

# Waterfall Cushion

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*Waterfall cushions are commonly used in wicker and wood-framed furniture.* THEIR SIMPLISTIC DESIGN PROVIDES AN ECONOMICAL ALTERNATIVE TO BOX CUSHION COVERS, AND MAKES THEM IDEAL FOR USE OUTDOORS. AS THE NAME SUGGESTS, WATERFALL CUSHIONS ALLOW RAINWATER TO ROLL OFF THE FRONT, LESSENING THE POSSIBILITY OF TRAPPED MOISTURE. IT IS THE TRAPPED MOISTURE THAT PROMOTES MILDEW GROWTH AND CAN DAMAGE THE FIBERS OF THE FABRIC.

*This type of cushion is surprisingly easy to make.* THEY ARE CREATED WITH ONE MAIN CUT OF FABRIC WHICH WRAPS FROM THE TOP BACK ZIPPER ASSEMBLY, DOWN THE FRONT, EXTENDING ALL THE WAY BACK TO THE OTHER SIDE OF ZIPPER ASSEMBLY. THE ZIPPER ASSEMBLY IS CREATED BY ADDING BOXING STRIP EXTENSIONS TO EITHER SIDE OF THE ZIPPER CLOSURE. THESE EXTENSIONS MEET UP WITH MAIN CUT TO CREATE THE FRONT RISE.

*Any outdoor fabric would be suitable for this type of cushion.* I RECOMMEND SUNBRELLA® WOVEN JACQUARDS BECAUSE THEY ARE MADE WITH ACRYLIC FIBERS WHICH ARE EXTREMELY DURABLE FOR INDOOR AND OUTDOOR USE. CUSHIONS MADE WITH THESE FABRICS CAN BE WASHED REGULARLY (WITHOUT SHRINKING) AND ARE INHERENTLY UV AND MILDEW RESISTANT. CHOOSE DESIGNS THAT ARE MULTI-DIRECTIONAL SO THAT THE CUSHIONS CAN BE FLIPPED OVER WITHOUT AFFECTING THE UPRIGHT PLACEMENT OF THE DESIGN.

*Follow these simple step-by-step instructions to create perfect Waterfall cushions.*

**STEP 1: DETERMINE CUT WIDTH**

Working from the fit of an existing cover, measure from seam to seam (left to right) at the widest point, and add  $\frac{3}{4}$ " seam allowance to both sides. The cut width of this cushion is 23" wide (  $21\frac{1}{2}$ " seam to seam).

Note: If you are building a new cushion insert, the foam insert should fit the chair opening (DO NOT make a deduction or an increase to the foam cut). The Bonded Dacron batting will provide the loft and fill out the cushion cover nicely. Since the foam cut fits the chair opening, you can use these measures, plus seam allowances, to determine your fabric cuts.

**STEP 2: DETERMINE CUT LENGTH**

Measure the overall length of the cushion cut by starting the tape at the center back (at the top of the zipper assembly) and continuing around the front, ending at the bottom center back (at the bottom of the zipper assembly). Add  $\frac{3}{4}$ " seam allowance to each end. The cut length of this cushion is 64" ( $62\frac{1}{2}$ " seam to seam).

**STEP 3: TRACE THE SHAPE OF THE CURVE**

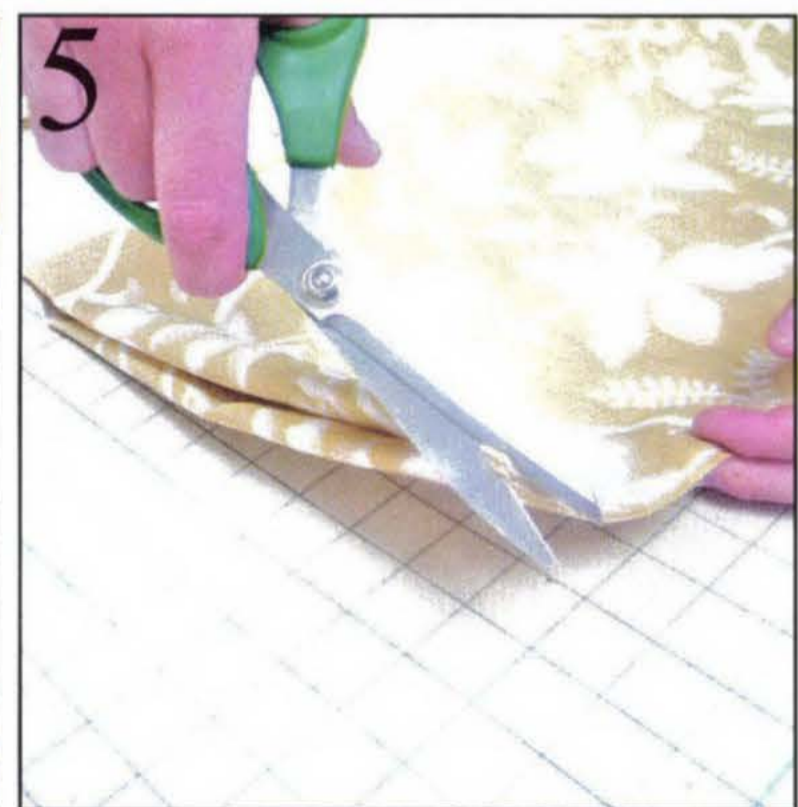
Place your fabric rectangle around the existing cushion and confirm that you have made a good cut. With an erasable marking pen, draw the curved shape of the cushion on one side.

**STEP 4: FOLD, FOLD AGAIN, AND CUT**

Fold the rectangle lengthwise, and again across the width so that you can create the same curved shape through all four layers of fabric. Be sure to include  $\frac{3}{4}$ " seam allowance in your cut.

**STEP 5: NOTCH CENTER OF EACH SIDE**

The neatness and efficiency of your cushion will be improved if you make a small notch in the exact center of each side. You will use the markings later to get the perfect placement of the zipper assembly.





#### STEP 6: CREATE ZIPPER ASSEMBLY

The zipper panels and side boxing strips are joined to create the zipper assembly. Begin by cutting two strips across the full width of the fabric. The rise of the cuts is determined by the thickness of the foam plus  $\frac{3}{4}$ " seam allowance on both sides. In this example, the foam (not including the Dacron wrap) is 4" thick, and the zipper strips are cut to 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".

**NOTE:** With the exception of striped fabrics (which you will want to align at the center back), don't worry about pattern placement, matching, or direction of cut. The zipper assembly is not a visible part of the finished cushion. The actual length of the zipper is not critical either. Don't waste time trying to match the length of the zipper to the previous cushion cover. The longer the zipper, the easier it will be to remove and replace the cover.

Fold one of the strips in half lengthwise (good side out) and stitch a length of #5 Nylon zipper chain down one side. If you have a walking-foot machine, use heavy outdoor polyester thread, as it will be the most resistant to the elements. In this example, the zipper chain is about 30" long, and a tan color outdoor thread is used.

Fold the other strip in half lengthwise (good side out) and stitch it to the other side of the zipper.

Cut off the extra fabric at the end of the zipper chain. These pieces are to be unfolded and stitched (good sides together) to either end of the zipper panels to extend the side boxing. Don't forget to add the zipper pull before closing off the ends. Finish the edges by serging, cutting  $\frac{1}{4}$ " off with the serger blade, and leaving tidy  $\frac{1}{2}$ " finished seams. The zipper assembly is now complete.

**NOTE:** Unlike box cushions, Waterfall cushions don't usually have a pocket to hide the zipper pull. Because there is no welt, a pocket creates a lump of seam allowance that is visible from the top of the cushion.

**STEP 7: BEGIN STITCHING ZIPPER ASSEMBLY TO CUSHION PIECE**

Notch the exact center of the zipper assembly (on both the top and bottom). Place it (good side up) at the machine, then place the center back of the cushion cut (good side down) on top, matching up the center notches. Begin to stitch around the first curve,  $\frac{3}{4}$ " in from the cut edge.

**STEP 8: MARK THE TURN**

As you approach the notch in the center front of the main cushion cut, make two markings that indicate the turning points for the rise of the cushion. In this example, the foam is 4" thick, and the turning points are marked at exactly 4" (centered with 2" on either side of the notch).

**STEP 9: SNIP SEAM ALLOWANCE**

Snip the seam allowance at your turn markings (through the top layer only, not the zipper assembly) so that you can manipulate the top layer of fabric around the turn the corner.

**STEP 10: TURN 1ST CORNER**

As you turn the 1st corner, you may make a sharp turn or round it out. This is personal preference. In either case, be careful that the center notch ends up in the center of the short side of the boxing extension. If that center point (which is the center point of the rise of the cushion) is not lined up perfectly, the entire cushion will be twisted and crooked.

**STEP 11: TURN 2ND CORNER**

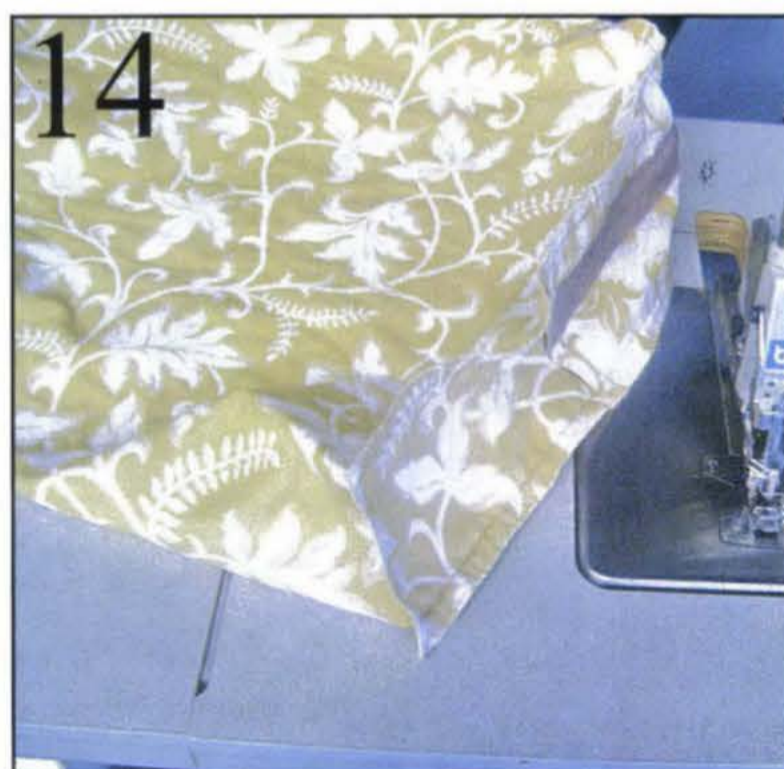
Turn the 2nd corner, maintaining the same sharpness or roundness to your turn.

**STEP 12: CONTINUE STITCHING**

Continue stitching (with good sides together) all the way around. As you approach the other side of the center back, ease or stretch the top layer forcing the alignment of the center back.

**STEP 13: CONTINUE STITCHING TO END**

Continue stitching towards the front rise and turn. As you approach, repeat steps 8-11 to mark, snip and turn the corners. Continue around until you meet up with the start of your stitch in the center back.



**STEP 14: REMOVE EXCESS SIDE BOXING**

Cut the excess side boxing strip from either side of the zipper assembly. In this example, the excess is removed by the blade of the serger.

**STEP 15: FINISH EDGES**

Finish all interior seams by serging, cutting  $\frac{1}{4}$ " off with the serger blade, and leaving tidy  $\frac{1}{2}$ " finished seams all the way around. The cushion is now complete!