



Beautiful Box Corners

by Sew4Home



Liz Johnson, Sew4Home Senior Editor

Sew4Home knows how to spot the most popular trends and develop them into must-make projects. We love to promote sewing and educate our website visitors on the value of working with the proper tools and materials, demonstrating how quality makes the sewing experience faster and easier, and produces finished results that are more polished and professional-looking – results you can be proud of.



Learn THREE different methods for creating the best box corners. You'll spot some of our favorite tips along the way – look for the Sew Smarter lightbulb emblem. Download a free summary handout with formulas you can use going forward to design your own corners. And, link to fun, free projects featuring box corners so you can practice all your new skills.

If you sew two squares together, then turn them right side out, the square is still flat. If you were to stuff it with some filler, it would make a lovely knife-edge pillow. If you

want to turn your flat square into something with more dimension, you can add boxed corners.

For our steps, we've used lighter colored fabric with contrasting thread so you can clearly see the steps of our techniques. You would use the fabric of your choice with coordinating thread.

#1: The Folded Box Corner

Start with those two flat squares. We're assuming you're working on a project that has sewn corners and is shaped like a square or rectangle. If you're following a pattern or tutorial, the boxed corners (as well as the exact measurements) will be indicated. If you're designing your own project, download the free summary handout at the end of the tutorial; it has all the formulas you need to help you determine the cut width and height of your panels.

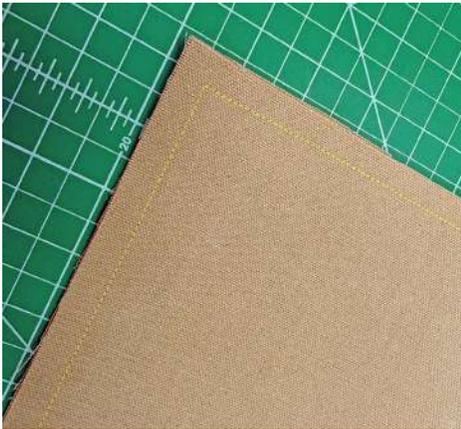
Place the fabric panels right sides together.

Using a straight stitch and the indicated seam allowance, sew the side and bottom seams, pivoting at each corner. We used a ½" seam allowance.





Precision is crucial for the best finish. Use the easy-to-follow plate markings on the Janome needle plate to help keep your seam allowance consistent. Set the Needle Up/Down feature for Needle Down. When you get to the corner (you can again refer to the plate markings to know where to stop), stop, the needle stays down and you can raise the presser foot just slightly (we love the easy access button to instantly raise and lower the presser foot), pivot 90°, align once again with the seam allowance plate marking, and off you go.



With the sewn fabric still right sides together, use both hands to pinch and pull apart the corner. As you pull, the fabric will begin to form a little triangle peak with the corner point at the top and the seam lines running down the middle of the front and the back. Align these side and bottom seams. The seam allowances should be facing in the same direction. Place a pin in the matched seams to hold them together. It is *very important* you line up the seams; that is what will make the intersecting seams of your finished corner a perfect match.

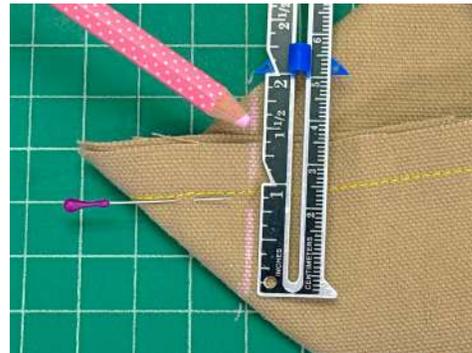


As a "line up test," you can stick a pin through the seam on one side and make sure it comes out through the seam on the other side.

[CLICK HERE TO SEE A MINI VIDEO OF CREATING THE CORNER PEAK.](#)



Mark the depth of the boxed corner with a fabric marking pen or pencil and a ruler. Our desired depth is 2". To find this measurement, slide the ruler down from the *peak* of your corner triangle until you reach the point at which the *base* of the corner triangle matches your desired depth. Draw a horizontal line at this measurement.



Another measuring option is to measure vertically from the corner point of your seam (the actual end point of the *seam* – not the tip of the fabric) down along the seam line. In this case, you measure HALF the width of your desired depth – or 1" in our sample. Draw a horizontal line at this measurement.





We are working with a finished 2" box corner for our steps – your box corner may be smaller or larger. Remember to download the free summary handout with the formulas for how to determine corner depth. It's a great "cheat sheet" to pin up in your sewing space.

Sew across the corner triangle on the drawn line. Be sure to lock your stitch at the beginning and end of the seam. We prefer to use the Lockstitch button, but you can also use a standard backstitch.



Depending on the type of project you're making and the fabric you're using, stitching across more than once is often a good idea for added corner strength.



If you're working with a thick or slippery fabric, consider switching to an Even Feed Foot or engage your machine's built-in AcuFeed™ Flex Feeding System. This gives you control from both the top and the bottom to insure your seam is straight and true. As we said at the beginning, *"precision is crucial for the best finish."*



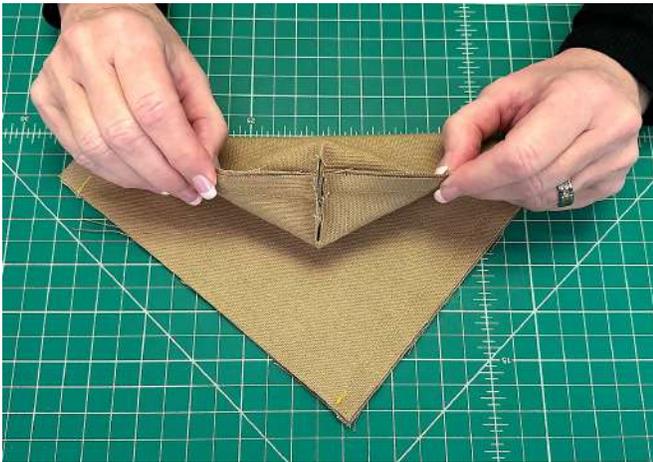
Trim away the peak $\frac{1}{4}$ " - $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the line of stitching.



If your fabric is prone to raveling, now would be the time to finish the raw edges. We used an Overedge Foot to finish our sample seam allowance. If you are brand new to this, S4H has a multi-part series you can check out with steps for the most popular machine sewn seam finishes. [Click here.](#)



Gently pull apart the corner at the seam line to see the boxed corner take shape.



Turn the project right side out to see your finished boxed corner. Lovely!



#2: The Cut-Out Box Corner

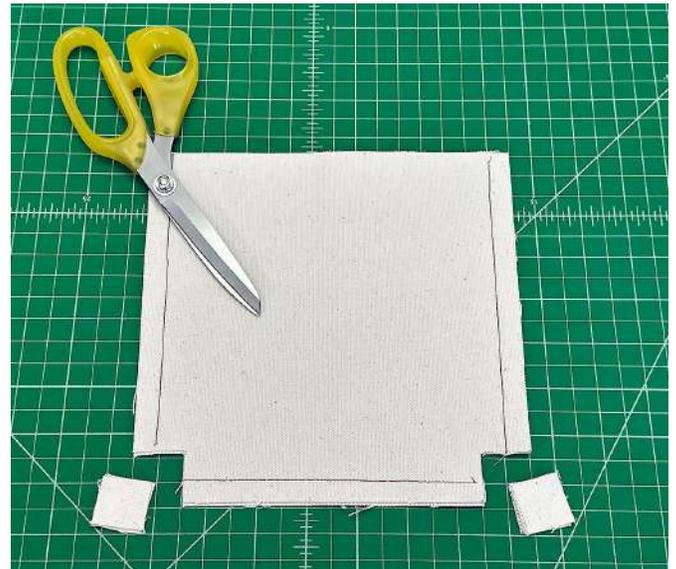
This option gives you the same finish as the Folded Box Corner, just in a different way. You may find it to be a better approach when sewing a boxed corner with heavier-weight fabrics, such as canvas, vinyl or wool.

Place the fabric right sides together on a flat surface.

Measure, mark, and then cut squares of equal size from each corner. These corner cut-outs should be HALF the size of your desired finished corner depth. In our example, we are still working with a 2" desired finished corner depth, so we cut out our corner squares at half that size: 1" x 1" squares. *Remember, if you are using a pattern, you should be given your cut dimensions, if not our summary handout shows you how to figure sizing.*



Using a straight stitch, and the indicated seam allowance, sew the side and bottom seams separately. *You just cut away the corner where you would have pivoted, so - yes - these are individual seams.*



You can also sew the side and bottom seams first, pivoting just like you did with the Folded Box Corner above, and then cut out the corner. It doesn't matter that you are cutting through the seams as they will be secured again when the corner itself is stitched. The sizing is the same: half the desired depth – cut out a 1" square for a finished 2" corner.

Using both hands, pull apart and flatten the open corner. Carefully match the side seam with the bottom seam. Pin in place. The seam allowances should be facing in opposite directions. Because this technique is most often used with heavier fabrics, having the seam allowances opposite one another helps reduce bulk along the seam line. Pin in place.



Sew along raw edge of the corner, using a straight stitch and the indicated seam allowance, which **must** be the same as your side and bottom seam allowance. In our example, our side and bottom seams were ½" so our seam allowance across the corner should also be ½".



You can further trim and finish your corner seam as needed, then turn right side out to admire the finished box.



Keeping the seam allowances the same along the side, bottom, and across the corner is extremely important for all the math and geometry to work correctly.

[CLICK HERE TO SEE A MINI VIDEO OF HOW 2D BECOMES 3D.](#)

Lock the stitch at the beginning and end of the seam, and consider double or triple stitching the seam for extra strength.

#3: The Reverse Box Corner

This unique type of corner is great for situations where you are working with very, very thick layers. It is also a super cool look that can add a professional accent to a bag or box. For our purposes here, we are not addressing any *lining* that might be involved. However, there are free S4H projects highlighted below that go into more detail.

Start with your same flat panels, right sides together. Using a ½" seam allowance (or whatever your project specifies), stitch along both sides and across the bottom, pivoting at the corners.

Since this technique is often a good choice for heavy-duty, hard-working projects, we recommend stitching around each corner a second time for added strength.

When done, trim the seam allowance at each corner on the diagonal to reduce bulk. Do not cut into your seam.

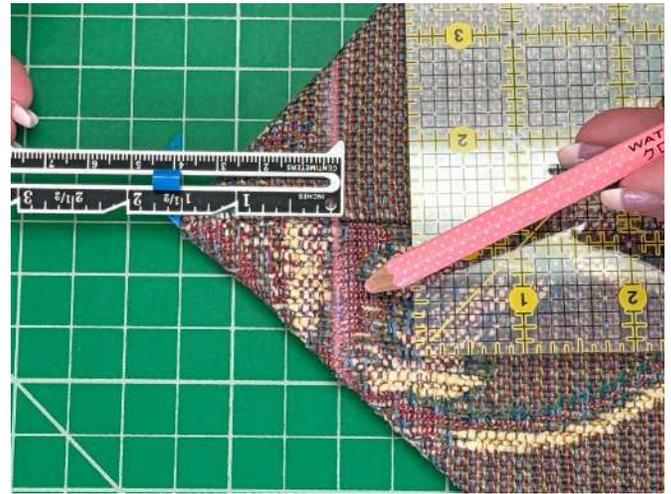


Turn the project right side out. Gently push out the corner so it is as sharp as possible. Press the corner peaks flat and away from the side seams.



Whatever the bag's finished depth should be, the corner will turn up by HALF that amount. For this sample, we wanted a depth of 3", which meant our corner would need to turn up 1½".

From the point of each corner, measure up 1½". Using a fabric pen or pencil, draw a line at this measurement horizontally across the corner.



Stitch across each corner along the drawn line.



Since you are working with a heavier fabric, you should slightly lengthen your straight stitch to about 3.0. It may also be a good opportunity to once again choose an Even Feed Foot or engage your AcuFeed™ Flex Fabric Feeding System. As an option, you can also edgestitch along both diagonal sides of each corner point. This helps further flatten a thick fabric.



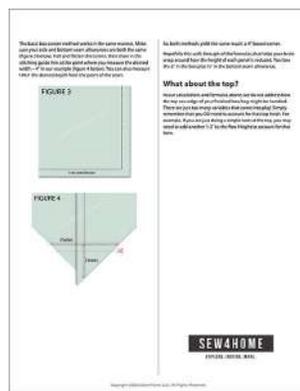
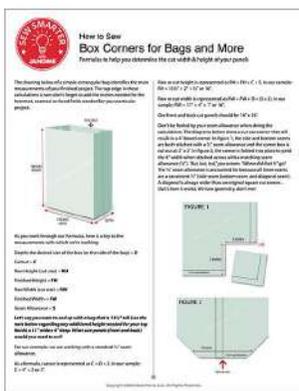
The Reverse Box Corner is traditionally riveted in place because of the number of layers all coming together at one point. Use an awl to create your initial opening.



Insert a double cap rivet to secure. If you are new to working with rivets, S4H has a full tutorial you can review prior to starting. [Click here](#). In addition, there are projects below you can try with this type of unique corner.



Summary Handout



This handout explains the formulas to use to determine cut width and height so you can design your own box corners. It is offered here as a free PDF file. Click the link below to download. You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader which is a free program.

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD THE HANDOUT.](#)

Time to Practice Your New Skills

Below are a number of **free** Sew4Home projects featuring box corners. Try one to practice your Best Box Corner.

Bright Spot Tote



Faux Suede Foldover Tote



Structured Fabric Nested Baskets



Yoga Mat Shoulder Tote



Linen Color Block Totes



Wine Bags with Carabiner Handles

