

Pocket Weave Sachet by Jane Patrick



Overview

This easy pocket is fun to weave on a simple cardboard loom, and requires no sewing.

The pocket is made by weaving around and around a rectangular form, first weaving across the front, then around the back, back to front, and so on. After the pocket part is woven, the flap is made by weaving back and forth on one layer only.

Introduction

Every late summer our neighbor would come over to help my mother prepare school clothes for me and my two sisters. We'd see what fit, and what didn't was passed down to the next girl after necessary adjustments. Our hems went down or up depending on style and growth spurts.

I remember my mother telling about her mother making over clothes during World War II, because fabric wasn't readily available and money was scarce. Whole

garments were dismantled and remade in the current style. Nothing wasted, everything saved.

How many of us today have a rag basket or button jar? Today I would guess most of us begin a project by going to the store. There's never a question of not finding just what we're looking for. The selection can be astounding. It is even more astonishing if we think that not long ago, just over two hundred years, fabric was still made by hand. Raw fiber such as wool was spun into yarn, dyed if color was desired, and finally woven. With so much labor invested in each piece of fabric, of course it was mended and remade and used and reused until it had nothing more to give except to be cut up into rags and rewoven.

What I find appealing about rag weaving is that these humble fabrics are irregular and unpredictable. Fabric strips twist and fray, creating lively, dynamic color and texture patterns. Rags, even ones that begin as new cloth from the fabric store, hold little secrets about what they once looked like.



Materials and Equipment

Orange print cotton quilting fabric cut in 1/2" (1.3 cm) strips, 1/4 yard (23 cm) is sufficient for weaving the bag and the inserted herbal sachet pillow (you'll need two 33/4" [9.5 cm] squares for the pillow; the rest should be cut into 1/2" [1.3 cm] strips); 6 1/2 yd (6 m) of 5/2 pearl cotton in avocado; matching orange sewing thread and needle; antique pearl button with shank; fragrant herbs, either purchased or from your garden; mat board cut to shape (see illustration); weaving needle; sewing needle; scissors; rotary cutter; straight edge; cutting board; pencil; masking tape; tape measure; steam iron and pressing cloth.

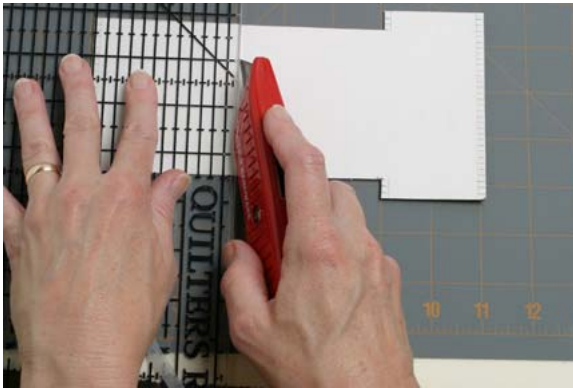
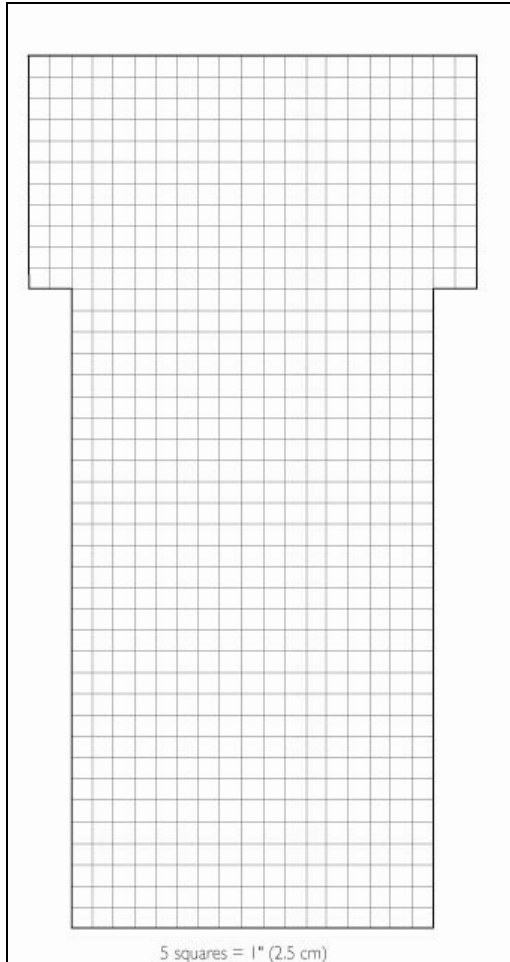
Resources

Fabric, yarn, quilting, and hobby stores stock fabric, yarn, and thread. Look in the bulk herb section at health food stores for sachet herbs.

Finished Size

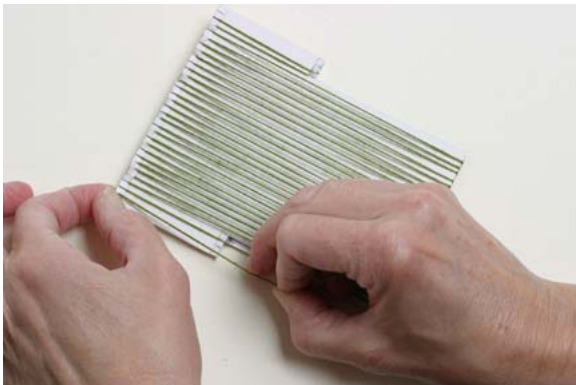
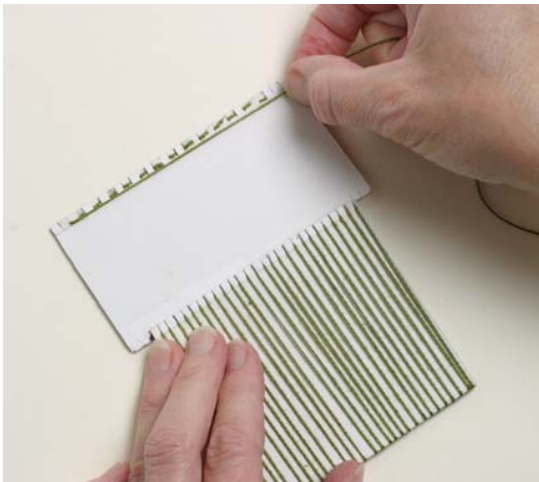
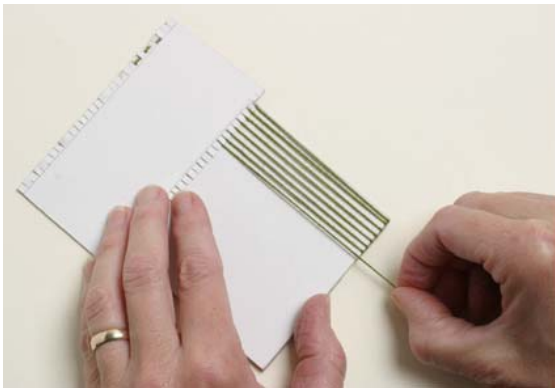
About 3 1/4 x 3 x 1/4" (8.5 x 7.5 x 0.6 cm).

Instructions



1. Cut mat board in a T-shape following the illustration. While the pocket could be woven straight up, the flap draws in somewhat during the weaving and doesn't cover the top sufficiently—increasing the flap by two threads on either side of the

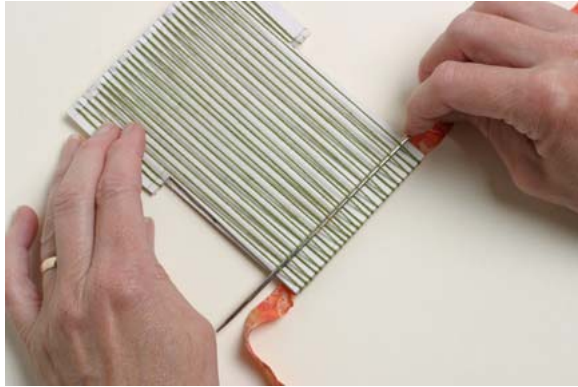
pocket solves this problem. Score the 6" (15 cm) length of the T-shape 3" (7.5 cm) from the end and fold up the lower portion along the score line to make a square. Mark and cut slots every 1/8" (3 mm) along bottom and top edges (this will yield 8 warp ends per inch [2.5 cm]).



2. With the loom folded, attach the warp yarn with masking tape on the lower right on the inside of the cardboard loom (you'll need to unfold the loom to do this).
Note: It is important to begin at the correct place so that the proper number of warps results—an odd number of warps is necessary to make the over-under-over-under weaving work with each round of circular weaving. Bring the warp end up on the short side around a tab, and then continue around to the back (long side) around the tab in a direct line. Continue on the long side down around to the front and around the second tab. Finish by winding the two extra warps along the short edge, carry the warp yarn across the top to the other side and wind the last two warps along the other short edge. Secure the end with masking tape. You will have a total of 29 warps.



3. With rotary cutter or scissors, cut the orange fabric into strips 1/2" (1.3 cm) wide and as long as the fabric width allows. Thread one length onto a weaving needle. Leaving a 3" (7.5 cm) tail, weave from right to left, over-under, over-under, across the front of the loom. Slide this first weft pick to the bottom edge of the loom.



4. You'll now begin weaving around and around. Turn the loom over and weave across the back from right to left and then around to the front. Continue weaving around and around, alternating every row with which warp threads you go over and which you go under, until the short side is filled. Compress each row, or pick, after you've inserted the needle, but before drawing the weft through, by pushing down with the needle so that there are about 7 picks per inch (2.5 cm). When you run out of one length of weft, join another as described in the box. To finish, weave as close to the edge as possible so that the weaving will be snug. If you have trouble getting the needle through at the top, switch to a smaller needle and trim off 1/8" (3 mm) from the width of the fabric strip. When you can't weave any further, cut off the weft and secure the end by weaving it back into the fabric.



5. With a new length of rag, weave the flap by weaving back and forth on the one side only. Weave as close to the top edge as possible. When you can't weave further, remove the weaving from the loom by sliding it out of the cardboard slots. Turn the weaving inside out and sew the weft tails into the weaving.



6. Finish the pocket by steam pressing with a damp press cloth and hot iron. Hem flap edge by turning under 1 row and hand stitching in place. Press. For closure, attach a small button in the center of the pocket, 1/2" (1.3 cm) from the top edge. For sachet, you'll make a pillow 2 3/4" (7 cm) square, beginning with two 3 3/4" (9.5 cm) squares of fabric. With right sides together, stitch around all sides using a 1/4" (6 mm) seam and leaving a 2" (5 cm) gap on one side. Stuff with herbs, sew gap closed, then insert in the woven pocket.

Hints

- When you run out of a strip, begin the next one by overlapping the new with the old. To avoid bulk, trim fabric strips where they overlap.
- If a tab becomes weak during weaving, place a piece of masking tape over the weak area to stabilize it.
- When weaving the flap, gently pull out the edge warps to keep the edges from drawing in.

Further Reading

Explore more about the lore and technique of rag rug weaving in these fine books. If you're as lucky as I was, you'll find them on the shelf at your local library: *Twined Rag Rugs: Tradition in the Making* by Bobbie Irwin (Krause Publications, 2000), *Weaving Contemporary Rag Rugs: New Designs, Traditional Techniques* by Heather Allen (Sterling, 2001), and *Rag Rug Handbook* by Janet Meany and Paula Pfaff (Interweave Press, 1996).

For more projects like this, check out Jane's book *Time to Weave: Simply Elegant Projects to Make in Almost No Time* available at your favorite weaving or book store, or online at www.interweave.com.