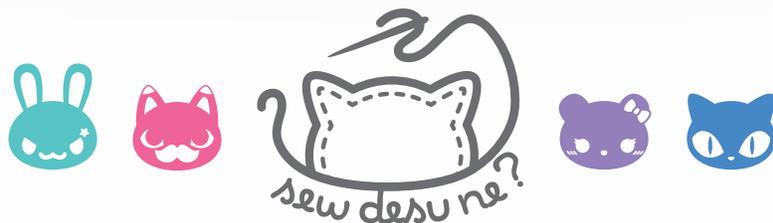# seal plush

A FREE SEWING PATTERN BY

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seal plush

With this pattern you can make a whole family of chubby baby seals! This simple design has tiny flippers, a pudgy body, and big baby eyes that are sure to make you smile.

With only 4 pieces it comes together very quickly. It's also a great way to use long-pile minky for an especially fluffy seal.

MAKES:

One plush: measures about 3½" tall, 7½" long, and 4½" wide

DIFFICULTY:

Sewing the belly onto the body might be the most difficult part for a newcomer, but if carefully match up your points you'll have a better time.

SKILLS USED:

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

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materials & tools:

- ¼ yd. of main fabric
- 4" x 4" piece of black applique fabric (flannel, felt, fleece, cotton, etc.) for pupils & nose
- 4" x 4" piece of dark gray or white applique fabric for eye corners & eyebrows
- 2" x 2" piece of white applique fabric for eye shines
- 2" x 2" piece of gray or white applique fabric for muzzle
- sewing thread to match main fabric and applique fabrics
- poly-fil stuffing
- basic sewing tools (sewing machine, scissors, iron, needles, pins, fabric marker, seam ripper)

long pile minky

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 crosswise 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.
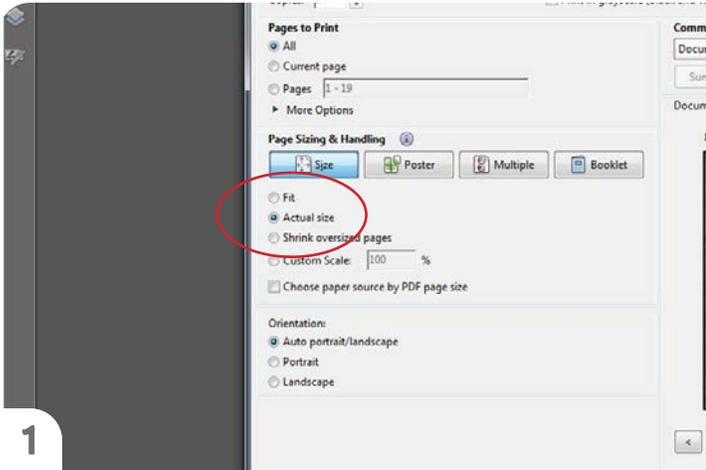
MINKY **VS.** **FELT**

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printing the pattern:

To print the pattern, set your computer to print **PAGES 12-13.** 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
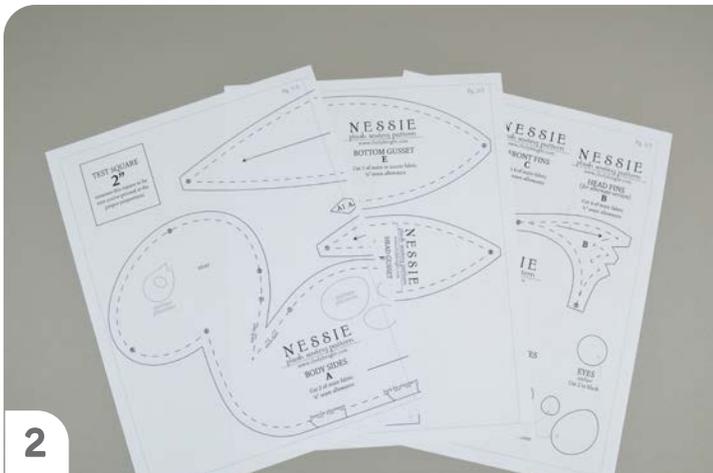
Print the pages needed for the file. You might have one or more. Either way, be sure you have the full collection by noting the page numbers in the corner.

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.

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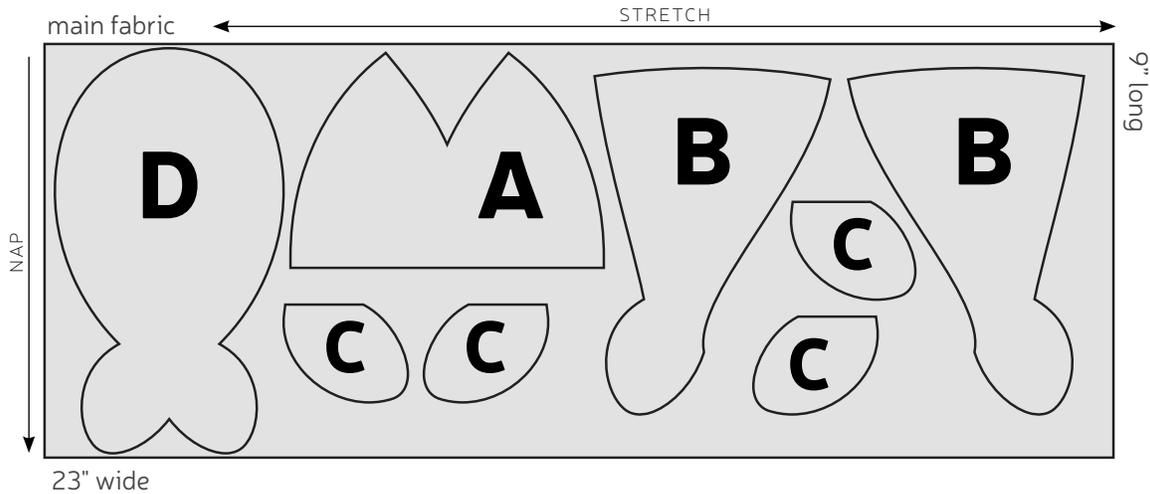
3
Using the paper as a template, cut out the fabric. Cut the required amount according to the pattern.

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

cutting layout:

main fabric

STRETCH

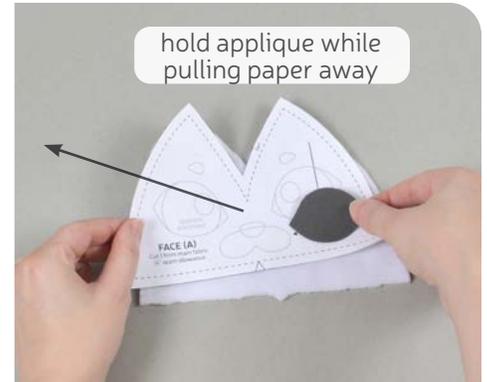6" long

NAP

D

A

B

B

C

C

C

C

23" 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 a ¼" seam allowance is used throughout the project.

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trace onto paper side

eye corners - gray or white
pupils, nose - black
muzzle - light gray or white

hold applique while pulling paper away

1. PREPARE THE FACE APPLIQUE

a. Grab your fusible web and applique templates. Trace the pieces you desire onto the smooth (paper) side. You should have at least 2 *eye corners*, 2 *pupils*, 2 *eye shines*, a *muzzle*, and a *nose*. You can also add *eyebrows* if desired.

➜ *The samples with whiskers were done with embroidery. Using applique for these shapes is not recommended for beginners since the pieces are very tiny and delicate.*

b. Fuse the bumpy (adhesive) side of the fusible web pieces onto the wrong side of your applique fabric. Fuse the *eye corners* and *eyebrows* to dark gray, the *eye shines* to white, the *pupils* and *nose* to black, and the *muzzle* to light gray. If your seal is a darker color, you may want to consider making the *eye corners*, *muzzle*, and *eyebrows* white instead (see below).

c. Cut out the *eye corners* and arrange them on the FACE (A) piece. Set your paper pattern on top of the fabric piece (right sides up). Align the *eye corner* piece on top where the placement markings are. Then carefully pull the paper pattern away while holding the applique piece in place.


fuse the eye corners first

add smaller pieces next

white eye corners, eyebrows, & muzzle
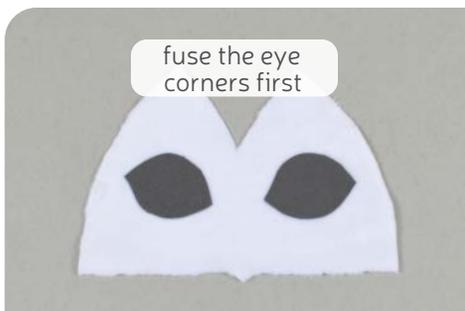
2. FUSE THE APPLIQUE

a. Fuse the *eye corners* in place with your iron. Use a press cloth (like a scrap piece of cotton) if you're using a polyester or fuzzy fabric like minky, that will help prevent harming or melting the fabric.

b. Next, move onto the smaller pieces: the *irises* and *eye shines.* Fuse them the same way as you did the *eye corners*, using the paper pattern and photos as a guide. Finally, add the muzzle and eyebrows.

c. The third picture shows alternate white eye corners and muzzle. This works nicely for darker colored seals. 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 page for some other applique options.*

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straight stitch; great for felt

applique whipstitch
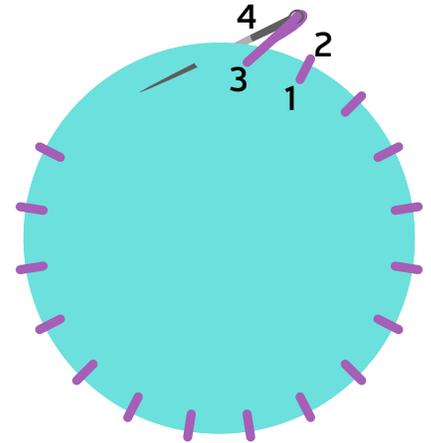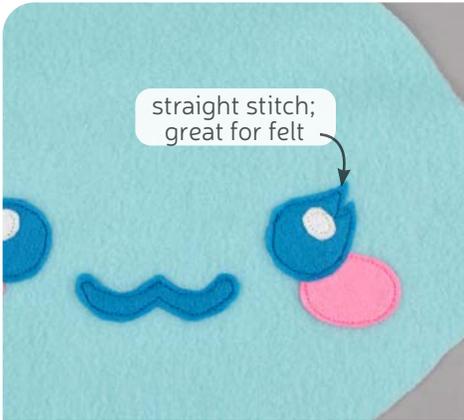
2a. OTHER APPLIQUE OPTIONS

a. 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.

b. 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.

c. 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.


match up slanted edges

blend stitching into fold

3. SEW THE FACE DART

a. Grab your **FACE** piece (A). Note the large wedge shape found along the top of the piece. This is a *dart*. We're going to sew it starting by lining up the slanted edges. Fold the fabric along the point of the dart with right sides together.

b. Sew the *dart* starting at the opening and working down to the point.

c. Try to blend your stitching into the fold for a smooth transition and a rounder finished plush.

DARTS:
A wedge-shaped gap found in a pattern. When sewn in fabric, it creates a tuck in the fabric and develops a 3D shape. The diagonal sides of the wedge are the **LEGS**; these are matched up and sewn to the **POINT** of the dart.

leave open for turning

sew down to circle

open up body pieces
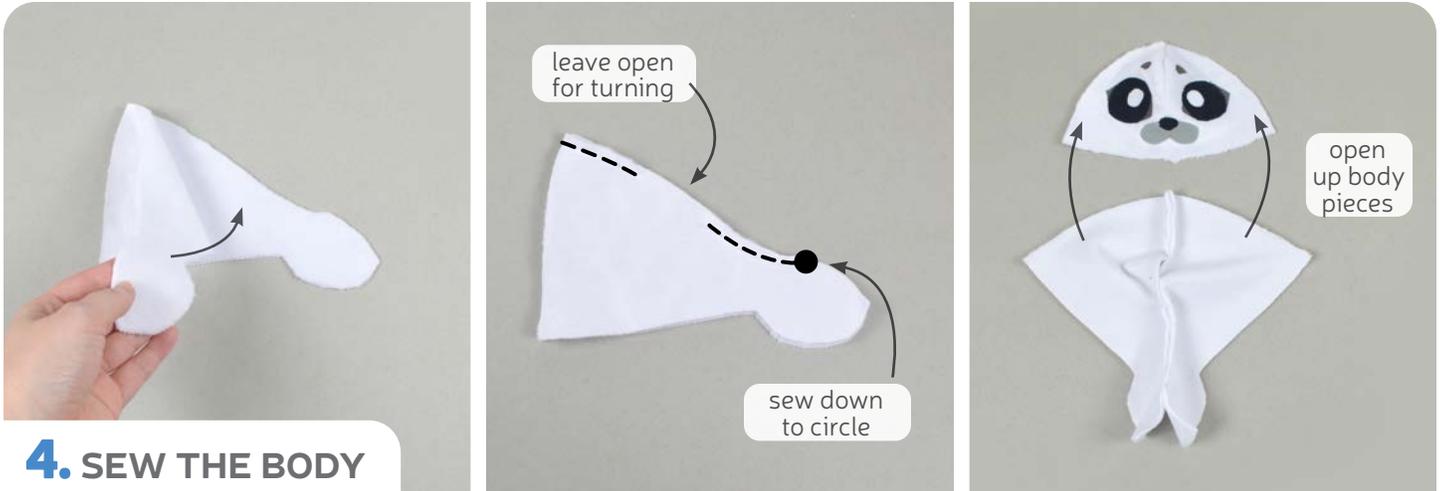
4. SEW THE BODY

a. Grab your **BODY** pieces (B). Align them with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.

b. If you haven't already, locate the *opening for turning markings* found on the paper pattern for the body. Transfer them over to the wrong side of the fabric.
Sew along this edge of the body, starting at the top corner and going down to the *circle marking* at the middle of the tail.

c. Open up the body pieces when complete, and retrieve your **FACE** (A) from before. We're going to be attaching the front edge of the body (that has the back seam in the middle) to the top edge of the face.


line up center seam & dart

open up when complete

5. SEW THE BODY TO THE FACE

a. Align the **BODY** (B) over the face with right sides facing and the raw edges matching up. The center seam on the body should line up with the *top dart* on the **FACE** (A). Pin the fabrics together.

b. Sew the body to the face along this edge.

c. Open up the pieces when complete.

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leave open for turning
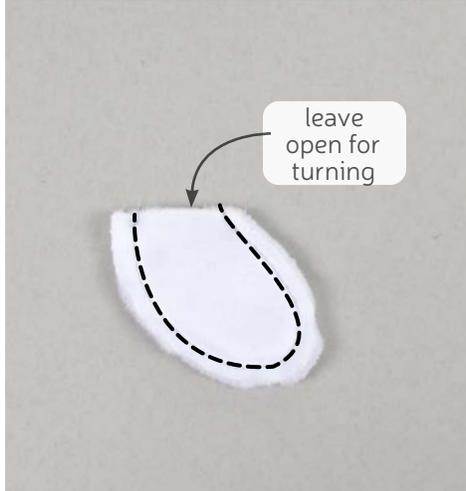
6. SEW THE FLIPPERS

a. Grab your **FLIPPER** pieces (C). Take two and align them with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.

b. Sew them together along the curved edge. Leave the straight edge open for turning the pieces right side out later.

c. Repeat this step with your remaining flippers for two total. Then turn them both right side out through the opening.


stuff very lightly

align beside top seam

baste flippers to body

7. BASTE THE FLIPPERS

a. If desired, stuff the flippers very lightly with stuffing so they take a little bit of shape. Try not to add too much or it will make the next step more difficult.

b. If you haven't already, locate the *flipper placement lines* found on the paper pattern for the **BODY** (B). Align the flipper within these lines so the raw edges match up. It should be right beside the top seam from step 5. Ensure that the flippers are pointing toward the tail.

c. Baste the flippers to the body of the seal within the seam allowance to hold them in place for future steps.

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).

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line up center notches

line up tail circles

sew all around shape

clip seam allowance at corners
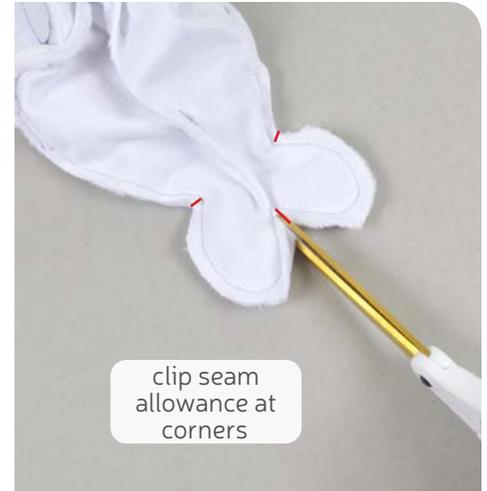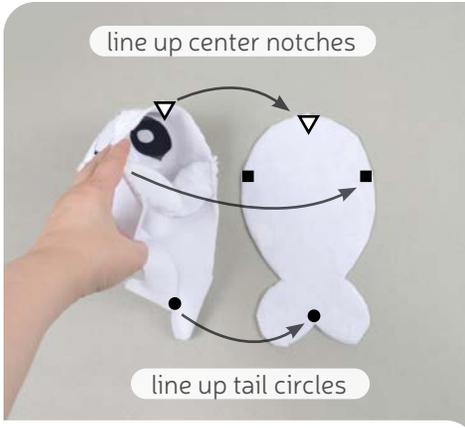
8. ATTACH THE BELLY

a. Grab your **BELLY** piece (D) and your body so far. Up next, the belly will be joined to the rest of the body. So open up the body piece to find the outer edge and line it up with the belly so right sides are facing.

There are some *placement markings* to be aware of for extra help. The *center top notch* on the belly should line up with the *center bottom notch* on the **FACE** (A). The *circle marking* on the body should line up with the *circle marking* on the belly (between the tail flippers). And finally, there are two *square markings* on the sides of the belly that will match up to the top seam from step 5.
Pin the fabrics together.

b. Sew the body to the belly all around the perimeter, matching up the *markings* as you go. Be sure to pivot at the corners between the body and the flippers, and between the two flippers..

c. Clip the seam allowances at the corners of the shape, including between the flippers and where the flippers meet the body.

turn right side out

stuff tail flippers first

fill up rest of body

9. STUFF THE BODY

a. Turn the body right side out through the *opening for turning* in the back.

b. To stuff, begin by filling up the tail flippers so they're nice and full.

c. Work your way away from the tail, filling the body firmly with stuffing. Finally fill up the last of the plush so the finish look is firm and there are no wrinkles in the fabric.
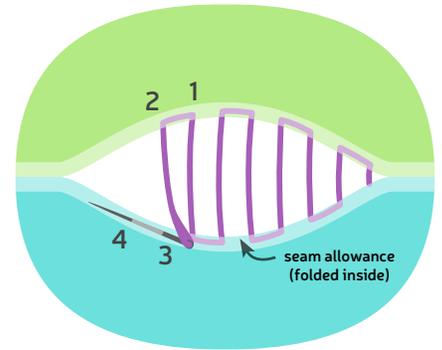
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bring needle out near one edge of opening

ladder stitch closed

bring out needle 1-2" away and clip thread
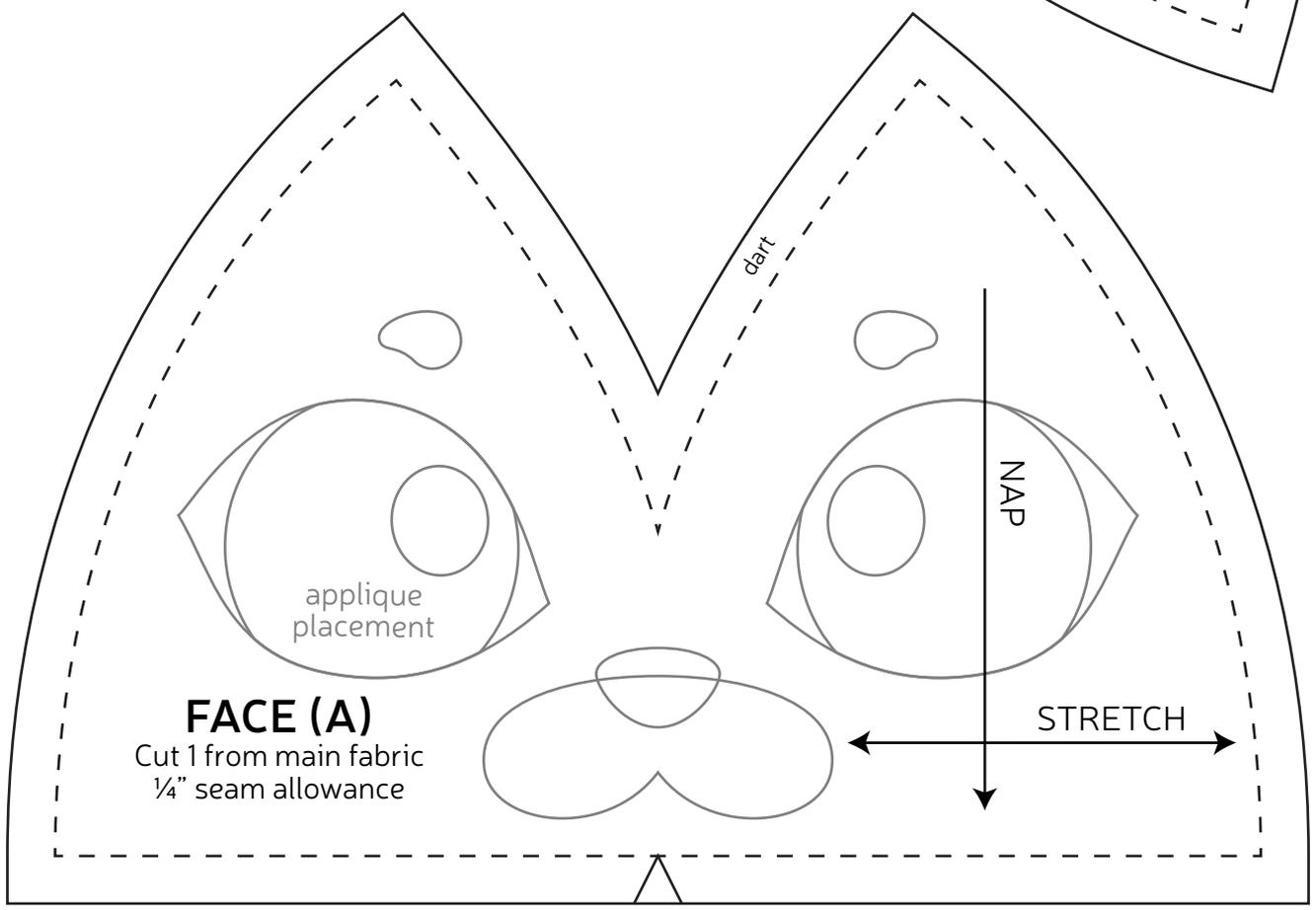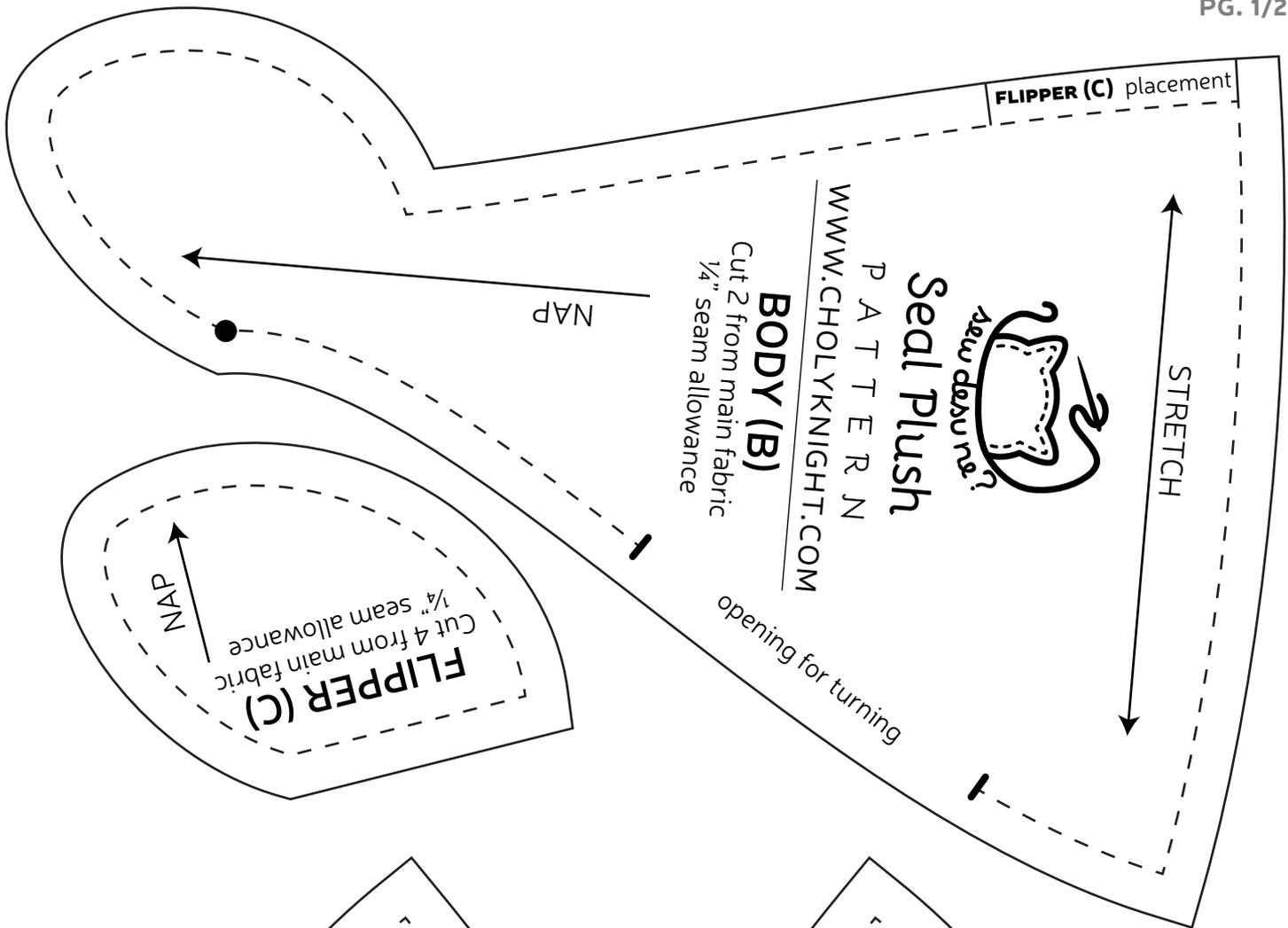
10. SEW THE BODY CLOSED

a. Once the plush is stuffed, make sure the seam allowances in the back 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.

b. Ladder stitch the back opening closed. 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.

c. 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 taut while snipping the thread. The excess thread should sink back inside the plush -- all hidden!

2 1

4 3

seam allowance (folded inside)

CONGRATS!
This completes your plush! Now give it a big hug!

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FLIPPER (C) placement

NAP

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how do you sew?

BODY (B)
Cut 2 from main fabric
¼" seam allowance

STRETCH

STRETCH

opening for turning

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

NAP

dart

NAP

applique
placement

FACE (A)
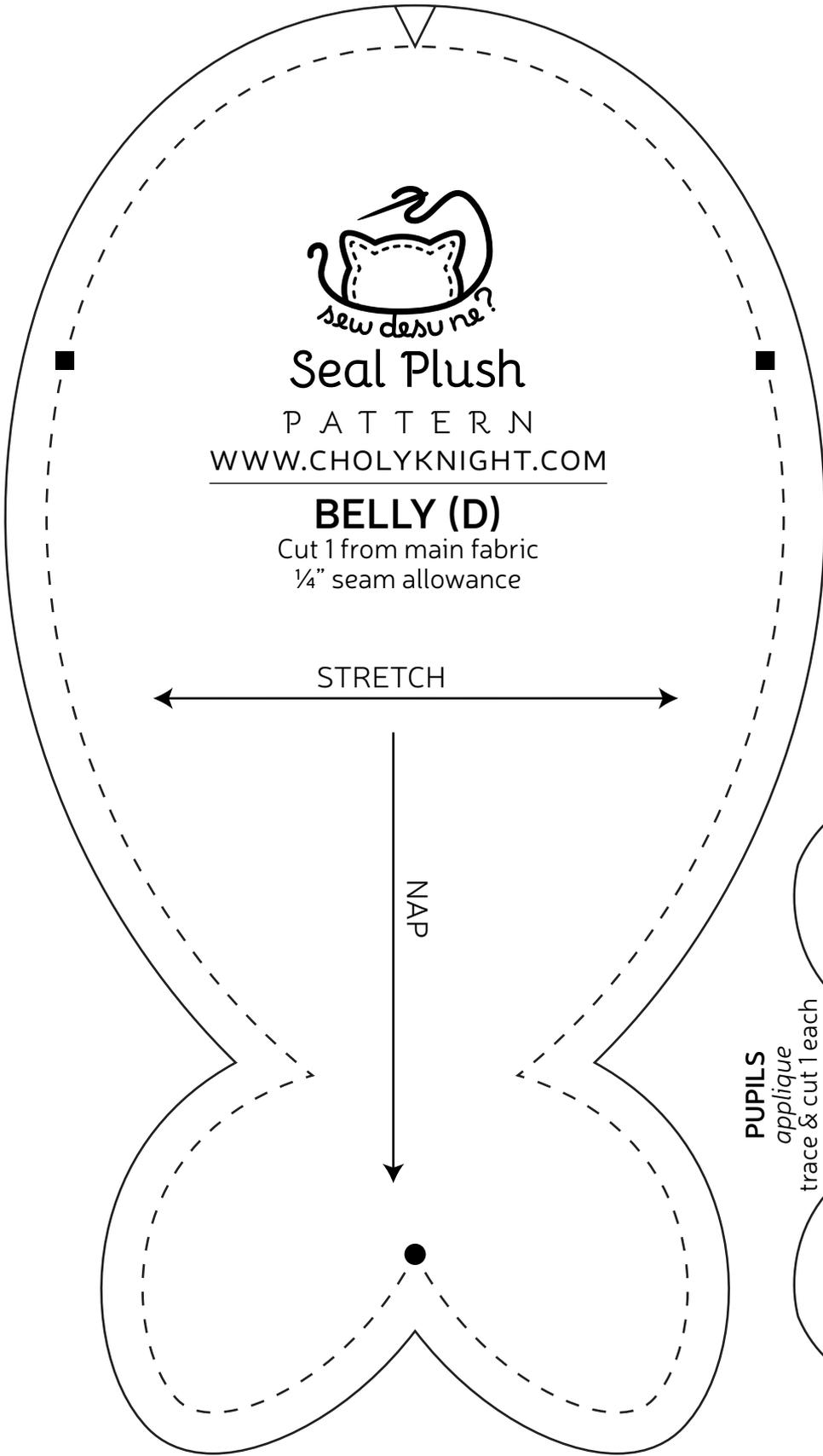Cut 1 from main fabric
¼" seam allowance

STRETCH

Seal Plush

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BELLY (D)

Cut 1 from main fabric
¼" seam allowance

STRETCH

NAP

EYE CORNER/SHINE
applique
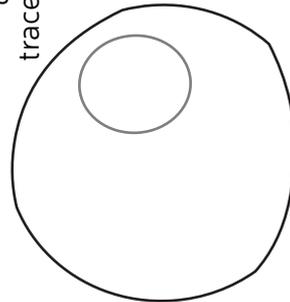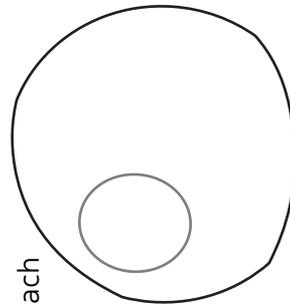trace & cut 1 each
of dark gray or
white
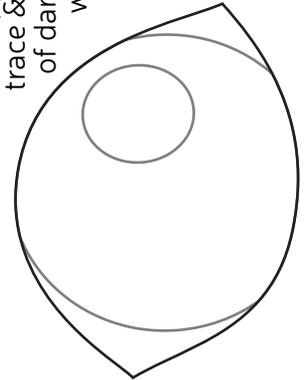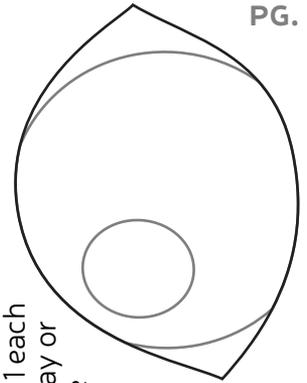
WHISKERS
applique
trace & cut 1 each
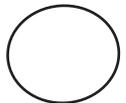of black
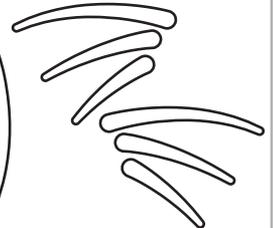
PUPILS
applique
trace & cut 1 each
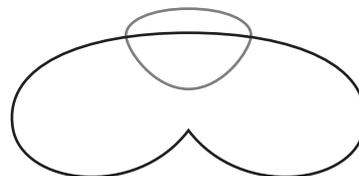of black

EYE SHINE
applique
trace & cut 2 of
white

NOSE
applique
trace & cut 1 of
black

EYEBROWS
applique
trace & cut 1 each
of gray

MUZZLE
applique
trace & cut 1 of gray