

Holiday Turkey Pillow



Have you ever noticed that of all the holidays Thanksgiving is the one most often overlooked in terms of home décor? The most likely cause of this situation is Thanksgiving's unfortunate placement on the calendar. Sandwiched between two decorating extravaganzas like Halloween and Christmas, no holiday in November has much of a chance.

Like most people, when Matt and I think of Thanksgiving, we both think turkey. Matt immediately thinks dinner, but my thoughts first tend to stray to holiday decorating.

The turkey is a long-suffering character in American history. Its first claim to fame came in 1784 when Benjamin Franklin suggested the wild turkey as the national bird. Fortunately, wiser heads prevailed and it is the eagle that graces our government buildings.

It was in 1941 that the fate of the turkey was sealed. Congress passed a joint resolution designating the last Thursday of November as a day of national thanksgiving, and we've been celebrating the holiday ever since.

I will admit that the turkey is not the most beautiful holiday symbol, but I still think that it is deserving of recognition as a holiday icon. It's rare that I'd suggest using a food item as inspiration, but if you'd like to make a pillow honoring the symbol most remembered for Thanksgiving, here's what you'll need:



Materials List:

5/8 yard of solid colored wool
Scraps of various woolen solids, textures, and plaids
Embroidery floss
18" pillow form
Paper
Pencil
Straight pins
Scissors
Fusible webbing (optional)

1 To create the front and back of the pillow cover, cut two pieces of fabric measuring 19" square. Because the fabric should fit snugly over the pillow form, this measurement includes a 1/2" seam allowance. If the pillow form is very firm, it may be necessary to add one inch to both the length and width of the pillow.



2 To create the turkey design, draw a circle measuring 6" to 7" in diameter on a plain piece of paper. (I used a soup bowl for a pattern.) At the top of the circle, draw a small neck and head measuring about 2" in length and 1 1/2" at the widest point of the head. Add small wings and an uneven number of larger tail feathers. I made my turkey with nine tail feathers. Finally, draw on the eyes, beak, wattle, and feet.

3 Once you are satisfied with your design, trace the pattern pieces onto another sheet of paper and cut them out. Be sure to make the pattern for the tail feathers several inches longer than they were on your drawing so that they can be placed under the body of the turkey.

4 Pin the pattern pieces onto the scraps of wool, using a variety of colors and textures in the tail feathers. Once the pieces are cut, arrange them on the front piece of the pillow, overlapping pieces as necessary. I attached the pieces to the pillow using the blanket stitch, but you could also machine stitch the pieces using a satin stitch. If you don't want to take the time to stitch the pieces in place, you could iron them on with fusible webbing.

5 Once the turkey is attached to the pillow front, it's time to make the pillow. Place your pillow pieces right sides together. Pin the two pieces together making sure the edges line up evenly.

6 Using a ½" seam, stitch the two pieces together, leaving a fairly large opening on one side. Trim the corners and turn the pillow cover right sides out. Insert the pillow form and hand stitch the opening closed. To give the pillow a more finished appearance, I also used the blanket stitch around the four sides.



This pillow will make a wonderful addition to your holiday décor, honoring one of our least celebrated holiday characters. I know your family will enjoy this holiday addition, almost as much as they will enjoy the real thing at Thanksgiving dinner.

Hope you enjoy.....both!

Shari

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