

Last Minute Father's Day Idea: Classic Plaid Pillow with Custom Silhouette or Monogram

Editor: Liz Johnson
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Commemorate Dad's day with a set of cool plaid pillows, featuring appliqués that celebrate his family, his interests, or simply his name. We used a very classic red plaid from *Pendleton* for the back of each of our pillows, white cotton duck for the fronts, twisted cording around the edges, and black felted wool for our appliqués to create the look of vintage silhouettes. The only thing missing is an Irish Setter at Dad's feet and leather patches on his jacket sleeves.

We provide the *DAD Letters* plus both a *Little Girl* and a *Little Boy Silhouette* as downloadable patterns.



Of course, you could design your own unique patterns on your computer. If you want to create your own silhouette, position the person (or pet) in front of a plain wall (white would be best) and take a digital photo of him/her in profile. Import this photo into your computer's drawing program, enlarge it to a size appropriate for your pillow - for example, our "girl" is 9" tall. Print it out at full size, then carefully cut it out with nice smooth lines. Think about your comfort level with appliqué; if you're new, you may not want a lot of tiny twists and turns. Check out our tutorial, [How to Appliqué Like a Pro](#) for hints and tips.

Your computer is also likely to have a wonderful selection of alphabet fonts from which to choose, which would be great for a monogram appliqué (that's how we got our RMT monogram) . You could also trace a silhouette image to reflect Dad's favorite hobby, such as a pair of golf clubs, a fish, a tennis racket, or a running shoe.

Sewing Tools You Need



- Sewing Machine and standard presser foot
- Zipper foot for stitching along the cording
- Satin Stitch foot or Appliqué foot or similar

Fabric and Other Supplies



Supplies shown are enough to make ONE 16" x 16" pillow. You will end up with extra because you need the ½ yard depth for a good fussy cut of the front and back panels, but you'll have extra width... maybe Dad needs more than one pillow or maybe you have more than one Dad to celebrate.

- ½ yard of 44"+ wide fabric for pillow backs; *we used Pendleton's Cunningham wool plaid*
- ½ yard of 44" fabric for the pillow fronts: *we used a white canvas cotton duck*
- Scraps or ½ yard of 20"+ wide fabric for the appliqués (the amount depends on the quantity and size of your appliqués); *we used a black felted wool*
- ONE 16" x 16" pillow insert
- 2 yards of piping: *we used a ⅜" twisted cord with a lip trim in black*
- Scraps or up to 1 yard of paper-backed fusible web (as above, it depends on the quantity and size of your appliqués); *we like Pellon Wonder Under*
- All purpose thread to match fabrics
- See-through ruler
- Fabric pen or pencil
- Iron and ironing board
- Scissors or rotary cutter and mat
- Straight pins
- Seam ripper
- Seam gauge

- Hand sewing needle

Getting Started

1. Download and print one or both of our appliqué patterns, which are sized for a 16" x 16" pillow [Little Girl Silhouette](#), [Little Boy Silhouette](#) and [DAD Letters](#). Or create your own.
IMPORTANT: Each pattern is ONE 8.5" x 11" sheet. You must print the PDF file at 100%. DO NOT SCALE to fit the page.
2. For each pillow back, measure a 16" x 16" square and mark the cutting lines on your fabric with your fabric pen or pencil. We used the Pendleton Cunningham plaid, so we fussy cut to make sure we centered the lines of the plaid in the square. Cut out each square.



3. Repeat to cut as many front fabric squares as necessary (*white cotton duck in our sample*).
NOTE: Often in our tutorials, we recommend cutting your pillow fabric squares an half inch to an inch larger than your pillow form. By cutting the fabric the same size as the pillow insert and then using a 1/2 inch seam allowance (as we do here), you will end up with a very full pillow when completed, which is important for this appliqué design.
4. Cut out each printed appliqué pattern and trace upside down onto the PAPER side of your fusible web.



At Your Sewing Machine & Ironing Board

1. Place traced images from the fusible web onto the WRONG side of your appliqué fabric (*black felted wool in our sample*). Following the manufacturer's instructions, fuse in place.

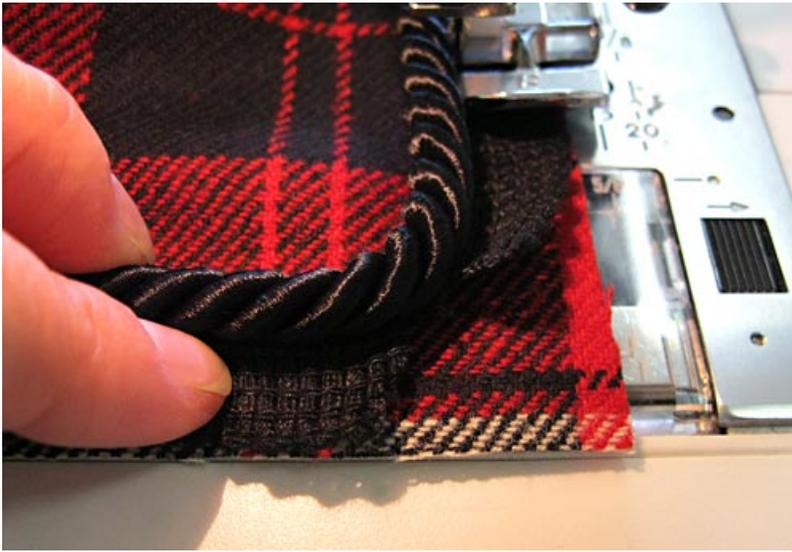


2. Cut out each image.
3. Peel the paper backing off each image, and carefully pin it in the center of the pillow front fabric. Use your ruler to make sure everything is nicely centered both top to bottom and side to side.
4. Iron in place, following the manufacturer's instructions.



NOTE: *If you use glass head pins instead of plastic, there are no worries about accidentally melting the head of your pin with the iron and ending up with a messy pink or white glob on your project.*

5. Set up your sewing machine for appliqué.
6. Stitch around each image, being as careful as you can to keep all of the stitching on the appliqué and not on the white canvas. This will give you a much nicer looking edge. If you're new to appliqué, check out our tutorial: [*How to Appliqué Like a Pro.*](#)
7. Attach a [Zipper foot.](#)
8. Pin the twisted cord to the right side of the back fabric square(*the plaid in our sample*). Start in the center of one side (the bottom edge if you have a directional fabric) and line up the edge of the cord's insertion lip with the raw edge of the fabric.
9. Machine baste very close to the cord. Clipping the lip of the cording at each corner will help it curve around the corner.



10. Finish by overlapping the ends and tucking them down towards the edge of the fabric.



11. Pin the completed front square to the back square, right sides together, aligning all of the raw edges. Leave a 7" - 8" opening along the bottom to turn right side out and insert the pillow form.



12. Still using the Zipper foot, stitch as close as possible to the cord all around. Remember to curve around the corners, following your original cord basting, and to lock your seam at either side of the opening.



13. Clip the rounded corners.
14. Turn the pillow cover right sides out and push out your rounded corners to get a nice smooth curve, a long knitting needle or chopstick works well for this.
15. Press well, turning in the raw edges of the opening so they are flush with the sewn seam.
16. Insert the pillow form and pin the opening closed.
17. Hand stitch the opening closed.



Contributors

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Pillows & Cushions

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