

How to...

MAKE LOVEBIRD PILLOWS

The idea for this array of pillows started with a pair of birds which were on an apron I found in a sale. As it cost next to nothing I didn't feel bad about cutting it up to reuse the birds. If you can't find a suitable bird print fabric, however, you could use one with a butterfly print or something similar. The branch the birds are sitting on is appliquéd fabric, and I added some silk flowers and leaves to create the effect of spring blossom. The flower pillows are made using cut out fabric flowers on embroidered stems, and even the chintz-type fabric has some added silk flowers and leaves. Green sequins sewn onto all the pillows add a delicate sparkle. •



1 For each pillow cover, cut from the linen a rectangle twice the length of the pillow plus 6in (15cm) and the width plus 1¼in (3cm). Using



tailor's chalk, mark the main elements of the design on the right side of each fabric piece.

2 For the bird pillow, iron fusible web to the wrong side of the bird fabric and the dark fabric for the branch. On the backing paper of the webbing on the dark fabric, draw a branch – it will be the mirror image of the design.



Out-cut the motifs. Remove the backing and iron the branch and birds in position on the right side of the linen.

3 Pull their silk flowers and leaves off the stems. Sew the flowers in place on the branch using cross stitch



and yellow floss to create stamens in the flower centres. Sew the leaves in place using running stitch in green thread down the centers. Sew sequins to the linen.

4 For the floral-patterned pillow, sew on additional silk flowers with little yellow beads in the centres. Sew sequins to the linen.



5 For the flower pillows, embroider green vertical stems with tiny leaves either by hand using running stitch or backstitch, or by machine using zigzag stitch. You could also sew on



a strip of green sequins to make a wider stem, as I did on the light-coloured pillow.

6 Cut out some flowers (and leaves if you wish) from fabrics and iron fusible web to the wrong side. Remove the backing paper, and iron them to the tops

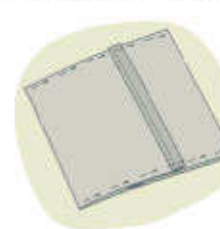


of the stems. If you wish, you could use free machine embroidery to stitch over the centres and stems and to add the outline of another flower or two...

7 Pull flowers and leaves off the stem of silk flowers, and sew the leaves to the embroidered stem with running stitch using green thread down the centres. Sew the silk flowers in clusters at the top of other embroidered stems, using cross stitch to create stamens. Sew sequins to the linen.



8 Complete the cover by hemming the short edges, stitching the side seams and turning right side out.



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