



DESIGN & MAKE

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Cutting Room Floor: CRF -006



Frilled cushion



Well, you'll either like this cushion, or you won't ! I quite like a bit of frippery now and then and this one just looks as though it's been to a good party ... which I guess in some ways it has - made from the bits that were left over. From the Cutting Room Floor.

The offcuts of a bedroom project with curtains, dressing table and window seats - these were the strips left between and at the sides of the cuts. We happened to have enough for the back as well, and I'm always very keen that the backs are as good as the front - you never know which way up the cushion will be the next time you see it.

If we hadn't had enough we would have found a similar taffeta, or picked up one of the colours that we find at the selvedge. Or the similar coloured cotton lining that we used to line the dressing table skirts. The favourite though would have been the same fabric, however compiled- in strips, or patches of the last remaining pieces. The back would have looked even more dishevelled, but not sure that would have mattered too much. A party is a party, after all.

The selvedges always give us the key to the colours we can use .. and with silk it's always a surprise.... these are what this one is made of



Design

What's so interesting about raw edges and selvages is that they show different faces, depending which way they are cut - one reveals the warp and the other the weft - as here, the colours of one are energetic, brilliant and vibrant whilst the other shows the chalky white that calms it all down.

Without the cut edges we see a beautiful soft, dusty, pink; with them it's quite different. I propped this cushion up in a corner of our landing, against dusty lavender- mauve walls, deeper toned curtains and below a gilt mirror. It's interesting how much of a lift even the smallest touch of brilliance can bring to a space.



THIS CUSHION

This one is 40 cms (16") square and for what it is it's about the right size. I'm not sure we'd go much larger but certainly it could be smaller at 35 cms (14"). It could of course be round, rectangular, or oval.

This one is made of bits and pieces so the dimensions are given so that they can be altered to suit whatever fabrics you have. It could of course be equally good planned.

We used silk but there is no reason why woollens or cottons, any fabrics that will twist and turn without collapsing - ending up looking like a dish rag- and with edges that can be enjoyed can be used. The fabric must be self confident enough to show itself off.



Make

Something to think about early on is the closure, and this decision is as much about the time you want to spend on it, as the enjoyment and fun you might have in making it, as the amount of fabric still available, as what you'd like to see when it's on your bed, or sofa.

If you've a mind to do so, a row of buttons with buttonholes, eyelets or rouleaux loops – either across the centre back, or off-centre, or along one side, would look very pretty, as would ties – either as neat bows or long ribbony affairs.

The point about the Cutting Room Floor projects is that we have to work with what we've got and this persuades us to think outside the box, to re-consider many of the accepted norms. The closure on the back, for instance – place it where the fabric will best allow and then choose the closure to suit. It doesn't matter where it is. Even if the last scraps mean that it can only be slip stitched, but that the join is part way across the back, do the slip stitching (very neatly) then finish it off with a row of top stitching, or French knots – anything that you can manage with the cushion pad in.

Just bear in mind that with a fixed closure laundering is more complicated, so keep the pad fresh with airing and shaking and out of harms way.

In any case, this cushion needs to be shaken up and plumped up quite often as these lovely edges and roses will catch the dust and it's best not left to settle....

MATERIALS

Cushion pad:	Approx. 40cms
Front:	One piece cut to the size of the pad, plus 1.5 cms (5/8") for seam allowances and 1 - 2 cms (3/8" - 3/4") in both directions for easement.
Back:	Ours is made the same size as the front as we slip stitched it closed. Made up according to the fabrics available and the closure requirements.
Frill:	Random lengths of fabric between 18 and 40 cms (7" - 16") deep and all together long enough to go twice around the cushion.
Roses:	strips of fabrics, can be wedge shaped, or in any shape you have – approx. 10-12 cms wide x 30- 40 cms (4- 5" x 12- 16")
Closure:	Slip stitching, hand sewn zipper, or any decorative finish; your call.
Optional:	Lining for the front and back. We always underline silk for cushions as it just looks so much more luxurious.

PREPARE

1. Cut out and press each piece.
2. If underlining, attach the lining to the front and back pieces, stitch them together around the edges, just within the seam allowance.
3. Make up anything you'll need for your closure.

Make

TO MAKE THE CUSHION COVER

1. Plan the frills.
 - a) Lay them out along the table, in a line, overlapped slightly to see how they look, with the lower edge representing the cushion sides and the lengths mixed.
 - b) Fold them all in half, some with the folded edge down, so that the raw edges will show, some the other way around.
 - c) Fringe the short ends of each, some more than others.
 - d) Unfold some of these pieces so that they are not exactly in half- off centre or at an angle.
 - e) If any of the lengths looks too short, just use it singly and lay another one over it and joining them at the lower edge.
 - f) This isn't necessary for the look, but we also twisted a couple of the longer lengths so that the outer edge becomes the seam and vice versa. Once it's been turned, just snip into the seam allowance and you'll be able to stitch it in place.
2. Once the frills have been planned, run a gathering thread along the lower edge of each.

Tip! Do these one at a time and return each to the table so that you don't upset the order.

3. Take each section at a time, gather it up to just under half of its current length. Pin it onto the cushion as you've imagined it and into the space you've (mentally) allocated it. This might change, as now you want it to look good on the cushion, so you might gather one piece up more than another, choose to have an open frill or a roll a round the corner...
4. Continue to place the pieces on, overlapping them by varying degree, or sleeving them one over another (release the gathering threads at the ends to do so). If you wish to join any of the short ends later you can do so with invisible or decorative hand stitching, top stitching.
5. Pin them really well - I used 142 pins for this one. Pin at right angle to the edges, heads out, so that unless they're in the way, they can all stay in place. Also pin down any long edges and make sure the excess fabric at the corner is properly out of the way of any stitching.
6. Turn the cushion front over. Stitch from this side so that you can follow the seam line exactly.
7. Remove the pins from the seam line - keep the ones that hold the frills down. From the front and with the tip of the iron press over the stitching and the gathers that are within the seam line only.
8. Place the back piece over the front. Line up all edges and pin them together. Sometimes, for whatever reason these don't match exactly, so: pin each the corner, pin half way along each side, then working with one side at a time keep pinning half way between the last two until the edges are together and there is no room for error. If you are slip stitching, leave a gap along the bottom edge to provide an opening that stops just 3-4 cms ($\frac{1}{4}$ - $1\frac{1}{2}$ " from each side. For any other closure, close it apart from approx. 10 cms (4") just enough to get your hand in to open it up again.

Make

9. Turn the cover over and stitch around, again from the back, this time just outside the previous stitching line. Secure the ends well at either side of the opening.
10. Press over the stitching line, again just keeping the tip of the iron with the seam allowance. Open the cushion out to make sure none of the frill has been caught in the stitching. If it has, unpick it...
11. Trim the stitched seams to 12mm (1/2") all around, neaten as necessary. Grade the corners or trim away the end of the frill from the corner square. Turn the cushion out, finger pressing the seams to from the inside as you do so. Finger press the back of the opening along the seam line, to make a soft fold.
12. Unpin the frill and pull the pieces out, fluff them up and look at it all. Fill the cushion with the pad. Pin the closure together and slip stitch - or do whatever needs to be done with yours....

THE ROSES

Look at the cushion to see where roses or bows might be placed, how many you think you'll need and at what sort of size. There are ways to make perfect roses, but here we want them to be fairly informal, if you know how to make them then just do as you wish... If not, don't worry too much about it.

1. Take a length of fabric and fold it in half lengthwise. Run a gathering thread approx. 1.5 cm (5/8") from the folded edge. Keep the needle and thread dangling and pull the strip up to about half it's original length. Start at the shortest end and roll it up until it looks like a rose - full blown or bud-like.
2. Use the needle and thread to stitch through the base and across the bottom to hold the shape. Take a scrap of fabric, fold the edges under and make a cover for the base of the rose. Stitch or pin it into the cushion folds.

Tip! Use roses to cover any miss-stitching or, if you made a mistake earlier, any needle marks.





Silk and pearls every girls dream.....





I love to see the raw edges and the selvedge that reveal the secrets of the weave- how fun and brilliant are the actual colours woven create a beautiful dusty pink like this.....



An interior designers guide to home furnishings. For those of us who love a bit of frippery, this is a pretty good start! All from left overs- OK good left - overs, but left-overs nonetheless.

Our Cutting Room Floor projects are aimed at enthusiastic amateurs and professional maker who want a bit of light relief... we are assuming a level of knowledge and enthusiasm, and a resource for random offcuts.

Other projects in similar vein are Rags and Tatters Cushion : CRF 001 ; Torn Patch Cushion CRF: 005
PROJECT'No. CRF 006

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