

This is an excerpt from the book

Quick to Make

From the Editors of Threads Magazine

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Great Pillows 1,2,3

featuring classic button details and an intriguing contrast of translucent silk organza and earthy, textured linen and silk, these three easy-to-sew pillows resemble the \$200 variety available from fine stores and interior designers, but at a much lower price. You don't need a lot of fabric for these pillows, so purchase the best—while silk organza adds polish, the polyester version doesn't press well.

PLEATED “APRON” PILLOW

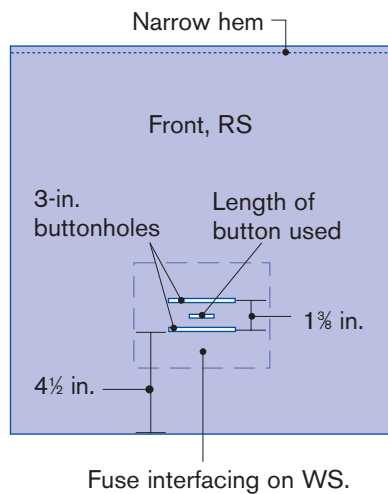
The elegant, pleated-organza apron flap on this linen pillow (shown at left in the photo below) looks hard to make but isn't. Start with a 16-in.-square pillow form. I prefer the cushiness of down or a feather/down blend, but you can also use a polyester form (see Resources on p. 91).

Follow the construction details in the drawings on the facing page to complete the front, back, tab, and apron flap, using a ½-in. seam allowance.

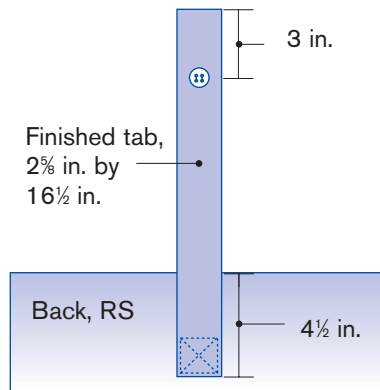
Fragile silk organza contrasts with rough linen and “scribbled” China silk to create stunning pillows for your home. From left, a pleated “apron” pillow, a handwritten silk pillow in a sheer “envelope,” and a long rectangle with three organza “pinafores” and double-button trim.



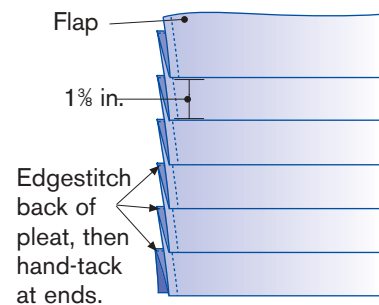
Apron Pillow



STEP 1. Cut 17-in. square of linen for both front and back. Finish top edge with narrow hem. Fuse interfacing behind buttonhole area and machine-sew buttonholes on front before assembling.



STEP 2. To make tab, start with 5 1/2-in. by 17 1/2-in. rectangle. Fold it lengthwise, RSs together. Stitch long side and one end. Trim, turn, and press. Then turn open end to inside and press. Attach tab to center of back by stitching box with X inside, as shown, over open end.



STEP 3. Cut organza flap 17 in. by 25 1/2 in. and finish side and lower edges with narrow hem. Draw chalk lines every 2 3/4 in., starting 1/2 in. from top raw edge. Use 1 3/4-in.-wide oaktag template on marked line to fold and press each of six pleats. Edgestitch back of each pleat, then hand-tack in place at side hems.

To assemble the pillow, baste the pleated flap to the top of the pillow back, right sides together. Join the front and the back, right sides together, stitching side and bottom edges (lift the flap away from the back so you don't sew it into the side seam). When stitching the lower corners, taper as shown in the bottom drawing on p. 75. Now stitch the flap to the back's top edge. Serge the seam allowances together, press to back, and topstitch. Slip the pillow into the case, then slipstitch the linen front and back together at the top opening to prevent gaping. The

flap will cover the top edge of the pillow. Attach a beautiful button to the tab to close it. Why not use a great vintage button?

A "LETTER AND ENVELOPE"

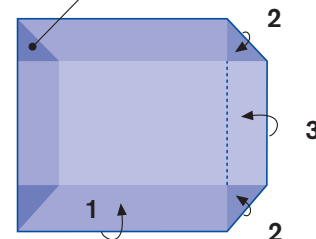
This fun pillow (shown at center in the photo on the facing page), inspired by one made by Pennington Home of Dallas, TX, is essentially a fabric letter. The 8-in. by 12 1/2-in. inner pillow of China silk is covered with words handwritten in fine-point permanent



Pinafore Pillow

Cut organza in 7-in. squares, press under 1-in. edge all around using oaktag template, and refold corners diagonally as shown to create a miter shadow. Center and pin squares to linen front, and satin-stitch each square to pillow, covering raw edge beneath and using wide, short zigzag. On each side of square, end stitching with needle on right, then pivot and stitch next side. Sew buttons (stack two together) at center of each square.

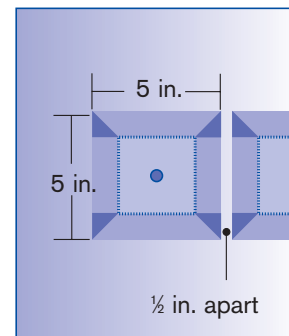
Completed miter



STEP 1. To create miter, after pressing under 1-in. edges, fold edge.

STEP 2. Fold corner diagonally.

STEP 3. Fold edge.



marker, which can convey any message you like. (My handwritten quotes are from an old book on fabrics.)

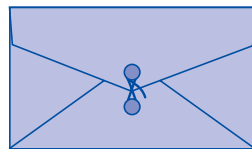
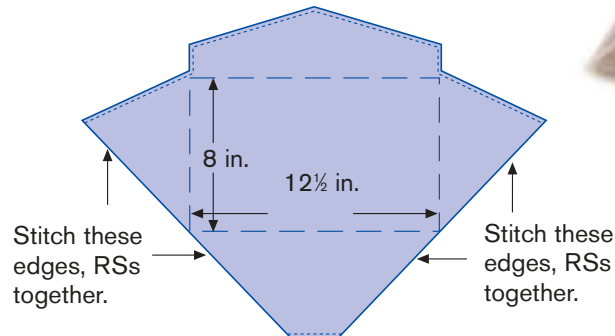
For this odd size, you'll need to make a muslin pillow form, lightly filling it with fiberfill (you want it fairly flat). After writing your "letter" on the China-silk fabric, sew a simple pillow cover, insert the pillow into it, and slipstitch the opening closed.

The delicate outer cover is a silk-organza envelope, constructed as shown in the top drawing on the facing page. I sewed mine a bit larger than the inner pillow, since the

extra roominess exaggerates its fragility. The envelope is easy to make—just narrow-hem the edges as shown, then stitch sides together in a $\frac{1}{4}$ -in. seam using a narrow zigzag. Add a button to the top flap and one to the envelope's lower V; tie a piece of silk ribbon to the top button to wrap in a figure eight around the two buttons. Voilà, an envelope.

Diagram of Letter Pillow's Envelope

To narrow-hem top edges and small lower edge, staystitch $\frac{1}{4}$ in. from edge, press under $\frac{1}{8}$ in., then another $\frac{1}{8}$ in., and stitch.



Sew each button with anchor button behind, and use 11-in. length of silk ribbon to wrap.

EASY "PINAFORE" PILLOW

It's simple to embellish a plain linen pillow with three square, silk-organza "pinafores" (as shown at right in the photo on p. 72). Construct the squares as shown on the facing page; a 1-in.-wide oaktag template helps in evenly pressing under the edges. Satin stitch the squares to a linen pillow front 12 in. by 21 in. (its finished size will be 11 in. by 20 in.); Sulky rayon thread in a slightly lighter or darker shade than the organza works well. Assemble the pillow in the usual way, tapering the corners as shown to prevent dog-ears.

And that's it. Have fun inventing your own new pillow designs. ●

Design idea

To Prevent "Dog-Eared" Corners

Chalk-mark $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. seam allowance at corner. When stitching seam, at about 2 in. from corner begin to taper stitching to widen seam allowance about $\frac{1}{8}$ in. to $\frac{1}{4}$ in. inside chalk line. Taper back to seam allowance on other side of corner.

