

PINCUSHIONS SQUARED

Designed and woven by Constance Hall

Difficulty rating: Beginner

Size: 4 x 4 plus edging

Yarn: Yarns that call for size 7 or smaller knitting needle were used.

Note: 100% cotton or yarns with little give are not ideal for pincushions as the pins don't go through the fabric with ease.

Overview: These are quick, fun projects and are perfect for gifts. These are also a great use of leftover small amounts of yarn. Each pincushion takes just two squares and all of them use just one yarn. For thinner weight yarn, such as sock yarn, double the yarn for a denser fabric. Pincushions will hold up better with a denser weave, rather than an open, lacy weave.

Quantities: Each pincushion takes two squares. Each square takes 8 yards of yarn. Edging yardage varies.

Other notions, equipment or tools: Crochet hook, tapestry needle, thin plastic for shield in pincushion. Beads, buttons or charms can be used for embellishment—this is a great time to raid your button box for unusual accents. Filling material and fabric to make a bag for the filling. See Filling section below.

Weaving

Weave two squares on the Zoom Loom. Ta-da! Weaving is done.

Filling

Polyester fiber fill or wool roving can be used to stuff the pincushion. If you prefer a heavier pincushion, ground walnut shells or sand make excellent filler material, but you will need to sew small bag to contain it. Ground walnut shells can be bought by the bag in pet stores and makes a firm but easily penetrable filling. Cut two squares of fabric slightly smaller than your Zoom Loom squares, and sew around the edges, leaving a small opening to pour the filling in. Use a funnel if needed, and do not overfill the bag. Sew the opening closed.

Assembly

These pincushions are made up of 4 layers: two Zoom Loom squares, the filling in a small bag, and a thin plastic shield.

The plastic shield prevents the pin points going all the way through the cushion. Any thin plastic can be used. A gallon milk jug will provide at least four flat pieces of plastic that work well. Cut the plastic the size of your square minus the edging or seam allowance.

Join the squares by sewing on a sewing machine or by hand, or by crocheting, knitting or tying the, together. You can then embellish the cushion with buttons, beads and embroidery. Be as fancy or plain as you like. This is where your creativity can take over!



Pincushion layers

Tip: When lining up the squares to join them together, orient the squares with the beginning yarn at the bottom left and the ending yarn at the top right. Place the squares with wrong sides together and sew three sides in whatever method you have chosen. Insert the plastic shield and bag of filling before sewing up the fourth side.

Crochet

Crochet is an easy way to join the squares together. Even if you're not an accomplished crocheter, this is a great time to give it a try. There is a tutorial with pictures at <http://chezplum.com/tutorial-single-crochet-seam>, and there are many more tutorials on the web.

Start by putting the crochet hook through a loop on the top square and the matching loop on the bottom square. Hook the yarn you are



A collection of pincushions:

Plum: A deep purple rayon chenille was joined with a contrasting peachy metallic ribbon yarn, Glisten from Louisa Harding.

Green variegated: Koigu, used double. Squares were joined on the sewing machine with decorative embroidery worked on top of machine stitching.

Peachy Pink: Louisa Harding Glisten, creates a sparkly cushion. The two squares were hand sewn together and topped off with a crystal button.

Red: Lorna's Laces Shepherd Sock Bold Red is used doubled for this brightly colored variation, joined with white ribbon and accented with a white button.

Purple: This simple, yet serviceable cushion is woven in Brown Sheep Nature Spun worsted. It was machine sewn and accented with a fancy flower button.

Purple/yellow/orange: Crystal Palace Panda Cotton weaves up into a plaid like fabric. I accented it with a simple crochet chain stitch on edge. An orange button attached with an orange satin ribbon finishes the cushion.

using for joining and pull it to the top. Wrap the yarn over the hook and pull it through the loop already on the hook. Insert the hook through the next set of loops and hook the yarn again. Pull it up. You now have two loops on the hook. Wrap the yarn over and pull it through both loops on the hook. If there is a large gap between sets of loops, make an extra chain stitch to bridge the gap. Adding in a chain stitch will keep the edges from puckering and drawing in. At the corners go into the loops an extra time or two to make extra stitches to turn the corner without puckering. When you get back to where you started, make an extra chain stitch and pull the yarn through. Work it back into your stitching and you are done!



Joining the squares with crochet

Finishing options

Machine sewing: If you sewed the squares together by hand or on the machine you might like the edging just as it is. The loops give a nice scalloped edge.

Hand sewing: For a different look, whip stitch around the outside edge with a contrasting yarn or embroider decorative stitches around the border.

Thread ribbon yarn on a tapestry needle and run it around the edge of the square. Tie the ends into a bow or tie a charm onto with the ends.

Embellishment: Place beads on the ribbon yarn as you go or sew beads on around the outside edge with a regular needle with a matching thread.

Have fun making pincushions—you really can't go wrong. These are just a few ideas to get you started. Once you start, it is hard to stop!

