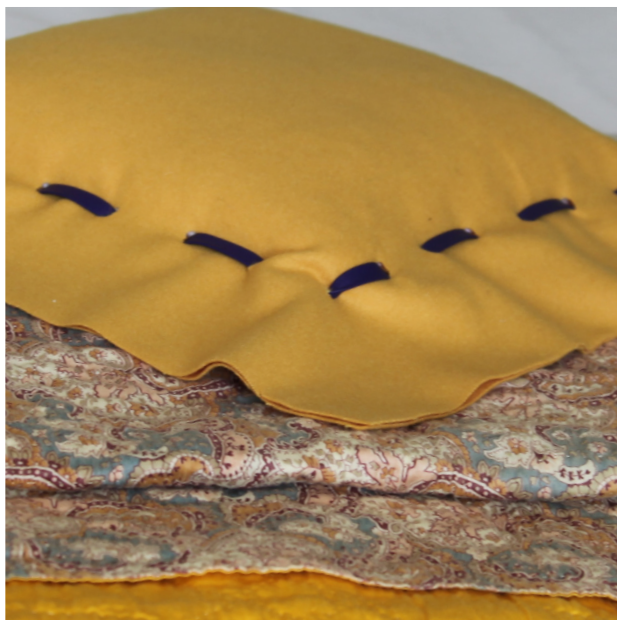# DESIGN & MAKE

BY HEATHER LUKE
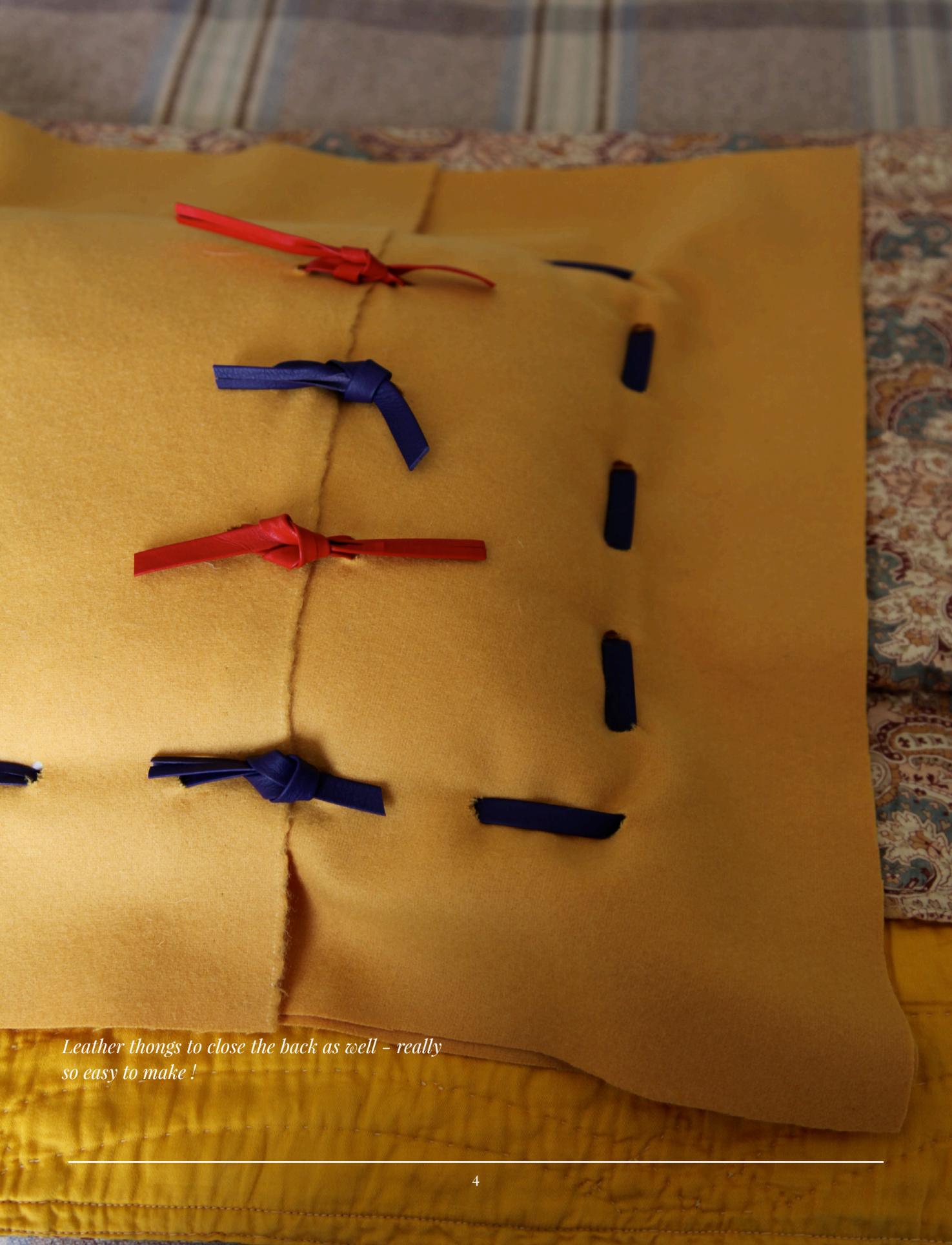
Laced Cushion

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The simplest cushion ever! This one can be put together in a very short time. The key is to buy materials that need no work .....

Wool melton is one of our favourite fabrics to use; it's easy to cut out, doesn't fray, looks great and launders well. And the sunflower yellow is joyful and uplifting. For the lacing we used some leather thongs that we already had – I think I picked them up from Neisha Crosslands shop when she was on the Kings Road in London some years ago. I bought them in red and blue. A good reason, for those who might be in doubt, why it's no bad idea to pick up interesting things when you see them !

These are lengths of soft leather that have been made from strips of approx. 3 cms (1 1/4") wide, folded into three – so finishing at approx. 1 cm (3/8"). The exact size doesn't really matter too much, and there are many tapes and ribbons that would look just as good; the important thing is that whatever you use should fill the size of hole that you've punched. I've just noticed on this photo that on the left side the off white of the cushion pad is just peeping through. It's not something that is as visible in reality, but it is there, and a good example of why the two sizes should marry up well...

The lacing does need to have some substance, and in proportion to the main fabric, as it is in effect holding the layers together. So for this woollen material, petersham, home made leather strips, flat shoes or boot laces, linen tape or even a fine summer belt could have been used instead. For a chintz or gingham weight, the lacing can of course be softer, so the choice might be a self rouleau, or from many of the vast choices of flat tapes ribbons and braids offer by interesting haberdashers and specialists, such as VV Rouleaux in Marylebone Lane – online or off.

These lacing holes were made with a hand held hole punch.

Leather thongs to close the back as well – really
so easy to make !

Make

PREPARE

1. We used a 40 cm (16") cushion pad for this project and a piece of fabric 65 x 135 cms – or 26" x 54".

2. We also used the selvedges for both sides of the back, but you only really need it for the one that shows, if that's how the fabric works out. The underside piece may or may not need finishing off.

3. For any other sized cushion you need to allow enough for the front piece to form a border, all around, and two pieces that will overlap at the back.

4. These backs overlap by just 3 cms (1 1/4") – if the overlap is tighter, use more lacing, if wider you'll need less. Three looks good at this size.

5. As fabric widths vary, if you're using the full width, so can the size of the overlap.

6. You'll need 4 laces approx. 80cm (32") long and three approx. 25 cms (10")

CUT OUT

1. Trim up the fabric edges. The fabric must be on grain if it is likely to fray at all, or very close to it for all non- fraying materials.

2. From the single width of fabric you'll cut three pieces, all 65 cms (26") top to bottom.

3. Find the centre and measure 32.5 cms (13") from each side. Do this at the top and at the bottom.

4. This should leave at 34.5 cms (13.5– 14") for the two backs.

5. Cut along these two lines.

TO MAKE THE CUSHION

1. Lay the front piece on the table, right side down, and smooth out.

2. Place the backs over, with right sides up, so that the outer raw edges are in line. The first back to be placed on should be the under side.

3. Secure these layers together, by pinning the centres together and then all the around the outsides, keeping the raw edges exactly aligned.

4. Working on the back only, and using a small measure, make a surface pinned line (not into the layer below) 11– 11.5 cms (approx. 4 1/4" – 4 1/2 ") in from the edges, in effect forming an internal square just slightly larger than the cushion pad.

5. Turn the cover over and do the same on the front.

Make

TO MAKE THE HOLES

The hole positions can be marked with a pencil, as the actual dots will disappear into the paper punch waste tray.

1. Remove the holding pins so that the backs and fronts are separated.

2. Working with the front piece, make pencil dots at each corner, and then equally between – 3 – 3.5 cm (approx. 1 1/4– 1 1/2") gaps is a good distance for lacing. So for this 42 cms there will be 12 dots marked at 3.5 cms intervals. (For the most accurate result measure the exact distance and divide into 12). Test one side first to make sure the gaps work out and, if they don't, adjust accordingly.

3. Take out the pins, then make each pencil mark into a hole, using a hole punch or tiny scissors. The hole punch will need to be newish, or at least sharp enough to cut fabric.

4. To make the closure, look at the back overlap and pencil mark good closure positions - three or four of them spaced evenly along the length. Mark both sides of the selvedge. Make the marks into holes.

TO PUT THE CUSHION TOGETHER

1. Place the front and backs together again. The holes around the outside should line up exactly, but don't worry too much if they don't - they can't be too much of a disaster.

2. Starting at the centre back, work right around to the opposite side, lacing the layers together. Leave equal lengths of tape free at either end.

3. With the second long lace continue around, back to the opposite side. Tie the ends together into a neat knot.

4. Fill the cushion with the pad, plumping it into the corners.

5. Use the short laces to tie the closures together.

6. Ideally the cushion should be plump but not trying to escape. If it seems over–full, just take the pad out again and remove some of the filling.

The colours of summer ....

An interior designers guide to home furnishings. It's good to contribute to our own home furnishings however much we might dislike the whole idea of sewing, or however pushed for time we are. These really neat cushions are the easiest thing ever - no machine, no sewing, no needles, you just need to be a dab hand with a hole punch. And non - fraying fabric helps....

Project Ref : Laced cushion

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