# U-Shaped Pillow

A detailed two-panel sewing project with an optional quilted outer cover



## A floral finish, a simple construction

Create a softly rounded U-shaped cushion by joining two matching fabric faces. This guide explains paper drafting, cutting, curved seams, stuffing and a neatly hand-sewn closure. All measurements are in centimeters; US sewing terms are used throughout.

Reference size: 70 × 52 cm cutting outline. Inner opening: 22 cm wide × 30 cm deep before sewing. Seam allowance: 1 cm included in the cutting outline. The stuffed dimensions will be smaller and depend on filling.

Before you begin: this is an original sewing interpretation of the photographs, not a tested or safety-certified nursing product. Make a scrap-fabric sample first. The supplied technical sheet is reproduced only on the final page; its additional side strips are not used in this two-panel method.

Feeding-use caution: never use a nursing pillow for infant sleep or lounging. Keep the infant attended and supported during feeding. Move a sleepy baby to a safe infant sleep space. See page 7 for care and use notes.



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# Materials & cutting plan

## Gather the essentials

Main fabric: 1.20 m of prewashed cotton fabric, at least 110 cm wide. Two rectangles of 74 × 56 cm give working room around the 70 × 52 cm outlines. Allow more for large directional prints.

Filling: washable polyester fiberfill. Have about 1 kg available; use only enough to form an even cushion without straining the seams. Required weight varies by fiber brand and loft.

Tools: sewing machine, matching polyester sewing thread, 80/12 or 90/14 universal needle, hand-sewing needle, fabric scissors, paper scissors, clips, ruler, washable marker, large paper and iron.

Optional quilted cover: another 1.20 m of cotton for the outside, 1.20 m of lightweight cotton backing, and low-loft batting for two 76 × 58 cm quilt sandwiches. Measure the finished cushion before trimming these panels.

## Cutting list for the basic cushion

Cut 2: complete U-shaped faces from the same paper pattern. No fold edge is required. Keep the fabric grain parallel to the center line from the arm tips to the bottom.

Do not cut the extra strips: the 14 × 68 cm curved pieces, 14 × 132 cm strip and 14 × 22 cm rectangle shown on the supplied final sheet belong to a different, unspecified construction. Their seam lengths are not verified for this project.

Seam settings: use a straight stitch about 2.5 mm long and a consistent 1 cm seam allowance. Test on scraps. Secure the beginning and end of each seam with a few reverse stitches.

## Prepare the fabric

Wash and dry according to the fabric label, then press flat. Inspect for weak areas and remove selvages from the cutting area. If you want patchwork, piece a larger panel first, press its seams, and then cut the U shape from it.



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# Draft the full-size shape

The final-page image is a measurement reference, not a full-size A4 cutting template. Draw the main U at full size on paper. The following geometry provides a repeatable interpretation; it does not copy every curve in the reference.

## 1 Mark a 70 × 52 cm rectangle

Use the top-left corner as (0, 0), with x measured to the right and y measured downward. Draw a vertical center line at x = 35 cm. Draw the left half first and mirror it across this line.

## 2 Form the outer edge

Mark top corners (0, 0) and (70, 0). Run the outer sides down to (0, 20) and (70, 20). Join them with a smooth lower half-ellipse that reaches (35, 52). Use the intermediate points below as guides, then smooth the line.

Outer curve points (x, y), in cm:
(0, 20); (4.7, 36); (17.5, 47.7); (35, 52);
(52.5, 47.7); (65.3, 36); (70, 20).

## 3 Draw the inner opening

The left inner edge is x = 24 cm and the right inner edge is x = 46 cm: the gap is 22 cm. Draw these edges from y = 0 to y = 10. Join their lower ends with a smooth U reaching (35, 30).

Inner curve points (x, y), in cm:
(24, 10); (25.5, 20); (29.5, 27.3); (35, 30);
(40.5, 27.3); (44.5, 20); (46, 10).

## 4 Finish the paper pattern

Connect the outer and inner edges across each arm tip. Round the four sharp tip corners slightly and mirror them. The outline is the cutting line. Draw the stitching line 1 cm inward from every fabric edge, including around the U opening. Do not add another seam allowance.

Fit check: cut a paper or scrap-fabric mock-up before good fabric. This size is not universal. If the opening needs adjustment, change the paper pattern symmetrically and recheck the fit; do not force a tight opening around the body.



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# Cut, match & sew



## 5 Cut two matching faces

Place the pattern on a single layer of cotton and trace the entire outline. Cut the first face. Repeat for the second face, keeping the same grain direction. Mark the center of the outer bottom, center of the inner curve and both arm tips within the seam allowance.

## 6 Pin with right sides together

Put the printed sides facing each other. Match the edges and reference marks. Clip or pin around the complete perimeter, including the inner U. Mark an 18 cm turning opening centered on the outer bottom curve. Keep that section unsewn.



## 7 Sew the complete perimeter

Begin at one end of the marked opening and backstitch. Sew 1 cm from the edge, around the outer curve, over both tips and around the inner U, returning to the other end of the opening. Backstitch again. Turn slowly through curves with the needle down; remove each clip before it reaches the presser foot.



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# Shape, fill & close



## 8 Release the curved seams

On the concave inner U, make small straight clips into the seam allowance about 1-2 cm apart where needed. On tight convex curves and tip corners, remove tiny V-shaped wedges. Stop at least 2-3 mm before the stitching. Never cut the seam itself.

## 9 Turn and press

Turn the cushion right side out through the opening. Use a blunt turning tool to ease out the rounded tips. Smooth the seams with your fingers and press gently. Fold both opening edges inward by 1 cm, matching the sewn seam line.



## 10 Add filling gradually

Separate fiberfill into small loose tufts. Fill the arm tips first, then the arms and bottom curve. Add alternating amounts to each side so the cushion stays balanced. Massage out lumps. Stop before the fabric becomes taut or stitches pull apart; a hand-feel check is not a product safety test.

11 Close: use doubled sewing thread and a ladder stitch, taking small alternating bites through the two folded edges. Pull gently every few stitches. Secure the thread, bury its tail inside and inspect the entire seam for gaps.



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# Quilted cover option



The photographed cushion has a smooth fabric surface. To add actual quilting, make a separate quilted cover around the finished cushion. A cover is easier to wash and keeps the filling inside its own shell.

## 12 Quilt before cutting

For each face, layer backing wrong side up, low-loft batting, and outer fabric right side up. Baste from the center outward. Quilt a simple grid using a walking foot; follow the batting manufacturer’s maximum spacing. Make two panels about 76 × 58 cm before quilting.

## 13 Fit the cover to your finished cushion

Start with the basic paper pattern and add 1 cm outside its cutting edge all around as an initial ease allowance, including into the U opening. This is a starting point, not a guaranteed fit. Cut and baste a scrap cover with 1 cm seams; adjust until the cushion slides in without compression or excess loose fabric. Use that fitted pattern to cut the quilted faces.

## 14 Add an opening and assemble

Mark a 45-50 cm section centered on the outer bottom curve for a coil zipper. With right sides together, sew that section with a 1 cm seam, using long basting stitches only between the zipper marks. Press the seam allowances open. Center the closed zipper behind the basted seam and stitch both tapes with a zipper foot. Remove the basting and open the zipper.

Join the remaining perimeter with 1 cm seams, stopping neatly at the zipper section. Finish raw edges, clip curves carefully, and turn through the zipper. Insert the cushion and close it. If the opening is too short, use a longer zipper on a revised test cover. Keep the pull concealed within a small sewn fabric garage; add no cords, ties or decorative buttons.



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# Check, care & print

## Final workmanship checklist

Check that the two arms are balanced, the inside curve is smooth, no stuffing escapes and the closure is secure. Remove every pin and loose thread. Recheck seams after washing. Repair damaged stitching before using the cushion again.

## Care for the finished project

Follow the fabric, batting and filling labels. Test a hidden area for colorfastness. Wash a removable cover separately when appropriate. Dry all layers completely before storage or use; damp filling can remain wet inside even when the outer cotton feels dry.

## Use boundaries

This handmade pattern has not undergone nursing-pillow safety testing. Sewing it carefully does not establish compliance or make it a certified infant product. If intended for feeding, use only with an awake caregiver actively attending and supporting the infant. Never use it for infant sleep, lounging or unattended positioning, and never place it in a crib or bassinet. If the baby or caregiver becomes sleepy, move the baby to a safe infant sleep space.

Safety reference: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, “CPSC Approves New Federal Safety Standard for Nursing Pillows to Prevent Infant Deaths and Serious Injuries,” September 18, 2024. Guidance consulted November 5, 2026.

## Printing the supplied pattern sheet

The next page contains only the supplied technical image plus the requested branded footer. Print it on A4 landscape as a reference. It is reduced to fit the page and is not a 1:1 cutting template. Use the drafting instructions on page 3 to make a full-size paper pattern.

Do not enlarge the whole supplied sheet by one percentage and assume every dimension is correct: its drawn proportions are not consistently to scale. Measure and draw the 70 cm width, 52 cm height, 22 cm opening and 30 cm opening depth independently. For this method use only the U-shaped main piece, cut twice.

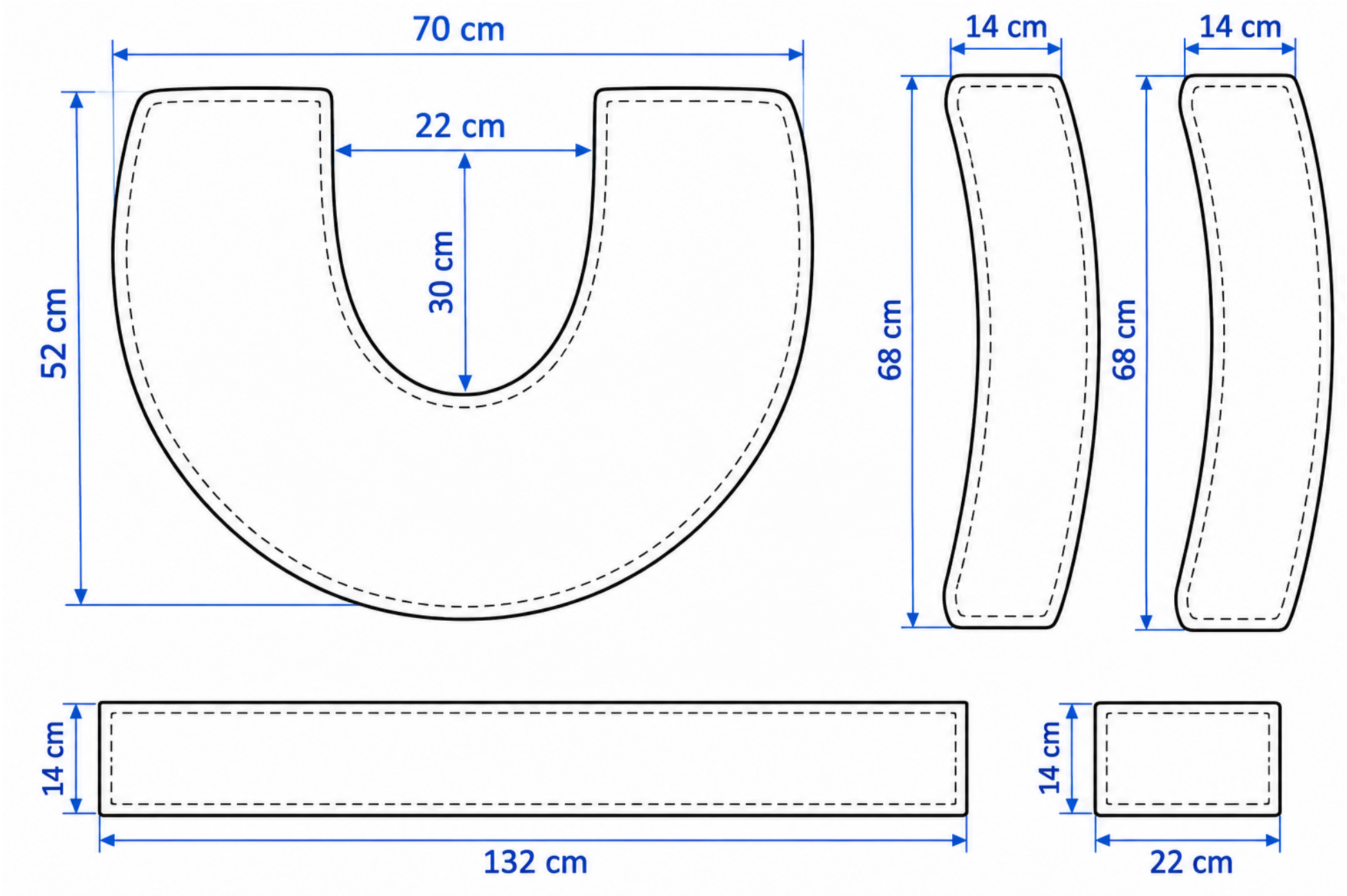
## Common questions

Why is my finished cushion smaller? The dimensions describe the flat cutting outline. Seams and stuffing reduce its flat footprint.
Why do the inner seams pucker? Check that the concave seam allowance is clipped and that stitches were not stretched while sewing.
Can I omit quilting? Yes. The basic two-panel cushion is sewn from plain cotton; quilting is optional.



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