

The Simplest Ways to Finish a Hooked Pillow

Finishing a pillow can be extremely difficult if you try to stitch the pillow together with the hooking right at the construction seam. A simpler way is to move the hooking more to the center of the pillow so the actual pillow construction is standard.

Method 1

Assuming you are hooking into an attractive backing, you can simply leave the background unhooked and sew up the pillow just as you would with any fabric. Loosely woven fabric of wool or other fibers can be used as a backing if the holes are large enough to pull the loops through.

Method 2

Method 1 cannot be used all the time because not all backings are attractive or fit your color plan. If you add sashing to your hooked piece, you not only make the final finishing much easier, you avoid having your hooking hidden from sight as it disappears around the curved sides of the pillow. The best time to add the sashing is after you have the majority of the piece hooked, but before you get within an inch or two of the final edge.

You will need one strip of fabric for each side. The length of the strip is the length of the hooked edge plus twice the width of the sashing. A little too long is better than a little too short. The width of the sashing is determined by what you find attractive. A sashing as small as 1" will allow you to sew up the pillow seam on a sewing machine. Wider sashings look artsy and mimic the look seen in fine art shops. A wider sash also makes a small hooking larger without any extra work.

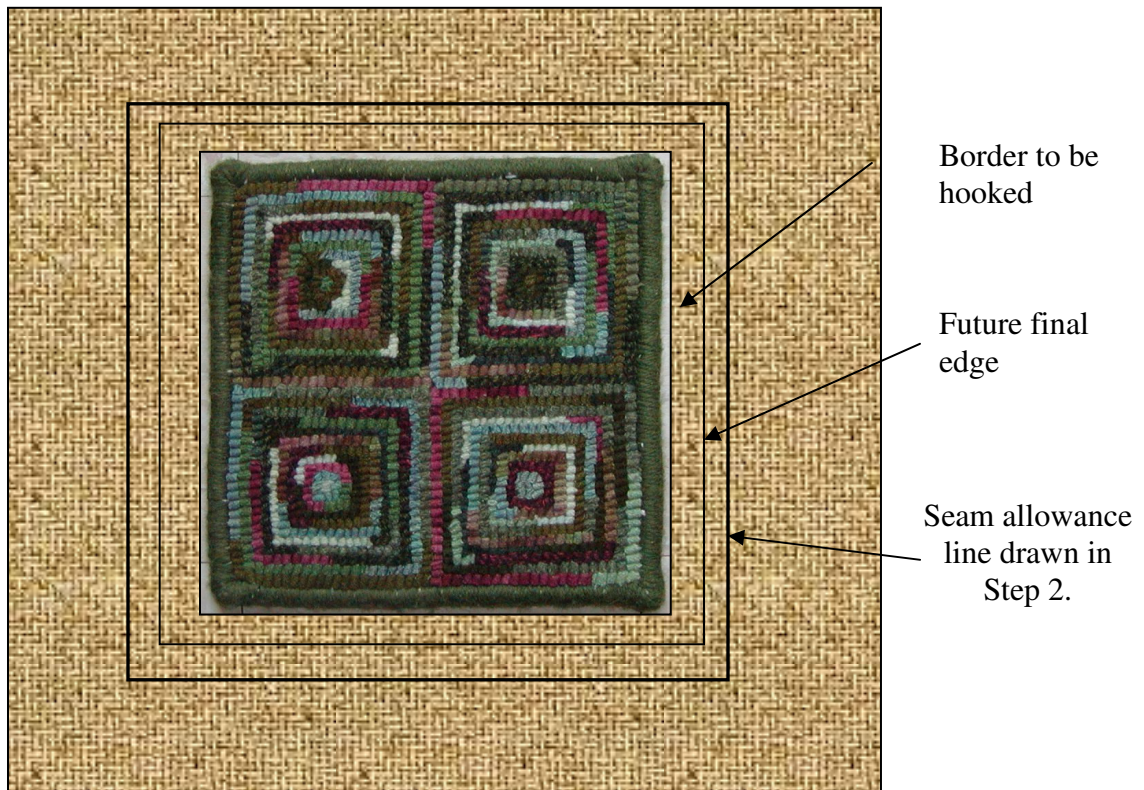
In addition to the sashing you will also need a piece of fabric for the pillow backing. It should be large enough to cover the hooked area and the added sashing. You may want to wait until you have the sashing attached before determining the final size of the pillow back.

1. Determine the final finished edge of your hooking. Poke the lead of a pencil through the backing and using this hole as a guide draw a line on the *reverse side*. This will become the stitching line when you are ready to sew on the sashing. Draw this line on all four sides.

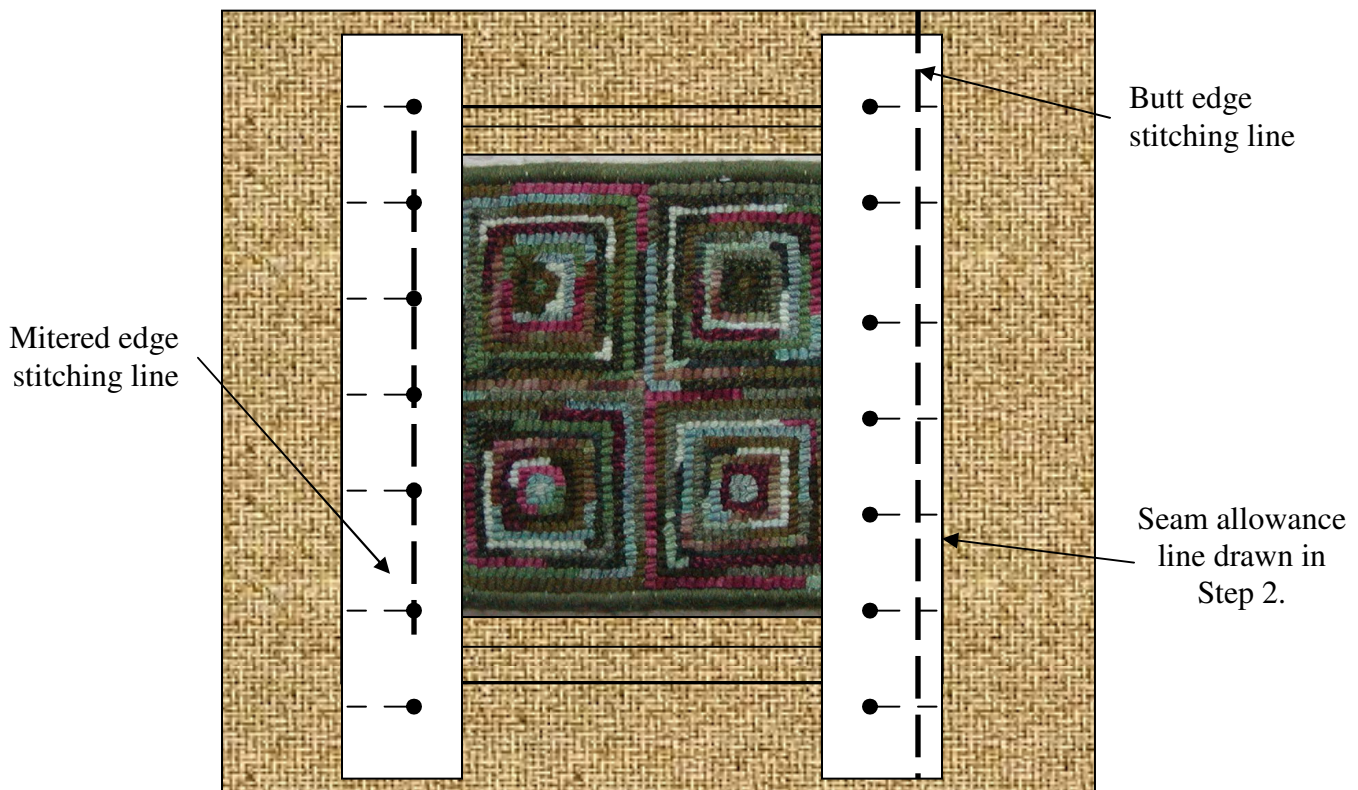
Note: See the lesson on how to Drawing Straight Lines on your Backing in my rug e-School at www.cindigay.com.

Finish the edge of your hooking by zigzagging. You can let the edge of the backing extend to the edge of the pillow for extra strength. See my finishing instructions on my website for more information.

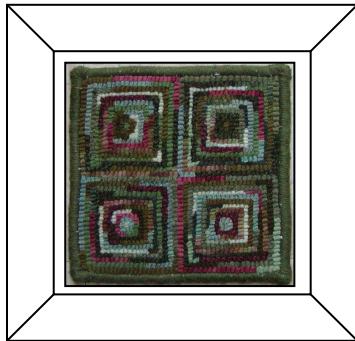
2. On the front, measure a seam allowance, such as 5/8", from the future finished edge. Draw this line on all four sides.



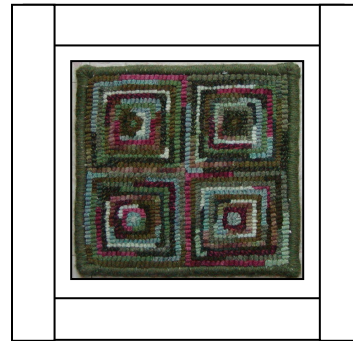
3. Lay the sashing on the front of the hooked piece along two sides, right sides together. Match the edge of the fabric sashing with the line you drew on the front. Pin securely.



4. Decide on the type of joint you want to make. The Butt joint is much simpler to construct and is often invisible if you use a spot dye or other textured fabric for the sashing.



Sashing with Mitered Joint



Sashing with Butt Joint

Note: Sew corner to corner only for a mitered joint. Sew the entire length for butt joint. See the drawing in Step 3.

5. Turn the backing over and repin from the back. For a mitered joint, you will only need to pin between the stitching lines, or only along the future finished edge of your hooking. You will be sewing on the back side so you can keep the seam straight and you will need the pins accessible so you can remove them as you sew. Remove the pins on the front.
6. With the wool on the bottom and the backing on the top, sew the seam in the ditch along the pencil line you made in Step 1. You can use a sewing machine or hand sew using a back stitch.
7. On the front, remove any remaining pins and flip the fabric out. Pin it temporarily in place. If you are making a mitered joint, fold the unsewn edges of the fabric out of the way so they do not get caught in the stitching for the remaining two sides.
8. Repeat Steps 3, 5 and 6 for the other two sides.
9. For the butt joint, cut off any excess sashing fabric. Finish hooking. For the mitered joint, fold back the sashing to create a 45 degree seam and hand stitch together, trim any excess sashing. Finish hooking.
10. Lay the backing fabric right sides together over your hooking. Sew all seams leaving a small opening to insert the pillow form or stuffing. Be sure to stitch all four corners. Trim the corners. Turn right side out, stuff and hand stitch the opening closed.

