



Ruffles

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Ruffles are gathered strips of fabric applied or joined to another portion of a project. They may be used at a garment or sleeve hemline, around a pillow edge, down the front of a shirt, or numerous other locations where soft fullness is desired.

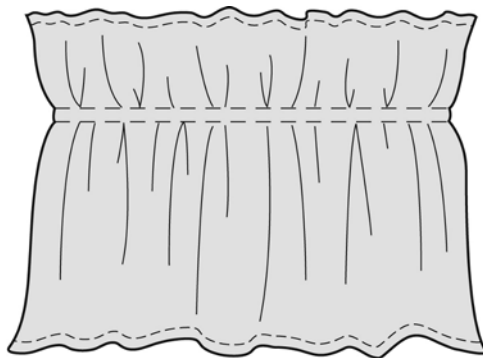
Ruffle Types

Ruffles can be made several ways depending on the application. Edges can be hemmed, serged or finished with lace, trims, bias tape, etc.

Single-layer ruffles are simply finished on one edge and joined to the garment or project on the other side.

Double-layer ruffles have a folded exposed edge, so there's no need for hemming; the second layer makes them sturdier than their single-layer counterparts. The photo above shows a double-layer ruffle.

Ruffles with headers (1) are gathered inside the ruffle width, as opposed to on the edge, and are applied to the base fabric surface, rather than within a seam. Both ruffle edges are completely finished before applying to the base fabric. The term double ruffle is sometimes used to designate a headered ruffle that's gathered in the center, creating an equal flounce on both sides of the gathering (see 3 on next page).



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Preparing Ruffles

Ruffle strips can be cut on the straight grain or bias, depending on the desired look, fabric selection and application. Ruffles that are going around curves (like necklines or round pillows) tend to drape better when cut on the bias.

Since ruffles are gathered, use lightweight fabrics to avoid excess bulk.

Most ruffles require multiple fabric strips for sufficient fullness. The pre-gathered length should be three times the finished length to allow for adequate gathering. Seam strips together and press seams open or finish to one side.

The wider the finished ruffle, the more fullness is needed to give a professional look. So, experiment with your fabric to determine the perfect ruffle fullness before cutting.

Single-layer Ruffles

Determine the desired finished ruffle width and add two seam allowances. Narrowly double hem or otherwise finish the exposed ruffle edge. If the ruffle is continuous (like on a hemline), join end seams.

Double-layer Ruffles

Determine the desired finished width, double it and add two seam allowances. If the ruffle is continuous (like on a hemline),

join end seams. Fold the ruffle in half and press the folded edge.

Headered Ruffles

Determine the desired finished width and sew strips together for adequate length. If the ruffle is continuous, join ends. Narrowly double hem or otherwise finish both sides of the ruffle strip.

Gathering

There are several ways to gather ruffles, and it's important to have evenly distributed fullness for a professional look.

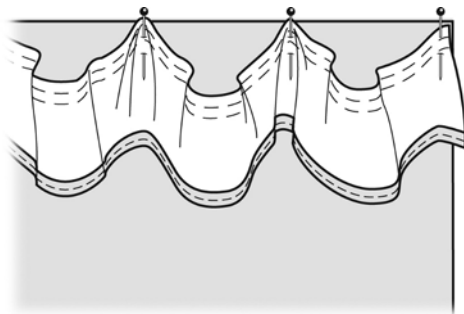
Stitch two rows of basting stitching within the seamline on single- or double-layer ruffles. Leave thread ends long for pulling.

On headered ruffles, stitch two basting lines along the header position, leaving thread ends long enough to pull.

As an alternative to gathering by basting, stitch over a narrow cord using a zigzag stitch, being careful not to catch the cord in the stitching.

Attaching Ruffles

To attach double- or single-layer ruffles to the project edge, divide the space on both into quarters. Pin-match the ruffle markings to the project quadrants, right sides together (2), and pull up the ruffle gathering threads to match the length. Be sure to anchor one end of the gathering threads to avoid pulling them out. Adjust the gathers evenly before joining the pieces.

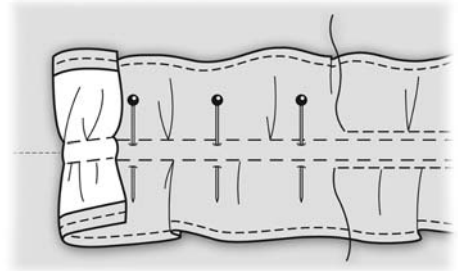


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When the ruffle is stitched to the project, remove any gathering threads that show on the right side. Finish any exposed seam edges together using a zigzag or serging; otherwise encase the ruffle between the project layers (i.e. neckline and facing; pillow front and back, etc.).

To attach a headered ruffle to an edge, finish the underside seam allowance with zigzagging or serging, and quarter the distance of the project and ruffle portions. Position the ruffle over the finished edge, lapping as needed for proper placement, and pull up gathers to fit. Topstitch the ruffle in place along the rows of gathering.

When a ruffle is applied within a project, as opposed to at an edge, simply topstitch it in place by stitching along the gathering lines (3).



3

After attaching a ruffle to a project, lightly press the seam allowances with the tip of the iron to flatten. Avoid pressing the ruffle fullness itself. Press any seam allowances away from the ruffle.

Turning Corners

If you're applying a ruffle to a project with a corner (such as a pillow or collar), allow extra ruffle fullness for turning the corner. When joining an adjacent project piece, such as a pillow back or undercollar, be careful to avoid stitching tucks in the ruffle at the corner(s)—pin the fullness folds carefully and check before turning right side out.

Ruffler

If your machine has a ruffler attachment, use it to gather or pleat ruffles before attaching them to the project. Rufflers also allow you to attach and gather a ruffle to a flat piece of fabric under it, so you can make and apply the ruffle in one step.

Follow your owner's manual instructions for using the ruffler attachment. 🖱️