Terry Cloth Shower Wraps for Women & Men

Editor: Liz Johnson
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If you’ve ever hunted for terry cloth, you know it can be challenging to find. If you do finally locate some, color choice and weight options are likely to be minimal, and the quality can be iffy. Thanks to the softness experts at Shannon Fabrics, those worries are over. They offer a wonderful selection of premium terry cloth in different colors, weights, and textures. Pick out your favorites to make our pair of classic shower wraps. There’s a full length wrap for women and a waist wrap for men. Great for yourself or as a snuggly gift. Drying off just got a lot more stylish.
All the Shannon Fabric Terry Cloth collections are 100% cotton. We used a standard 10 ounce which comes in a 44/45" width in a variety of pretty colors for the women's wrap and a heavier 16 ounce terry for the men's wrap, which is available in fewer colors but a full 56/58" width. We found a nice selection of Shannon Terry Cloth at Fabric.com in a variety of weights and colors.

Sewing with terry cloth doesn't require much in the way of special skills or tools, but here are a few things to keep in mind:

1. Terry cloth is a napped fabric, so it loves to shed. You may want to consider covering your work surface and/or keeping a lint roller or vacuum nearby. You might even want to cover yourself in an apron. To help reduce lint, you can throw your cut pieces into the dryer along with a damp towel prior to starting construction.
2. Also thanks to its plush nap, terry cloth has a definite direction. Just like you need to keep track of the direction of the nap on fleece and corduroy, you have to watch nap direction on terry cloth. To test the nap, run your hand over the terry cloth. One way will feel smooth, the other way will feel rough. The smooth way is the correct direction of the nap. Make sure all your pieces are going in the same direction.
3. All raw edges should either be finished by sewing machine or serger or bound as we did with our wraps.
4. Use a lengthened stitch (apx. 3.5 is a good average, but always test first on scraps) and a heavier needle, such as a universal 16.
5. Because of its loopy texture, ripping out a seam from terry cloth can be challenging. Many people like to sew with a contrasting color of thread so you have a better chance of seeing the stitches you're trying to remove. If you know your seam won't be visible, this is an okay choice — but be careful. Also, it can be easy to miss the thread and instead tear the loops of the terry cloth with a seam ripper. Make sure your seam ripper is super sharp or try tiny scissors or the edge of a rotary cutter blade to snip away any thread mistakes.
We are cutting the width along the *selvedge* in order to eliminate a bulky hem. The wrap will lay soft and flat against the body since we can use the finished selvedge as the bottom of our elastic casing. This also means you’ll have some terry cloth left over. Using our measurements, you could cut two men’s wraps from the recommended terry cloth yardage (if using a 56/58” width or by shortening the height by 1”). Or make a matched set (perhaps for a wedding gift) from the same color of wide-width terry cloth: one man’s and one woman’s. Two of the women’s wraps don’t quite fit even within a wider width terry, but why not use the extra to make a pretty matching set of bound washcloths?!
There is about 10” of stretch calculated into both our wrap styles. Dimensions are listed below and they should be a good fit for most folks. As always, size them up or down to best fit your wearers.
We bound our wraps with eye-catching quilting cottons to add an extra punch of color. Make sure you pre-wash both the terry cloth and the cotton prior to cutting the project. Terry cloth is prone to shrinking, and many quilting cottons can shrink a bit as well. Because this is an item that is meant to be laundered, you want to start with pre-washed fabric.
Speaking of laundry, the bow on the women’s wrap is optional. It’s simply attached with a safety pin so it can be removed prior to washing. And before tossing *either* finished wrap in the laundry, adhere the Velcro®! If the strips are closed together, they won’t catch on other items in the wash or back onto the wrap itself. Open Velcro® sticks to everything and can cause the loops of the terry cloth to snag or tear.
A custom "bath bundle" makes a great gift for all kinds of occasions. However, maybe it's simply time to treat yourself to a spa day!
Our women’s wrap finishes at approximately 40” wide x 30” high. It stretches to about 50”. Our men’s wrap finishes at approximately 40” wide x 22” high. It also stretches to about 50”. These measurements are similar to wraps we found online and in-store and are meant to be one-size-fits-all. However, you can certainly use our measurements as a starting point then cut your wrap larger or smaller for your best fit.
Sewing Tools You Need

- **Sewing Machine** and standard presser foot
- **Walking or Even Feed foot** or use your machine’s built-in fabric feeding system, such as the Janome AcuFeed Flex™ system – a Walking foot or similar is strongly recommended when sewing with the terry cloth as well as working with the thick elastic and the Velcro®. We used our Janome feeding system throughout the project.

Fabric and Other Supplies

NOTE: Quantities shown are for ONE wrap.
1½ yards of 45”+ wide terry cloth for the main body of the wrap

NOTE: As mentioned above, we are cutting the wrap’s width along the selvedge to allow the best finish for the elastic casing. This means you will have leftover terry cloth. Also as mentioned above, you could cut TWO men’s wraps from the 1½ yard cut (if using 56/58” width fabric or by squeezing the length down by 1”) or one woman’s wrap and one man’s wrap. Check the cutting directions below as adjust as needed for your width of terry cloth. The combinations depend on the width of terry cloth you select. You could also make a set of pretty bound washcloths to go with either wrap from the excess.

- ½ yard of 44”+ wide quilting weight cotton for the binding
- ³⁄₄ yard of 1½” wide no-roll elastic
- ¼ yard of 1½” wide Sew on Velcro®; we used black for the women’s wrap and white for the men’s wrap – Sew On Velcro® can sometimes be challenging to find in the wider widths, you could go down to 1” or you could butt together two narrower ¾” strips side by side as options.
- ¼ yard of ½” wide twill tape or ribbon for the optional hanging loop; we used ½” twill tape from our stash
- ½ yard of 20”+ wide lightweight fusible interfacing; we used Pellon Shape Flex
- All purpose thread to match fabric and Velcro®
- See-through ruler
- Fabric pen or pencil
- Iron and ironing board
- Scissors
- Rotary cutter and mat
- Tape measure
- Seam gauge
- Seam ripper
- Straight pins
- Fusible seam tape, optional to help Velcro® in place
- Hand sewing needle

Getting Started and Pattern Download

Women’s Wrap

1. **DOWNLOAD AND PRINT:** The Women’s Shower Wrap Pocket pattern.
   IMPORTANT: This pattern is ONE 8½” x 11” sheet. You must print the PDF at 100%. DO NOT SCALE to fit the page. There is a guide rule on the sheet to insure your printout is to scale.

2. Cut out the pattern along the solid line.

3. From the terry cloth, **remember to cut the width (the longest of the two dimensions) along the selvedge**, cut the following:
   ONE 51” x 33” rectangle
   Using the pocket pattern, cut ONE

4. From the binding fabric, cut the following:
THREE 3" x WOF (width of fabric or 44" in this case) strips
ONE 4" x 24" strip for the optional bow
Using the pocket pattern, cut ONE

5. From the lightweight interfacing, cut the following:
   ONE 1½" x 24" strip for the optional bow
   Using the pocket pattern, cut ONE

6. From the elastic, cut ONE 23" length.
7. From the Velcro®, cut ONE 7" length.
8. From the twill tape or ribbon, cut ONE 6" length for the optional hanging loop.

NOTE: We layered our cotton and terry and cut both layers at once from the pocket pattern.

Men’s Wrap

1. From the terry cloth, remember to cut the width (the longest of the two dimensions) along the selvedge, cut the following:
   ONE 51" x 23½" rectangle
   ONE 7" wide x 6" high rectangle for the pocket

2. From the binding fabric, cut the following:
   TWO 3" x WOF (width of fabric or 44" in this case) strips
   ONE 7" wide x 6¾" high rectangle for the pocket

NOTE: None of the bound edges on either wrap are curved so we straight-cut our binding strips rather than using extra fabric to make bias strips.

3. From the lightweight interfacing, cut ONE 7" wide x 6¾" high rectangle for the pocket
From the elastic, cut ONE 23” length.
5. From the Velcro®, cut ONE 7” length.
6. From the twill tape or ribbon, cut ONE 6” length for the optional hanging loop.

At Your Sewing Machine & Ironing Board

Women’s Wrap

Seam the non-bound side

1. Rotate your cut terry cloth panel so its selvedge is running along the top. This means your two 33” sides and the bottom are all raw cut edges. One of the side edges will be bound and one will be hemmed. On the women's wrap, the hemmed edge is the left edge.
2. Make a 1” double-turn hem along the left raw side edge. To do this, measure and fold back ½” and press. Then, measure and fold back an additional ½”, press again and pin in place.
3. Thread the machine with thread to best match the terry cloth in the top and bobbin. Lengthen the stitch.
4. Topstitch the length of the hemmed edge, staying close to the innermost folded edge.

Place and encase the elastic

1. Place the wrap wrong side up and flat on your work surface. Along the top edge (the selvedge), measure 7” in from each edge and place a marking
2. Measure to find the center point between these two marking pins and place a third marking pin. On our 51” cut width (which is now hemmed along one edge and so is 50”), this center point would be 18” from each of the side pin points.

3. Finally, measure between the center point pin and each outermost marking pin to find the center point of each of these sections. Place a pin at each of these points. On our width, these points would be approximately 9” to the left and the right of the center pin point.

4. You should end up with five marking pins across the top of the wrap. That’s a lot of measuring, but the main thing to keep in mind is that you want the sections to be even with enough room at each outer edge for the Velcro® strips.

5. Find the length of elastic. Fold it into quarters and place a pin at each fold. You should end up with three marking pins along one side of the elastic.

6. One more bit of measuring... because you’re having so much fun! From the main center point pin along the top of the wrap, measure 1½” to the left and 1½” to the right.

7. Find the 6” length of twill tape (or similar ribbon). Form the twill tape into a loop and center each raw end over the measured 1½” points as shown in the photo below.
8. Machine baste in place to secure.

NOTE: Remember, the hanging loop is optional.

9. With the loop basted in place, match up the pin marks along the top of the terry with the pin marks on the elastic.

10. First place each end of the elastic at one of the 7" outermost pin marks.
11. Stitch down each end to firmly secure it.

NOTE: We left thread to match the terry cloth in both the top and bobbin throughout these steps, and we continued to use a slightly lengthened stitch.

12. With the two ends secure, match up the other three pin points, re-pinning through both layers. The top edge of the elastic should sit about $\frac{1}{8}$” down from the selvedge. So — not flush, but almost.
13. Starting at one end, position the presser foot to stitch down the center of the elastic through all the layers.

14. Gently stretch the elastic as you sew so it lays flat against the terry cloth.

15. When done and removed from under the presser foot, the terry cloth will softly gather across the elastic.
16. With the elastic sewn in place, fold down the top edge 3” so the two layers are wrong sides together and the elastic is sandwiched in between.

17. Because the center section of the wrap is gathered with the elastic, it easiest to first confirm this 3” hem at each edge.

18. Stitch along the bottom hem, which means you are edgestitching right along the selvedge. Stitch from one outer side, across the elasticized center section, to the opposite outer side. Remember, one side edge is already hemmed and the opposite side edge is raw.

19. As you did when stitching the elastic in place, you need to gently stretch the elastic as you sew down the hem. Sew a small section, then stop with the needle in the down position.
20. Gently pull to flatten, and resume stitching across another small section. Continue in this manner across the full elasticized area.

21. Make sure you pull the hanging loop down into position prior to stitching across.

22. Flip the wrap right side up to stitch the final horizontal seam. This seam should be 1½" down from the top folded edge, which means it is about 1¼"
up from the first seam line.

23. Stitch all the way across in the same manner, stretching across the center section. When done, the elastic is firmly secured and there is a soft ruffle along the top (above where the elastic is attached).

NOTE: Our Janome machines have excellent plate markings that extend onto the base the machine, so it was easy for us to use one of these guidelines to keep our seam consistent. If you don’t have good machine markings, you could draw in a line to follow with a fabric pen or pencil.

Create and place the pocket

1. Place the lightweight interfacing on the wrong side of the cotton panel. All edges should be flush. Following manufacturer’s instructions, fuse in place.

2. Place the cotton panel and the terry cloth panel right sides together and pin all around, leaving about a 2” opening along the straightest part of one side.

3. Using a ½” seam allowance, stitch all around the pocket oval. Remember to lock the seam at either side of the 2” opening.
4. **Clip the curves**, using generous wedge clips as this is a tightly curved oval.

5. **Grade the seam allowance**, trimming back the terry cloth to about ¼".

6. Turn the pocket right side out through the opening. Use a long, blunt-end tool, like a knitting needle, chopstick or point turner, to gently round out the curved seam. Press flat, pressing in the raw edges of the opening so they are flush with the sewn seam.

7. Using the original paper pattern as a guide, mark the position of the pocket fold line.
8. With these pin marks in place, unfold and edgestitch along the top curve of the pocket just from pin point to pin point. This allows the pocket flap that folds down on the front of the pocket to have a nice line of edgestitching.

9. Find the main wrap. Place it right side up and flat on your work surface. The pocket should sit approximately 15" down the upper finished edge and 5" in from the raw right side edge. Pin the pocket in place along the sides and curved bottom.
10. Fold the pocket flap up and out of the way, and edgestitch the pocket in place on the wrap along the sides and around the curved bottom.

Bind the right side edge and bottom

**NOTE:** The steps below summarize a standard blanket binding method. If you are new to this technique, you may find it helpful to review our full step-by-step binding tutorial: [A Complete Step-by-Step For Binding Quilts & Throws](#)

1. Find the three binding strips.
2. Place the ends of two strips together at a 90° angle.
3. Draw a diagonal line corner to corner across the overlapped ends. Pin along the drawn diagonal line.
4. If necessary, re-thread the machine with thread to best match the binding in the top and bobbin. Re-set the stitch length to normal.
5. Stitch along the drawn line.
6. Trim the seam allowance to ¼”.
7. Press open the seam allowance.
8. Repeat to add the third strip to create one continuous length.
9. Fold the completed strip in half wrong sides together and press well to set a center crease.
10. Un-fold wrong side up. Fold back each long raw edge ½” and press well.

11. Press in each end of the strip ½” as well.
12. Starting at the bottom hemmed corner (the bottom left corner), slip the binding over the raw edge of the terry cloth. The binding should slip all the way over so the raw edge of the terry cloth is sitting against the inner fold of the binding.
13. Pin in place all along the bottom edge.
14. Make a diagonal fold at the bottom right corner and continue pinning all the way up the right raw edge.
15. At both ends, wrap the terry and flatten the folded ends together so they are perfectly flush. Edgestitch along each end to keep these edges flush.

16. Lengthen the stitch.

17. Topstitch along the bottom of the wrap and up the right side, pivoting at the corner. Go slowly to insure you are maintaining a straight seam and catching both sides of the binding in this one seam.
Place and stitch the Velcro®

1. Place the wrap right side up and flat. Position the loop side (the soft side) of the Velcro® strip on the left side of the wrap (the hemmed side). The end of the strip should sit along the topstitching of the hem. The bottom edge of the Velcro® should sit right along the selvedge of the folded down hem. You can feel this hem through the front of the wrap. Pin in place down the center of the strip.
   
   NOTE: Some people prefer to use a fusible seam tape to adhere Velcro® rather than pinning through the thick layers.

2. Re-thread the machine with thread to match the Velcro® in the top and thread to match the terry cloth in the bobbin. The stitch remains lengthened.

3. Edgestitch the Velcro® in place around all four sides.
4. Flip over the wrap so it is now wrong side up.
5. Place the hook side (the rough side) of the Velcro® strip at the opposite side of the wrap (what will be the right side of the wrap when viewed from the front – the bound side). The end of the strip should sit along the edge of the binding. As with the loop strip, the bottom of the Velcro® should sit right along the selvedge of the folded down hem. Pin in place and edgestitch in place in the same manner as above.

Optional bow

1. Find the remaining 24” fabric strip and the thin strip of interfacing.
2. Center the interfacing on one half of the fabric strip, on the wrong side. Following manufacturer’s instructions, fuse the interfacing in place.
3. Fold the strip in half, right sides together. Pin in place along both ends and along the long side. Leave an approximate 2” opening at the center of the long side.
4. Using a ½” seam allowance, stitch across both ends and down the long side. Remember to pivot at the corners and to lock the seam at either side of the 2” opening.
5. Clip the corners and press open the seam allowance.
6. Turn the strip right side out through the opening. Use a long, blunt tool to gently push out the corners so they are nice and sharp. Press flat, pressing in the raw edges of the opening so they are flush with the sewn seam.

7. **Hand stitch** the opening closed.

8. Tie the strip into a pretty bow and attach at the top right corner (the top of the bound edge) with a safety pin, as shown in the sample photos above. We recommend simply pinning the bow in place so it can be easily removed prior to laundering.

### Men’s Wrap

The basic steps are the same for the men’s wrap. The main differences are how the elastic casing is folded down to create the waistband and the positioning and construction of the rectangle pocket. In addition, because men’s “clothing” is oriented opposite from women’s, the hemmed edge of the men’s wrap is along the right side and the bound edge along the left, which means the Velcro® is also opposite.

#### Waistband elastic

1. Center the elastic in the same manner as above. It should sit just below the selvedge exactly how the women’s wrap elastic was positioned. Stitch in place down the center.

2. Rather than folding down a 3” hem, fold right along the top of the elastic. With the bulk, this will be about a 1¼” to 2” hem. Stitch in place along the bottom on the selvedge and along the top just below the fold.
Pocket

1. Fuse the interfacing to the wrong side of the fabric panel then place the fabric pocket panel and the terry pocket panel right sides together. The side and bottom edges of both layers should be flush. Along the top edge, the fabric panel will extend beyond the terry cloth panel by $\frac{3}{4}"$. Pin in place along both sides and across the bottom.

2. Using a $\frac{1}{2}"$ seam allowance stitch along both sides and across the bottom, pivoting at the corners.

3. **Clip the corners, Grade the seam allowance**, trimming back the terry cloth to $\frac{1}{4}"$. 
4. Turn the pocket right side out through the open top. Use a long, blunt tool to gently push out the corners so they are nice and sharp. Press flat.

5. Fold down the extending top fabric panel \( \frac{1}{4} \)" and press. Then fold and additional \( \frac{1}{2} \)", bringing this folded hem down over the terry cloth front of the pocket. Pin the hem in place.

6. Edgestitch the hem in place.

7. Find the wrap. Place it right side up and flat on your work surface. Place the pocket into position. It should sit 10" down from the top folded edge of the waistband and 5" in from the left edge (the unhemmed edge). Pin in place and then edgestitch in place along both sides and across the bottom, pivoting at the corners.
Finish

1. Create the length of binding, which requires just two strips seamed together rather than the three for the women’s wrap. Bind the bottom edge and the left side in the same manner as above for the women’s wrap – just working along the opposite side.

2. We used white elastic against the white terry cloth. The position of the hook and loop is the reverse of the women’s wrap. The hook side (the rough side) is on the right side of the men’s wrap in line with the right hemmed edge (on the right side). The loop side (the soft side) is on the wrong side of the wrap in line with the bound edge.
3. Stitch both pieces of Velcro® in place in the same manner.

Contributors

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Bath Linens

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