Lush & Plush Trends from Fabric.com: Minky and Satin Baby Blankets

Editor: Liz Johnson
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Recently, movie star and trendsetter, Nicole Kidman was photographed holding baby Faith wrapped in a plush pink baby blanket with a lush satin ruffle. Dozens of commenters on the photo demanded to know where she got that adorable blanket. Nicole's not telling, but no worries because we have an even cuter design you can make yourself. It's part of our new S4H Series sponsored by Fabric.com: the lush-est, plushest, most trendy fabrics for Fall and Winter. Mar Bella Minky and rich satin combine today for this double-sided beauty!

Fabric.com has a wonderful selection of the absolutely gorgeous Mar Bella Minky and it's all on sale! In fact, there are so many pretty Mar Bella patterns to chose from, we *had* to make our design double-sided. Minky is rather slippery on the back, and with wrong sides together; we knew there could be a problem with our layers shifting. However, we didn't want to add any quilting stitches to hold the layers together as we felt it would take away from the beautiful look of the motifs. Instead, we came up with a clever solution: there's a secret layer of flannel in between the two layers of Minky. The double-napped flannel keeps the two layers from shifting and adds a little extra oomph and insulation as well.

As we mentioned in our previous Flannel Pillowcase tutorial, make sure you pre-wash your flannel. Otherwise, it could shrink up more than the Minky and cause your lovely blankie to twist and turn.

Big, big thanks to all the friendly folks at Fabric.com for helping us bring this series to you. We have a great group of projects, tips and product reviews to get you working like a pro with flannel, Minky, faux fur and faux leather. They've also provided us with a wonderful Great Giveaway Gift for one lucky Sew4Home fan.

If you haven't visited Fabric.com before, scoot on over there today. They offer free shipping on orders of just $35 and more.

When you combine that with a 100% satisfaction guarantee, free return shipping and the ability to order swatches, you have a no-risk way to shop online for fabric and more.

Sewing Tools You Need

- Any Sewing Machine (we recommend the Janome HD3000)
  NOTE: *You will be sewing through a number of slippery layers, make sure you have a machine with a good feeding system, like the 7-piece feed dog on the Janome HD3000.*
- Ruffler attachment (optional... but a super-cool time saver)

Fabric and Other Supplies

Amounts shown below are for ONE blanket. Multiply as needed for twins, triplets and beyond.

- 1 yard of 44-45" wide fabric for the blanket front: *we used Mar Bella Minky Madrid Cuddle in Rosa Pink from Fabric.com and Mar Bella Minky Barcelona Cuddle in Marina Blue from Fabric.com*
- 1 yard of 44-45" wide fabric for the blanket back: *we used Mar Bella Minky Valencia Cuddle in Rosa Pink from Fabric.com and Mar Bella Minky Granada Cuddle in Marina Blue from Fabric.com*
- 1 yard of 44-45" wide flannel for the interior blanket layer: *we used Double Napped Flannel in White from Fabric.com*
- 1½ yards of 44-45" wide fabric for the blanket ruffle: *we used Adore Duchess Satin in Ivory from Fabric.com*
- All-purpose sewing thread in colors to match fabrics
- Scissors or rotary cutter and mat
- See-through ruler
- Tape measure
- Fabric pencil or pen
- Straight pins
- Hand sewing needle
- Iron and ironing board
- Pressing cloth for ironing the Mar Bella Minky

Getting Started

1. From the front fabric cut ONE 35" x 35" square.
2. From the back fabric cut ONE 35" x 35" square.
3. From the cotton flannel fabric, cut ONE 35" x 35" square.
4. Using a small glass or cup, round each corner of each layer (front, back and flannel).

5. From the ruffle fabric, cut EIGHT strips 6" x width of fabric (WOF). Trim off the selvedges.
   NOTE: *We used the rule of thumb that says your ruffle needs to be approximately 2½ times the length of the edge to which you're applying the ruffle. Since our quilt will be 34" square when finished, we multiplied 34" by 4 to get 136". Then we multiplied 136" by 2.5" to get 340". Finally divide this new total length by your WOF to get the number of strips you'll need. In our sample, that meant dividing 340" by 45". This equaled 7.56, which we rounded up to 8. We wanted a 2½" finished ruffle, so we knew our ruffle strips would need to be 6" to account for folding the strip in half plus a ½" seam allowance. After all this math-noodlin', we cut EIGHT 6" x WOF strips. Sewn together, this gave us approximately 352" of ruffle fabric to work with. If you are new to this technique, you can check out our tutorial: Gathering & Ruffles Made Easy .*

At Your Sewing Machine & Ironing Board

The ruffle

1. Sew all eight 6" strips together end to end. To do this, place two strips right sides together and stitch along the 6" edge, using a ¼" seam allowance. Repeat to create one long strip. Press all seams open.
2. Fold and press this long ruffle piece in half lengthwise wrong sides together.
3. Hem one end of ruffle. To do this, turn one end under ¼" and press, turn under again ¼" and press, and then sew in place close to the folded edge.

NOTE: *This is a LOT o' ruffling, which is why we opted to use the a ruffler attachment for our Janome machine. These contraptions look intimidating but are easy to use. Most machine manufacturers offer something similar to what we show, and the Janome version is actually made to fit both Janome machines as well as machines from other manufacturers. It comes with pretty good instructions of how to set the ruffle depth and insert the folded fabric. If you*

don't have a ruffler attachment, you can ruffle the traditional way with two lines of machine basting. With this much length, it's good to do the machine basting in easy-to-work-with sections of about 18" or so. Again, you can take a look at our tutorial: Gathering & Ruffles Made Easy . Janome also has a good video tutorial on their Ultimate Ruffler.

4. The satin fabric we used for our pretty ruffle can be very slippery, so it is best to pin the raw edges with the head of the pin facing to the raw edge side of the ruffle, and with a pin set about every 3-4". This will help keep the satin fabric from twisting and torquing as it is fed into the ruffler. **Be sure to remove pins as you feed the satin fabric into the ruffler!**
5. Gather the entire length of the ruffle to the approximate length of the four sides of the quilt (136"). Leave some extra length for overlapping to finish the ends. No need to have an exact measurement, just give yourself plenty to work with.
6. Starting with the hemmed end, and with the back of that hem against the right side of the blanket (wrong side to right side), pin the ruffle to the BACK fabric. Align the raw edges of the ruffle with the raw edge of the fabric.

7. When you have about six inches remaining before the beginning and the end meet, lay out the end of the ruffle so it overlaps the beginning by about 2½".

8. Cut off the excess, then hem this end in the same manner as you hemmed the other end. If you've used a ruffle attachment, you'll need to switch back to your regular presser foot.

9. Overlap the two finished ends so the ruffle lays flat and finish pinning.

10. Machine baste the ruffle in place around all four sides.

Assembling the layers

1. Machine baste the flannel square to the wrong side of the blanket FRONT fabric using a ¼" seam allowance.
   NOTE: *Your corners should be rounded at this point. Remember that step from above. I happened to take this photo prior to my "rounding."*

2. Carefully pin the extra ruffle fabric away from the corners so it does not get caught up in the stitching when the quilt top is sewn on.
3. Layer the flannel/front fabric and the ruffle/back fabric right sides together. The ruffle is now sandwiched in between the layers.
4. Pin in place, using plenty o' pins. Leave a 3-4" opening along one side for turning.
5. Using a ½" seam allowance, stitch through all layers around all four sides, remembering to leave that 3-4" opening for turning. Stitch slowly, smoothing the layers as you go; this will help insure your ruffle stays flat.
6. Clip all four corner curves. Then, trim the flannel/front fabric close to the seam, but be careful not to cut into your stitching. DON'T trim the ruffle/back fabric.
7. Turn quilt right side out, pull out the ruffle, and press from each side.
   NOTE: **Use a pressing cloth/towel and low heat as the Minky does NOT react well to direct or high heat from an iron. It will ruin the nap and any embossing in the fabric.**
8. Use a long, blunt-end tool to round out the corner curves; a long knitting needle or chopstick works well.
9. Fold in the raw edges of the opening so they are flush with the sewn seam. Finger press. Pin in place.
10. Hand sew the opening closed with a small whipstitch. Minky is great for hiding hand stitching; it simply disappears into the nap.

Contributors

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Sample Creation and Instructional Outline: Gregory Dickson

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