

Plaid Flannel + Faux Fur Pillows

Featuring an Optional Invisible Zipper Closure by Sew4Home.com

An exclusive S4H project for Janome Canada

Design by Anne Adams, Instructions by Liz Johnson, Sample by Debbie Guild

Traditional plaid and lush faux fur, it's a classic combination that immediately signals the need to snuggle in front of a crackling fire in your rustic cabin in the woods. What? No cabin in the woods?! No worries. These Plaid Flannel + Faux Fur Pillows will look just as amazing anywhere they end up!

Our friends at Sew4Home created this cozy custom project exclusively for Janome Canada users.

You'll learn some very handy tips for sewing with faux fur as well as see two different presser feet used to insert the optional invisible zipper: a traditional Concealed Zipper foot and a new take, using the Janome AcuFeed™ Flex fabric feeding system.

Learning to insert an invisible zipper is a great skill to add to your sewing toolbox. It comes in handy on a variety of projects from garments to home décor. Of course, you don't HAVE to use a zipper. You could choose to simply leave an opening through which to insert the pillow form, then hand stitch the opening. You could do that, but wouldn't it be so much more fun to learn something new?!



Continental M7 Professional

This project can be made on any Janome machine; the S4H crew used the Continental M7.

> Learn more about the [Award Winning M7](#)

Finished Size: 18 x 18"

Skill Level: Confident Beginner



Sew4Home provides inspiring tutorials that are expertly designed and have easy to understand instructions with gorgeous photography. To get to know Sew4Home better, visit [Sew4Home.com](#)

Project photos courtesy of S4H. Any unexpressed use of these images in whole or in part are strictly prohibited.

Sewing Tools Needed

- Sewing Machine; S4H used the Janome Continental M7
- Standard presser foot
- Walking or Even Feed foot or engage your machine's built-in fabric feeding system - to help move the disparate layers evenly; S4H used the AcuFeed™ Flex feeding system on the Janome Continental M7
- Concealed Zipper foot

Fabric and Supplies Needed



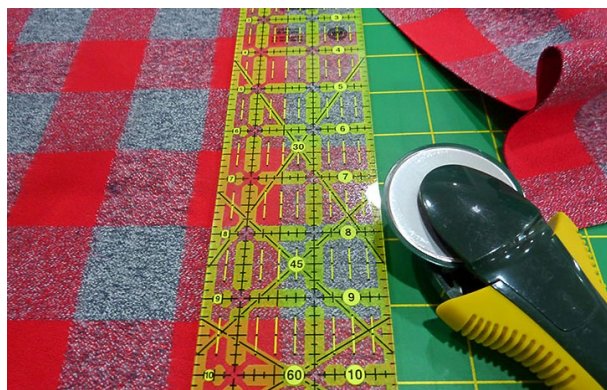
Note: The yardages listed below are for ONE pillow, however, with 44"+ width fabrics, the cuts recommended should allow you to make two identical pillows. A bit extra is included to allow for fussy cutting.

- 5/8 yard of 44"+ wide mid-weight, large print plaid flannel for Side A; S4H used two plaids from the Mammoth Flannel collection by Robert Kaufman Fabrics
- 5/8 yard of 44"+ wide lightweight faux fur for Side B; S4H used two luxury faux fur options from Shannon Fabrics
- ONE 12-14" invisible zipper
- All-purpose thread to match fabric
- See-through ruler and a fabric pen or pencil
- Seam gauge and seam ripper
- Sharp scissors with pointed ends
- Rotary cutter and mat
- Iron and ironing board
- Straight pins
- Sharpie marker or similar to draw cut lines on the back of the faux fur

Getting Started

Step 1: From the fabric for Side A (the plaid flannel in our sample), fussy cut ONE 18 x 18" square

Note: When working with plaid, fussy cutting is super important. Use the lines within the plaid as your cutting guides and make sure the plaid is centered within the square from side to side and top to bottom. For more about [fussy cutting](#), check out our full tutorial.



Step 2: From the fabric for Side A (the faux fur in our sample), cut ONE 18 x 18" square - that sounds simple, but cutting faux fur takes some extra steps. You need to cut out your panel without giving the faux fur a haircut. It won't grow back, and you'll have a bald spot when you try to sew the seams together.

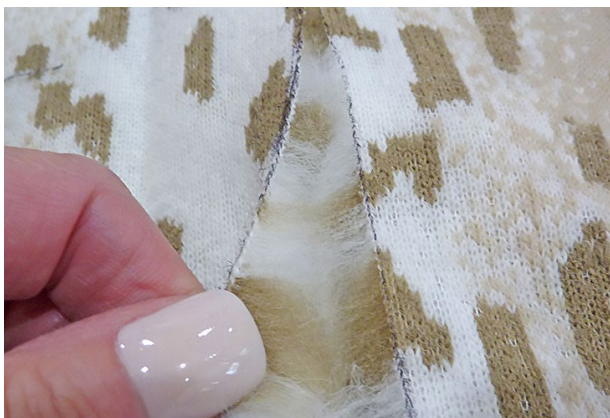
Step 3: First, draw out your 18 x 18" square on the BACK of the faux fur with a Sharpie marker or similar. If your chosen faux fur has a design on it, take the extra time to fussy cut to center that motif top to bottom and side to side.



Step 4: Find the sharp scissors with the pointed ends. Using these, carefully cut along your drawn lines. When cutting, the idea is to cut only the backing and not the fur pile. Use just the tips of the scissors. With the wrong side facing up, slide the bottom blade of your scissors up next to the backing.



Step 5: Cut with short, deliberate snips, being careful to cut just the backing. If you feel a drag, you're starting to cut the nap. Back off and start again. It's a good idea to practice cutting on a scrap to get a feel for it.



Step 6: When done, peel away your pretty square with its flowing faux fur edges.



For more about sewing with faux fur, [review the full S4H tutorial](#) which has more tips and tricks.

Sewing Instructions

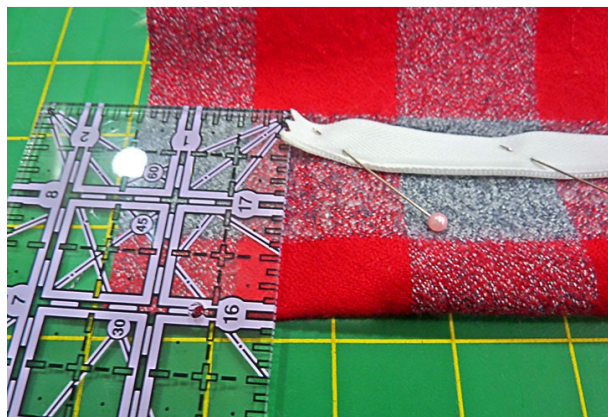
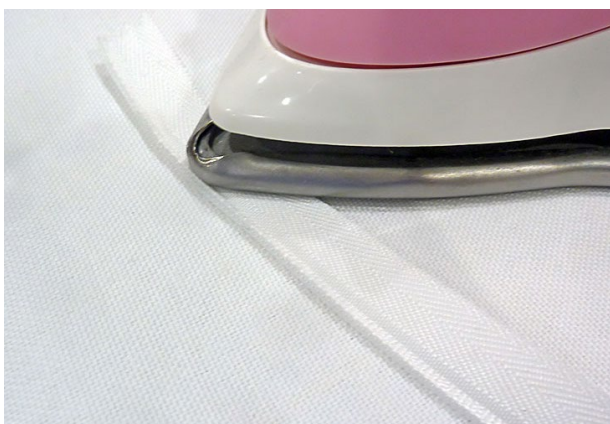
The invisible zipper, using AcuFeed™ Flex

As mentioned in the introduction, no one is going to force you to put in an invisible zipper. But, it's a great skill to practice and it means your pillow cover can be removed for cleaning or if you want to re-use the pillow insert when it's time to update your pillowscape for a new season.

Step 1: Measure 1½" in from each side edge along what will be the bottom of your zipper. The key to keep in mind regarding top versus bottom is the direction of the nap on your faux fur. You want the nap running down from top to bottom. In the photo below, we've off-set the two layers just a bit so you can see how we've marked the 1½" measurement on both layers.



Step 2: Iron the invisible zipper along each side to uncurl the teeth. By doing this, you will be able to sew more accurately along the edge of the coil. If you don't do this, your invisible zipper probably won't be so invisible after it's sewn in place. Be sure to use the synthetic setting on your iron, otherwise you could melt the nylon teeth.



Note: When the zipper tape is pinned right sides together with the fabric, the zipper will seem like it's twisted, but it's not! Once it's zipped closed, the seam allowance will turn to the wrong side with the zipper. This is one of those sewing-mind-bender situations. You just gotta roll with it and trust it will all work out in the end.

Step 3: This type of zipper is best installed with the two sides of the seam loose from each other, which is why it is the first step in these instructions.

A zipper has a right and wrong side, just like fabric. An invisible zipper must be placed right sides together with your fabric, working with one side of the zipper, then the other.

The zipper coil needs to line up with the seam allowance. For this, use a seam gauge for positioning. From the coil to the edge of your fabric should equal your seam allowance. For this project, our seam allowance is $\frac{1}{2}$ ".

Using the original $1\frac{1}{2}$ " guides you marked above, pin one side of the zipper in place.

As shown, we are starting with the plaid side. Remember, pin the zipper and the fabric right sides together.

Step 4: Starting at the top of the zipper, stitch along the inside of the zipper coil. Use a backstitch at the very top to secure the start of the seam.



Note: We used our AcuFeed™ Flex built in fabric feeding system for this first example because it is very helpful when stitching the faux fur side of the zipper in place. But fear not, below we show you that a standard Concealed Zipper foot can also work.

Step 5: Continue as far down as you can go until you reach the zipper pull. Backstitch again at the bottom to secure the seam.

Be sure to sew slowly, it helps with accuracy and prevents puckering.



Note: Our flannel had a strong tendency towards raveling, so we took the time to finish the edge of the zipper tape and flannel with a zig zag stitch.

Step 6: Pin the second side of the zipper to the faux fur panel, making sure to align it perfectly parallel with the plaid panel.



Step 7: Brush the nap of the faux fur down and away from the coil as you pin. You can also see our zig zag finishing stitch along the plaid side of the zipper in the photo below.



Step 8: Stitch the second side of the zipper. Because we opted to use the helpful Janome AcuFeed™ Flex feeding system, we sewed with the zipper closed. This is different than when using the Concealed Zipper foot (as shown below), but it allowed some extra stability to keep the layers flat and the fur out of the way. Because the AcuFeed™ Flex system is keeping the layers feeding evenly from both the top and bottom, we were able to actually sew on top of the zipper itself, which is what allowed us to sew right along the coil, similar to what is possible with the Concealed Zipper foot.

As with the first side, stitch from the top to the bottom.



Concealed Zipper foot

The zipper insertion can all be done with a standard Concealed Zipper foot. Pin in the same manner, right sides together.

Step 1: Insert the top of the zipper into the appropriate groove on the foot. This is where pressing the zipper pays off. The zipper lays nice and flat. The metal toe on the front of the foot pushes the coils to the side so the needle can sew exactly where it needs to for a perfect invisible zipper seam.



Step 2: Stitch from top down, again getting as close to the zipper pull at the bottom as possible.



Step 3: Pin the second side in place against the fur.



Step 4: Stitch from top to bottom on this second side. You do need to go slowly and take care to brush the nap of the fur out of the way as you stitch.



Note: If you want/need even more details about invisible zippers as well as the Concealed Zipper foot, take a look at [S4H's full tutorial prior to starting the project.](#)

Finish construction

With the zipper installed and open nearly all the way, place the front and back panels right sides together, aligning the remaining three sides as well as the unsewn ends at the top and bottom of the zipper.

Step 1: Pin in place all around... but DON'T pin willy-nilly, letting the nap of the fur stick out as in the photo below.



Step 2: As you did above when installing the zipper, tuck the nap down and out of the way when pinning the plaid to the faux fur. An aluminum knitting needle works well as a tool to tuck in all those hairs



Note: Don't forget to review the [S4H Sewing with Faux Fur tutorial](#) for more tips and tricks.

Step 3: Using the built-in AcuFeed™ Flex feeding system or a traditional Even Feed/Walking foot, stitch around the three unsewn edges of the pillow first (the top and both sides) with a 1/2" seam allowance. Remember to stop and sharply pivot at the two top corners.



Step 4: Remove the pillow cover from the machine and re-position to stitch the bottom corners. Drop the needle in about 1" from the end of the side seam. Stitch to the corner, sharply pivot, and stitch to meet the zipper seam. Stop and lock the seam.



Step 5: Repeat at the opposite side.
[Clip the corners.](#)

Note: If you feel like your flannel is raveling too much, you may want to consider finishing all your seam allowances with a zig zag stitch as we did above along the zipper insertion.

Step 6: Turn the cover right side out through the open zipper. Using your finger or a long, blunt tool, such as a knitting needle, chopstick or point turner, push out all the corners.

If you followed our 'tuck and pin' suggestion above, you should have a lovely, clean seam. However, working from the right side, you can also use a dull pencil or a knitting needle to pick stray fur hairs out of the seam. Tweezers would also work but you need to be careful not to break the hairs.

Step 7: Insert the pillow form and fluff it out into the corners. Zip closed.



Note: Of course, if you opted to avoid the invisible zipper (that would be sad!), you'll leave an approximate 12" opening along your bottom seam through which to insert the pillow form. Pin the opening closed, making sure the pinned section is flush with the sewn seam. Hand stitch closed with a [tight ladder stitch](#) to finish.