

Make Your Own
BEDSPREADS



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A handsome bedspread easily can be the center of interest for your bedroom. It may serve as covering or it may provide an important decorative touch. Often, it does both.

Before selecting a bedspread, study your needs. The type of room, the people using the room, and the style of furniture will help determine the kind of spread you should use.

While there is a wide variety to consider, bedspreads usually fall into one of the four following classifications:

1. Tufted—chenille, candlewick, or punch work.
2. Woven—The color and pattern are woven into the fabric.
3. Coverlets and quilts.
4. Custom tailored—made of firmly woven fabrics (antique satins, linen, chintz, glosheen, denim, percale, etc.) with custom detail as quilted top, ruffles, flounces, applique, or embroidered designs.

Each kind may be purchased ready made or may be custom made. This discussion is designed specifically for the last group—the tailored or custom made type bedspread.

By making your own spread, you can not only save money but you can choose the exact fabric, color, and style to harmonize with other bedroom furnishings. The fabric and the style of spread will be determined by the type of room and the way the room is used.

A boy's room usually needs strong colors, bold patterns, and sturdy fabrics. Denims, twills, corduroy, linens, and bulky weaves are good examples. These fabrics would also be appropriate for multi-purpose bedrooms. With these fabrics, you would expect to use more tailored designs.

Light weight fabrics in pastel colors and delicate designs suggests a girl's bedroom or a special guest room. Polished cottons, chintzes, ginghams, organdies, and taffetas usually lend themselves well to feminine styles.

SELECT YOUR FABRIC

When you have decided on the style spread to use you are ready to select fabric. The variety of colors, textures, designs, fibers and weaves on today's market makes this an interesting experience.

Consider the following factors in making your choice:

1. A firm weave of sufficient weight to hold its shape will be easy to work with and will wear much longer. Loosely woven fabrics ravel, stretch, and pull out at the seams.
2. Since the bedspread covers a large area, choice of color is important. Color may be chosen to blend with other colors in the room or to give contrast.

3. Pattern is often used to add interest in the room. Stripes, florals, or geometric designs may be used satisfactorily, depending on the effect you wish to create.

4. Consider texture in selecting fabric for your spread. The nubby textured fabrics express a feeling of informality. The smooth, shiny textures are used for more formal rooms.

5. Look for fabrics that will launder or dry clean easily. The label which reads "Sanforized" or "Pre-shrunk" means that the fabric will not shrink more than 2 per cent.

6. Color fastness to light, washing, and dry cleaning is desirable for a cover you use every day or for a long period of time.

7. New finishes which repel moisture and soil and resist wrinkles are used on many fabrics. These qualities are highly desirable in a bedspread.

ESTIMATE THE YARDAGE

Make up the bed with sheets, blankets and pillows to take measurements. Measure each bed individually to determine length and width for finished spreads. These measurements will help you estimate the amount of fabric you will need and will help you cut and use the fabric to best advantage. Although standard beds can vary an inch or two, the following chart shows accepted measurements for standard mattress sizes. (Figure 1)

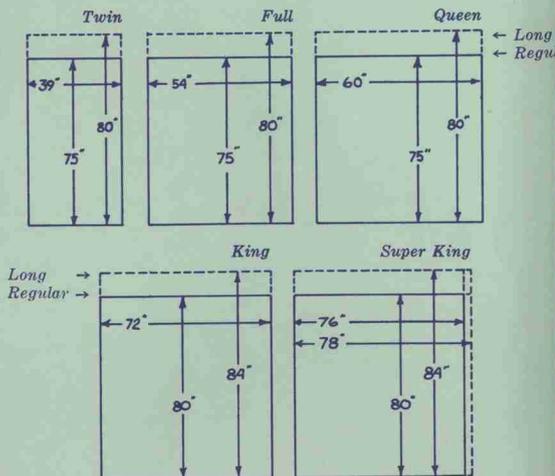


Figure 1

In addition to measurements for width and length of the mattress, you will need to measure for the overhang of the spread on the sides and at the foot and make allowance for covering the pillows.

Amount of overhang will vary according to the style of the spread and the distance from the top of the mattress to the floor.

A minimum of 20" extra length is needed if the spread is to tuck under and cover the pillows. If pillow covers are separate from the spread, the style of the cover will determine the amount of fabric needed.

The following measurements will be helpful in computing fabric needs:

Width of mattress _____ inches

Length of mattress _____ inches

Overhang on sides (2 sides) _____ inches
(top of mattress to bottom of spread)

Overhang at foot _____ inches
(top of mattress to bottom of spread)

Allowance for pillows _____ inches

Allowance for cording _____ inches
(Allow for 1/2" seams. Hem allowances will depend on the style of the spread.)

You can make your own layout chart by fitting these measurements to the width of fabric you wish to use. This chart will determine the exact amount of fabric you need to buy. Keep in mind that the lengthwise grain of the fabric should run from top to bottom of the spread. If the sides are fitted, the type of weave and/or design of the fabric will determine the direction of the length-wise grain line for the overhang.

For adequate fullness in a shirred flounce, allow two to two-and-one-half times the combined measurements for the length and width of the bed. Self cording requires approximately an extra yard of fabric.

DECIDE ON DECORATIVE DETAIL

The trend in decorating bedrooms is to use matching draperies and spreads. Repetition of fabrics and styling provides a feeling of harmony and coordination.

The choice of trims and finish details provides variety and individuality. Braids, fringes, bindings and decorative accents are available to fit almost any fabric, style of spread or room decor. Cording not only comes in a variety of sizes but may be self-covered or covered in contrasting fabric.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CONSTRUCTION

The same good sewing techniques used for making seams, bindings, hems, etc. on other items are applied to making bedspreads. Good workmanship is always an earmark of quality. Fabrics should be pre-shrunk and straightened so there is no evidence of "off-grain."

The style of the bedspread will determine the seam lines, finishing details, and trim. The width of the fabric will also influence the finishing detail of the top. If more than one width is needed for the top, the first width is centered and a second width is cut to fit on either side to provide the amount required to make the top. All seams should be at least 1/2 inch and should be finished neatly.

All custom-tailored spreads will wear longer, will wrinkle less, and look better if they are lined. It is almost essential to line light-weight fabrics. Quilting will also add to the wearing quality of many fabrics. Use a firmly woven pre-shrunk muslin or other fabrics especially designed for lining. When a lining is used, be sure that it has been pre-shrunk. The two fabrics may be cut and handled as one. (Figures 2 and 3)

DIAGRAM OF SECTIONS OF BEDSPREADS

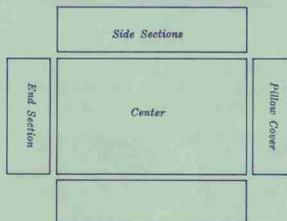


Figure 2

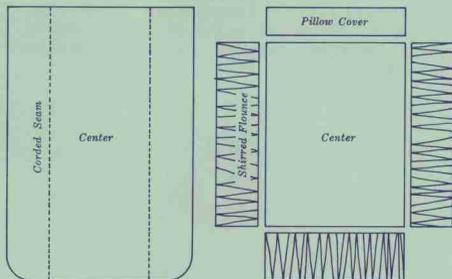


Figure 3

DUST RUFFLES

Dust ruffles may or may not be used according to the style of spread. If they are used, the material used for them and the style should be appropriate and pleasing with the spread.

There are two usual ways of fitting the dust ruffle. A round rod with spring socket suction-cup ends may be made to fit between the bedposts. A casing is made at the top of the dust ruffle to fit this rod. Or, the dust ruffle may be attached to a sheet fitted between the mattress and springs.

COVERING THE CORD

Covered cording may be purchased in a variety of colors or plain cording may be covered with fabric of your choice. If you cover the cord, both the fabric and cord should be preshrunk.

The covering should be cut on a true bias. Several yards of bias may be cut in a continuous piece by the following method:
Take a 30 inch square of material, fold diagonally and cut on the fold. (Figure 4)

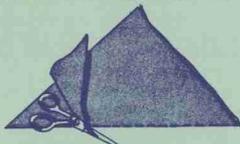


Figure 4

With right sides together, turn the top piece a quarter turn and match the lengthwise edges. Make a $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch seam and press open. (Figure 5)

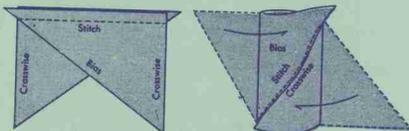


Figure 5

Lay the fabric flat, wrong side down. Fold each triangle in half to form rectangle. Put the crosswise edges together so that the edges extend $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches at each end. Sew $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch seam and press open.



You now have a continuous cylinder with a $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch extension at each side, which starts and ends the bias strip. Fit this over the end of an ironing board and use a measuring gauge to cut the strip evenly. (Figure 6)

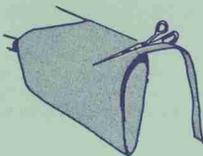


Figure 6

Use an adjustable cording foot to stitch the cord into the bias strip. Keep the edges of the strip together and guide the fabric without either pushing or pulling. (Figure 7)

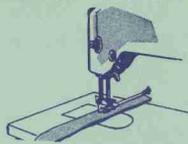


Figure 7

OTHER REFERENCES

- Better Bedding for Better Sleep, North Carolina Agricultural Extension Service, Home Economics 7.
- Selection of Household Linens, Mimeo, House Furnishings Department, North Carolina Agricultural Extension Service.
- Decorating With Slip Covers, North Carolina Agricultural Extension Service, Home Economics 20.

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