dolphin plushies

A SEWING PATTERN BY

sew desu ne?

dolphin plushies

These plushies are made to mimic a cute baby dolphin! Completely chubby and pudgy with a tiny bottle nose, round body, and bitty dorsal, side, and tail fins. They're measure at just hand held size so they're perfect as a tiny gift for an ocean lover.

DIFFICULTY:

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Being so tiny, this plush needs a little bit of coordination to complete all the small pieces.

SKILLS USED:

- Curved sewing
- Fusible web applique
- Ladder stitch
- Basting

MAKES:

One plush, about 5" wide, 5" long, and 4" tall

materials & tools:

- ¼ yd. of main color fabric (for body & fins)
- ¼ yd. of white fabric (for belly)
- 3" x 3" piece of black applique fabric (felt, cotton, etc.)
- 2" x 2" piece of white applique fabric (felt, cotton, etc.)
- 3" x 3" piece of light or heavy duty fusible web
- sewing thread to match main fabric, applique fabrics, and accent fabric
- poly-fil stuffing
- basic sewing tools (sewing machine, scissors, iron, needles, pins, fabric marker, seam ripper)

faux fur

minky

cuddle fleece

micro fleece

anti-pill fleece

fleece

SUGGESTED FABRICS:

Plush, stretchy fabrics such as fleece or minky are suggested. The variations of fleece and minky mentioned to the left would work well, but really any plushy fabric with a bit of stretch on the cross-wise grain would be well-suited.

Stretch fabrics like **FLEECE** or **MINKY** will create a more squat, round shape when stuffed.

Non-stretchy fabrics, like **FELT** or **COTTON**, won't stretch when stuffed so the resulting plush will look elongated as shown.
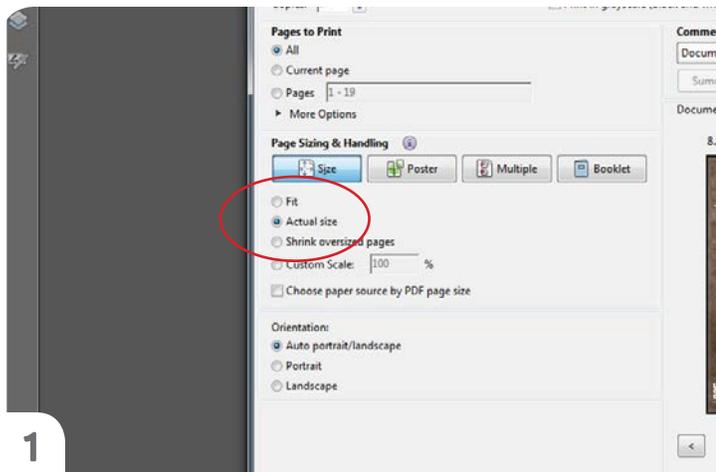
MINKY   **VS.**   **FELT**
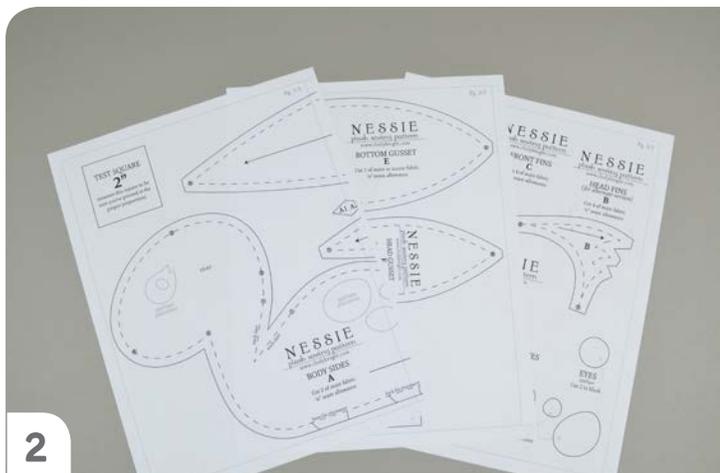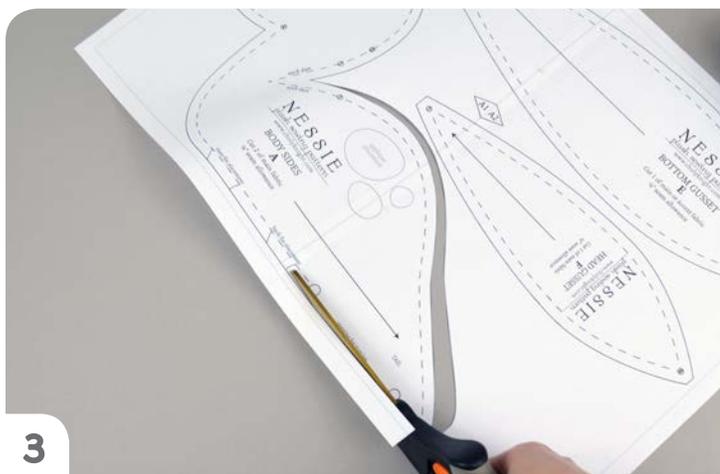
printing the pattern:

To print the pattern, set your computer to print **PAGE 11**. If you're unfamiliar with printing and assembling a .pdf pattern, read the steps below.

1

At the print dialog box, check the box that says print at "Actual Size" or 100%. Any other selection (such as "Fit to page") will distort the pattern so it's slightly larger or smaller and we don't want that.

2

Print the pages needed for the file. You might have one or more. Either way, be sure you have the full collection by noting the page numbers in the corner.
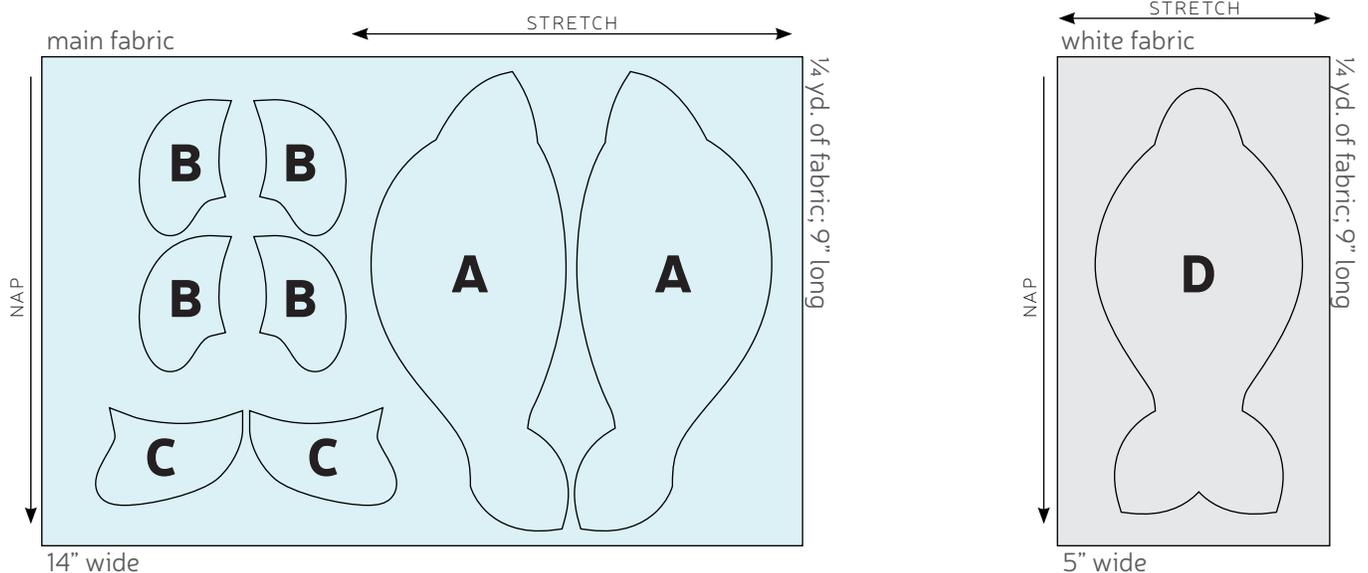

3

You can trace the patterns onto a different paper, or you can also just cut them straight from the printer paper. They might be a little hard to pin through, so you might want to use your longest pins. But you could also use pattern weights or trace the outlines onto the fabric with a washable marker and cut them out from there.

cutting the fabric:

1 Place pattern on the fabric, and make sure the stretch line matches the stretch of the fabric. The nap line should go in the direction of the fur.

2 Pin the pattern in place, use pattern weights, or trace the outline of the pattern with a washable marker.

3 Using the paper as a template, cut out the fabric. Cut the required amount according to the pattern.

4 For all fur fabrics, shake the excess fuzz away.

cutting layout:

main fabric

STRETCH

¼ yd. of fabric; 9" long

NAP

B B
B B
C C
A A

14" wide

STRETCH

white fabric

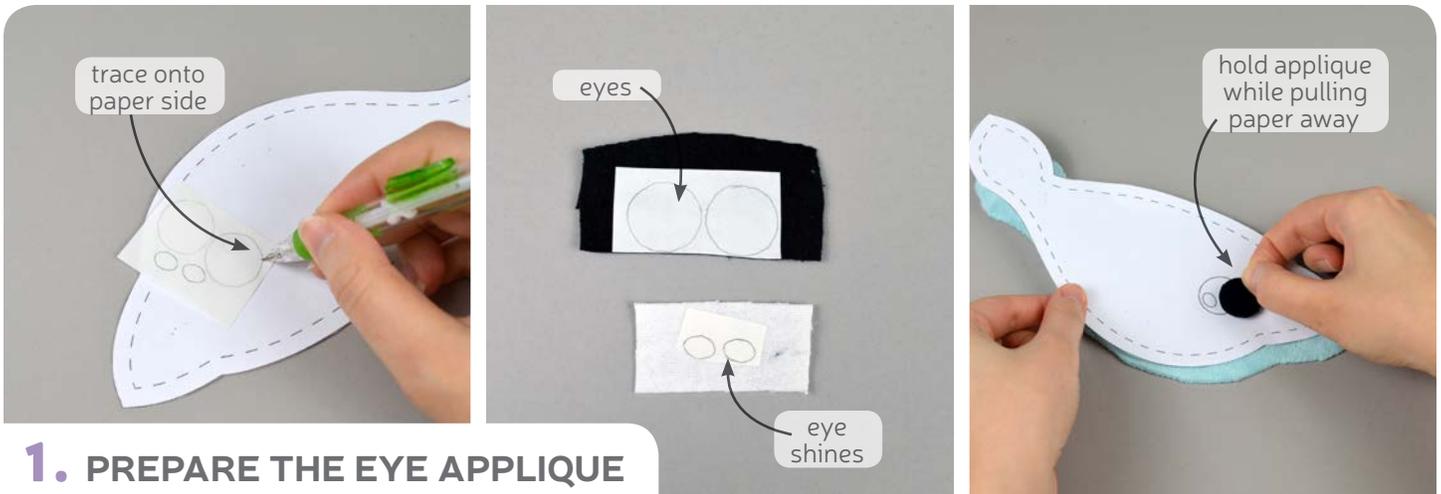¼ yd. of fabric; 9" long

NAP

D

5" wide

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- Briefly read the project instructions so you know what to expect.
- If desired, mark the cut fabric pieces with the markings and symbols from the pattern. Or wait until the applicable step before transferring.
- Note that the seam allowance used is ¼" throughout the project.

trace onto paper side

eyes

eye shines

hold applique while pulling paper away

1. PREPARE THE EYE APPLIQUE

- Take your fusible web and trace the eye pieces onto the smooth (paper) side. You should have two of each piece: eyes and eye shines. Fuse the bumpy (adhesive) side onto the wrong side of your applique fabrics. Eyes - black; eye shines - white.

- Cut out the eye pieces and arrange them on the Side (A) piece of your main fabric. You can do this by setting your paper pattern on top of the fabric piece (right sides up), align the eye piece on top where the placement markings are, then carefully pull the paper pattern away while holding the applique piece in place.

trace onto back for mirror image

fuse eyes, then eye shines

2. SEW THE EYE APPLIQUE

- Since the Side (A) piece isn't symmetrical, you can align the second eye piece by tracing the eye marking on the back side of the paper pattern and do the same paper sliding trick.

- Fuse the eye pieces in place with your iron (use a press cloth -- such as a scrap piece of cotton -- if you're using a polyester or fur fabric like minky). Then add the eye shines.

- If you used heavy duty fusible web, you can keep the pieces fused without sewing, or you can sew them in place a number of ways. I've used a zigzag stitch here.

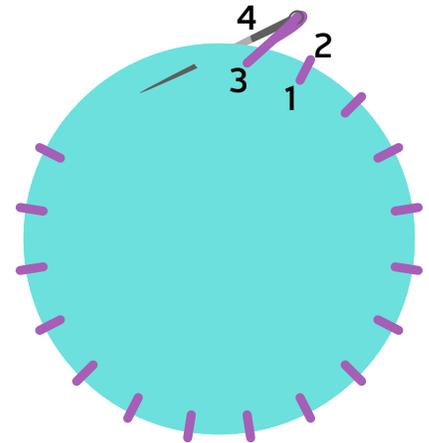- Refer to the next step for some other applique options.

straight stitch; great for felt

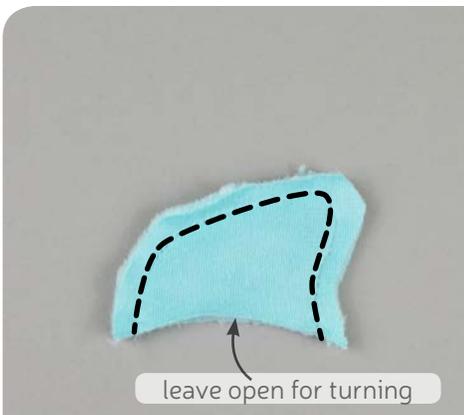applique whipstitch

2a. OTHER APPLIQUE OPTIONS

- Other good options for applique include a straight stitch, which involves sewing around the edge of the applique pieces with a straight stitch using matching thread -- about 1/8" in from the edge.

- You can also applique by hand; I prefer a whipstitch. Thread a hand-sewing needle with some matching thread and knot it. Bring the thread up from the back of the project; about 1/8" in from the edge of the applique shape. Bring it down perpendicular from the curve, just outside of the applique shape. This completes one stitch.

- For the next stitch, bring the needle back up about 1/8" away from the previous stitch and 1/8" in from the edge just as in the first stitch. Once again, bring it down just outside the applique shape. Continue this way until you've sewn around the shape.

trim excess seam allowance

leave open for turning

3. SEW THE DORSAL FIN

- Take your two Dorsal Fin (B) pieces and align them with right sides facing. Sew them together along the long curved edge, leaving the short curved edge free as shown for turning the fin right side out.

- Trim the excess seam allowance at the corner and turn the fin right side out.

fin is pointed to back

layer sides together

4. SEW THE SIDES

- If you haven't already, transfer the dorsal fin placement lines over from the paper pattern onto one of the Side (A) pieces. Align the open edge of the dorsal fin within these lines and baste it in place within the seam allowance. Be sure the tip of the fin is pointed towards the back fin.

- Take your other Side (A) piece and layer it on top of the first with right sides facing. Align the raw edges and pin along the top half of the piece. Sew them together along the edge shown in the photo, going over the fin in the process. Together, these two Side (A) pieces form the top of the dolphin.

basting:
A form of temporary sewing meant to hold pieces in place. A long stitch length is often used for this reason. The finished result is not meant to be seen and sometimes is even removed later (depending on your project).

leave open for turning

trim excess seam allowance

fin tips point toward back fins

5. SEW THE SIDE FINS

- Take your two Side Fin (C) pieces and align them with right sides facing. Sew them together along the long curved edge, leaving the short curved edge free as shown for turning the fin right side out.

- Trim the excess seam allowance at the corner and turn the fin right side out. When complete, repeat with the remaining two side fin pieces for two completed fins total.

- If you haven't already, transfer the side fin placement lines over from the paper pattern onto the Bottom (D) piece. Align the open edge of the dorsal fin within these lines and baste it in place within the seam allowance. Repeat on the other side so both fins are basted in place.

back seam matches closed circle

front seam matches open circle

leave open for turning

6. SEW THE BOTTOM TO THE SIDES

- If you haven't already, transfer over the circle markings from the Bottom (D) paper pattern to the fabric piece. These indicate where the top of the dolphin will line up with the bottom. Also transfer over the opening for turning markings.

- The seam found on the back fins will line up with the closed circle, and the seam found on the nose will line up with the open circle. Pin these in place. Line up the rest of the top of the dolphin with the bottom (right sides facing), until the pieces are pinned all the way around.

- Sew around these edges, but leave the opening for turning that you marked earlier between the side and back fins.

trim outer corners, clip inner corners

stuff nose & tail fins first

stuff sides & bottom next

7. TURN AND STUFF THE DOLPHIN

- Trim the excess seam allowance at the outer tail corners, and clip into the inner tail corners (found between the fins and where the fin joins the tail). Turn the plush right side out through the opening for turning and define the corners with a chopstick.

- To stuff the dolphin, start with a small ball of stuffing and stuff each side of the tail fin. Then stuff the nose. Stuff the rest of the dolphin a bit at a time, pushing each part to the sides and bottom so the face gets full. Once the sides and bottom are packed tight, finally stuff the center and work your way to the top.
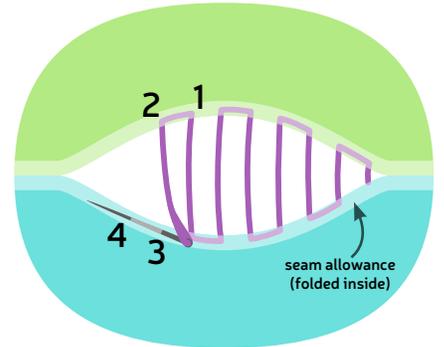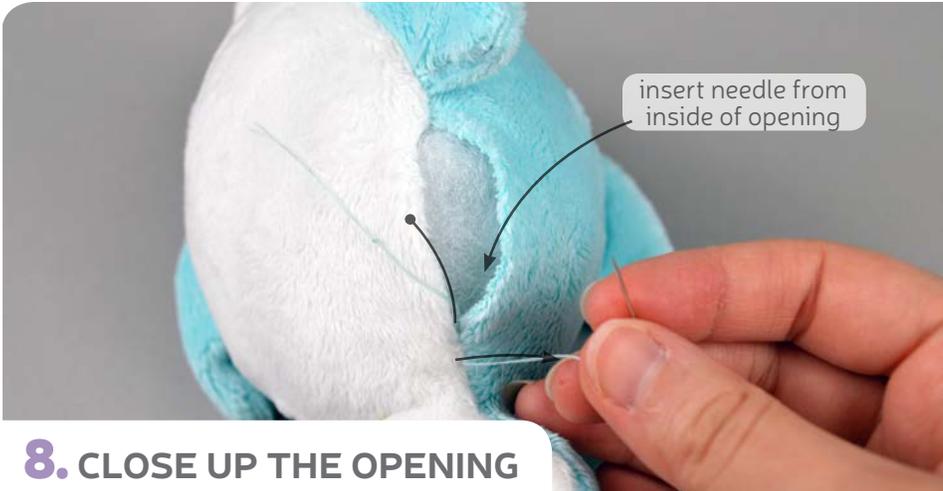
insert needle from inside of opening

2 1

4 3

seam allowance (folded inside)

8. CLOSE UP THE OPENING

- Once the plush is stuffed, make sure the seam allowances in the opening are tucked inside and prepare to ladder stitch it closed. Thread a hand-sewing needle and knot it at the end. Insert the needle from the inside of the opening and out of the plush near one edge of the opening. This will leave the knot inside the plush.

- Continue from here doing a ladder stitch. Take a 1/8" stitch into the fold of one side of the opening, then go across and take another. Keep going down the opening until you reach the end.

TIP: A ladder stitch is also sometimes called a **SLIP STITCH**, **HIDDEN STITCH**, or **INVISIBLE STITCH**.

ladder stitch opening closed
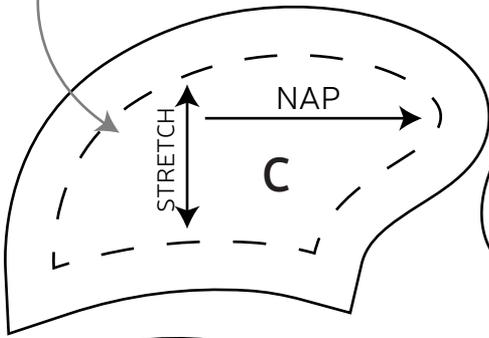
hold thread taut while clipping

9. FINISH THE PLUSH

- When you're finished, stitch a knot into the end of the seam. Then insert the needle near the finished knot and out of the plush about 1-2" away.

- Pull the thread through and hold it taught while snipping the thread. The excess thread should sink back inside the plush -- all hidden!

congrats! now give your plush a hug, because you're done!

SIDE FIN (C)
Cut 4 from main fabric
¼" seam allowance

STRETCH

NAP

C

DORSAL FIN (D)
Cut 2 from main fabric
¼" seam allowance

NAP

STRETCH

D

applique placement

EYES
trace/cut 2
from black

EYE SHINES
trace/cut 2
from white

STRETCH

NAP

dorsal fin placement

Dolphin Plush
P A T T E R N
WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM
SIDES (A)
Cut 2 from main fabric
¼" seam allowance

leave open for turning

NAP

STRETCH

side fin placement

side fin placement

Dolphin Plush
P A T T E R N
WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM
BOTTOM (D)
Cut 1 from white fabric
¼" seam allowance