

PJ Bag Pillowcase

American Patchwork & Quilting

1 MILLION
PILLOWCASE CHALLENGE



materials

For one pillowcase:

- ☐ $\frac{3}{8}$ yard fabric for band
- ☐ 1 yard fabric for pillowcase body and drawstring
- ☐ All-purpose sewing thread
- ☐ Large safety pin
- ☐ Marking pen or pencil and ruler
- ☐ Unsharpened pencil with eraser on top

Finished pillowcase: 30×20" (fits a standard-size bed pillow)

Yardages and cutting instructions are based on 42" of usable fabric width.

Measurements include $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowances. Sew with right sides together unless otherwise specified.

Add a drawstring to the band of pillowcase and it becomes a pajama bag perfect to take along to your next sleepover. Follow these simple step-by-step photos to make one—it's a cinch!

FABRICS are from the Don't Be Crabby collection by Laurie Wisbrun for Robert Kaufman Fabrics (robertkaufman.com).

1



From band fabric, cut:

□ 1— 10×41" strip

From pillowcase body/drawstring fabric, cut:

□ 1—26½×41" rectangle

□ 1—2½×42" strip

To make a drawstring, place the 2½×42" strip flat on an ironing board with the printed side up. Fold it in half lengthwise with the printed side inside. Matching the long edges, press the strip with an iron.

TIP: This is a good place to team up with an adult who can help keep the edges lined up while you press the strip in half.

NOTE: With the machine's presser foot down, backstitch at the beginning and ending of each seam.

2



Sew the long edges together **with a ¼" seam allowance**. Also sew across one short end.

TIP: Use layers of painter's tape or masking tape as a guide to keep your seam straight. Position it so the right edge of the tape is ¼" from the needle.

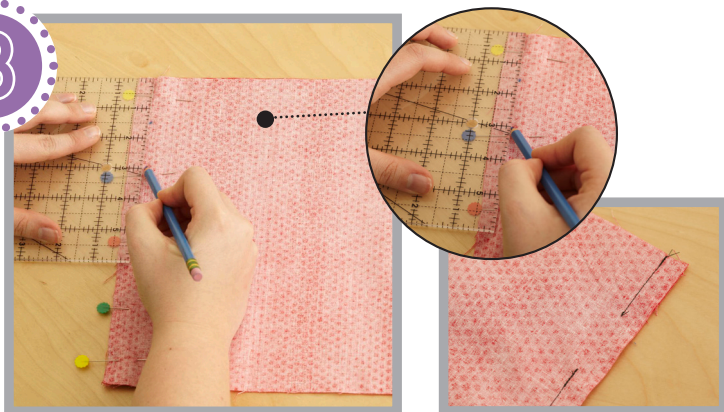
Turn the strip right side out and have an adult help you press it flat to make a drawstring.

TIP: To turn the strip printed side out, have an adult help you get this started. Use the eraser end of an unsharpened pencil to push the short stitched end up into the drawstring. Holding on to the pencil with one hand, continue pushing the short end up through the tube, gathering the drawstring onto the pencil until the printed end comes out the opposite end. Once the edge of the drawstring comes out, remove the pencil and pull down on the gathered fabric while pulling up on the printed end that poked through until the entire drawstring is turned printed side out.



Fold over the unstitched end of the drawstring ¼", then fold it over a second time another ¼" and machine stitch through all the layers across the fold to secure.

3



With the printed side inside, fold the 10×41" strip in half crosswise (matching the short ends). Mark a 1½" long opening in the seam 1½" from the top edge.

(This opening will be used for the drawstring later.)

Sew the short ends together **using a ½" seam allowance** and leaving the marked line open (unstitched).

TIP: Move your tape seam guide over so the needle is ½" from the right edge of the tape. Take a couple of backstitches on each side of the opening to secure the seam. Press the seam allowances open.

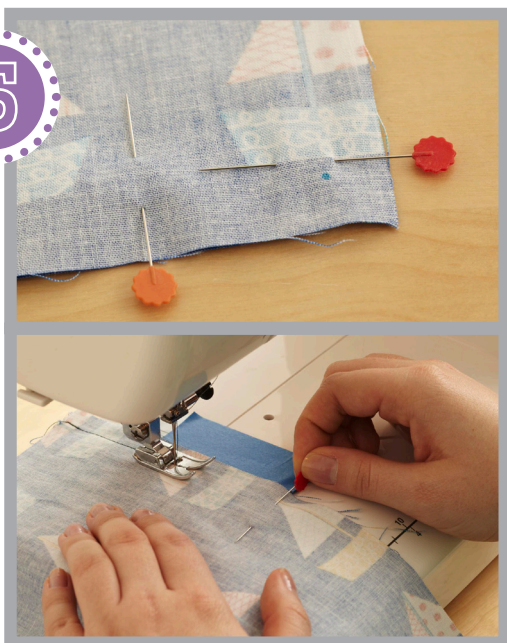
4



Fold the tube you made in Step 3 in half with the printed side facing out and the long edges matching. Press it flat to make the pillowcase band.

It's easier to loop the pillowcase band around the end of the ironing board so you're only dealing with two layers of fabric at a time.

5



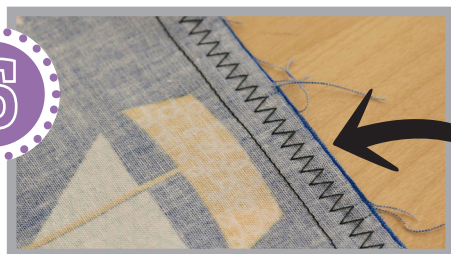
With the printed side together, fold the body rectangle in half to make a $26\frac{1}{2} \times 20\frac{1}{2}$ " rectangle. First pin the long edges together. Then, pin across one short end at the bottom of the pillowcase. Make sure the heads of the pins are sticking off the edge so you can take them out as you sew. Mark a dot on the bottom corner $\frac{1}{2}$ " from each edge.

Sew along both pinned edges with a straight seam **using a $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance**. When you get to the dot marked $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the bottom corner, stop with your needle down in the fabric. Lift the presser foot and pivot the fabric and continue sewing across the bottom of the pillowcase. Backstitch to secure the end of the seam.

Do not sew over pins. Instead, remove each pin just before it reaches the sewing machine's presser foot.

TIP: Sew at a slow speed so that you can control your fabric layers and keep the seamline straight. If you have to stop to readjust the layers, stop with your sewing machine needle down in the fabric so it won't shift as you adjust the pieces.

6



To make sure the seam allowance doesn't fray, zigzag stitch in the seam allowance across the pillowcase side and bottom. Turn the pillowcase body printed side out.

7



Turn the pillowcase right side out and press the side and bottom seam allowances flat.

For best results, you may need to roll the seams between your fingers to nudge them to the edge before pressing them.

8



Slide the band over the body so that all the raw (cut) edges are at the top. The seam opening in the band should be placed inside (next to the pillowcase body). The seams of both the band and the body should match up on one side. Place a pin on either side of those seams to make sure they will match up properly when you start to sew.

Remove the deck around the sewing machine arm. Sew together the band and body through all the layers. Remember to take the pins out before they reach the sewing machine needle. Zigzag stitch in the seam allowance just as you did in Step 6.

FINISH THE PILLOWCASE

9



Press the band open, pressing the seams toward the body (away from the band). On the printed side of the pillowcase body, topstitch around the entire pillowcase $\frac{1}{4}$ " below the band seam to secure the seam allowances.

TIP: Sometimes the edge of your sewing machine foot can be a good guide to keep your stitching line straight. Keep the edge of the presser foot along the band seam you already sewed.

Use the edge of the presser foot as your guide!

10



On the printed side of the pillowcase band, topstitch around the entire pillowcase again, this time $2\frac{1}{2}$ " above the band seam to make a casing for the drawstring.

TIP: To keep this seam straight, have an adult measure and place a piece of painter's tape or masking tape on your sewing machine where the band edge should be as you sew. Use the edge of the tape as a guide to keep your pillowcase straight as you sew.

11



Have an adult help you with this next step—showing you how to begin pulling the drawstring through the casing.

Using a large safety pin at one end of the drawstring, thread the drawstring through the opening in the band

you left in Step 2. Keep the layers as flat as possible as you pull the drawstring through the casing and bring it back out through the opening.

12



To prevent the drawstring from being pulled out accidentally, pull it through so that both ends are sticking out evenly and use the large safety pin to pin the ends together.

Machine stitch through the middle of the drawstring (opposite the opening in the casing where they come out) to secure the drawstring in place.