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Some on-the-spot Ideas

By BRENDA CLEEVE

THE modern crisp cotton fabrics in a wide range of attractive patterns are cheap to buy and easy to launder, so they lend themselves to many uses in the home. A study of the design often enables the fabrics to be used to better advantage and the popular spotted patterns are outstanding in this respect.

Fabrics with large spotted patterns can often be given extra appeal by the addition of embroidery. This can be carried out in a heavy thread such as soft embroidery cotton. Where this thread is not readily obtainable or if the colour range is rather limited, stranded cotton used in three or six strands makes a good substitute. Knitting cotton may also be used, but here again there is not usually a wide choice of colours.

Plain or patterned fabrics can be appliqued on to the spotted background to give interesting results and haphazard shapes provide variation from the ordered layout of the spotted material. The illustrations show examples of embroidered and appliqued spots on tray-cloths. Worked on black and white spotted material there is an effective contrast for any colour one cares to use.

Cushion covers and many other articles lend themselves to effective decoration in this manner.

PLEATING

Simple pleating can be done very easily on spotted fabrics where the printed design is straight. The cushion cover

(illustrated) was made by this method, the pleats being stitched in position with bands of bias binding in this case, although ordinary machine stitching could be used.

At each end, the pleating is released to form a frill, the raw edges being hemmed under or finished with self-toned or contrasting binding.

This cushion cover took one yard of 36 in. material, the odd pieces from the sides being used for the backing. Of course the quantity of material used would depend on the size of the cushion, type of pleating used and the pattern of the fabric.

CHOOSING AND CUTTING A FABRIC

Wherever possible, choose a design in which the spot or pattern is in a definite plan, repeated over the fabric—not a haphazard pattern. This makes the design easy to follow and to match up when joining two or more pieces. This applies particularly where large-spot fabrics are used, as in such cases any errors in matching are very noticeable.

In cutting, try to utilise the pattern in your design. Choose a line that will leave

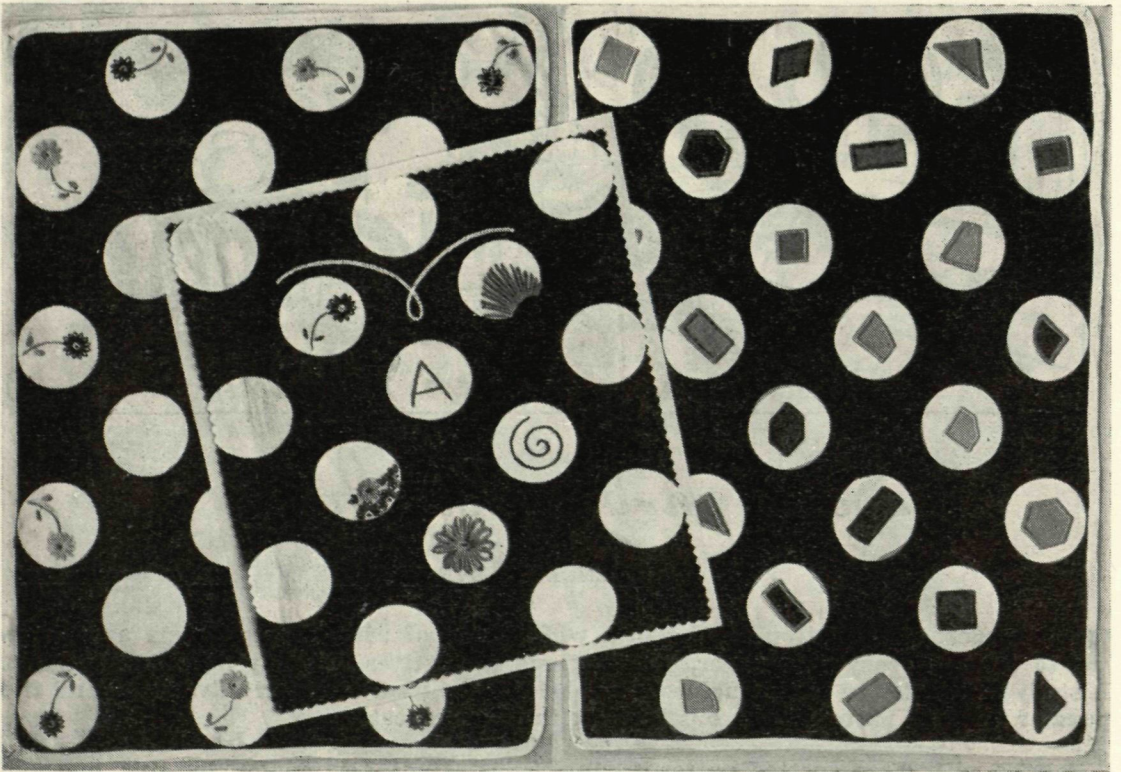


Fig. 1.—Tray-cloths and similar articles can be decorated with embroidery and applique work, some specimens of which are shown above.

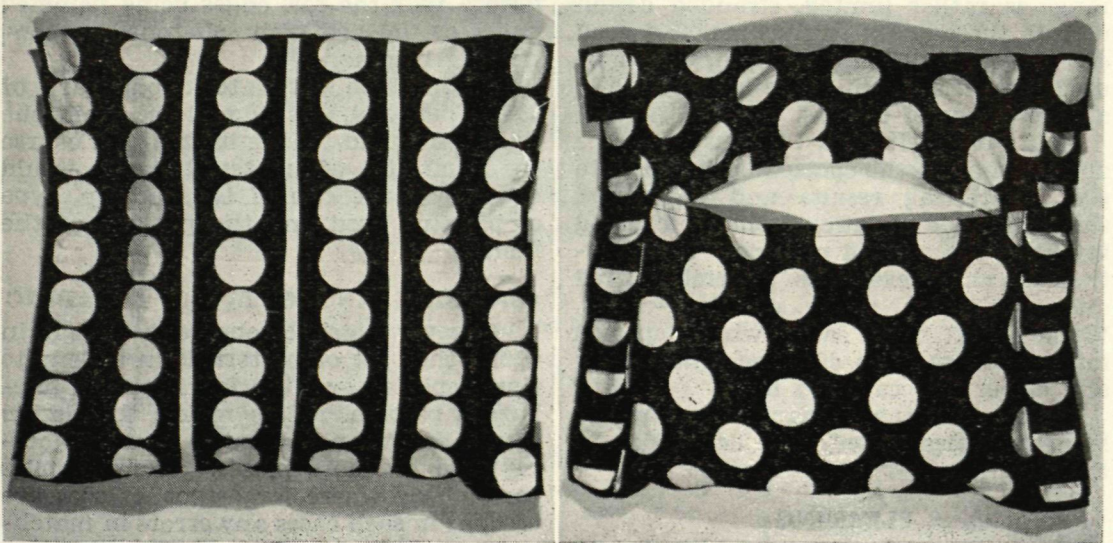
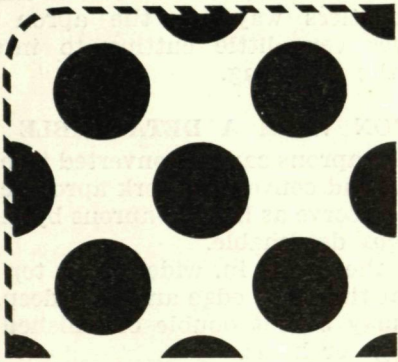
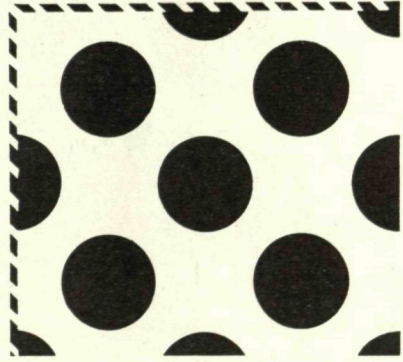


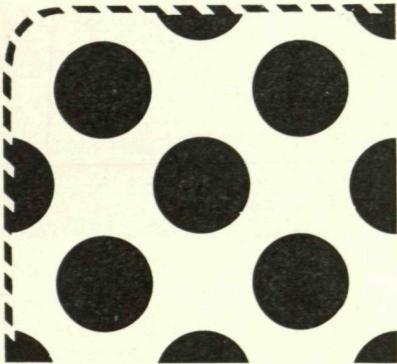
Fig. 2.—Front and back views of a cushion cover in which the spots are brought together in vertical rows by pleating, the pleats being held together by strips of bias binding. At the edges, the pleats are released to form frills.



This corner line



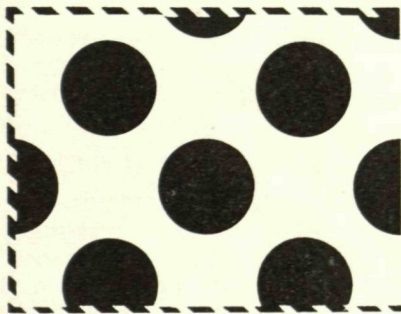
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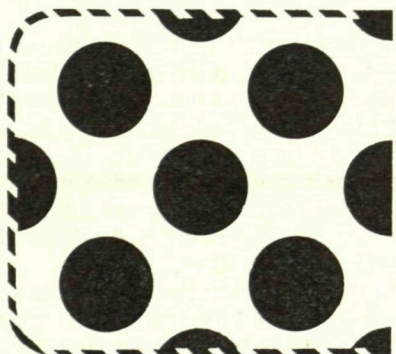
This cutting line



Not this



Uneven borders



Even borders

Fig. 3.—Some hints on cutting spotted fabrics.



Fig. 4.—Spotted material with shaped edges is combined with striped material in this apron.

as many as possible of the spots complete and try to keep the borders even, with the same spot pattern on each side. It is not always possible of course, but where it can be done, the appearance of the finished article will be greatly improved.

Corners may often be shaped round the spots whereas with a checked fabric the square corners are usually more effective.

Sometimes a spotted fabric lends itself to a scalloped or shaped edge. The apron (illustrated) has a shaped edge combined with a striped contrasting edging. The shaped edge could be finished with a facing or with bias binding.

Cut the apron as shown in the diagram. The edges of the bib and sides may be finished with bias binding or small hems. The waist edges are gathered in to 7 in. and the straps joined on so that they form a double band to enclose the gathers and then open out to form a single tie.

This is a very simple pattern but one which gives a good fit. It can be made up in a number of fabrics and can be trimmed in countless ways as the apron itself involves very little cutting to interfere with the trimming.

APRON WITH A DETACHABLE BIB

Waist aprons can be converted into work aprons and conversely work aprons can be made to serve as hostess aprons by making the bibs detachable.

Cut the bib 10 in. wide at the top edge, 7 in. at the lower edge and 9 in. deep. The part may be cut double or finished with bindings or hems.

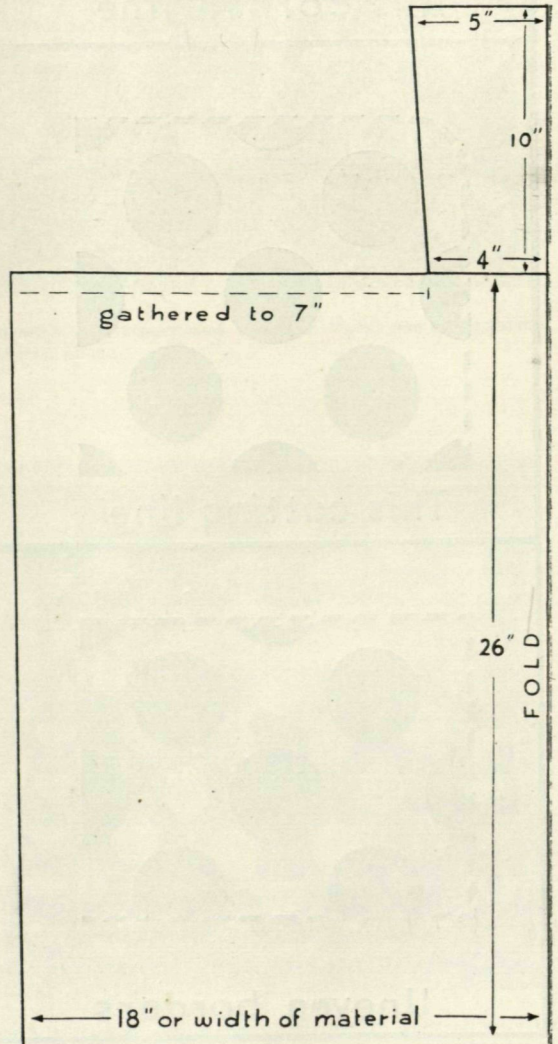


Fig. 5.—Cutting out the apron.



Fig. 6.—An apron with a detachable bib.

The bib can be fastened on by buttons, hooks or press studs—buttons possibly being the most effective as far as fastening is concerned—and when the bib is removed the buttons form a trimming on the waistband of the apron. For this reason a double bib is preferable, as the buttonholes can be worked on this firmer foundation. The buttonholes are better

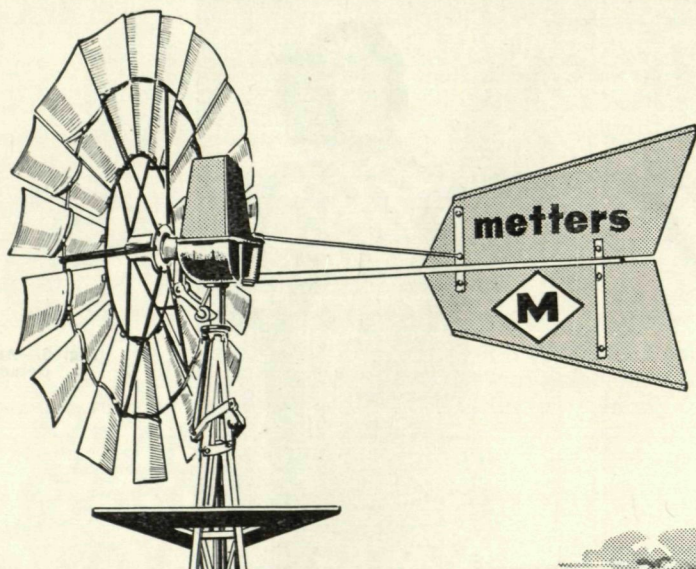
worked in a vertical position to take the strain of the bib.

The apron illustrated was decorated with embroidery done in soft embroidery thread using two rows of herringbone stitch. One row was worked over the other, picking up the spaces between the stitches in the first row. The two rows were then held firmly in place with spoke stitch.

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