

# DRAPERY & DESIGN PROFESSIONAL



Serving the Custom Home Furnishings Industry since 1993



Michele Williams  
Communications Director  
CHF Academy

# From the D&D Pro Network

**D**o you know it all? Of course not! Do you sometimes face the fear of starting a new project where you're challenged beyond what you've constructed before? Yes! Well, no matter how many years we've been in business, we can all have these challenges and fears. We will never know it *all*. This is custom and, as such, each job can be different and challenging.

Recently my mom asked me to re-cover an ottoman with an attached cushion. Now, I have been in business since 2000 focusing primarily on window treatments and bedding. Upholstery has never really been something I've tried (unless you count dining room chairs — and those are easy). My first thought was, *Sub it out*. My second thought was, *I can do this because there was an article in Volume 2010, Issue 1, written by Laurie Medford that provides a step-by-step process*. So, I decided to challenge myself to something new and face the fear that I might mess it up. Guess what, I did it! The directions gave me the information I needed, and where I had to improvise a little based on the ottoman I was working with I was able to do so because of my prior experiences.

Every day professionals are learning from our webinars, classroom and online Forum. Every day professionals are facing their fears — no matter how small or how large. Every day we are all accepting the challenge of a new job, and then rising to the task. Every day we learn a little something new — even if it is to try a new technique and face our fear. How cool is that?

Keep learning. You won't regret it. ↪

*Michele Williams*



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Cover photo - Window Treatment by Elizabeth Gerdes of Stitch Above the Rest, photographed by Brandy Stoesz

# Making a Feather Seat Cushion Insert

## Part 3: Making the Cushion Insert

By Liz Cox  
Hampshire, England

In Parts 1 and 2 of this series, I discussed how to make the template for the cushion insert (Volume 2011, Issue 3) and what to consider when choosing the cushion filling (Volume 2011, Issue 4). Now I'll explain how to construct the cushion insert.

This insert has a gusset (or border section or boxing) between the top and the bottom of the cushion, but if you're making a different style of cushion where you don't want the border section, then just skip all of those references.

### Overview of Cutting Measurements for the Cambric

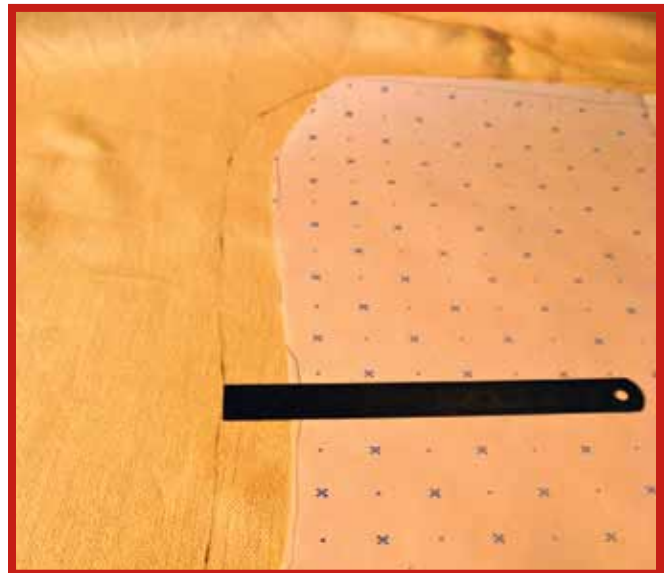
- Cushion Insert Top and Bottom = Template + 2.5 cm (1 inch) all the way around. This allows for 1.25 cm (½-inch) seam allowances and 1.25 cm (½-inch) doming — adjust the doming measurement if you want more or less doming in the finished cushion.
- Border = Finished cushion depth, which is 10 cm (4 inches) + 2.5 cm (1-inch) doming + 2.5 cm (1-inch) for the 1.25 cm (½-inch) top and bottom seam allowances. This would be 6 inches with extra for doming, or 5 inches if you don't want doming.
- Border Length = All-around flat measurement of the template, which is 277 cm (109 inches) + 2.5 cm (1 inch) for the two 1.25 cm (½-inch) seam allowances.
- Inside Channels/Baffles = Cushion depth, which is 10 cm (4 inches) + 2.5 cm (1-inch doming) + 2.5 cm (1-inch) for the two 1.25 cm (½-inch) seam allowances.
- Inside Channels/Baffles Length = Length of marked line drawn on insert top and bottom pieces.

When using cambric you want the waxed or glazed side on the inside of the cushion next to the feathers — this will help limit feather migration.

### Cutting Out the Pieces

**The Top and Bottom Pieces:** Put the template on a piece of waxed or glazed cambric and draw a line around it 2.5 cm (1 inch) bigger (or use measurements as calculated above). Cut out the cambric. When you cut out the main fabric for the cushion you will need to add only a 1.25 cm (½-inch) seam allowance to the template since you do not

need to make any allowances for doming. Flip the cambric template over and cut out the other side of the cushion. It's important to flip the template over so that you get an exact mirror image.



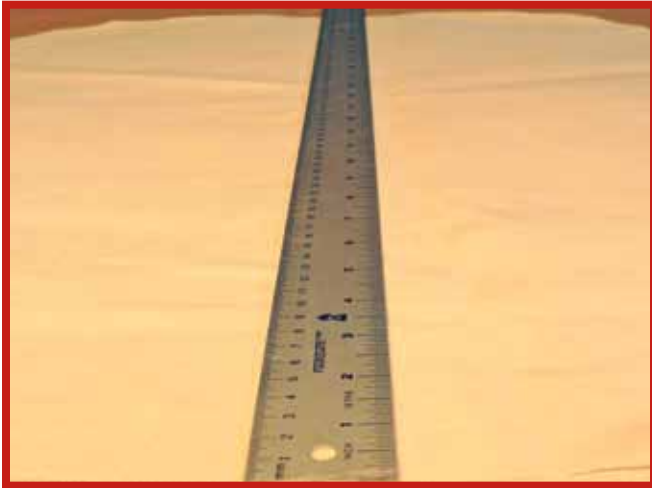
**The Gusset or Border Pieces:** You want a 10 cm (4-inch) border, so cut a strip of cambric 12.5 cm (6 inches) wide — this gives you a 1.25 cm (½-inch) seam allowance on either side and 2.5 cm (1 inch) for feather doming.



**The Channel or Baffle Pieces:** You want to divide the cushion into sections so the feathers don't all fall to one end. To do this, first decide how many channels the cushion insert needs. For an average

seat, three channels are usually sufficient, but for a very large or small seat you should adjust the number of channels accordingly. For this example I will assume an average size seat with three channels.

**Step I** You want the channels to be fairly equal in size, so measure the length of the cushion insert (back to front) and divide this measurement by 3 to work out the size of each of the channels. In this example the length of the cushion insert is 66 cm (26 inches), so each channel will be 22 cm (8½ inches).



**Step II** On the inside (waxed or glazed side) of the top and bottom pieces, mark the lines for the channels across the width of the cushion insert. You will use these lines to attach the calico channels as described in Steps 1, 4 and 6 of the construction instructions below.



**Step III** Measure the width of these channels (the lengths will be different if the cushion is shaped, with the larger measurement perhaps toward the

front of the seat). In this example the front channel measures 60 cm (23¾ inches) and the back channel measures 49 cm (19½ inches).



**Step IV** Cut pieces of calico for the channels using the measurements you have just determined. Cut these 15 cm / 6 inches wide — i.e., 10 cm / 4-inch border, 2.5 cm / 1-inch seam allowance and 2.5 cm / 1 inch for doming. It isn't necessary to use cambric for the channels, as feather migration isn't really a concern between the channels if all the channels are fully, evenly stuffed. In this example I have used two different fabrics for the channel pieces to make it easier to see how each is attached to the top and bottom pieces.



### Constructing the Cushion Insert

**Step 1** Machine sew the channel pieces to the wrong side of the cambric top or bottom insert piece. At this stage it doesn't matter whether you use the top or the bottom piece, but for clarity I will start with the bottom piece. Follow the lines you've already marked on the wrong side. Use a 1.25 cm (½-inch) seam allowance, and stop and start this seam 1.25 cm (½ inch) from the edges of the bottom piece. If necessary, trim the channel pieces to ensure they are clear of the 1.25 cm (½-inch) seam allowance to be used for the border section. Note that the channel pieces are not attached to the border piece — just to the top and bottom pieces.



**Step 2** Machine sew the border to the bottom piece, which you have just attached to the channels. Sew all the way around with right sides together. Be sure not to catch the channel pieces in this seam. Don't forget that you need to have the raw edges on the inside when you're finished.



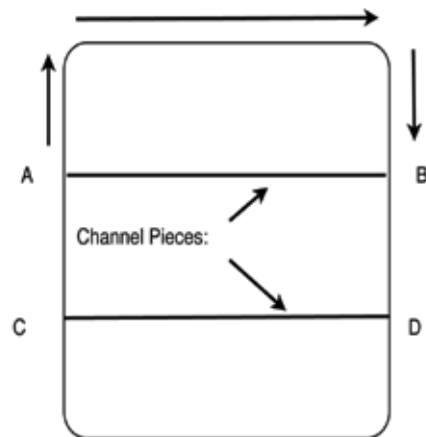
**Step 3** Lay the bottom insert piece channel-side down so the right side is facing up. To attach the top piece to the border section, sew from one channel line around to the other side of the same channel. Again, remember to put the right sides together. (In the Step 4 diagram, that would be Point A to Point B around the top outside edge of the cushion.)



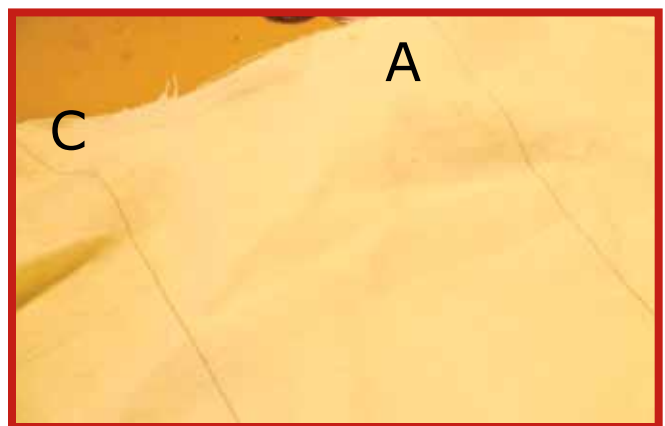
**Step 4** Reach under and pull the unsewn edge of the first channel piece (gold) over this boxed section of the cushion, and stitch to the channel line on the wrong side of the top insert piece that you drew in Step II above. Use a 1.25cm (1/2-inch) seam allowance and be sure to keep the channel edges clear of the border seam allowance.

Diagram to Demonstrate the Stitch Line when attaching the Cushion Insert Top to the Boarder.

Step 4 -



**Step 5** Sew the top piece to the border section from one channel line to the other on one edge – from A to C, for example. At this stage leave the other edge (B to D) open for stuffing the feathers later. Be sure to keep the right sides together.



**Step 6** As you did in Step 4, reach under and pull the unsewn edge of the second channel piece (red) over this boxed section of the cushion, and stitch to the channel line on the wrong side of the top insert piece. Sew along this line (C to D across the cushion) with a 1.25 cm / (½-inch) seam allowance.



**Step 7** Match up the unsewn edges of the top insert piece to the unsewn edges of your border piece, right sides together. Using a 1.25 cm/(½-inch) seam allowance, sew the border to the rest of the top piece so that the cushion is completely sewn inside out. Stitch C to D *around* the cushion, leaving B to D open. It looks like a crescent moon! Now turn the cushion to the right side through the opening of B to D.



**To Finish:** Stuff with feathers. You want a full and plump cushion insert, so keep checking the look and feel as you stuff. Hand stitch the B to D opening closed using a locking stitch. ↻



# Meet The Writers



**Jan Britt** is the owner of Jan Britt Interiors, located in Marietta, Georgia. She has worked in the interior design and window treatment industry for over 20 years and has worked as an instructor at Kennesaw State University, made multiple appearances on HGTV, and has written articles that were published for local newspapers and magazines. Jan specializes in window treatments, interior design, and staging.



**Liz Cox** is the owner of Signature Interiors, a custom soft furnishing and upholstery business providing bespoke service to residential and commercial customers in Bermuda and the United Kingdom. Liz specializes in the use of traditional materials and methods while also meeting the needs of the modern market. Liz is a member of the Association of Master Upholsterers and Soft Furnishers.



**Donna Cash** operates a workroom in Flowery Branch, GA. She's a 20-year veteran of the window coverings industry and has an associates degree from the Art Institute of Atlanta. She's a WFCP Associate, and a member of WCAA, DraperyPro and the Designers Workroom Council in Georgia. Donna is also a certified yoga instructor.



**Sarah Devaney-O'Neil** is the owner of Storibook Designs Inc., a custom home furnishings and design business providing design and advice for both residential and commercial clients. She has 20-plus years of leadership experience, including sales training and upper management positions for two large home furnishings retailers.



**Carol Collard** Since 2005, Carol Collard, the owner of Creations by Carol located in Medway Massachusetts, has been creating custom soft furnishings including window treatments, bedding, custom slipcovers and lampshades. She is a career professional in both slipcovers and window treatments. As a WCAA member, Carol became Treasurer of her local chapter in 2010, and was recently appointed to the WCAA Board of Directors as a director at large.



**Kristine Gregory** is principal of Bedeckers Interior Effects Inc. Kristine is an Allied Member of American Society of Interior Designers, past president of the Richmond Chapter of WCAA and a WFCP Specialist. She is the only designer in the Richmond area who is an expert in both the psychology of color and personal organization. Visit her website at [www.bedeckers.com](http://www.bedeckers.com).





**Nancy Letts** is the owner of Pine House Drapery, a full service workroom started in 2001 that serves interior designers and a few retail clients in beautiful northern Michigan. Nancy and husband Rob fabricate everything from window treatments to upholstery. Nancy is a member of the D&D Pro Network, DraperyPro, WCAA, and is a CHFA Career Professional in Slipcovers.



**Linda Principe** is the owner of Linda Principe Interiors in Monroe, New Jersey, specializing in interior design and window treatments. Linda was involved in the formation of the WCAA Central NJ Chapter and is the Immediate Past President of that Chapter. Linda is currently the President of the WCAA National Board of Directors.



**Jo Moore** has operated Jo's Sewing Studio since 2004, but began specializing in home-décor fabrication in 2007. She's a CHFA Career Professional in Window Coverings and Cornices, was featured at the 2010 IWCE Alumni Showcase, made Cincinnati Magazine's Best of the City 2010 list, and serves on WCAA's Education Committee.



**Susan Woodcock** is Brand Experience Manager for Rowley Company. Prior to joining Rowley, Susan owned Tavern Hill, a professional drapery workroom founded in 1988. She is an instructor for CHF Academy and a popular industry speaker. Susan has been featured in many books, magazines and CHF Academy workroom videos. She's a member of the WCAA and a WFCP Expert.



**Margie Nance** started her workroom in 1992, then began teaching at the CHF School with Cheryl Strickland in 2000. Just five years later, she and her husband, Andy, purchased the school and moved it to its current location in Charlotte, NC as she took on the position of CEO until mid 2009. Margie is a master artisan and educator. In 2010 she received her certification training as a Life Coach and specializes in working with people in creative industries.



**Massachusetts North East Chapter, WCAA** The Massachusetts Northeast Chapter of the WCAA is a group of 35 window treatment professionals (workrooms, designers, installers, and vendors) from RI and MA who meet monthly in the Littleton, MA area. In addition to education and networking, the group has been actively involved in local and national charity projects. See [wcaa.org](http://wcaa.org) for more info.

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