

# Four Seasons of Embellished Patchwork Pillows

From *Stitching for the Seasons*  
By Jen Daly



## Class Description:

These charming seasonal pillows provide the perfect opportunity to teach beginner students wool appliqué, simple embroidery, and basic quilting techniques.

## Class Length:

The full project can be taught as a 6-hour skill-building class, or you can teach a 3-hour wool appliqué/embroidery class focused on the seasonal panels.

**Option 1:** 3 hours. Students will make a panel embellished with wool appliqué and embroidery that can be inserted into a 4" x 6" frame or

finished as desired. Students will learn the basics of wool appliqué, including the fusible web method, the freezer paper method, and the blanket stitch and whipstitch (with optional discussions on felting wool and making templates). Students will also learn the basics of simple embroidery and embroidery stitches, including the backstitch and French knots.

**Option 2:** 6 hours (1 day or two 3-hour sessions). Students will complete the embellished panel (Option 1) and incorporate it into a 12" x 16" patchwork pillow. In addition to the skills practiced in the first part of the class (Option 1), the extended project gives students the opportunity to learn or practice the basics of quilting, including rotary cutting, sewing with a ¼" seam, pinning, nesting seams, chain piecing, and pressing. Depending on time constraints and the skill of the students, the project also provides an opportunity to instruct students on making a quilt sandwich, basting, and basic machine quilting (optional).

### **Class Supply List:**

This class is a great opportunity to sell project kits, specifically a kit for the embellished panel (including wool and floss) and a pillow-finishing kit. If you plan to teach only Option 1, you can also offer pillow-finishing kits for students to complete the project at home using ***Stitching for the Seasons*** as a guide. In addition, you can sell kits not only for the specific season that you plan to teach in class, but also for the remaining three seasons—once they have learned the techniques, students can complete all four seasons at home using ***Stitching for the Seasons*** as a guide.

### *Kit Contents*

#### Option 1 Embellished Panel Kit:

- 5" x 7" background fabric panel
- 5" x 7" piece of low-loft batting or white flannel (if not doing the full pillow project)
- Felted wool\*
- Embroidery floss\*
- Appropriately sized square of lightweight fusible web (such as HeatnBond Lite)
- Appropriately sized square of freezer paper

\*as indicated in specific project instructions in ***Stitching for the Seasons***

Note: Because most beginning students do not have a felted wool stash and may not have easy access to felted wool, it is very helpful to offer wool/floss kits. However, I have taught the embellished panel portion of this class without kits (incorporating a materials fee in the price for the class). To do so, I put four large rectangular tables together and laid out an assortment of felted wool and embroidery floss down the center of the grouping. Students were then able to choose materials for themselves, and the decision-making created a fun and collaborative atmosphere. If you choose this method, make sure to supply each student with the background panel, batting, freezer paper, and fusible web. Don't forget to ask your students to minimize waste by cutting close to the edges of the wool and saving larger scraps.

#### Option 2 Pillow-Finishing Kit:

- 1 mini charm pack or 42 - 2½" x 2½" squares (you could also use larger pieces of fabric if you would like to use this as an opportunity to teach rotary cutting)
- ½ yard fabric for pillow backing
- ½ yard lining fabric (such as muslin) or 16" x 20" piece minimum
- 16" x 20" piece of batting

Note: If you give students the option of bringing their own pillow-finishing materials, make them aware of which season you're doing so they can choose appropriate fabric colors, prints, etc.

*Students should plan to bring the following additional supplies to class:*

#### Option 1 (embellished panel):

- ***Stitching for the Seasons*** by Jen Daly
- Sharp scissors (for both paper and fabric)
- Pins
- Embroidery needle (size 5)
- Needle threader (optional)
- Embroidery hoop (suggested 4" diameter)
- Pencil
- Water-soluble marking pen
- Iron, ironing surface, pressing cloth (these can also be provided by the teacher as a shared station)
- 4" x 6" frame (optional)

#### Option 2 (full project):

- All supplies from Option 1 above
- Sewing machine in good working order (manual, extra needles, etc.)
- Rotary cutter, ruler, cutting mat (these can also be provided by the teacher as a shared station)
- Seam ripper
- 12" x 16" pillow form

### **Classroom Preparation:**

Option 1: Each student will need ample space for cutting and stitching. There should be at least one ironing station (with a pressing cloth) for every two students. Because of the scraps that will be generated, it is helpful to have a little waste bag at each place or between students.

Option 2: In addition to the preparations noted above (Option 1), each student will need space and an outlet available for their sewing machine. You can either set up rotary-cutting stations for shared use, or leave space for each student to set up their own rotary cutting mat, etc.

### **Class Agenda:**

*Specific pillow instructions can be found on the following pages of*

#### ***Stitching for the Seasons:***

*Think Spring Pillow p. 15*

*Summertime Pillow p. 38*

*Hello Fall Pillow p. 60*

*Welcome Winter Pillow p. 83*

#### Option 1 only:

1. Discuss wool appliqué: what it is, uses, materials required, etc. (p. 108).
2. After instructing your students on the two methods of preparing wool appliqué, namely the freezer paper method (p. 108) and the fusible web method (p. 109), prepare the wool appliqué.

Note: In ***Stitching for the Seasons*** only one method was suggested for each pillow (with the exception of winter). However, there is an opportunity to teach both methods with each pillow as follows.

Spring: fusible web method was suggested, but try the freezer paper method for the leaves.

Summer: freezer paper method was suggested, but try the fusible web method for the stem.

Fall: freezer paper method was suggested, but try the fusible web method for the acorn caps.

3. Prepare the background panel as discussed in the project instructions.
4. Fuse (if necessary) and stitch the appliqués onto the background panel using both the whipstitch and the blanket stitch (p. 109, 110). While students are working, there should be an opportunity to discuss how to felt wool (p. 108) and make templates (p. 25).
5. Prepare appliquéd panel for embroidery as described in the project instructions (substituting 5" x 7" piece of batting for 16" x 20" piece of batting and lining fabric) and embroider (p. 110).
6. To frame the finished panels, remove the glass from a 4" x 6" frame. Wrap the appliquéd/embroidered panel/batting around the glass (centering it) and reinsert into the frame. Fold the corners to reduce bulk and replace the backing.

Option 1 and 2 combined:

1. Discuss wool appliqué: what it is, uses, materials required, etc. (p. 108).
2. After instructing your students on the two methods of preparing wool appliqués, namely the freezer paper method (p. 108) and the fusible web method (p. 109), prepare the wool appliqués.

Note: In ***Stitching for the Seasons*** only one method was suggested for each pillow (with the exception of winter). However, there is an opportunity to teach both methods with each pillow as follows.

Spring: fusible web method was suggested, but try the freezer paper method for the leaves.

Summer: freezer paper method was suggested, but try the fusible web method for the stem.

Fall: freezer paper method was suggested, but try the fusible web method for the acorn caps.

3. Prepare the background panel as discussed in the project instructions.
4. Fuse (if necessary) and stitch the appliqués onto the background panel using both the whipstitch and the blanket stitch (p. 109, 110). While students are working, there should be an opportunity to discuss how to felt wool (p. 108) and make templates (p. 25).
5. Following project instructions, assemble pillow top using appliquéd panel and 2½" squares. Instruct students in the basics of quilting, including rotary cutting (if the squares were not precut), sewing with a ¼" seam, pinning, nesting seams, chain piecing, and pressing.
6. Prepare the pillow top for embroidery as described in the project instructions and embroider (p. 110).

7. Machine quilt the completed pillow top as described in the project instructions and on p. 103 (**optional** and dependent upon the skill of the students—with beginners, you probably wouldn't have time).
8. Prepare the pillow backing panels and assemble the pillow as described in the project instructions.