

Embroidery can really take home décor to the next level. Once you have embroidered the pillows, the table runners, the coasters, and even the drapes what is left to embellish? The furniture is a huge canvas to express your creativity and make your space your own. You may not want to tackle a set of slipcovers for the sofa, but an ottoman as shown in the video is a project achievable with just about any embroidery machine. Below are some guidelines for successful embroidery on upholstery velveteen and some basic instructions on making your own slipcovers if you want to “go big and stay home”!

Supplies

- Fabric for the project shown in the video is upholstery grade velveteen. Any heavier weight fabric will work. The amount of fabric depends entirely on the size of the project. See booklet pages reproduced in this handout for yardage suggestions.
- Floriani Wet N Stick stabilizer for embroidery on velvet and velveteen
- Floriani Heat N Gone stabilizer for embroidery on velvet and velveteen
- Embellish Iridescent Embroidery Mylar to add sparkle for embroidery on velvet and velveteen
- Dream Weave Fusible to add extra body to lightweight fabrics or to stabilize the back of pile fabrics such as velvet and velveteen
- Fusible No Show Mesh to stabilize the back of pile fabrics such as velvet and velveteen
- Sewing pins
- Ten Thread spool stand for Baby Lock Altair and similar Baby Lock and Brother Machines is shown in the video
- Removable marker that shows on back of fabric
- Pins for trial fitting slipcover
- Damp sponge or foam paintbrush for wetting stabilizer
- Embroidery Design, Anita Goodesign “Designer Roses” Design Pack was used in the video
- Embroidery Threads and embroidery bobbin
- All purpose thread



Velvet and Velveteen are Special Fabrics

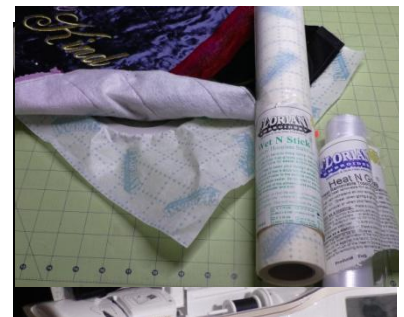
The lush surface of velvet and velveteen fabrics is created as the surface fibers are trimmed to make a pile during the manufacturing process. Other examples of pile fabrics are carpets and toweling. The pile fibers are woven into the base fabric and then sheared off to create a lush surface. These pile fibers are sometimes held more securely in place with an additional layer fused or bonded onto the back of the fabric.

Set Up for Embroidery on Velvet and Velveteen

Embroidery on these fabrics requires special considerations because the fibers that create the pile can be pulled away from the base fabric or crushed. Consider the following embroidery techniques when setting up to embroider on piled fabrics.

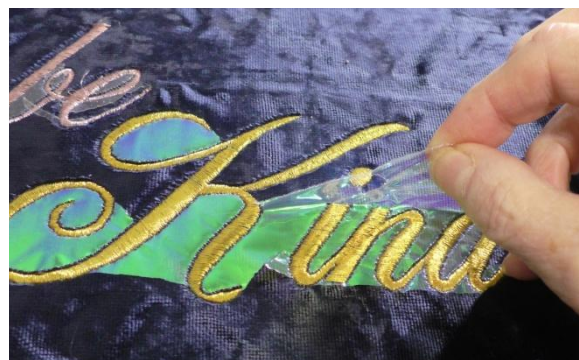
Add Bonding to the Back of Un-Bonded Fabrics - Secure the pile fibers to any un-bonded fabric with a fusible stabilizer. Some pile fabrics for upholstery are bonded with an additional layer on the back to stabilize the fabric and hold the piles in place. To stabilize un-bonded fabric, fuse a layer of No Show Mesh or Dream Weave Fusible to the wrong side of the fabric. Always test the fabric for heat tolerance and place a towel on the ironing surface to avoid crushing the pile. Do not iron over a hard edge or the edge will emboss a permanent mark on to the fabric.

Don't Hoop the Fabric in the Frame - Hoop the stabilizer and secure the fabric to the stabilizer only. Embroidery frames will crush the pile creating marks called "hoop burn". These marks are permanent and ruin a project. These fabrics are also thicker and more difficult to capture with the two parts of the embroidery frame. Moisture activated stabilizers such as Floriani Wet N Stick work well to hold a washable or wet-able fabric in place because they release easily when re-activated with water and will not pull the pile fibers away through the back of the fabric. Hoop the stabilizer with the shiny side up and moisten using a damp sponge or foam paintbrush on the stabilizer. Use minimal moisture and the stabilizer will become sticky right away. Allow the stabilizer and fabric to dry for maximum adhesion before embroidering.



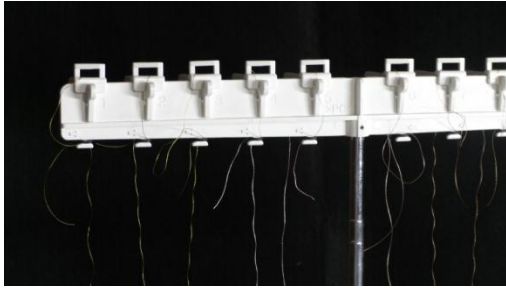
The recommended embroidery speed for this stabilizer is 600-700 stitches per minute. To remove the stabilizer, moisten the back of the stabilizer and allow the moisture to seep through to the side in contact with the fabric. Be patient as this may take a few minutes. Hold the hoop vertically allow gravity to test if the fabric has been released as the adhesive becomes moist. Sticky stabilizers will pull the pile fibers away from the fabric as they are pulled away if the fabric is not bonded on the backside so they are not recommended for pile fabrics that do not have a protective bonding layer on the wrong side. Always test using a small sample of stabilizer and fabric before starting your project.

Use a Topper - Embroidery stitches will bury into the pile fibers without a topper. (Think dropping a pin into the carpet!) Always use a topping when sewing on velvet or velveteen. Cut a piece of topping roughly 1" larger all around the embroidery area and place on top of the fabric in the frame. To keep the stitches above the pile use a topper such as Heat N Gone. After embroidery tear away as much stabilizer as you can. The remaining topper in the nooks and crannies is easily removed by touching the tip of an iron on the fabric and stabilizer. The stabilizer remains under the threads to hold the pile in place under the embroidery even if the piece is laundered. Toppings are usually taped in position, but adhesives will damage the velvet. Do not use



an adhesive product such as tape to hold the topper in place as it will remove pile. Pin the topper in the corners over the area to be embroidered. Check that the pins are not in the embroidery area by using the trace feature. An alternative to add sparkle to a project and hold the fibers in place is a mylar topper such as Embellish Iridescent Mylar. Wash away stabilizers are not suitable for use as a topping for velvet for two reasons. They dissolve and no longer trap the fibers of the pile under the stitches. Unless completely removed with prolonged soaking, the residue of the stabilizer remains in the fibers. Prolonged saturation may distort the velvet and crush the nap and any remaining residue will also harden the pile.

Try a Ten Spool Thread Stand for Large Projects



The ten-spool thread stand helps to organize threads and is particularly useful for a project with multiple thread changes and multiple hoopings. The thread stand attaches in place of the cover. Remove the cover by lifting it open and pulling up. Insert the thread stand in the slots. Pull the telescoping thread

guides to the highest position. Position the thread on the spool pins in the order of use or use temporary labels to mark the thread number or color name. Use the appropriate spool cap for the type of spool and insert the thread up and into the thread guides. Pull a little thread to make sure the thread is flowing smoothly. The end of the thread fits into the small rubber ring to hold it in place when not in use. The thread stand can be threaded off the machine and then easily snapped into place when ready to embroider.



Notes on Creating Embroidered Slipcovers

Determine the size of the piece to be embroidered. Add seam allowance and a little extra. Mark the area to be embroidered on the piece with a wash away marker. When marking velvet, always mark the wrong side. Velvet has a nap. Nap refers to a fabric with a direction. Run your hand along the velvet to feel the nap. One direction will feel smooth and the other a little rough. The nap affects the shine of the fabric and if the pieces are joined with the nap in different directions the fabric will appear to be different colors. Plan the fabric for your project with the smooth direction towards the hem. In other words, when running your hand from top to bottom, the fabric will feel smooth.

When embroidery is complete, pin-match the pieces of the slipcover together. Make the cover as snug as you can for a good-looking cover. A zipper may be necessary along one or multiple sides for a secure fit. After pinning, baste the cover together and check the fit. The final step is finishing the lower edge.

See the following excerpt from the 1940 Singer Home Decoration Guide on Making your own slipcovers for additional notes on construction. Many additional detailed sources are available in books and on the internet. Use this enclosed guide as basic information to help you judge your interest in the art of making your own slipcovers.

Slip Cover Measurements Chart



		For Yardage
BACK LENGTH—(floor to top)—A to B plus 2" seam allowance	inches	inches
BACK WIDTH—R to S plus 2" seam allowance	inches	
FRONT BACK LENGTH—B to C plus 2" seam allowance, plus 3" tuck-in	inches	inches
FRONT BACK WIDTH—N to O plus 2" seam allowance	inches	
BACK WIDTH—O to N plus 2" seam allowance	inches	
SEAT LENGTH—C to D plus 2" seam allowance, plus 3" tuck-in	inches	inches
SEAT WIDTH—across—J to K plus 2" seam allowance, plus 3" tuck-in	inches	
SEAT WIDTH—across—T to U plus 2" seam allowance	inches	
FRONT LENGTH—D to floor at E plus 2" seam allowance	inches	inches
FRONT—across P to Q	inches	
SIDE LENGTH—(arm to floor)—F to G plus 2" seam allowance	inches x 2 =	inches
SIDE—(front to back)—H to I plus 2" seam allowance	inches	
ARM LENGTH—(inside)—F to J plus 2" seam allowance, plus 3" tuck-in	inches x 2 =	inches
ARM—(inside) front to back—L to M plus 2" seam allowance, plus 3" tuck-in	inches	
CUSHION—Length—I to 2 plus 2" seam allowance	inches x 2 =	inches
Width—4 to 5 plus 2" seam allowance	inches	
Depth of box—2 to 3 plus 2" seam allowance	inches	inches

Add an extra yard if the fabric has a design that must be centered.
To estimate yardage add up **lengthwise** measurements of pieces and divide by 36".

•25•

Making A Muslin Pattern

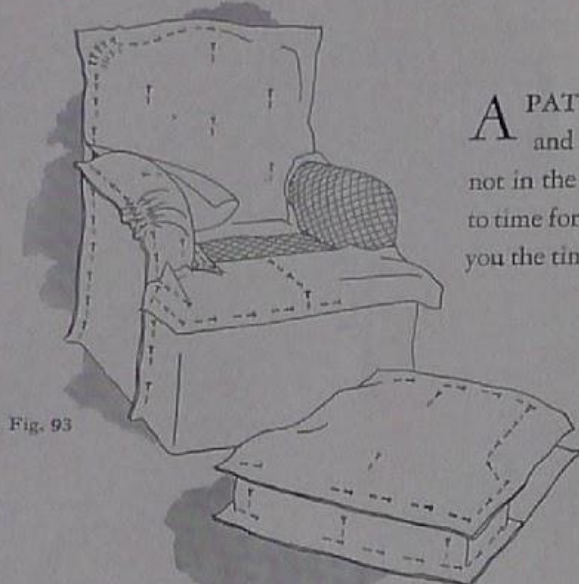


Fig. 93

A PATTERN for your sofa or chair is a good thing to have, and the most satisfactory one is made of muslin, which is not in the least expensive. You can use such a pattern from time to time for making other covers for the same chair, and it will save you the time and effort of pin fitting each time.

First block your material to correspond to the measurements for each section of the chair. That is, if the back measures 39 inches high and 26 inches across, including a generous one-inch seam allowance, cut a piece from your muslin this size, being sure the 39 inches is on the true lengthwise of the material. As each section is cut, pin it to its location on the chair, Fig. 93.

Follow this same procedure for all types of chairs. The wing chair takes more sections, of course, but is not more difficult to do. The "tuck-in" allowance should be made between the wing and the back, tapering from regular seam allowance at the top to a three-inch allowance at the seat, as shown in Fig. 94, which shows one-half of chair pin-fitted and edge trimmed to one-inch seam allowance.

Next, determine the exact center of each section of the chair, placing a pin lengthwise at both top and bottom. Then take the exact lengthwise center of each section and place over lengthwise pins.

You are now ready to begin pin fitting. In placing your seams, it is very important to follow the original lines of the chair or the muslin cover of the upholstery.

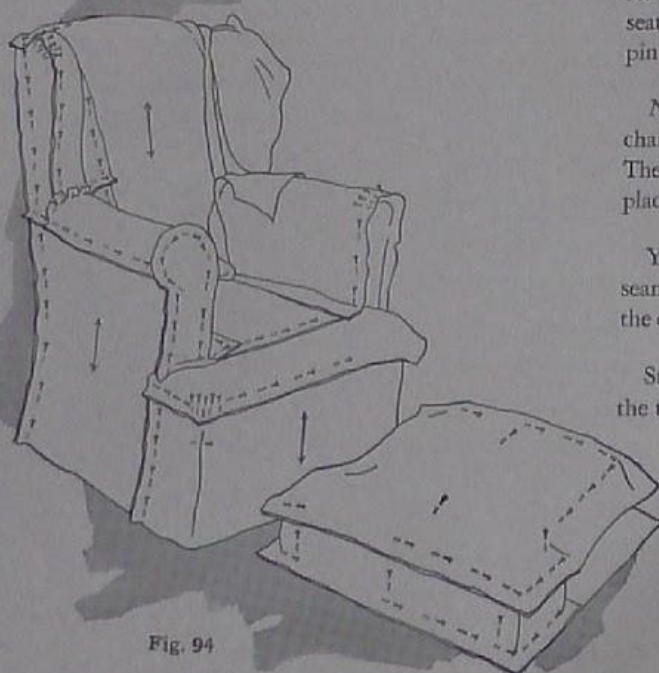


Fig. 94

Start with the back and front sections, working from the top center. Smooth out material above the arms of the chair, both front and back, keeping material straight with the grain. Place pins occasionally, particularly along seam line to hold material in place. Continue from top center, pinning both sections together. Draw material to fit snugly. Place pins lengthwise. Work toward outer edge to where fulness begins in front section.

Next pin side seams between top and arm. Then ease in fullness over rounded part by placing pins crosswise, taking up a little fullness between each pin as shown in Fig. 95. Pin both sections together across gathers, and make notches in seam allowance on either side of gathers.

Next pin front and inside arm sections. Seam must be snug over rounded part of arm and to the back, but taper to the full "tuck-in" allowance at the seat as at "C", Fig. 96.

Join side arm sections to inside arm and back sections, material to be eased over the rounded part of the arm, "B", Fig. 96, same as at the top. Then join the front section to inside and outside arm sections, and last the seat. Be sure that the "tuck-in" allowance is accounted for at the back and sides. "D" and "E", Fig. 96.

When the pin fitting is complete, go over entire chair again, examining it critically, taking up any unnecessary fullness.

To be attractive and properly made, a slip cover must be "form-fitting." The better the pin fitting job, the more successful the slip cover.

Then with a colored pencil (blue preferred) draw a line over the lengthwise pins on both sides of the seams. Next using a sharp scissors, trim all seams evenly to one inch. Next, notch seams at center points, and where fullness in one section is to be controlled when joining to corresponding sections, as shown in Fig. 96.

Block pieces for cushions the same as for chair sections. Make one continuous strip for boxing and pin fit to pillow. Mark seam line and trim to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch seam allowance. Round all square corners. Begin curve about $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches from point and curve to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch diagonally from point.

This same step by step procedure should be followed for all type chairs and sofas. Some types require more sections, but the method of assembling them is the same.

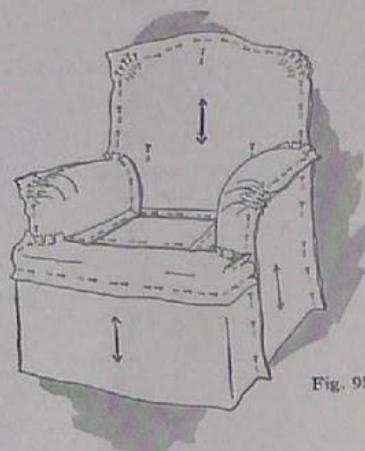


Fig. 95

However, always begin at the top with the front and back sections and work from center to sides and down.

After you have made one slip cover, you may decide that making muslin patterns for other chairs is not necessary. You have found them easy to make and feel confident you can go right ahead and cut into the material for the next one. But *do* make a muslin pattern for your first slip cover. Even professionals work with muslin first, when making unusual designs in curtains, slip covers and bed spreads.

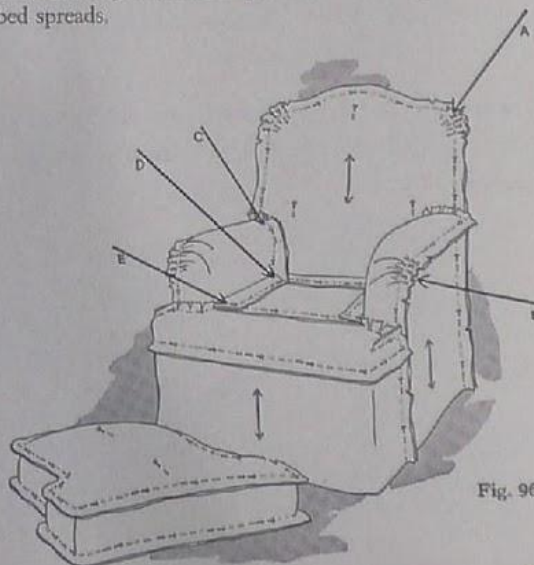


Fig. 96

Fitting

WORK with the right side of the fabric out as shown in Fig. 101. This is the way it is to appear in the finished slip cover and you are sure to place the design where it should be. There is always the possibility that one side of the chair may vary a little in size. One arm may be a little fuller than the other. Fitting with the right side out enables you to see what the results will be. Mark all seam lines with colored pencil, and when joining sections "marked line" is placed over "marked line".

After fabric has been cut from muslin pattern, pin fit to chair as a double check. *Be sure of the fit, then stitch.*

With needle and strong thread run a row of gathers between notches as shown in Fig. 99, and fasten thread securely.

Darts may be used instead of gathers to take up the fullness if desired. If so they should be made as inconspicuous as possible. The darts are pinned to conform to the curve or corner of the chair. Make tailor's tacks, shown in Fig. 100, to mark stitching line. Stitch perfectly. Do not stretch fabric. Darts are very apt to break what should be a continuous line, as in striped fabrics. It is best to avoid using them where fullness can be *eased in*.

With all pieces fitted to your satisfaction, the slip cover can now be stitched together.

Before proceeding further, measure all seams to be finished with welting-fringe or other trimming to determine amount of yardage required.

For the average size chair with cushion, you will use from 10 to 12 yards. An arm or wing chair requires from 12 to 14 yards. A sofa with three cushions takes approximately 25 yards.



Fig. 99



Fig. 100



Fig. 101

Construction Details

THE first step in actually assembling the slip cover is to stitch the connecting seams, assuming that all seam lines have been made, and notches and gathers or darts put in where fulness is to be controlled. The connecting seam A indicated in Fig. 107, joins the inside arm sections to front back section. These seams must fit snug over the arm but taper to the regular "tuck-in" allowance at seat.

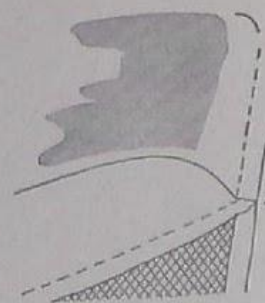


Fig. 107

The next step is to join arm sections, stitch welting or fringe to inside arm section, placing line of stitching directly over marked line, Fig. 108. Use the Singer Cording Foot with right toe for this stitching. Then apply side arm sections, placing seam line on line of stitching, Fig. 109, matching all lines and notches. Place pins at regular intervals to hold sections in place. Never attempt to join shaped sections and insert welting, piping or fringe in one operation. Only on straight seams should this ever be done, and then by an expert. Good seaming is much too important in the making of a slip cover for one to risk joining all sections with one row of stitching. With so much thickness one edge is apt to stretch, or the seam may be stitched unevenly. Do one thing at a time. Join opposite side arm sections in the same way. At this stage, try sections on chair again.

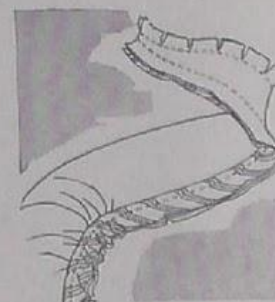


Fig. 108

Next step is to apply seam finish to continuous line along sides and over top of chair, Fig. 110. Join back section to sides and front back, matching center line notches and pin securely, placing pins across the seam. Leave one side free 18 or 20 inches for closing.

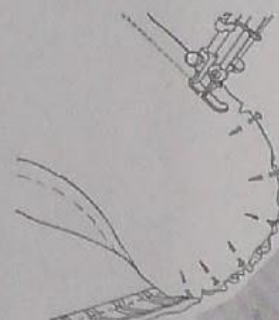


Fig. 109

Join seat section on all four sides, making due allowance at the back and sides for "tuck-in." Try cover on chair for further inspection. Pin closing together at side back. Make any adjustments necessary to perfect the fit.

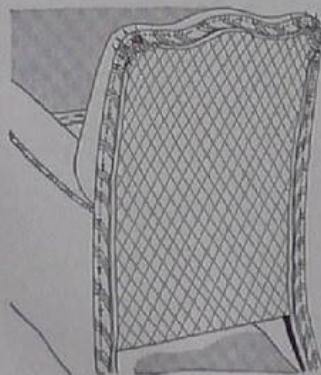


Fig. 110

Slide Fastener Closing

BACK CLOSING. For the average chair one closing is sufficient.

Turn back seam allowance on free edge and baste.

Use an 18 or 20 inch fastener, depending on height of chair. With fastener closed, place opening end about 2 inches below flounce heading. Pin seam finish edge (welt-ing or fringe) to tape, keeping line of stitching about 1/16 of an inch from metal, Fig. 116A. Then place folded edge over metal and pin to position, use plenty of pins and keep sides of closing even. Then baste, Fig. 116.

Open fastener and with the Singer Cording Foot, stitch close to welting on right side. Stitch across closed end and down the other side, keeping stitching about 1/16 inch from metal. Trim seam edges even with tape of fastener and overcast edge together; press.

COVERING CUSHION. Pin fit sections, Fig. 117, checking to see that all lines and the design are correct and sharp corners rounded. Stitch welting or fringe to top and bottom sections, following line marked for seam allowance. Join boxing, leaving seam open across back of bottom section. Remember to clip along inside curves and notch out curves. Insert slide fastener at closing, Fig. 118, following same procedure as for slip cover.

Another way of inserting the slide fastener is to make a separate back section, same length as the slide fastener plus 1/2 inch on each end for seams and 1 1/2 inch wider. Cut this strip through the center. Then turn back 3/4 inch on matching sides of each strip. Join ends to boxing, bringing folded edges together in center. Stitch boxing to top and bottom sections all around. Place closed slide fastener under opening, pinning securely. Then open slide fastener and stitch all around as shown in Fig. 119, keeping line of stitching about 1/16 inch from the metal. Overcast edge of fabric and tape of slide fastener together.

Fig. 116A

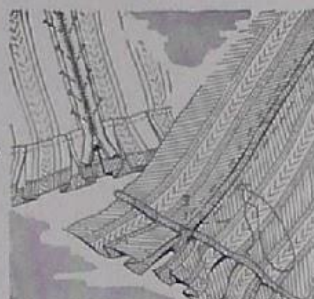


Fig. 116

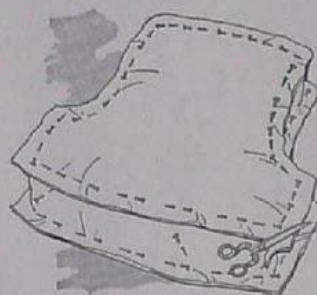


Fig. 117

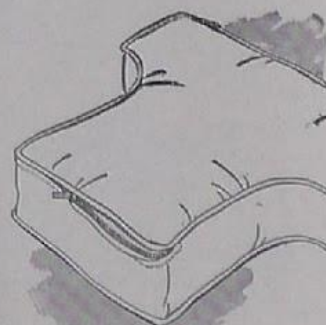


Fig. 118

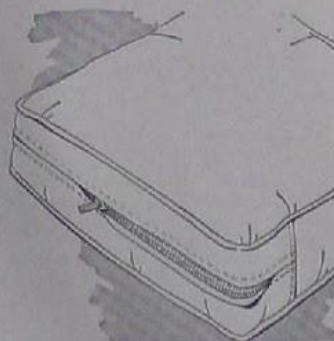


Fig. 119

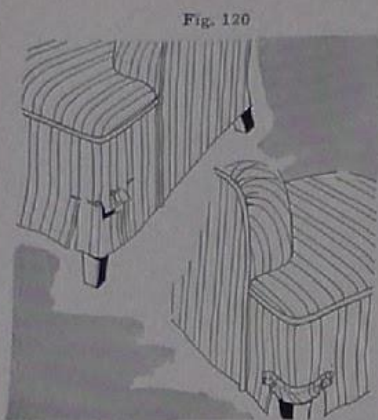


Fig. 120

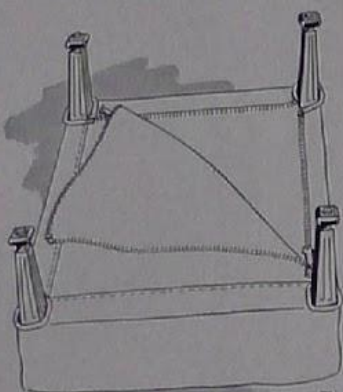


Fig. 121

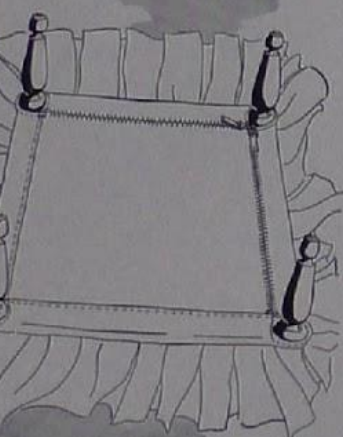


Fig. 122

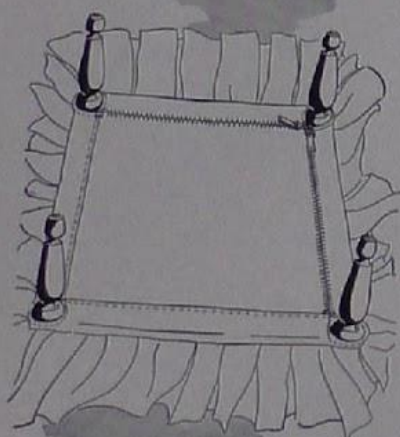


Fig. 123

Construction Details [Cont.]

UNDERNEATH FINISH. Allow for a 3 inch turn back on all four sides of chair. Mark seam line for finish around chair legs even with turn back. Shape cover as shown in Fig. 120, slashing material to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of seam line and trim off between slashes. Finish around opening with welting or $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch bias strip as shown in Fig. 121, and stitch. Clip seam and turn to underneath side.

Cut a piece of double thickness unbleached muslin or any other closely woven plain fabric to fit inside of turn backs, allowing $\frac{1}{2}$ inch on all edges for seams. Stitch this section to front and one side of slip cover—closing around one front leg. Press seam edges back and stitch again on the right side. Insert slide fasteners at side and back, Fig. 122. Be sure slide fasteners open at both ends.

To put cover on chair, slip the front closed opening up over leg, smooth cover up over arm, then draw cover over back of chair. Smooth down all around and close back opening. Turn bottom of chair up and close slide fasteners at side and back.

This type of finish holds the cover neatly in place at all times, and facilitates removing the cover.

Use this same closing for chairs finished with pleated flounce or fringe, Fig. 123, if desired, as it is a satisfactory way of keeping cover in place.

Snap fasteners are also used as a closing and can be bought on a tape by the yard, Fig. 124. A large hook and eye should be used at points where there is to be much strain. Whatever type of closing fastener you use, be sure it is rust proof.

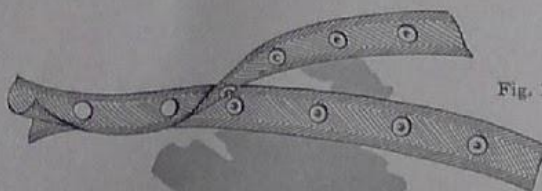


Fig. 124