

Royal Treatment for Old Queen Sheets

Our only problem in bed: the husband and I often have to fight for more of the top sheet. Given the deeper mattresses of today—that and shrinkage, the top sheet for our queen-size bed barely overhangs the mattress—and that's when the bed is made.



Have manufacturers solved that problem and started making wider queen-size top sheets? Please tell me this is the case!

We're fairly average for our height and weight, but mounded under that top sheet, we bring the side edges up considerably. So it's common for arms and legs stick out, or for the sheet to end up over on one side of the bed.

Bed linens are usually sold in sets, and even then, they seem to have shot up royally in price. And I admit it, I'm spoiled: I want soft, 100% cotton, a dense weave, none of that synthetic percale or microfiber – whatever those are.

One solution, an expensive one at that, is to buy bed linens separately: a queen-size contour sheet, but a king-size top sheet. But then the edges of the top sheet drag on the floor. In that case, I've been known to cut off 10" and hem the sheet on one side.

Another is to fix the top sheet you already have, which is just what I did, and you can too. While you're at it, embellish with a little ribbon, and dress up the pillowcases, too.

What You'll Need:

- 2 1/4 yards pre-shrunk cotton fabric: a woven gingham or plaid is ideal for ripping into strips along the grain and along the stripes in either direction.
- Ribbon to match or coordinate (I used a satin 1/2" wide) 2 1/2 yards for top sheet, 2 3/8 yards for 2 pillowcases
- Sewing thread to match

What To Do:

1. To add borders to the top sheet, tear 2 strips along the entire length of the fabric: 19" wide for a really deep hem, as shown, or 13" wide for a nicely proportioned border.
2. Pin one strip along one side edge of top sheet, trimming ends 1/2" longer and folding to align with corners. Stitch just beyond top sheet's hem, about 3/8" from edges. Press.



3. Press border strip up, turn the opposite edge 1/2" to wrong side, and press. Pin to reverse side of top sheet, covering the previous stitching line.



4. Using matching thread, zigzag-stitch along the pinned edge, removing pins as you go.



5. Press. Topstitch or zigzag stitch ribbon along the larger, hemmed heading of the sheet.

6. For pillowcases, make a tube: Cut or rip a strip, 5" wide and 82" long. Fold lengthwise in half with right sides facing, and ribbon inserted inside the fold. Stitch along one short



end and raw edges, 1/4" from edge. Pull ribbon to turn tube right side out. Cut stitched short end. Press flat. Cut the tube crosswise in half, and use one for each pillowcase.

7. Rip out a few inches of pillowcase seam along the opening. Pin and topstitch tube to cover stitching of hem. Using a narrow zigzag stitch, secure ribbon along both edges, covering the other edge of the tube. Turn pillowcase to wrong side, and restitch seam, aligning the tube and ribbon. Turn to right side, and press.

