

Accessories We Love: Janome Ultimate Ruffler

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Wednesday, 17 June 2015 1:00



Ruffles. Bet you can't use them just once. If you love ruffles like we do, you need to know about an accessory that makes ruffling and pleating easier, faster and more precise: the Ultimate Ruffler from Janome. This attachment is designed to work with any machine that can accept a snap-on presser foot, which means you don't have to have a Janome. Other machine manufacturers make similar attachments, which work in much the same way. It's time to go from flat to frilly.

Janome's Ultimate Ruffler is available at authorized Janome dealers. They have a good dealer locator on their Janome America site to help find a dealer near you. There are sizes available for machines with a maximum stitch width of 7mm as well as the new models with a maximum stitch width of 9mm.



You can certainly ruffle a single layer of fabric, in fact, some people like to ruffle raw-edged fabric to create a chic frayed look. But for our purposes, we're going to demonstrate with the most common fabric treatment for ruffling: the folded strip.

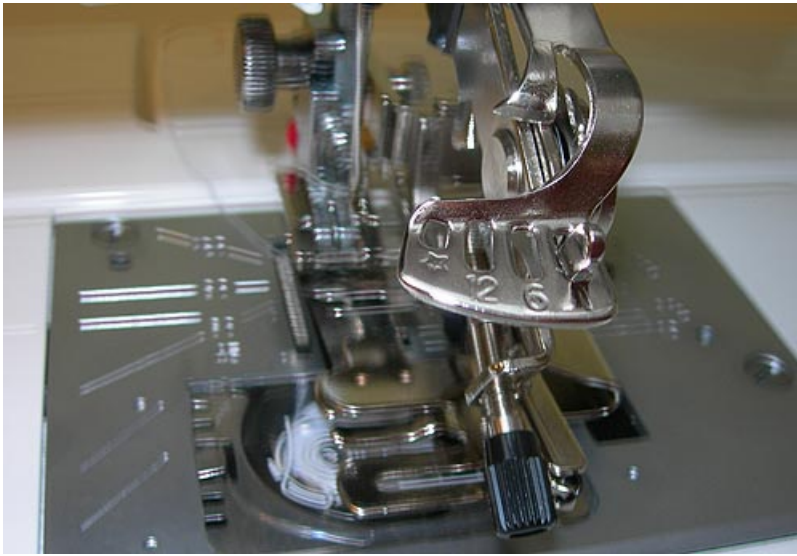
1. The rule of thumb for how long your flat strip of fabric should be is approximately $2\frac{1}{2}$ times the length of the edge to which you're applying the ruffle. For example, if you have a 20" x 20" pillow and you want to have a ruffle all around the edge, you would multiple 20" x 4 to get the perimeter measurement (80"), then multiply that measurement by 2.5 (80" x 2.5 = 200"). To that, add a couple inches for overlap. You will cut your ruffling strips across the width of your fabric to get your finished length. If the fabric has a width of 44" (don't count the selvages; you want to trim these off), you need to divide the finished length by the width of the fabric to figure out how many WOF (width of fabric) strips to cut. In our sample, 144" (the perimeter plus 2") divided by 44" = 3.23. Always round UP, so cut 4 strips. That will be plenty.
2. The **width** of the strip is simply the finished width you want, plus your seam allowance, multiplied by two, because you will fold the strip in half. Let's say we want a 2½" ruffle on our pillow. Our equation would be 2½" plus a ½" seam allowance. which equals 3". 3" x 2 = 6".
3. In our example, we would cut FOUR 6" x WOF strips, which means we'd need at least $\frac{2}{3}$ of a yard of fabric.
4. Stitch your strips together end-to-end to create one long strip. Press all the short seam allowances open.
5. Fold the strip in half, wrong sides together, and press.



6. Attach the ruffler to your sewing machine. You'll need to remove the machine's regular presser foot, slide the ruffler under the now-empty presser foot ankle, *with the black 'c-hook' OVER the needle screw*, then snap the ruffler into place.



7. Select a straight stitch, and test your needle drop to make sure it goes in and out of the needle hole in the ruffler easily. There are adjusting screws on the ruffler to move the opening to best match your needle drop.
8. Set the number of stitches between the ruffles by selecting one of the slots on the front of the ruffler on the ratchet gear feed plate. The '1 slot' is a ruffle every stitch. The '6 slot' is every six stitches, and the '12 slot' is every twelve stitches. The six and twelve options are really more pleats rather than ruffles.



9. Then, set the depth of the tuck with the screw on the side of the ruffler. The standard ratio is 2 to 1. Tighten to deepen, loosen for a shallower fold. It's important to test gather some practice strips to get the look you want. There really isn't a chart of exactly what settings to use for which applications. It's all about your taste, your fabric, and the finished look you're going for.



10. Insert the raw edges of your folded strip into the slit at the front of the ruffler. We started with the 1 slot for a ruffle every stitch and with the depth at about 4.
11. Another important element to achieving beautiful ruffles is how long the stitch length is set on your sewing machine. The shorter the stitch length the tighter the ruffles. For example, Janome suggests a stitch length of 5.0 when the Ratchet Gear Feed Plate is set at 1 and the depth screw is at a higher number.



12. Drop your needle, and start gathering. Keep your fabric moving smoothly and make sure you have enough room at the back of your machine for the gathered strip to accumulate.



13. You do not back tack at the beginning or the end of your gathering, because you want the gathers to be able to be adjusted slightly to best fit the edge to which they will be applied.
14. We tried a new test, moving the ratchet gear feed plate into the '6 slot' and tightening the depth screw to create pleats every six stitches.



15. Then, we moved the plate into the '12 slot' and tightened the depth screw a bit more to create pleats every twelve stitches.



16. You now have beautiful, long strips of ruffles or pleats to add to your project.



17. Janome has a [good video tutorial](#) on their [Ultimate Ruffler](#) as well as a [Technique Sheet](#) that outlines some specialty uses such as puffing strips and working with lace and ribbon.

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