

Fresh Linens: Patchwork Euro Pillow Shams Using Charm Pack Squares

Editor: Liz Johnson

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One of the best ways to add both height and drama to your bed linens is with pillow shams. They sit in front and cover up the more ordinary pillows. Just like in real life... the pretty ones are always in the front row! There are two traditional shapes, regular and Euro. A regular full size sham usually measures around 20" x 26", a regular king approximately 20" x 36", whereas the Euro sham is square, usually about 26" x 26". Our *Fresh Linens* Euro Shams feature an easy yet elegant patchwork center made from a Charm Pack, plus a lovely flange in a coordinating solid.

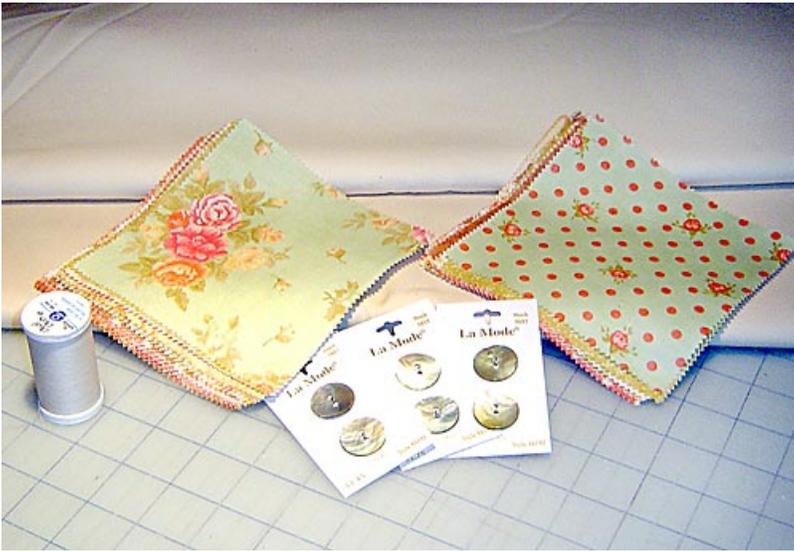
The majority of our *Fresh Linens* projects start with pre-cuts, thanks to our friends at Moda Fabrics who provided us with a full set of all the pre-cuts available for Joanna Figuera's beautiful *Fresh Cottons Collection*.

This collection of fabric has a softly nostalgic feel, but there's nothing old-fashioned about it. That's one of the magical things about Joanna's designs; she pulls in wonderfully vintage themes and colors but the result is never dowdy or out-of date. In fact, they are always new and fresh and fun. To learn more about *Fresh Cottons*, pre-cuts and our nine *Fresh Linens* bedroom projects, read our article, *Fresh Linens Liven up a Guest Bedroom with Crisp, Comfy Color*.

Sewing Tools You Need

- Any Sewing Machine (we recommend the Janome 3160QDC)

Fabric and Other Supplies



Supplies listed are for TWO shams

- Charm Pack (we used thirty-two of forty-two 5" x 5" squares in a standard pack; if you choose not to use a Charm Pack, you'll need to cut thirty-two 5" x 5" squares): *we used Joanna Figueroa's Fresh Cottons Charm Pack by Fig Tree Quilts for Moda Fabrics*
- 2 yards of a 44-45" wide coordinating solid fabric for back and front rectangles: *we used Moda's Bella Solids in Natural*
- 1½ yards of a second 44-45" wide coordinating solid fabric for flange and small front squares: *we used Moda's Bella Solids in Ivory*
- All purpose thread to match fabrics
- See-through ruler
- Iron and ironing board
- Scissors or rotary cutter and mat
- Fabric pen or pencil
- Straight pins
- Tape measure
- 2 Euro style pillows 26" x 26"

Getting Started

The center of the Euro pillow shams are considered to be 'patchwork', a term you hear often in relation to quilting. It's important when doing a project of this nature that you be very consistent in your cutting. This way all the pieces fit together nicely. If you are new to quilting projects see our *Hints & Tips* section below for some tricks on how to cut identical pieces in multiples.

1. Fold the larger piece of coordinating solid fabric (*Bella Solid in Natural in our sample*) selvage to selvage.
2. From this piece, cut TEN 3" strips across the width of the folded fabric.
3. Now, sub-cut the 3" strips into 5" pieces (or 3" x 5" rectangles). You need a total of 80 rectangles to complete both shams.
4. From the remaining piece of this first coordinating solid, cut FOUR 17" x 27" pieces for the envelope back pieces.
5. Fold the other, smaller piece of coordinating solid fabric (*Bella Solid in Ivory in our sample*) selvage to selvage.
6. From this piece, cut FOUR 3" strips across the width of the folded fabric.
7. Now, sub-cut the 3" strips into 3" pieces (or 3" x 3" squares). You need a total of 50 squares to complete both shams.
8. From the remaining piece of the second coordinating solid, cut EIGHT 5" strips across the width of the folded fabric.
9. Now, sub-cut these 5" strips into eight 32" lengths for the flanges.

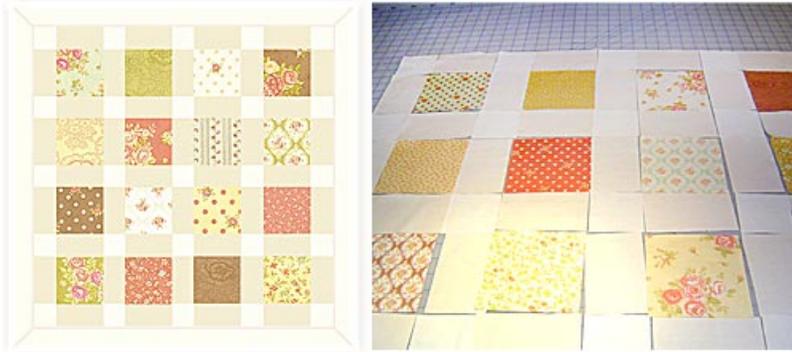
At Your Sewing Machine & Ironing Board

In 'patchwork' it's super important to be consistent when sewing all the pieces together. You should think of it like putting together a puzzle. In the end, all the pieces have to fit together perfectly. Don't worry though, fabric is very forgiving! We're lucky enough to sew on Janome machines in the Sew4Home studio, many of which have Cloth Guides. These help you to

sew a consistent seam, which is really handy with this type of project. For a quick tip on how to make a DIY fabric guide using Post It® notes, see our [Whimsy Quilt project](#).

Determine the layout for each sham

1. You need to decide which patterned fabric you want where BEFORE you began to sew. Do this by laying out all your pieces on a flat surface (both the patterned Charm Pack squares as well as all your solid pieces.) Mix and match until you have two layouts you find pleasing. You can follow our pattern or design your own, but remember, your Charm Pack might have a slightly different selection than ours. There's no 'wrong' design; it's all based on what you like best.



2. Think of the squares and rectangles as a grid. You'll need to pick a direction in which to sew the pieces together. We recommend working from left to right, and then top to bottom. Again, if you are new to quilting, our *Hints & Tips* section below explains a bit about a quilt technique called 'chain piecing'.

Building the rows

1. Using a 1/2" seam allowance, begin by piecing together the first row. This row is made up of the small solid squares and solid rectangles. Match the 3" sides, right sides together, and stitch. Work from left to right, adding one piece at a time until you have your full row of five squares and four rectangles. Press all seams open.
2. Following the same process, sew the next row together. In this row, you'll be piecing together five rectangles and four Charm Squares.
3. Press all the seams open.
4. Working from the top row down, pin these first two rows right sides together. The most important thing to remember is to keep your seams in line with one another. It helps to place a pin in the seam to make sure it's lined up on the other side.



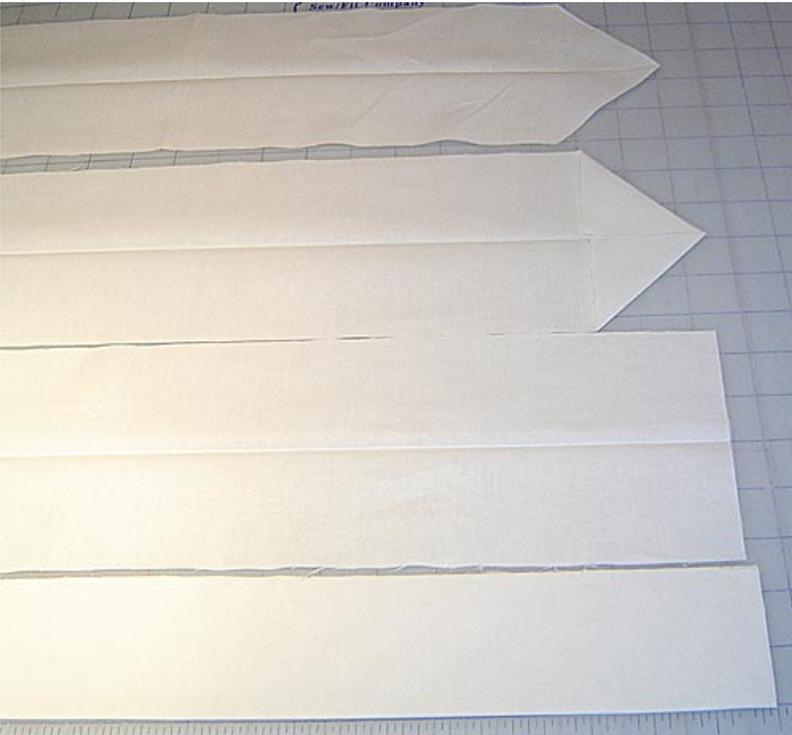
5. Using a 1/2" seam allowance, sew the rows together.
NOTE: As you sew, make sure your seam allowance stays flat underneath; this helps eliminate 'bulk' at each intersecting seam.
6. Continue in the same manner until all nine rows are sewn together from top to bottom.
7. Press all the seams open.
8. Repeat the entire process for the second sham.

Creating the flange

1. Find four of the 5"x 32" solid strips. Fold each strip in half lengthwise and press to create a center crease.
NOTE: The center crease lines will be important in helping to create the mitered corners on the flange.
2. Open up the strips with the fold facing down.
3. Bring in each corner in to meet the center crease line at a 45° angle, creating a point at each end of the strip. Just like

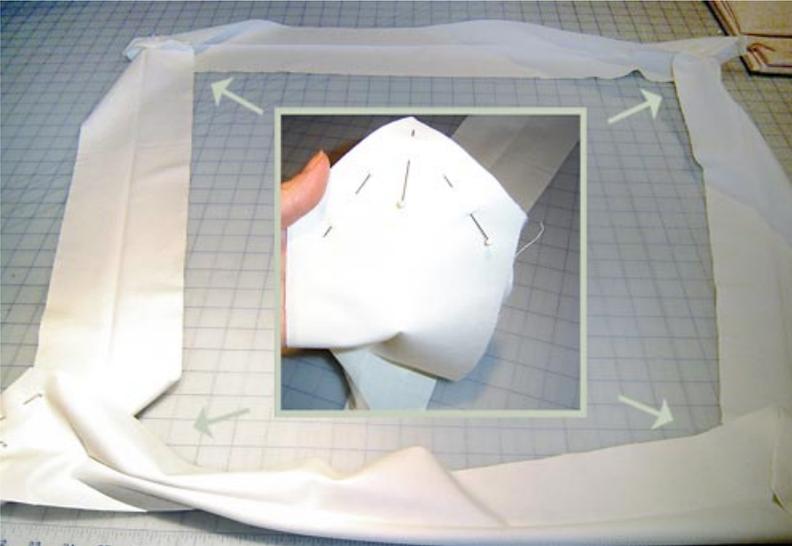
the first steps in making a paper airplane. Press the point in place.

4. Open the pressed points. Trim away the corners along the pressed fold lines, leaving a clean point.

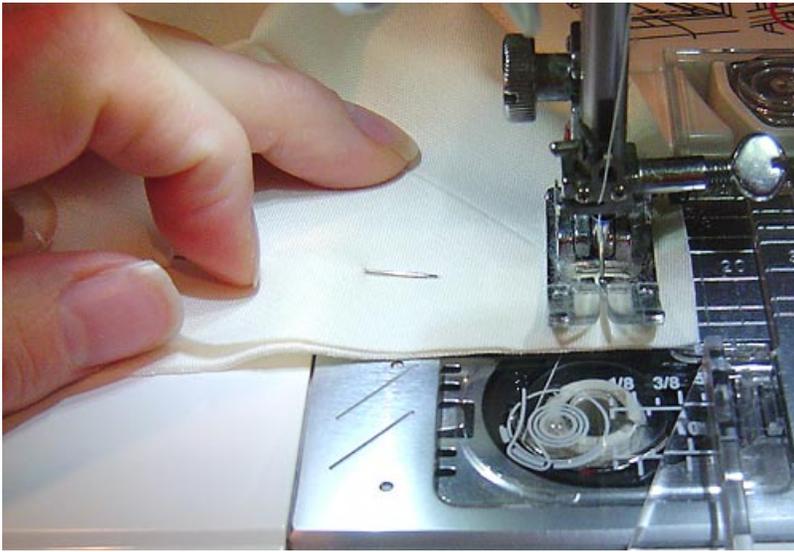


5. Pin the points together, end to end.

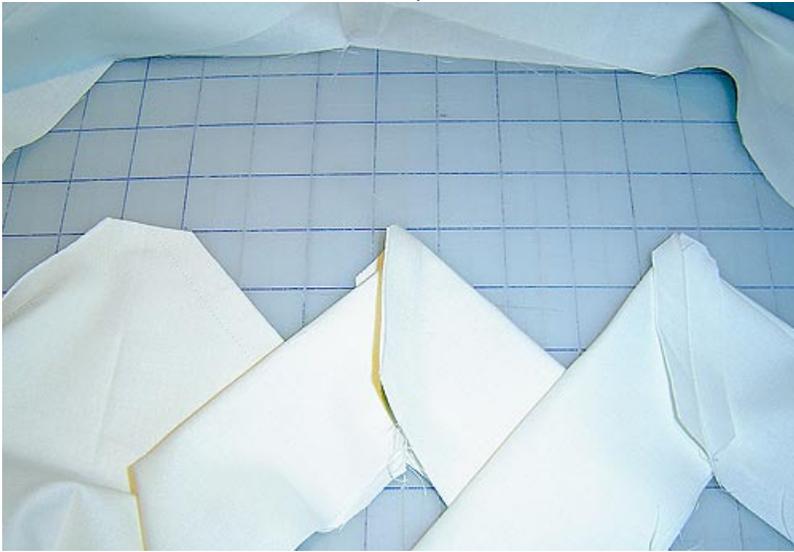
NOTE: *Be sure not to twist the strips, they all need to be right sides together. Use the center crease lines to help you keep track of which are the right sides.*



6. Using a 1/2" seam allowance, sew each point. Start at one side of the corner, sew to the point, stop with the needle down in the crease line, pivot, then continue to sew down the opposite side of the corner.



7. To create the mitered corner, trim away the tip of the point, then pinch and pull the point in the opposite direction so you can see the seam. Press the seam open on both sides.



8. Turn right side out, folding the point back into the original center crease of the flange. Press in place.



9. Repeat these same steps for the remaining three corners of the flange.
10. Place the flange right side together with your patchworked center.
11. Starting in one corner, begin to pin the flange. You want the miter seam of the flange to be aligned with the corner of the patchwork center. To do this, you will need to make a tiny pleat at each corner. This will enable you to turn the corner smoothly when sewing.

12. Pin all four corners first and then pin the layers together in between.

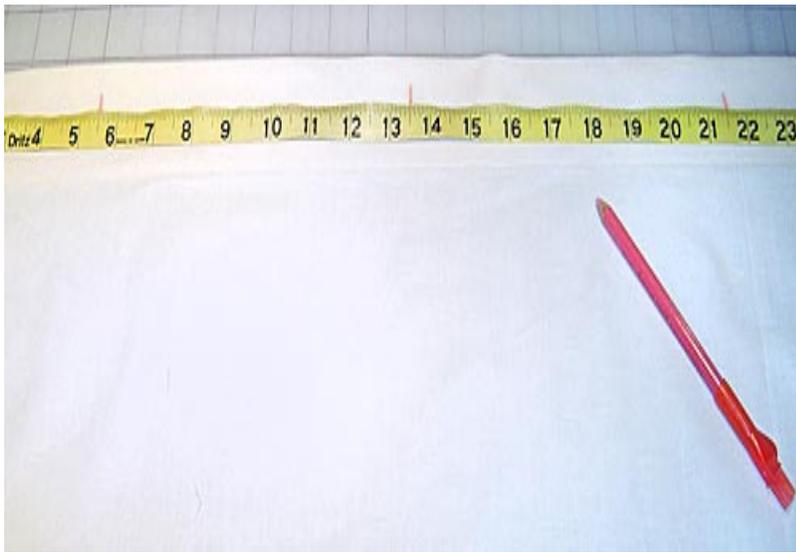


13. Using a $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance, sew the flange in place. At each corner, you will need to sew to the tiny pleat, pivot 45° , sew across the corner to the next pleat, stop with the needle down, and pivot 45° again to continue sewing along the next side.
14. Press flange toward patchwork center.
15. Repeat all that to create the flange for the second sham.

Pillow back



1. Find two of the 17" x 27" solid fabric pillow back pieces.
2. Fold and press $\frac{1}{2}$ " along one 27" side on each pillow back piece.
3. Fold and press again 2" to create a simple double fold hem.
4. Sew along the pressed fold.
5. If you are new to hemming, take a look at our tutorial [How To Make A Simple Hem](#).
6. Repeat for the remaining two pillow back pieces.
7. Using a tape measure and fabric marking pencil, mark the buttonhole positions. Working from left to right, place a mark at $5\frac{1}{2}$ ", $13\frac{1}{2}$ " (center), and $21\frac{1}{2}$ " along the hemmed edge of one pillow back piece.



8. Make buttonholes following the manufacturer's directions for your machine. If your new to buttonholes, you can also take a look at our tutorial: [How to Make a Buttonhole](#)
9. Following the same process as the buttonholes, mark the button placement on the opposite pillow back piece at the same 5½", 13½", and 21½" positions.
10. Thread a hand sewing needle and [sew on the buttons](#).
11. Repeat to make buttonholes and sew on buttons on the remaining two pillow back pieces.
12. Button each set of pillow back pieces together.
13. At the top and bottom, where the two pieces overlap, hand or machine baste the pieces together within the seam allowance. This will help hold the two pieces together when you sew the pillow front to the pillow back.
14. Place one pillow back right sides together with one pillow front. Put the pillow front on top so you can sew along your previous line of stitching. Be sure to tuck in flange, especially at the corners (we suggest pinning these out of the way). You don't want to catch the corners in the seam.



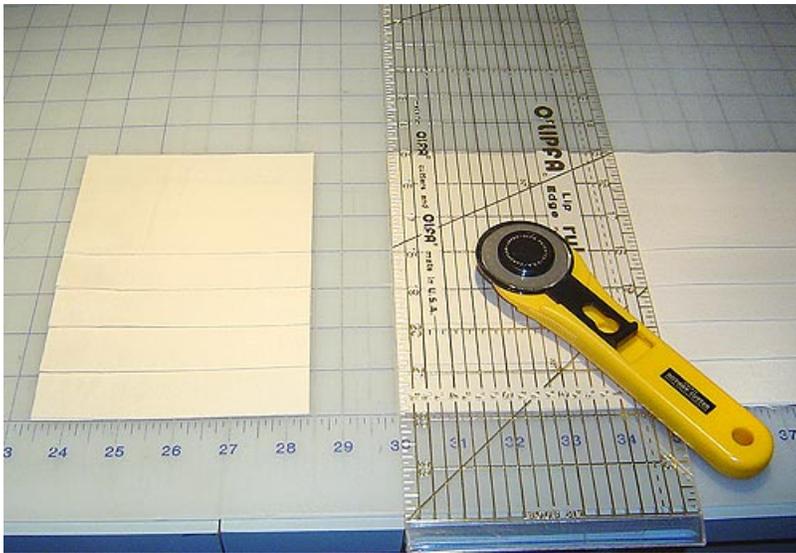
15. Using a ½" seam allowance, sew around all four sides of the pillow sham.
16. Turn right side out through the button opening in the back.
17. Pull out the flange all around and press.
18. Insert a Euro pillow form.
19. Repeat these same steps to finish second sham.

Hints and Tips

How to cut multiple, same-size pieces at once

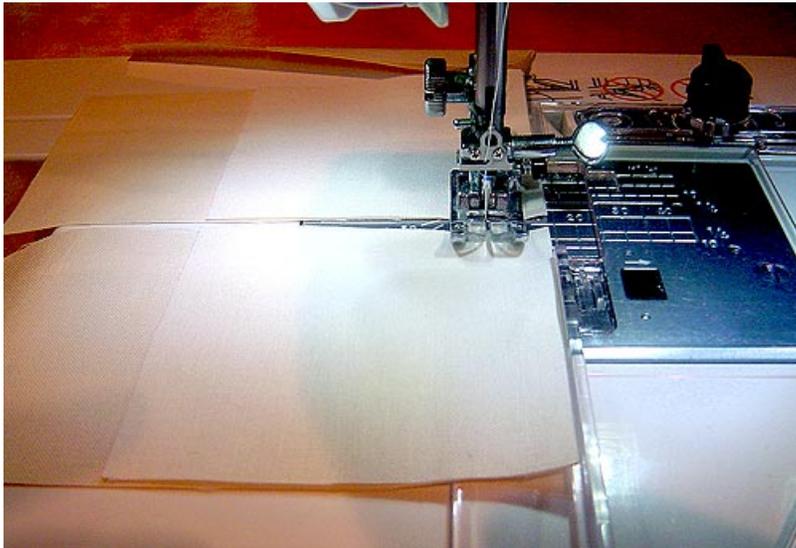
You can cut the squares and rectangles needed for these Euro shams quickly and easily. Using a rotary cutter and cutting mat, overlap the cut strips from the width of fabric, using the 1" grid marks on a cutting mat. Make sure your strips are layered

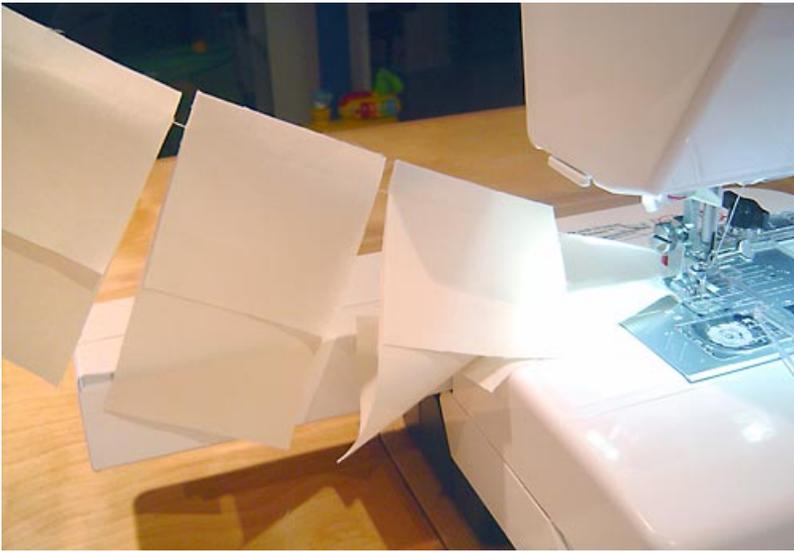
straight across. Now, simply line up your see-through ruler and cut the widths you need. If you have 3 strips layered, you can cut 6 squares at one time!



How to chain-piece

In a project like this, you can do what's called 'chain piecing'. This means you create pairs, such as the squares and rectangles. You simply count the number of pairs you need, and keep feeding them through your sewing machine without clipping the threads in between, making a the 'chain'. You continue this process until the row is complete. In this project, there are an odd number of squares per row, so you'll need to sew that last little square on the end.





Other helpful tutorials

[How to Make a Simple Hem](#)

[How to Sew on Buttons by Machine](#)

[How to Make a Buttonhole](#)

[Quilting Basics Part 1: Tools, Cutting & Piecing](#)

Contributors

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Sample Creation and Instructional Outline: Jodi Kelly

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