

Lush & Plush Trends from Fabric.com: Pillow Insert Comparison

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Pillow inserts give your pillows their plump shape, and allow them to do their job: provide soft support or cushy comfort. A pillow insert, also known as a pillow form, is simply a plain-covered pillow designed to be used with a decorative outer pillow cover (*those things we love to design here at S4H!*) Put another way, covers are your pillow insert's wardrobe. For our *Lush & Plush Series*, Fabric.com provided us with samples to try of the two types of pillow inserts they stock: polyester and feather/down. Although tempted to shirk our duty and simply take a little nap on the pretty pillow inserts, we managed to stay awake long enough to write our review.

A few pillow insert basics

Square, round, rectangular, oblong and bolster are the most common pillow insert shapes. They can be as small as a ring-bearer's pillow and as large as a floor cushion. The most common size throw pillows are 16" and 18" squares.

When selecting the pillow insert size, keep in mind that the *insert* should always be the same or a bit larger than the finished cover size. This keeps your cover taut. How much larger is a matter of personal preference and the style of the pillow cover. At Sew4Home, we most often use a pillow insert the same size as the pillow cover we are making. For example, an 18" x 18" finished pillow cover for an 18" x 18" insert. An inch smaller on the cover is also a nice, chubby look: a 17" x 17" finished pillow cover for an 18" x 18" insert.

Fabric.com's polyester pillow insert



This is an indoor/outdoor variety with 100% polyester fill and a polyester protective cover. The form can be machine washed on gentle and tumbled dry on low heat.

They offer square forms in the following sizes:

14" x 14"

16" x 16"

18" x 18"

20" x 20"

24" x 24"

27" x 27"

And rectangle forms in:

12" x 20"

16" x 20"

[Click to view](#) their entire polyester range.

Prices range from \$9.98 for the 14" x 14" to \$26.98 for the 27" x 27". Very reasonable for a nice quality.

Polyester pillows retain their shape well and require little maintenance. They're a good choice for anyone allergic to down and feathers. The fact that these can live inside or outside is a plus. You don't have to have a full set of pillows to decorate inside and then another set for outdoors.

The insert we tested was a bit darker than the traditional bright white of most pillow forms. This might be an issue with especially lightweight and/or sheer fabrics. Stiffness can be a drawback of polyester inserts, but we found [the Fabric.com insert](#) to be nice and plump without being rigid. Most importantly, it was true to size. Often, inexpensive pillow forms can be up to an 1" smaller than the size marked on their packages.

Fabric.com's feather/down pillow insert



This is an indoor only pillow made of 95% grey duck feathers and 5% duck down with a cotton protective cover. The form can be machine washed on gentle and tumbled dry on low heat.

They offer square forms in the following sizes:

14" x 14"

16" x 16"

18" x 18"

20" x 20"

24" x 24"

27" x 27"

And rectangle forms in:

12" x 20"

16" x 20"

And, a 8" x 26" bolster style.

[Click here](#) to view their entire feather/down range.

Prices range from \$8.98 for the 14" x 14" to \$19.98 for the 27" x 27"... actually less expensive than the 100% polyester variety, which really surprised me. As a comparison, 100% goose down pillow inserts in a 26"- 27" square would typically run from \$60-\$75 each. To be able to get a cushy feather/down insert for under \$20 is a *great* deal, and you don't have to tell anyone it's 'duck-duck' rather than 'goose.'

Down and feathers give pillows a lovely loft and a soft, luxurious feeling that conforms to the shape of the pillow cover. I've seen these less-costly blends of down and feathers become too fluffy, but the [Fabric.com blended insert](#) was nicely filled and very 'mashable.' By this, I mean we could do the famous designer-decorating touch of a karate chop to the top of the pillow to form a chic 'double-ear' look.

The 'down side' to down or feathers is that some people are allergic. It also tends to pack and can become lumpy if not fluffed from time to time.

If you want more unusual shapes and sizes or a higher percentage down pillow, you'll need to search elsewhere. But for standard shapes, Fabric.com has an excellent variety at extremely reasonable prices in both the polyester and the feather/down styles. Plus, shipping is free on orders of \$35 and more. Browse our [Sew4Home Pillows & Cushions category](#) to find a little something for your pillow insert to wear.

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