Mermaid Pillow

Celebrate your inner siren with this fun, rainy day summer project.
We definitely went "overboard" on piecing and trims—you don't have to, with tips
to make an easier, faster project along the way.

Supplies:

- Completed Mermaid embroidery trimmed to 10" x 6"
- Scraps of aqua, yellow, and lavender fabrics for border treatment (*see sizes on page 3*)
- 13 x 17 batting and muslin to quilt mermaid front panel (*optional*)
- Trims such as rick rack, beads, ribbon, or pompoms (*optional*)
- Pillow Backing Fabric: Two pieces the height of your project by 15" inches wide (our pieces were 11" x 15")
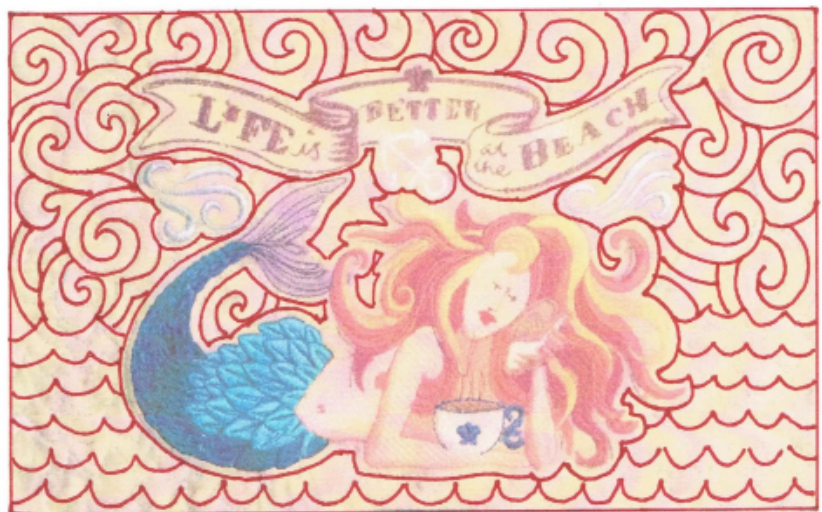- 12" x 16" Pillow Form
- Button to close back (*optional*)

1. Border treatment

If you enjoy a bit of piecing work, follow our instructions on pages 3 and 4 to create our "Flying ~~Geese~~ Fish" border treatment pictured. If not, all you need do is to add a single border, or any other combination of fabrics of your choosing, to add up to 11" x 17" for a firm pillow, or 12" x 16" for a softer one. (*Ours is 11" x 17"—you can add an additional ½" border all around to ours for the softer version.*)
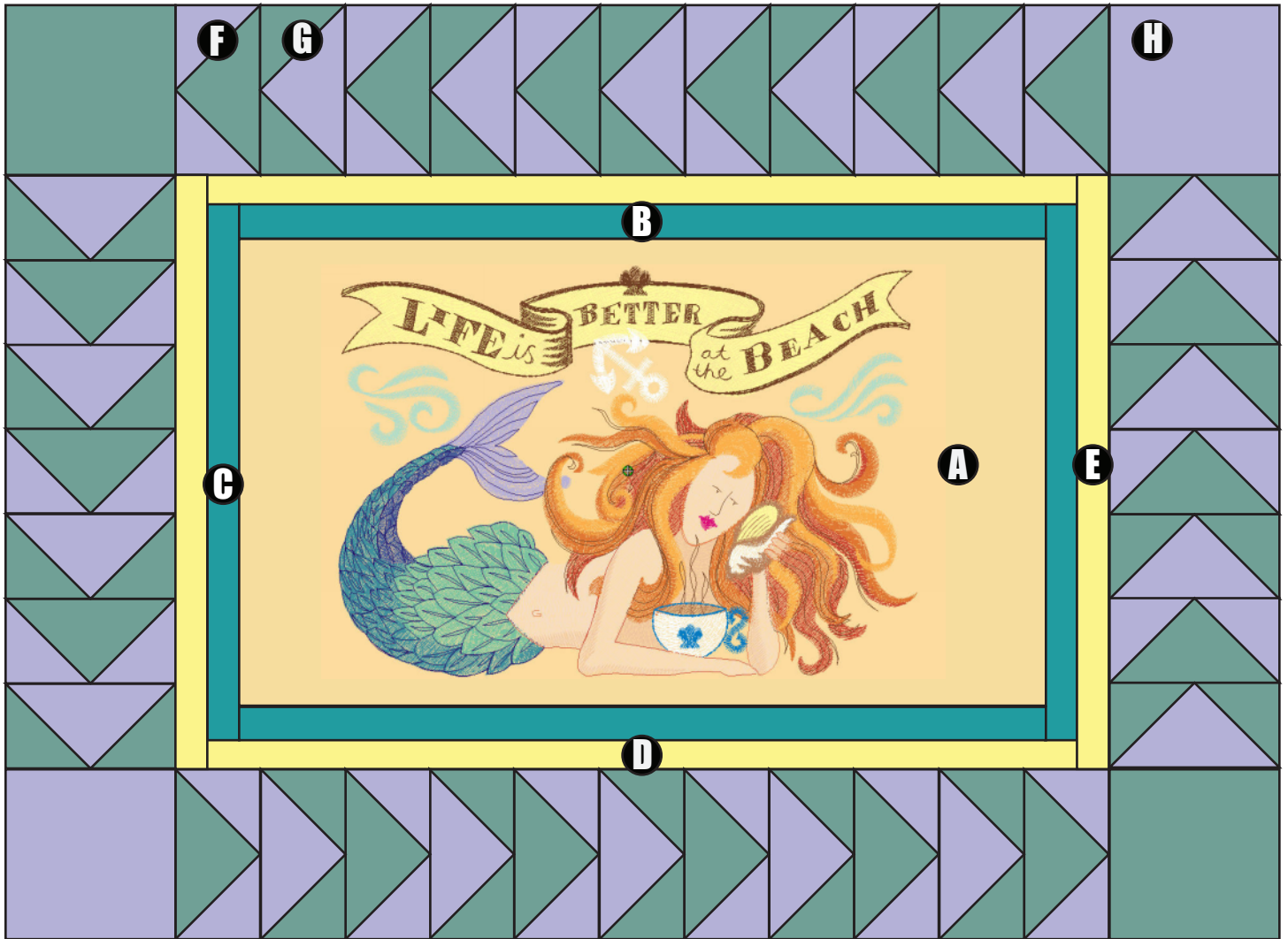
2. Quilting

Quilting is optional—for a quicker version, just use your pieced mermaid and skip to step 3. Quilting does make for a more finished and substantial look.

Add batting and backing to your pieced top to make a quilt sandwich. Pin every 4 inches or so, removing pins as you go. First, we "stitched-in-the-ditch" around the mermaid rectangle, and around the aqua and yellow borders; then we stitched-in-the-ditch" around all of the diagonal lines in our Flying Fish border and around the corner squares. For the mermaid block, we do enjoy a bit of free motion quilting—this little project is the perfect place to get you started. Practice first on a muslin quilt sandwich. First, we stitched around the mermaid; then, we quilted waves in the bottom half of the block and swirls in the top for a water look. (See Quilting Diagram.) Even if your free motion is not "perfect"—a "primitive" look is just fine for this girl and adds much character to your pillow. Not convinced? Skip the free motion work and simply stitch around the mermaid. When you are finished quilting, trim batting and backing to the same size as the front and make
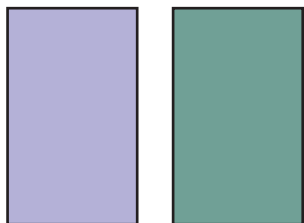

Quilting Diagram

	Pieces	Quantity	*(All dimensions include 1/4" seam allowances.)* Size
A.	Mermaid	1	10" x 6"
B.	Aqua Top and Bottom Borders	2	10" x 7/8"
C.	Aqua Side Borders	2	6-3/4" x 7/8"
D.	Yellow Top and Bottom Borders	2	10-3/4" x 7/8"
E.	Yellow Side Borders	2	7-1/2" x 7/8"
F.	Aqua on Lavender Flying Geese units	18	1-1/2" x 2-1/2" *(see following page)*
G.	Lavender on Aqua Flying Geese units	18	1-1/2" x 2-1/2" *(see following page)*
H.	Corner Blocks *(2 each lavender and aqua)*	4	2-1/2" x 2-1/2"

Trim Mermaid embroidery to 10" x 6." Stitch aqua topand bottom borders (B) to mermaid; then stitch aqua side borders (C) on. Stitch yellow top and bottom borders on (D); then add the yellow side borders (E). Stitch your Flying Fish borders as described on the following page. Add the longer flying geese border strips to the top and bottom of you piece, paying attention to the way they point around the outside. Finally, add the strips with the corner squares attached to the sides. Finished size is 11-1/2" x 15-1/2."
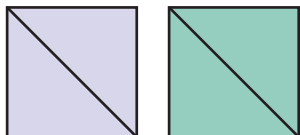
Piece Flying Fish borders

Cut 18 1-1/2" x 2-1/2" rectangles each of two different fabrics. (Cut 2-1/2" strips of fabric first, then cut the strips into 1-1/2" pieces to make this go more quickly.)

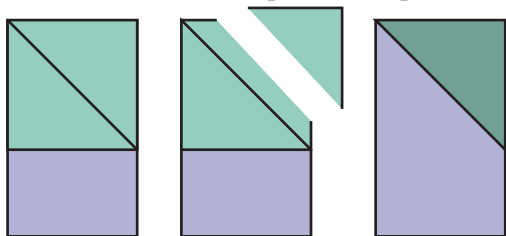When finished, you will have 18 F units and 18 G units.

Cut 36 1-1/2" x 2-1/2" squares each of two different fabrics. (Cut 1-1/2" strips of fabric first, then cut the strips into 1-1/2" pieces to make this go more quickly.)
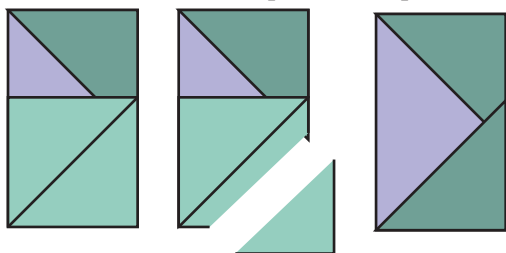
With a pencil or erasable fabric marker, draw a diagonal line across the wrong side of all 72 squares

Sew the flying geese into the following four strips shown using 1/4" seams. There are two units of seven flying geese and two units of eleven flying geese.
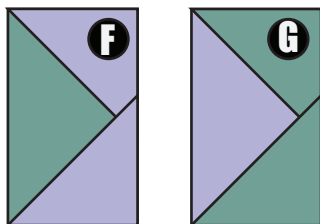
With right sides together, stitch a square to the opposite color rectangle across the line. Trim seam to 1/4" and press unit open.
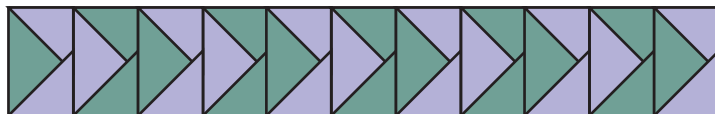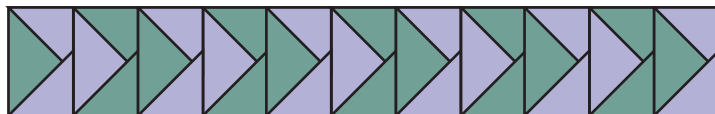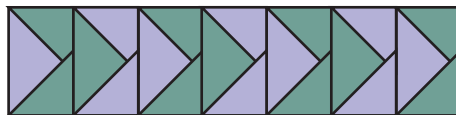
With right sides together, stitch another square to the other side of the rectangle across the line. Trim seam to 1/4" and press unit open.

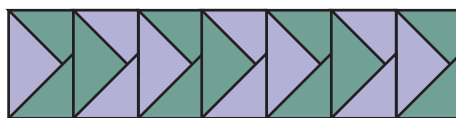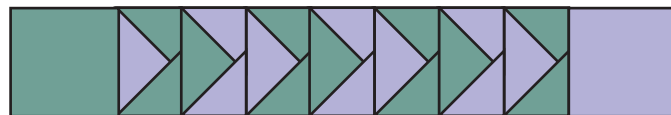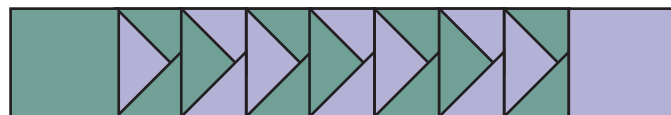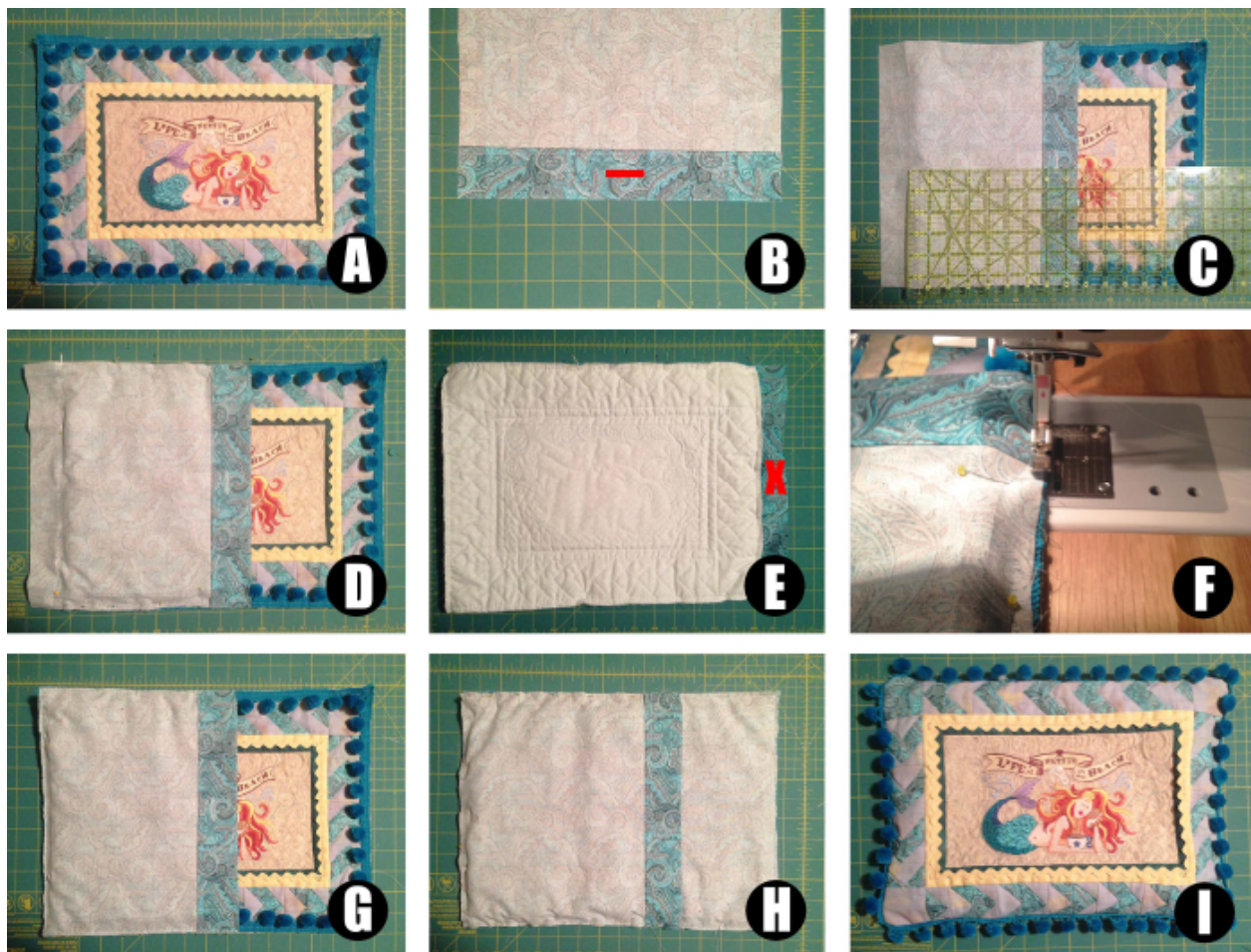Finally, stitch the squares, H, to the ends of each seven unit strip.

sure the corners are square. Now is the time to add your trims! We went "overboard" for our mermaid, adding a wavy yellow rick rack to the inside borders and aqua pompoms around the edges. Edge trims need to be attached face IN as shown by our pompoms in Photo A.

3. Back Assembly

Measure the height of your piece—don't worry if it has shrunk up a bit; it will still fit a 12" x 16" pillow form. Our piece still measure 11." Take the measurement and cut two pieces of backing fabric the height you measure by 15" long.

Fold the short edge of each piece in 2" and then 2" again; press. Top stitch close to the folded edge to finish. Create a buttonhole centered on one of the hemmed edges as shown in red in Photo B below—if you have an embroidery machine, chances are you have some fancy buttonhole capabilities, too! A buttonhole is not something we normally use, but we found our sewing machine manual online, and had a perfect one in less than ten minutes. Do it! (*Tip: Not excited about the button hole? You don't need one— you can use Velcro dots, or nothing at all—this project self closes over the pillow form.*)

Lay the backing piece with the buttonhole face down on your project as shown in Photo C. Use a ruler to center the buttonhole over the width of the pillow. (*This piece is oversized, so you can shift it left and right a bit.*) When the buttonhole is centered, pin the backing to the front around the top, bottom, and left side as shown in Photo D. Now flip the project over, and trim off the excess batting shown by the red "X" in Photo E. Move your project over to the sewing machine, and using a basting stitch at the 1/8" seam line, stitch the three sides together. A zipper foot made it much easier to navigate past the pompom trims; use one if you need to. You now have one side of the backing attached. (Photo G.) Now attach the final piece of backing to the other side in the same way—this time, you will not need to trim anything; use the full width as shown in Photo H. Again, pin and then baste on the sewing machine. When finished, check for imperfections in your seams and just rip out and spot fix any problem areas. Finally, set your machine to a regular straight stitch length again, and sew around the pillow at the ¼" seam line, all the way around the four sides. Then zigzag or serge the edges, if desired, for a super strong seam.

Turn the pillow right side out—use a blunt scissor tip to press out the corners, carefully. Press your pillow casing so that everything is nice and tidy, and your edge trims face outward. Now slip your pillow form inside. To attach the button, mark a dot in the center of the buttonhole on the piece underneath; stitch your button on. We folder up a small piece of stabilizer and used it on the wrong side of the fabric to give extra strength to our button.

Get comfy with a book and chair… and, of course, your shell phone! You've made a gorgeous handmade piece to be enjoyed each summer for years, and it's time to celebrate!

Be sure to post a photo of your finished project on any of our social media at the link below:

http://www.sanfranciscostitchco.com/JoinUs