–20 in

about 2 to 3 yards

Lumbar pair, 12 × 20 in

about 1 yard

Add extra when needed

Order extra for stripes, directional fabric, velvet nap, large repeats, matching multiple pillow fronts, welt cord, mistakes, and future repairs.

How to Measure and Cut



- Press the fabric flat if the product care notes allow it.
- Mark the wrong side with tailor chalk using a ruler or yardstick.
- Keep stripes, nap, or directional patterns aligned the same way on every panel.
- Cut two panels per pillow, or one front panel and one back panel if you are mixing fabrics.
- Finish raw edges if the fabric frays before you sew the zipper.

How to Sew a Zipper Pillow Cover



- Place front and back panels right sides together.
- Choose the bottom/back seam for the zipper. Mark the zipper opening.
- Baste the zipper seam, press open, then place the zipper face down over the seam allowance.
- Stitch close to the zipper tape. Remove basting stitches and open the zipper halfway.
- Sew the remaining three sides, clip corners, turn right side out, press, and insert the pillow form.

Washing, Care, and Shrinkage

Shrinkage notice

Any washable fabric can shrink. Some upholstery and decorative fabrics can shrink unevenly, change hand, bleed dye, flatten texture, or separate from backing after washing. Always test a sample or scrap first, measure before and after washing, and account for shrinkage before cutting final pillow panels.

Test before washing

Wash, dry, and press a scrap the same way you plan to clean the finished cover. Check shrinkage, color bleed, texture change, backing separation, and fraying.

Pre-shrink only when appropriate

If the fabric is washable and the cover will be laundered later, pre-wash before cutting. Do not pre-wash velvet, vinyl, leather-look, backed, or dry-clean-only fabrics unless product notes allow it.

Avoid heat surprises

Hot water, high dryer heat, and aggressive steam can shrink fibers, distort seams, flatten pile, or change texture. Air dry flat when possible.

Spot clean first

For finished pillows, remove the insert if possible and blot spills quickly. Test any cleaner on a hidden area before treating the face fabric.

Printable Project Checklist

- ☐ Choose finished pillow size and insert size.
- ☐ Order fabric sample and confirm color, scale, texture, and care notes.
- ☐ Test wash or spot-clean a scrap if the cover may be cleaned later.
- ☐ Calculate cut panel size and yardage. Add extra for repeats/nap.
- ☐ Cut panels square and mark zipper placement.
- ☐ Sew zipper side, open zipper halfway, sew remaining sides.
- ☐ Clip corners, turn, press, insert form, and save care notes.

Need fabric for a custom pillow?

Shop pillow and cushion fabric by color, scale, texture, and care needs at BestUpholsteryFabric.com/fabric/pillow-cushion-fabric/