

Sewing Ruffles: A Guide to 14 Different Types of Ruffles

Exploring sewing, you'll find the charm of ruffles. They've been in fashion for centuries, starting in the Renaissance. Ruffles can make your clothes look elegant and sophisticated. You can try different techniques to achieve various looks.



Types of Ruffles

There are many **types of ruffles**, like gathered and circle ruffles. You can make them big and fluffy or soft and elegant. Knowing how to make ruffles helps you create stunning clothes, whether you're new or experienced.

#1 Hand Gathering Methods

You can gather fabric by machine or hand. Machine methods are quick, while hand methods offer more control. You can gather fabric by hand, using a basting stitch or a cord.

#2 Machine Gathering Technique Using Basting Stitch

This technique involves sewing a long **basting stitch** along the edge of the fabric using a sewing machine. The stitch length is set to the longest possible setting, allowing the threads to be easily pulled to create gathers. After stitching, one or both threads are gently pulled to form the desired amount of gathers. This method provides flexibility in adjusting the gathers and is commonly used for creating ruffles and gathered fabric sections.

#3 Machine Gathering Technique Using a Gathering Foot

The **gathering foot** is a specialized sewing machine attachment designed to create gathers automatically as you sew. When the fabric is fed through the gathering foot, it is slightly gathered without the need for a separate basting stitch. The amount of gathering can be adjusted by changing the stitch length or tension settings on the machine. This method is quick and efficient, and it is ideal for sewing consistent gathers over longer fabric lengths.

#4 Hand Folded Machine Gathering

The manually folded gathering is a machine sewing technique in which fabric is folded manually as you sew, **eliminating the need for a basting stitch**. The fabric is pleated or gathered by hand in real-time and secured with a sewing machine. This method allows for creative control over the spacing and size of the folds, resulting in a personalized and unique gathered effect. It is a versatile technique often used for quick and dynamic ruffle designs.

The following video explains the step-by-step method of hand-gathering techniques and machine-gathering techniques.

#5 Single Layer Gathering

The classic **gathered ruffle technique** is a timeless choice for creating ruffles. It involves gathering fabric to create a textured effect. You can use a gathering foot or a ruffler attachment to make a classic gathered ruffle. These tools help gather fabric evenly. Single-layer gathering creates a delicate, airy texture. It's great for regular ruffles, often seen in prom and wedding dresses.

#6 Double-Layer Gathering

A **Double-Layer Ruffle** is a type of ruffle made by layering two pieces of fabric, one on top of the other, to create a fuller, more textured effect. The two layers are gathered or pleated and sewn together to form a thicker ruffle with added volume. This style enhances the overall fullness and gives a more dramatic, layered look, making it ideal for bold decorative accents on garments, accessories, or home décor items.

#7 Centered Gathered Ruffle

A centered gathered ruffle is created by gathering a fabric strip along its central line, resulting in ruffles that cascade evenly on both sides of the stitching. This technique produces a balanced and symmetrical decorative element, often used to add texture and visual interest to garments or home décor items. The process involves sewing a gathering stitch through the middle of the fabric strip, pulling the thread to create the desired fullness, and then attaching the ruffle to the base fabric along the gathered line.

The Centered Gathered Ruffle is also known as a double-edged ruffle because it is created on both sides of the center. Different types of ruffles exist under this class as well.

The following video demonstrates the methods of single-layering, double-layering, and centred-gathering techniques.

#8 Pleated Ruffle Technique

A **pleated ruffle** is a decorative fabric trim created by folding a strip of fabric into pleats, which are then stitched in place. These pleats can be evenly spaced or varied in size to achieve a specific design. Pleated ruffles provide a structured and tailored look, making them ideal for adding a sophisticated touch to garments, home décor, and accessories. The precise folding of the fabric gives this type of ruffle a crisp and elegant appearance.

#9 Square Stitched Ruffle

This ruffle is created by sewing a series of small, straight stitches in a square pattern across the fabric. After stitching, the fabric is gathered along the lines to create a puffed, square-shaped ruffle. This technique gives the fabric a structured and neat appearance.

#10 Peak Stitched Ruffle

This ruffle is formed by sewing diagonal stitches that create a series of pointed peaks along the fabric. The fabric is then gathered to accentuate the ruffle's sharp, pointed shape, creating a more delicate, sharp-edged look.

#11 Curved Stitched Ruffle

As the name suggests, this ruffle is created by sewing curved lines on the fabric and then gathering it. The resulting ruffle has a smooth, flowing appearance, making it ideal for soft, elegant designs.

#12 Zigzag Stitched Ruffle

This ruffle is made by sewing zigzag stitches along the fabric. After sewing, the fabric is gathered to enhance the zigzag shape, creating a more dynamic, textured ruffle with a playful, energetic look.

The following video demonstrates the methods of square, peak, curved and zigzag stitched ruffle techniques.

#13 Circular or Flounce or Spiral Ruffle



Flounce or Spiral Ruffled Dress

A circular or flounce ruffle is a type of ruffle that is cut from fabric in a circular or spiral shape, often resembling a doughnut or spiral curve. Unlike regular ruffles, typically made from rectangular fabric, flounce ruffles require more fabric to accommodate the full circle or curve. These ruffles naturally create frills due to the curved edges and can be attached directly to the garment without the need for gathering or pleating. However, to add extra fullness, the inner side of the circle can be gathered or pleated. Flounce ruffles tend to offer more fluidity and volume, creating a graceful, soft appearance compared to the more structured look of regular ruffles.

#14 Pleated Ruffles

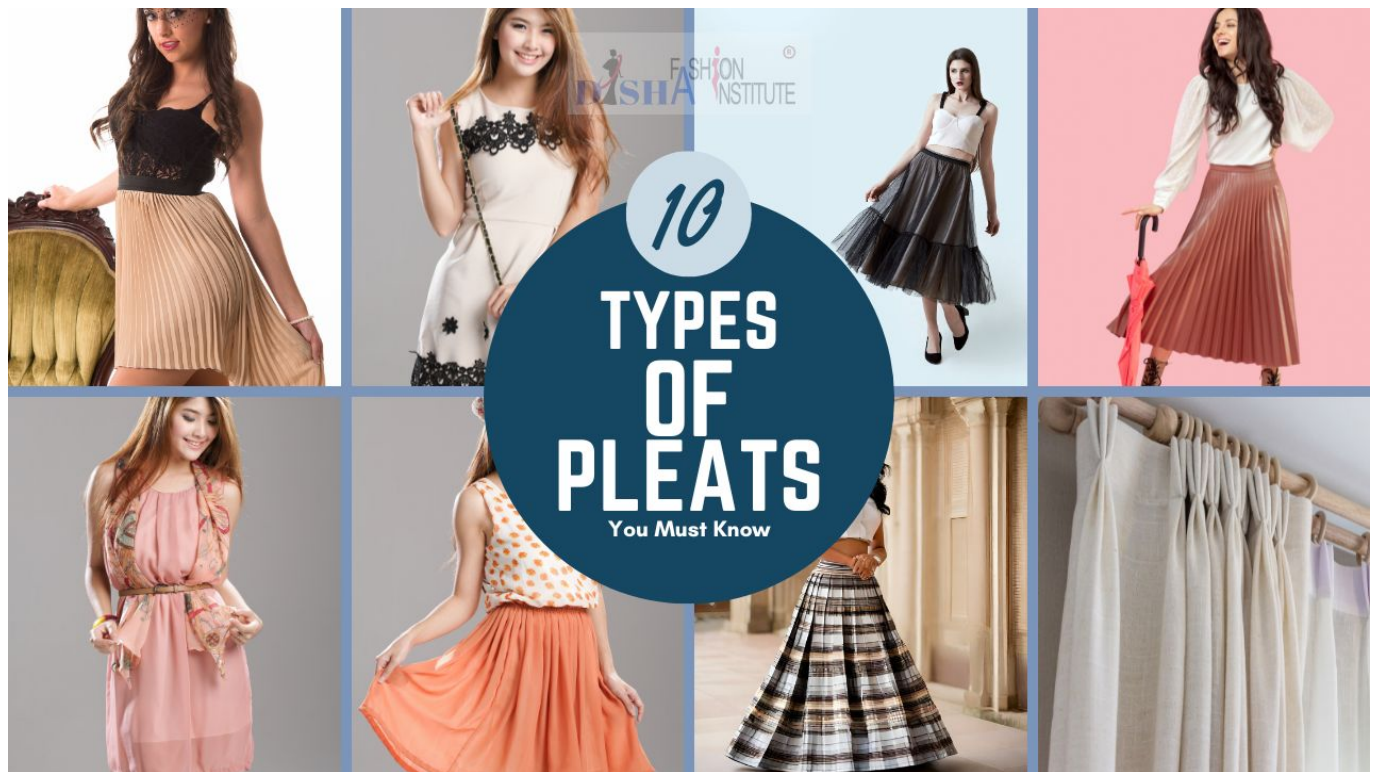
Pleated ruffles combine the structured folds of pleats with the flowing aesthetic of ruffles, resulting in a decorative feature that adds texture and volume to garments or accessories. While pleats and ruffles are often discussed interchangeably, they are conceptually distinct.

Key Difference:

- **Pleats** are deliberate, structured folds in fabric that are stitched or pressed to hold their shape. They are primarily used to shape garments or create design elements like 'Knife' or 'Box' pleats.
- **Ruffles**, however, involve gathering fabric along one edge to create soft, flowing waves or frills that add a romantic or playful look to a design.

Although some content may group pleats, such as knife pleats or box pleats, under ruffles for convenience, it is essential to understand that pleats focus on structure and precision, while ruffles emphasize movement and volume.

For a deeper dive into the different types of pleats, explore the below blog post.



[TYPES OF PLEATS](#)

[Explore Types of Pleats](#)

Conclusion

In conclusion, ruffles are a versatile and timeless design element that adds charm, volume, and elegance to garments and accessories. There are a wide variety of styles, such as gathered, pleated, flounce, and decorative ruffles, each bringing its unique flair and functionality to fashion projects. Understanding the characteristics and techniques behind each type allows designers and sewing enthusiasts to make informed choices and create stunning designs. Whether you're aiming for a bold statement or subtle detailing, ruffles offer endless creative possibilities to elevate any creation.