

End-of-the-Bed Bench

At the end of your bed, park a comfy bench where you can take off your shoes, read a good book, or store extra pillows while you sleep.



A tufted cushion makes a soft landing spot, whether it sits on a wooden settee, such as this one (*above*), a purchased bench, or a cedar chest. This cushion measures 3×16×44 inches, but you can size it for any bench. To determine the amount of material you'll need, just add 8 inches to the length of the bench seat; double the bench seat width measurement, and add 7 inches. These measurements allow for 3-inch-deep sides and ½-inch seam allowances.

Materials: To make the cushion (*above*), you'll need: a 39×51-inch piece of cotton upholstery fabric, a 16×44-inch piece of 2-inch-thick polyester padding, cotton quilt batting, a ruler, a pencil, sewing thread, quilting thread, a large embroidery needle, and a 16-inch square of felt.

Sewing the cover. With right sides facing, fold the fabric in half lengthwise (folded piece will measure 19½×51 inches). Sew ½-inch seams along the short ends and the long side, leaving a 24-inch opening in the long side. Lay the cover flat, and finger-press the folded side to make a gentle crease.

Sewing the corner seams. Prepare a corner for stitching by grasping each layer of fabric between your thumb and index finger, and pulling the layers in opposite directions. Align the seams, one on top of the other, and press the layers flat (*Photo 1*). Place the 1½-inch mark of the ruler at the seam and move along

the seam until the 0-inch and 3-inch marks hit the edges of the fabric (*Photo 2*). Mark the line across the seam with a pencil; then stitch the line.

Repeat on all corners. Keep in mind that two of the corners will line up seams with the finger-pressed fold instead of another seam.

Filling the cushion. Cut the batting into two 16×44-inch rectangles; sandwich them on either side of the padding. Turn the cover right-side out. Roll the ends of the stacked padding toward the center, place the roll inside the cover and unroll the ends, fitting them into the corners. Sew the opening closed by hand.

Stitching the padded edges. Thread the embroidery needle with quilting thread. Grasp the edge of the cushion (including some of the batting) and stab a running stitch through the layers, forming a ½-inch lip around the top of the cushion (*Photo 3*). Repeat this process around the bottom of the cushion.

Tufting the pad. Cut sixteen 1-inch squares from the felt. Evenly space eight squares on the top of the cushion and eight on the bottom, making sure they align. Using doubled quilting thread, sew through one felt square, push the needle through the cushion, catch a square on the other side, and double back to the starting point. Tighten the loop so the cushion puckers, and knot the thread. Repeat the process for the remaining seven tufts. 🏠

