

WORKSHOP: "SETTING UP TO SEW" – NEEDLE CASE



Summary: We will use hand and/or machine sewing to make a felt needle case with attached pin cushion decorated with rick rack.

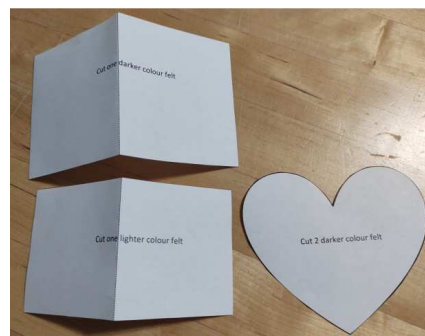
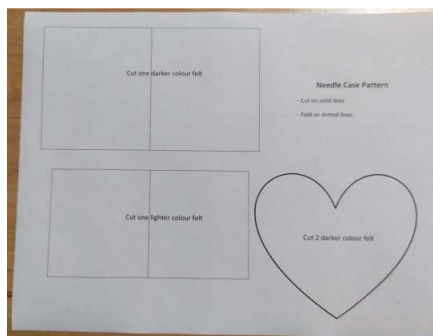
Materials and Equipment:

needle case & pin cushion pattern
measuring tape
cotton press cloth
small piece of felt – light colour
small pieces of felt – darker colour
5/8" rick rack or flexible narrow braid
stuffing or blanket to cut up
hand sewing needle (sharp)
instructions/ideas sheet
3 threads: approximately matching 2 felt colours and rick rack

optional: sketch paper to draw your own pattern
optional: pencil, eraser, sharpener
ruler
sewing machine
chalk pencil or water soluble marker
small fabric scissors
sewing shears
iron and ironing board
optional: pinking shears (not provided)

Class Plan: Making a Needle Case

1. Sketch a simple shape for your pin cushion or use the template with heart provided. Cut out the pattern.



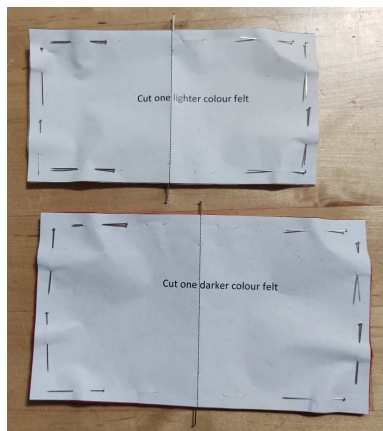
2. Pin your pattern pieces to the felt colours marked on the pattern. Layer two thicknesses for the heart.



3. Cut out your felt pieces using sewing shears and small scissors for the tight corners.
Optional: Cut out your shapes with pinking shears instead for a zigzag edge.



4. Mark the centre line of your two needle case rectangles with pins before removing your pattern.



5. Mark the centre line of your two rectangles with a chalk pencil and ruler, using the pins as a guide.



6. For this project we used thread for basting because it is a great way to use up those scrap threads when you don't know what they are made of (e.g. cotton or polyester). Your needle case likely won't get washed so shrinkage of different fibre types doesn't matter
7. Cut 4.3/4" of rick rack (zigzag trim), fold it in half and tack (take a few stitches in place) it about 1/4" in from the edge to the inside side of one of your felt hearts with the ends sticking down into the heart.



8. Treat the ends of your rick rack with liquid fray preventer to seal the ends anywhere it will be left exposed.



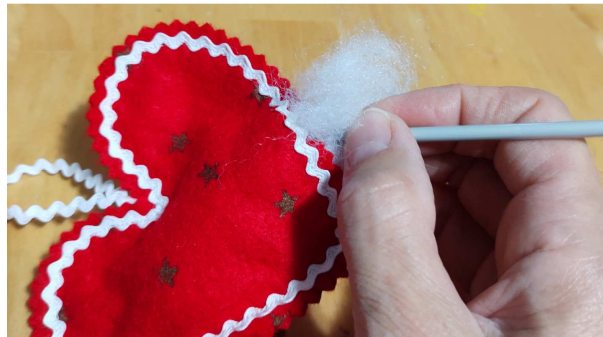
9. Optional: Hand or machine stitch rick rack to either side of your heart shapes about 1/4" in from the edges all around with thread colour making your rick rack (white here).



10. Hand or machine stitch your heart shaped pieces of felt together wrong sides together about 1/4" in from the edge all the way around, leaving 1" gap on the straight edge of one side for stuffing. If you applied rick rack in the previous step, match the thread to that (white here), otherwise match your thread to your felt colour (red here).



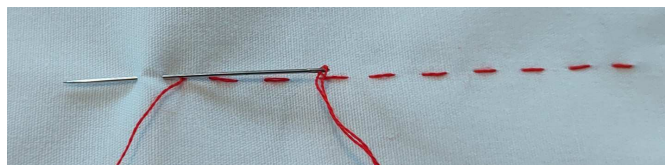
11. Stuff your felt heart with fuzz or tiny pieces of cut up blanket scrap material. Use a knitting needle to poke the fuzzy into the harder to reach areas.



12. Hand-sew the 1" gap closed with white thread. We used a running stitch from one end to the other and then back again.



- a. A running stitch is a simple in and out stitch.



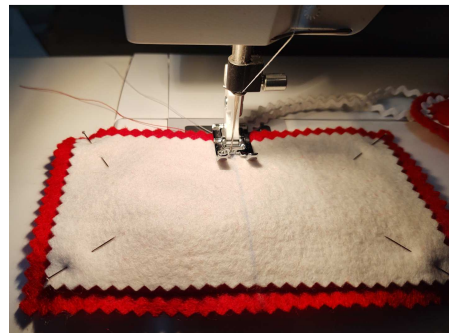
13. Optional: Stitch rick rack to the right side of your larger piece of needle case felt in a rectangle, treating the ends with fray preventer.



14. Cut 9" of rick rack, treat the ends with fray preventer and loop it through the heart rick rack to join them. Matching the ends and hand or machine stitch them to the inside back of your needle case with matching thread. Here we used white thread on top and red bobbin thread.



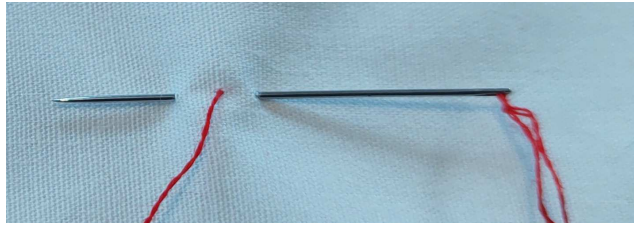
15. Stack your needle case felt rectangles with the smaller one on top, centring it over the larger one, and stitch by machine or hand along the centre line, joining the rectangles together.



- a. For hand stitching we used "back stitch" without going all the way through the larger piece of felt, so the stitches won't show on the outside.



- b. In back stitch you start by taking a small stitch from right to left in your fabric. Insert the needle in the end of the previous stitch and come out just beyond where the thread started.



16. Fold your needle case in half, and iron it along the crease on a VERY COOL setting with a cotton PRESS CLOTH over the felt. The felt in this project is synthetic and will melt or discolour even at very low heat. A press cloth is a barrier between fabrics and your iron to protect the fabric and your iron from melting.



17. Add your needles to your needle case, pinning them to the smaller felt insert in your needle case.



18. Happy creating, and please share pictures of your creations if you feel comfortable.

Useful Information/Adaptations/Variations:

- To make the project simpler, leave the rick rack off of the heart and needle case outsides.
- For hand sewing, secure your thread at the start of the seam by taking a few stitches in place. Or twist the end of the thread around your finger, roll them together and pull to make a knot in the end.
- Try making several needle cases in different colours to organize different types of needles separately.

Trouble Shooting:

- If your rick rack twists or shifts while machine sewing it, try making the presser foot pressure lighter. You can also omit the rick rack to make it simpler.
- The whole project can be done by hand sewing if preferred. It is nice to have a little project in progress to carry around with you, to fill little bits of time like waiting at the dentist office.