

Acid colour

Try this autumnal Hawaiian-style wool
appliqué cushion by **Lucy Poland**





This cushion cover was made using an old wool blanket but it could also be made from old woollen knitwear that has shrunk and felted in the wash, from commercial felt or from a combination of all three. Lucy cut blankets into quarters for ease of dyeing. Each piece is ample for one cushion. Acid dyes are easy to use and give brilliant colours. Skeins of white or natural wool can be added to the dye bath with the blanket if desired to give matching yarn. As well as adding colour the dyeing process will felt the blanket so that the edges will not fray when cut.

PREPARATION

1 Machine wash your blanket then dye in colours of your choice. At least three colours are needed.

Note: Make sure you are using dyes for wool as cold water dyes are not usually suitable for dyeing woollens.

2 Make the paper templates. Take a piece of paper 12in square and fold in half three times, vertically, horizontally and diagonally to give a triangular shape. Cut a design into this either using the patterns provided or experimenting with your own and then open out the paper. Repeat with a smaller piece of paper approximately 7in square. Cut a single leaf template, which will be repeated for the central motif.

Note: Have patience if trying to design your own cutouts. It is very easy to cut the incorrect side and all the pieces will then fall apart!

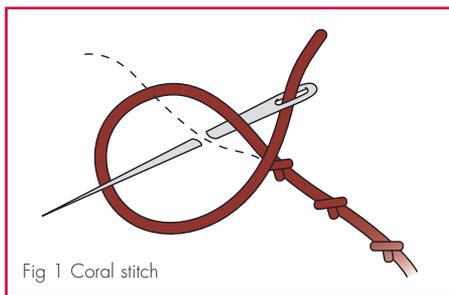


Fig 1 Coral stitch

APPLIQUÉ

1 Cut a piece of blanket 15in square for the cushion front. Use the opened out paper templates to cut pieces of blanket for the appliqué. If using the designs given you will have a large square piece, a smaller circular one and four individual leaf shapes.

2 Centre the largest of the appliqué pieces on the cushion front and pin in place using DK or tapestry wool work all round the edge in coral stitch (Fig 1).

Then work round the shape again about 1/2in from the edge using DK wool to couch down a cord of thicker chunky wool. You can either use wool which tones with the colour of the blanket or opt for completely different colours.

Finished size

15in square

Skill level

Intermediate

Materials

- ◆ Old wool blanket
- ◆ Oddments of chunky wool and double knitting (DK) or tapestry wool
- ◆ Acid dyes
- ◆ Paper for templates
- ◆ 16in Cushion pad

Where to buy

- ◆ Wool blankets can be found in charity shops and at car boot sales.
- ◆ Acid dyes are available from George Weil/Fibrecrefts, Old Portsmouth Road, Peasmarsh, Guildford, Surrey GU3 1LZ. Tel: 01483 565800 or visit www.georgeweil.co.uk

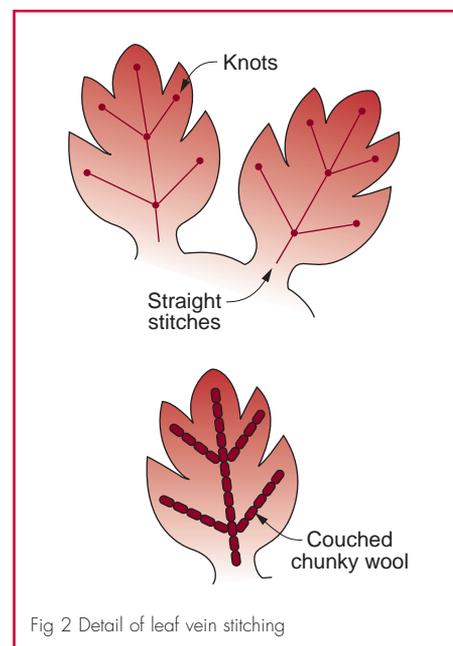


Fig 2 Detail of leaf vein stitching



3 Take the circular appliqué piece and position this on top of the previous piece. Secure in place using a combination of straight stitches and knots to simulate veins in the leaves (Fig 2).

4 Position the four individual leaves on top and stitch in place this time using couched chunky wool to resemble the veins (Fig 2).

FINISHING THE CUSHION

1 Trim the cushion front to measure 14½in square. For the backing cut two pieces of blanket each 14½ x 11in.

2 On each piece fold under 1in along the long edge and pin in place. On the RS use DK to couch down a length of chunky wool about ½in from the folded edge. This secures the fold and gives a firm decorative edge.

3 Overlap the two backing pieces with folded edges in the middle so they are the same size as the cushion front. Place on cushion front, WS together, and pin in place.

4 Cut a strip of blanket 4in wide and the length of one side of the cushion. Scallop one long edge. You can either cut this directly into the fabric or make a paper template first.

5 On the back of the cushion carefully line up the unscalloped edge with the edge of the cushion and stitch through all layers about ¼in from the edge (Fig 3).

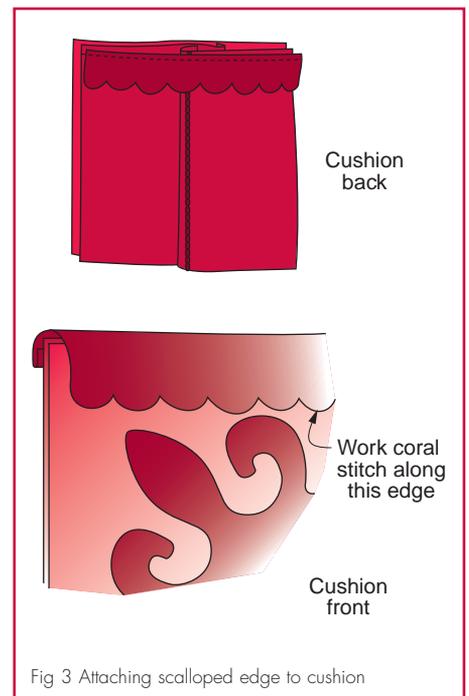
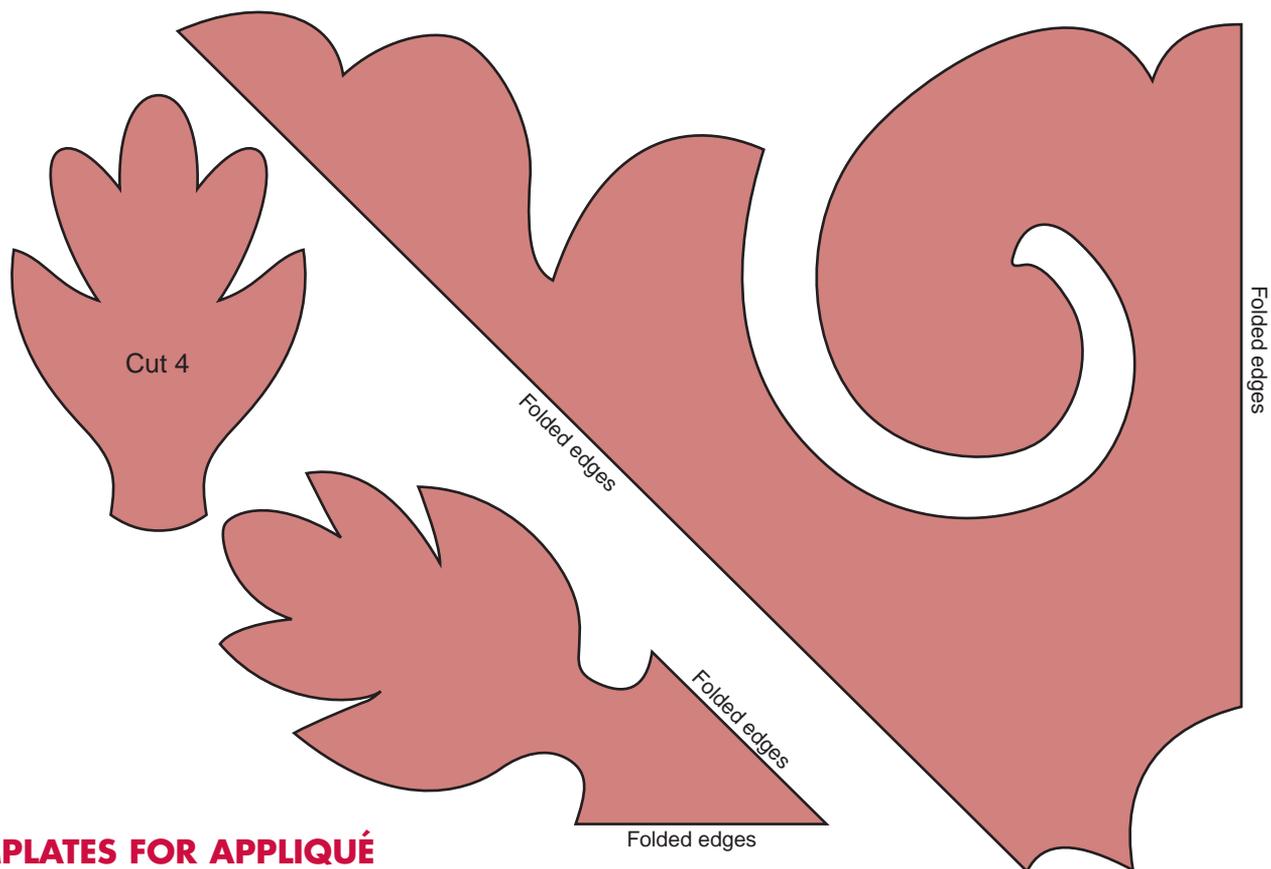


Fig 3 Attaching scalloped edge to cushion

6 Fold the scalloped edge over to the front of the cushion and stitch in place using coral stitch, being sure not to stitch right through to the back of the cushion (Fig 3).

7 Repeat steps 4-6 with the other three sides: oversew corners to neaten. Insert cushion pad. ♦



TEMPLATES FOR APPLIQUÉ SHOWN AT 100%