



Groovy Bird Embroidered Pillow Tutorial

This pillow cover (or cushion cover as we say here in England) looks really impressive but is so easy to make. You'll only need basic sewing and embroidery skills and as the cover has a simple envelope closure at the back, you don't have to worry about being able to make buttonholes or insert a zip.

I'm not going to give exact fabric measurements as this will depend on the size of the pad you are making a cover for. Instead I'll give you proportions which will make it easy for you to adapt the pattern to your requirements.

I decided to work the bird in colours to compliment some lovely Cath Kidston fabric I picked up in her sale. It would look great in other colours to suit whatever fabric you're using, but try to stick to only 4 or 5 (max) as otherwise it might begin to look bitty. I used only 4 colours, but two of those were rainbow skeins – one in pinks and one in greens which gave me some nice shaded effects without having to introduce any new colours.

You will need:

For the embroidery

- 1 piece of plain fabric – I used white cotton sheeting. The width needs to be half the width of your cover plus 1" and the height needs to be the height of your cover plus 1/2".
- Embroidery hoop
- Floss in 4 or 5 colours to tone with the colours in your patterned fabric.

For the cover

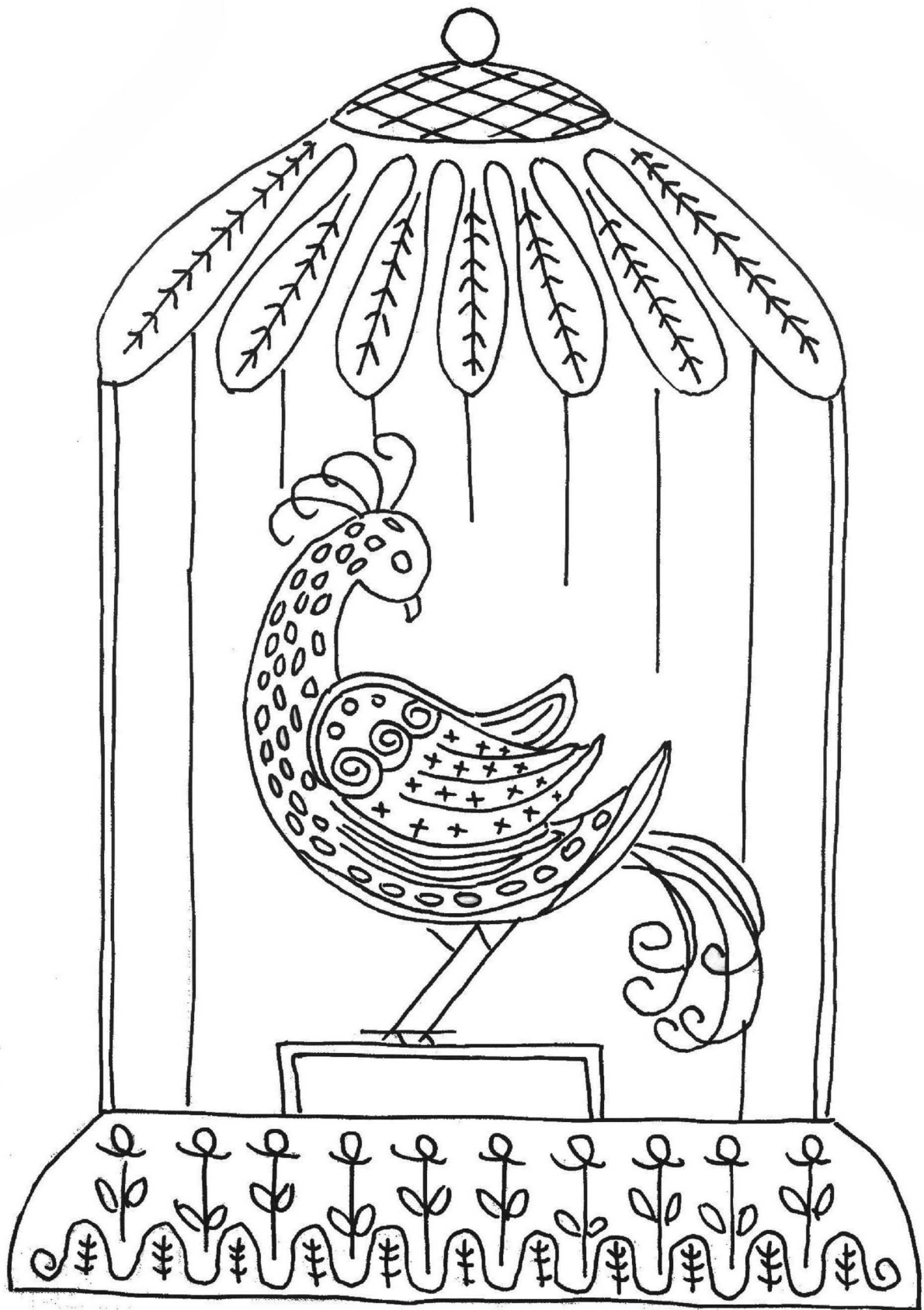
- 1 piece of plain fabric measuring 1/2" taller and 1/2" wider than your pad will be.
- 2 pieces of patterned fabric the same height as your cover and width measuring one quarter the width of your cover plus 1/2"
- 2 pieces of patterned fabric the same height as your cover and width measuring two-thirds the width of your cover plus 1/2"
- Length of ric rac braid twice the height of your cover plus 1" (optional)

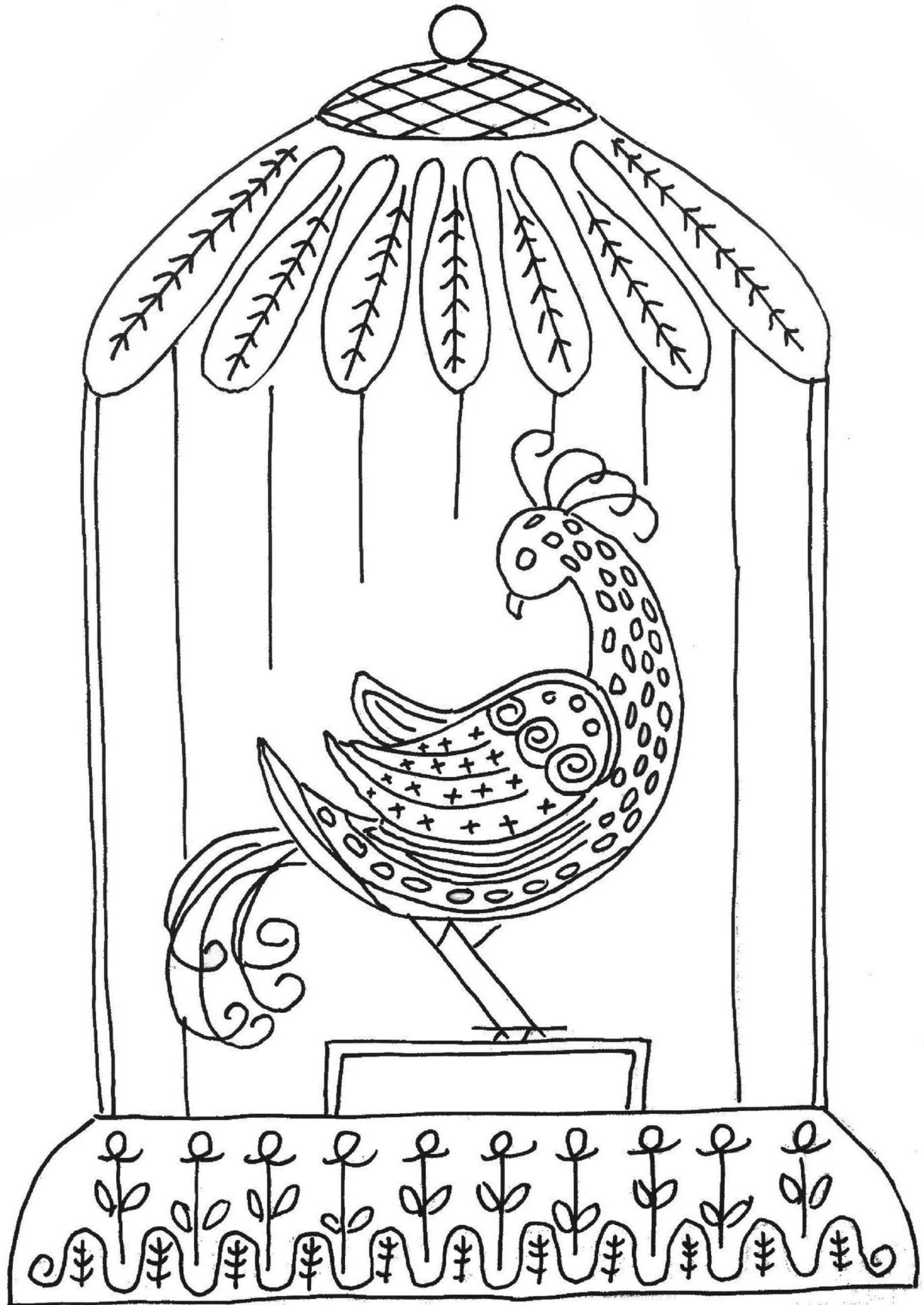
You will also need fabric shears, snips, pins, sewing machine and thread, iron and ironing board.

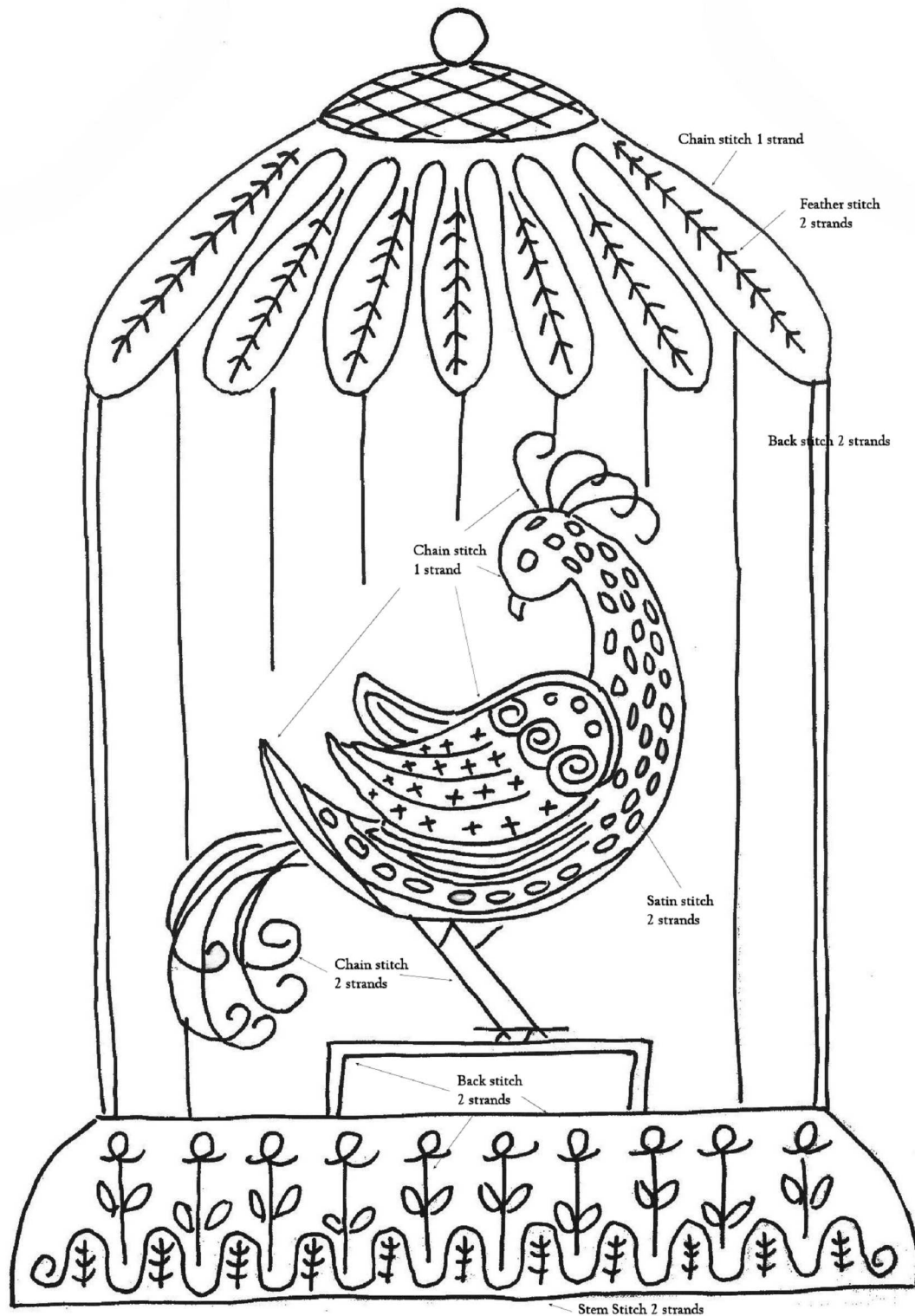
Let's get started!!

First work the embroidery

Transfer the image onto your plain fabric. Be sure to centre it on the fabric. I have supplied the image in reverse as well as the right way round to suit whichever transfer method you prefer to use. You may need to resize the image to suit your pillow cover.







Here's the image marked for stitching. I used chain stitch for the curly bits as they are quite tight and I find chain stitch keeps to the line better. I only used 1 or 2 strands of floss to keep the image light and open-looking.

After stitching, wash if necessary to remove transfer marks, then press flat.

Make the cover



Collect your materials – make sure you have everything you need before you start (I speak from experience here!)



To make the front of the cover, take your two smaller pieces of patterned fabric and join to your embroidery panel along the long sides.

Stitch the ric rac braid (if desired) over the seams to cover them.



Your cover front is now finished (how easy was that!)

To make the reverse of the cover take the two larger pieces of patterned fabric. The outside edges will need to be finished.

Take your iron and fold the fabric over about ¼ " and press, then ½ " and press again. I don't bother measuring, just judge by eye as it's not vital that you're exact here.

Then machine stitch the folded edge down ...



Do this to both pieces of patterned fabric. That's the back finished!

Now assemble the cover

You need to make a fabric sandwich. Position your fabric as follows ...

1. Plain fabric (same size as front piece) right side down (if there is one)
2. Cover front right side up
3. First part of back wrong side up
4. Second part of back wrong side up

The back pieces will overlap. The overlap will form your envelope opening.



Pin the pieces together and machine around the edge leaving a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. I usually run the machine around twice for additional strength.

Clip the corners and trim the seams with pinking shears to prevent excessive fraying.

Turn right side out and press.

Insert pad through envelope opening.

Admire your work and prepare to receive many compliments!!



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