



Pattern of the Month - November 2013

by Evelyn George

“Crafty Pincushions”

It's easy to make a clever pincushion with a napkin ring or other small container, a circle of fabric, stuffing, needle and thread and a bit of glue. Look for the widest napkin rings or bracelets you can find, at thrift stores, linen shops, import and craft stores. Any small container (preferably unbreakable) such as a mini flower pot, baking tin, demitasse or teacup, candle holder, tiny basket, bowl, bucket, tin box or even a colorful plastic juice lid could also be used. There's almost no sewing involved, and they're so much fun--you'll want to make some for gifts, too!

You'll need:

Napkin ring or other small “container”

7” to 9” circle of fabric (or oval or square, depending on the container)

Polyester fiberfill stuffing

Needle and strong thread

Glue Gun (if container is non-porous, such as metal, plastic, glazed ceramic)

or Craft Glue (if container is porous, such as wood, basket, unglazed flower pot)*

** If possible, test a sample of your materials to make sure glue works; craft glue needs to dry several hours or overnight before you'll know for sure.*

An 8” or 9” circle of fabric is about right for a 1½” to 2” deep napkin ring. Run a gathering stitch around the circle about 1” to 2” from raw edge, depending on depth of napkin ring. Gather part way to form a pouch, fill evenly with stuffing, then draw thread up tightly and make a secure knot. Push a bit more stuffing into the “stem” and make a few stitches across the bottom to keep it in place. This part looks ugly but will be stuffed down inside the napkin ring, providing more surface area for contact with the glue. Test the fit before gluing, and add more stuffing or trim off excess fabric as needed to make a good fit.

For other containers, let the shape determine how much fabric is needed to fit easily inside the container and still make contact with the inside so the glue will hold it in place. For wide, shallow containers run the gathering stitch closer to the edge, and gather just enough to fit the container. Glue all the way around, to seal stuffing in place.

Glue Gun: Protect your work area with an old plastic tablecloth or newspapers. Have a heatproof tray on which you can set the glue gun down safely. This glue works for almost any surface, and sets almost instantly. Decide in advance where you need to apply the glue, then work quickly. Follow directions that came with glue gun; unplug when not in use, to prevent fire.

Craft Glue: Protect work surface. Apply glue carefully to inner surface of napkin ring or other container, keeping it below the upper edge; run a little extra glue around the “stem” of the stuffing, quickly twist it into place, and hold it firmly together for a couple of minutes until it begins to bond. Let dry overnight.

If the container is open on the bottom (like a napkin ring) you can cover it by gluing a circle of light cardboard over the hole, for a more finished look. And of course, you can embellish as desired!

Tip: If it seems like the pincushion might be top-heavy or tipsy, consider wrapping a small rock in batting and a bit of fabric, and gluing this in place inside the bottom where it will be hidden, but will add some weight.

