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Tricia Waddell and Katrina Loving
embellish pillows and wall hangings with
simple needle turn appliqué.



Project: Add Needle-Turn Appliqué to Pillow Covers

By Katrina Loving, Project Editor of *Stitch* Magazine

[Other project shown: Mellow Mushroom Mini-Quilt by Kevin Kosbab, from *Stitch* Spring 2010 issue]

Fabric

For one design similar to Sample (Pillow Cover shown is 14" (35.5 cm) square)

- One cotton print scrap, at least 6" x 10" (15 x 25.5 cm; *shown*: Dots Mod Buds in light green by Liz Scott for Moda) for appliqué
- One removable pillow cover (*shown*: light gray)

Other Supplies

- Sewing thread to match appliqué fabric
- One or two colors of six-strand embroidery floss (optional; *shown*: dark brown and light brown)
- Handsewing needle
- Embroidery needle
- Removable fabric marking pen
- Embroidery scissors
- Thimble (optional; Recommended: leather thimble)
- Leaf appliqué templates (optional)

Instructions

Prepare the Appliqué

1. Trace the appliqué shapes onto the wrong side of the cotton print scrap with a removable fabric marking pen, leaving at least 1/2" (1.3 cm) between each shape (sample shown features one Large and two Small Leaves).
2. Staystitch around each shape, stitching just a hair outside the drawn line. Then, cut out each shape, leaving 1/4" (6 mm) of seam allowance.
3. Using embroidery scissors, clip into the seam allowance around each shape, clipping to, but not into the stitches. Clip about every 1/4" (6 mm) or as needed.

Attach the Appliqué to the Pillow Cover

4. Optional: Using a removable fabric marking pen, draw a gently curved line on the pillow cover, from top to bottom and about 5–5 1/2" (12.5–14 cm) from one side edge. This represents a gently curved branch for the leaf appliqués.
5. Place the Large Leaf on the pillow cover, tilted for an organic appearance and about 1/4–1/2" (6mm–1.3 cm) from the drawn line. Place this leaf near the top of the pillow cover for a design similar to that on the sample. Pin in place by placing a few pins near the center of the appliqué shape.
6. Thread the handsewing needle with matching thread and knot one end of one thread. Holding the fabric near the appliqué taut with one hand, bring the needle up through the pillow cover from the wrong side, bringing it out just under, but not through, the appliqué fabric.
7. Use the needle to sweep the seam allowance just ahead of the needle, under the appliqué fabric. Hold the edge in place as you stitch, making sure that the drawn line and staystitching are both hidden. Using the standard hand appliqué stitch, begin stitching the first swept-under edge in place (taking 1/8" [3 mm] stitches in the pillow cover fabric and tiny stitches, only one or two threads, in the edge of the appliqué). Continue stitching around the edge of the appliqué, sweeping under each section of the seam allowance as you come to it and maintaining the curved edge of the leaf shape neatly. At the points of the leaf, sweep under the point first, then sweep under the seam allowance on each side to form a crisp point; hold in place for stitching. Check the tension of the appliqué piece as you go to ensure that the fabrics are taut but not puckering.
8. When you have completed the stitching, fasten off securely on the wrong side and then remove the pins. Press flat, protecting the fabrics with a press cloth and setting the iron temperature as appropriate for fabrics used.
9. Repeat Steps 5–8 with each remaining leaf appliqué, alternating the side of the drawn branch line and angling the appliqué for a pleasing, organic appearance (refer to the photo AT DIRECTION for assistance).

Finishing

10. To create the center branch, thread the embroidery needle with 3 strands of embroidery floss and stitch along the drawn line with a running stitch. If using a second color of embroidery floss, repeat entire step
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with the second color, stitching right next to the first line with no space between and offsetting the stitches slightly. Remove any remaining pen marks according to manufacturer's instructions.

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