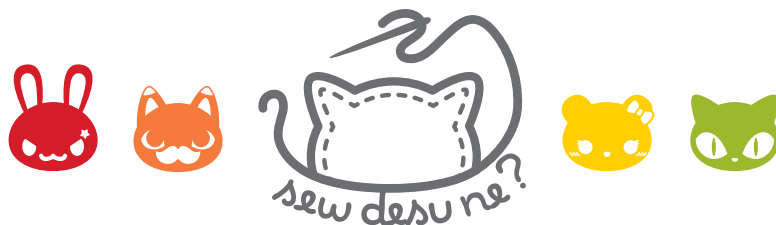


love dragon plush



A FREE SEWING PATTERN BY



love dragon plush

A combination of a Valentine's and Chinese New Year celebration with the most adorable result!

This little dragon pattern is done in the more Eastern style, with antlers, a prominent snout, and whiskers. Though the base template could also be used to make a Western style dragon with wings and horns.

To top it off, the finished dragon holds a little heart -- a perfect gift for a loved one.

SKILLS USED:

- Fusible web applique
- Basting
- Darts
- Sewing small pieces
- Gathering stitch, gathering
- Ladder stitch
- Top-stitching
- Sewing curves

DIFFICULTY:



This plush has a decent bit of hand sewing, so it's slow going. And the tiny details get a little finicky.

The hardest part is likely attaching the head, the snout, and the heart. It helps to pin or baste the areas first to make sure it's placed correctly before going in with proper stitches.

MAKES:

One plush: about 9" tall (not including ears and antlers), about 5" wide, and 5" long.

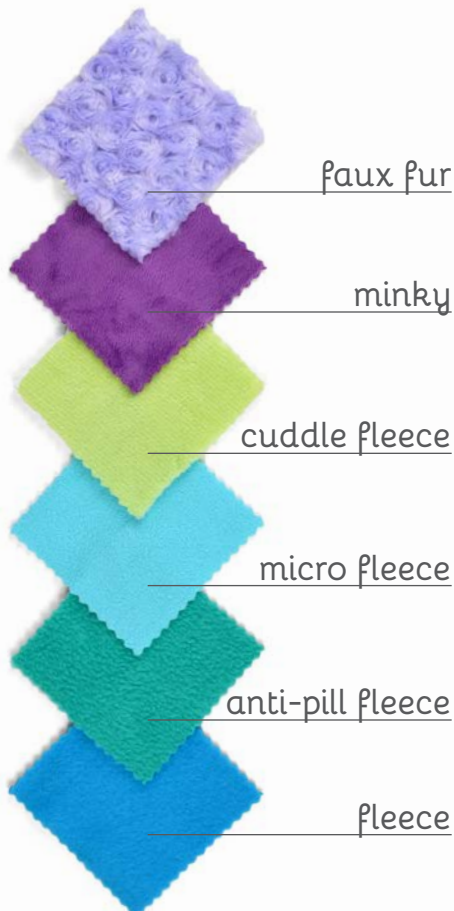


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materials & tools:

- ¼ yd. of fabric for main body
- ⅛ yd. of accent fabric for spikes
- ⅛ yd. of accent fabric for inner ears & snout
- ⅛ yd. of accent fabric for antlers
- ⅛ yd. or 4" x 7" piece of accent fabric for heart
- about 30" of embroidery floss for whiskers
- 3" x 3" piece of black applique fabric (felt, cotton, etc.) for pupils
- 3" x 3" piece of accent applique fabric for eyes
- 2" x 2" piece of white applique fabric for eye shines
- 2" x 2" piece of accent applique fabric for eyebrows
- 6" x 6" piece of light or heavy duty fusible web
- 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)



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

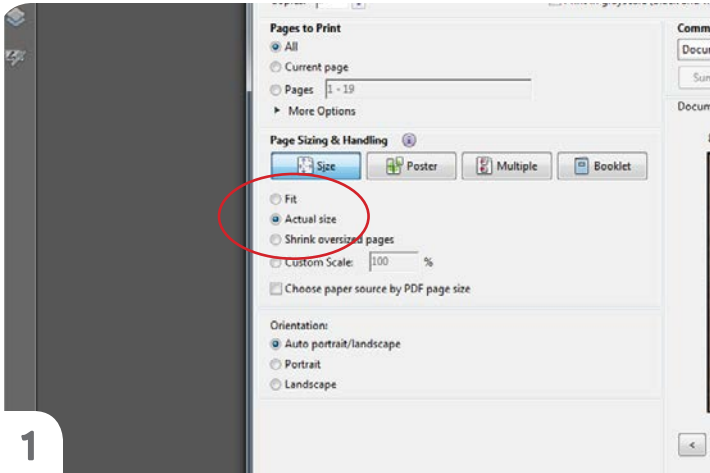


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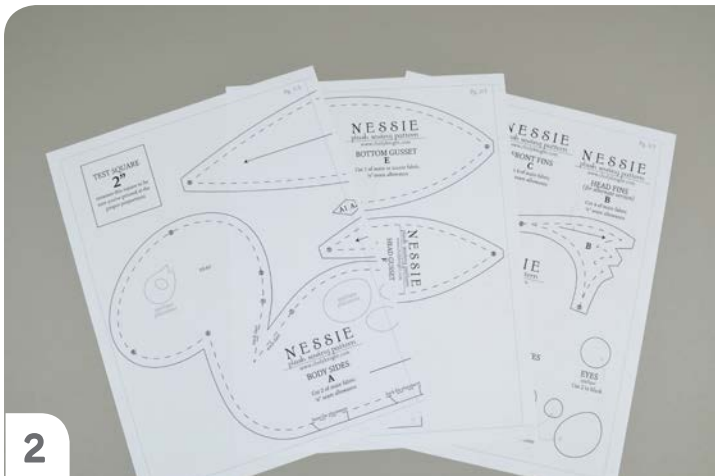
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printing the pattern:

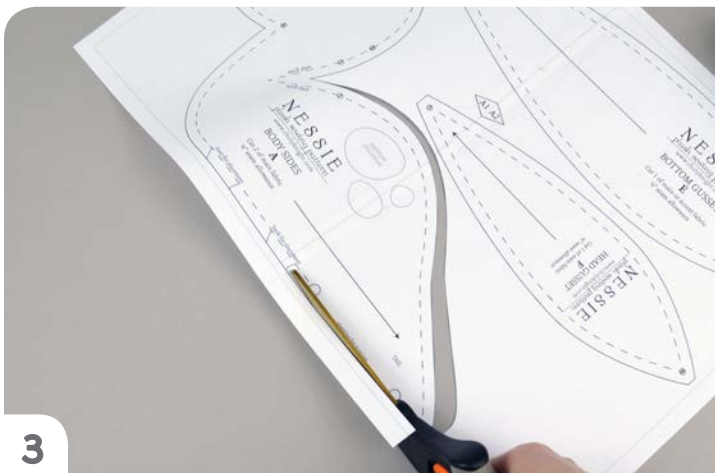
To print the pattern, set your computer to print **PAGES 23-26**. If you're unfamiliar with printing and assembling a .pdf pattern, read the steps below.



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.



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.

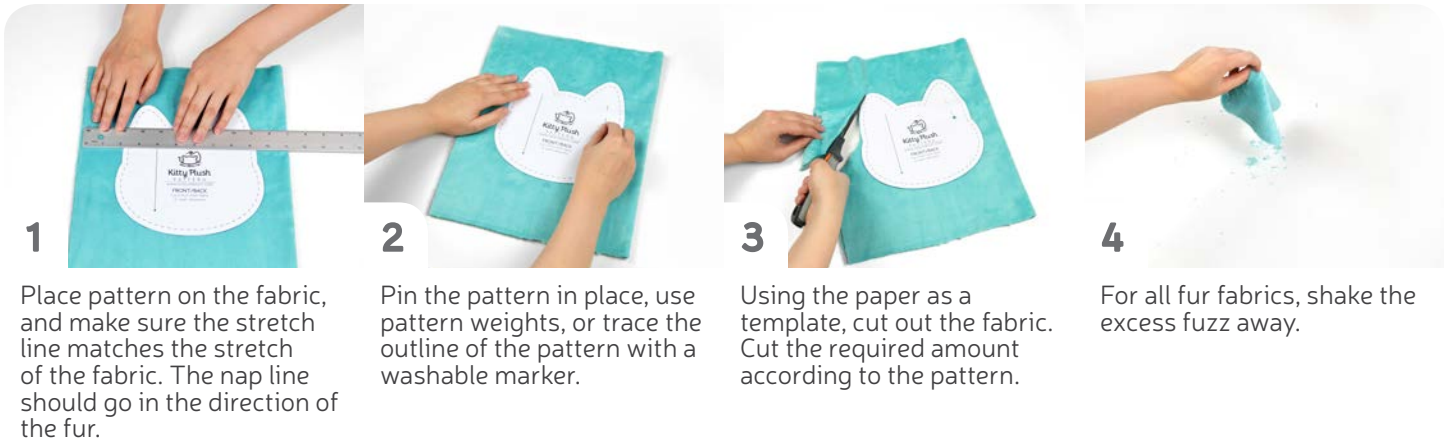


You can trace the patterns onto a different paper, or you can also just cut them straight from the printer paper. They might be a little hard to pin through, so you might want to use your longest pins. But you could also use pattern weights or trace the outlines onto the fabric with a washable marker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

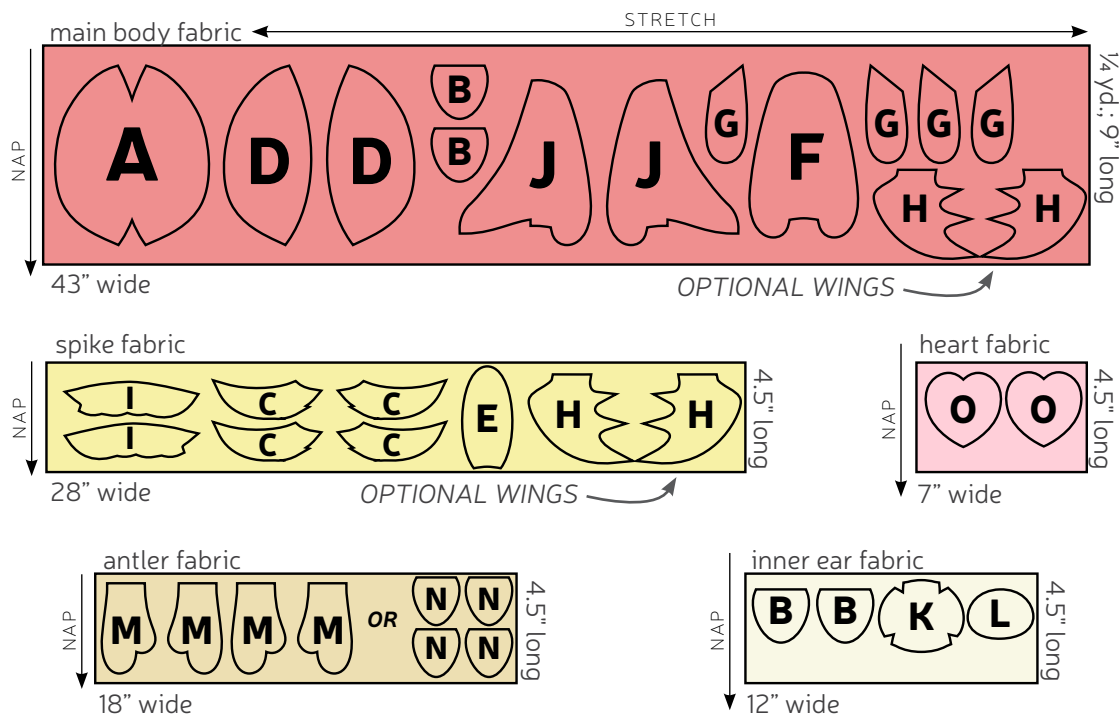
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cutting the fabric:



cutting layout:

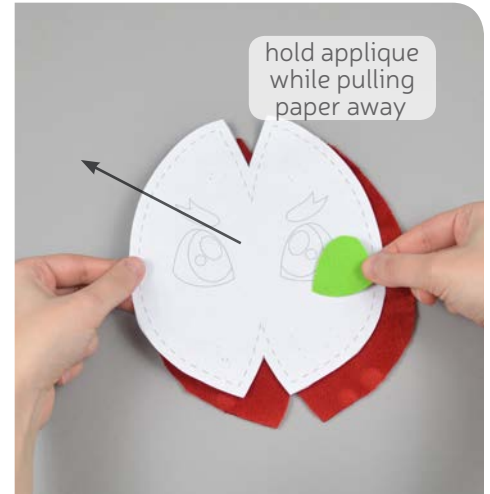


BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- 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 1/4" throughout the project.

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1. PREPARE THE FACE APPLIQUE

- Take your fusible web and trace all your applique pieces onto the smooth (paper) side. You should have 2 eyes, 2 pupils, 2 large eye shines, 2 small eye shines, and 2 eyebrows (if using)
- Fuse the bumpy (adhesive) side onto the wrong side of your applique fabric. The pupils go onto black, the eyes and eyebrows on the accent fabric, and the eye shines on white.
- Cut out the eye pieces and arrange them on the **HEAD FRONT** (A) piece. Set 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.



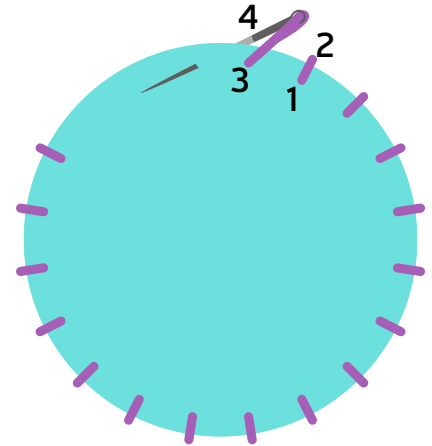
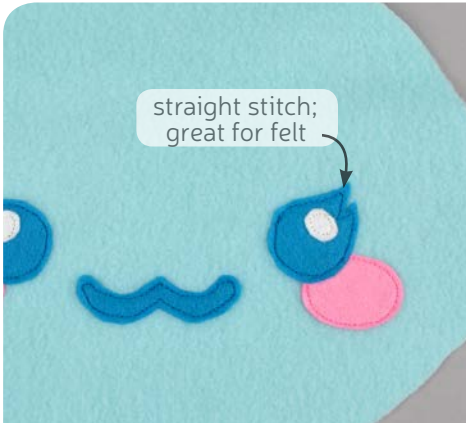
2. FUSE THE APPLIQUE

- 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).
- Next, move onto the smaller pupil, eye shine, and eye brow pieces. Fuse them much the same way as you did the eyes, using the paper pattern and photos as a guide.
- 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.

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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.



3. SEW THE DARTS

- Locate the open wedge found on the top and bottom of the **HEAD FRONT** piece -- these are the darts. To sew them, start by folding the front piece in half along the point of the dart and match up the slanted lines that make the wedge shape.
- Sew the darts by starting at the opening and moving down to the point. When sewing the point, try to blend the seam in with the fold so it makes 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.

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4. SEW THE EARS

- Grab your **EAR** pieces (B). Take two of them; one in accent fabric and one in the main fabric. Align them with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.
- Sew them together along the long curved edge. Leave the short straight edge free for turning right side out.
- Turn the ear right side out. Repeat with the remaining two ear pieces for two complete ears total.

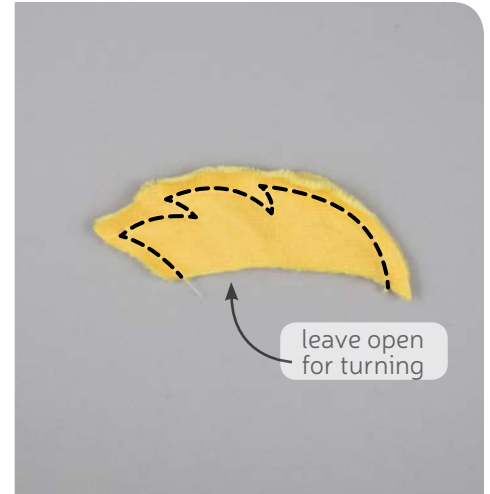
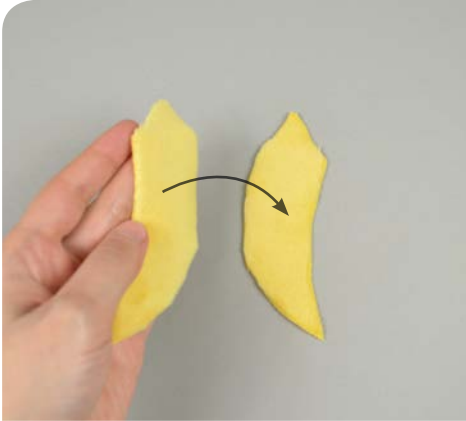
- Refer to the **EAR** paper pattern to find the **fold line** for the ears. Use this as a guide to fold the ear with inner fabrics facing. Pin the ear together.
- Baste the ear along the bottom edge to hold the fold in place. Repeat with the remaining ear so you have a mirrored pair.
- If you haven't already, locate the **ear placement lines** found on the **HEAD FRONT (A)** paper pattern. Transfer them over to the right side of the fabric. Place the open end of the ear within these placement lines. Be sure that the fold is pointing toward the middle of the front. Pin the ears in place.
- Baste the ears to the front within the seam allowances to hold them in place for future steps.

5. BASTE THE EARS



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6. SEW THE HEAD SPIKES

- Grab your **HEAD SPIKE** pieces (C). Take two of them and align them with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.
- To get the detailed jagged lines for the spikes, use the paper pattern as a template. Trim off the seam allowances and trace the sewing lines onto the wrong side of the fabric.
- Sew the spikes along the traced lines, being sure to pivot at each corner. Repeat with the remaining two spike pieces for two complete spikes total.

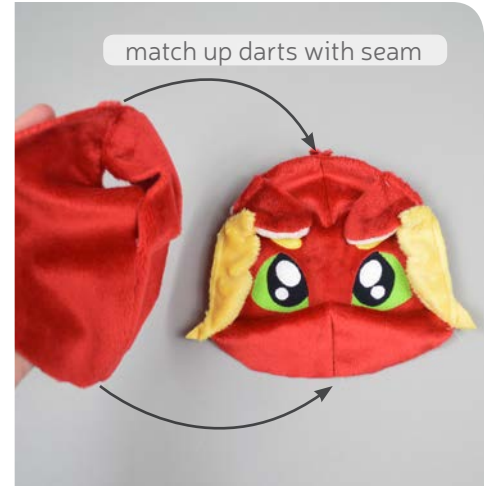
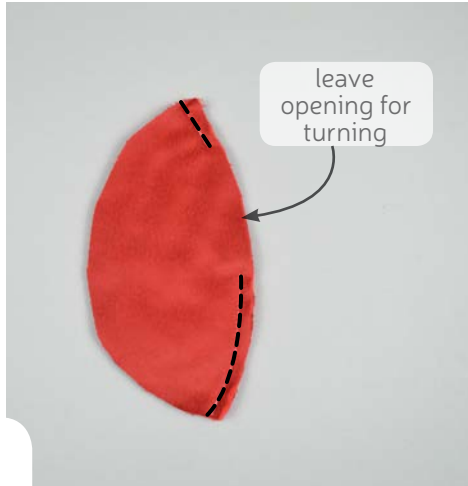
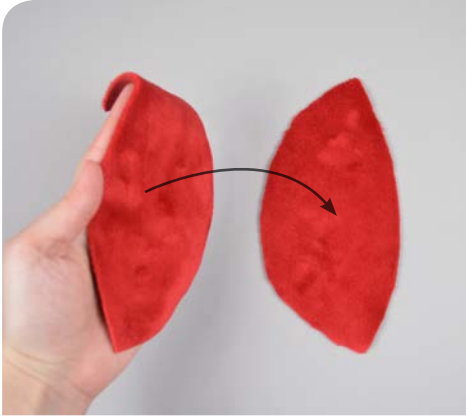
- Trim the seam allowance at the inner and outer corners of the spikes. This will increase flexibility and decrease bulk. Be sure not to cut your threads when trimming.
- Turn the spikes right side out, pushing out each corner.
- If you haven't already, locate the **spike placement lines** found on the paper pattern for the **HEAD FRONT**. Transfer them over to the right side of the fabric. Align the open end of the spikes within these lines. Be sure the tips are pointing upward.
- Baste the spikes to the front within the seam allowances to hold them in place for future steps.

7. TURN AND BASTE THE SPIKES



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8. SEW THE HEAD BACK

- Grab your two **HEAD BACK** pieces (D). Align them together with right sides facing and edges matching up.
- If you haven't already, locate the **opening for turning** markings found on the paper pattern. Transfer them over to the wrong side of the fabric. Sew along this edge of the **HEAD BACK** pieces only, but be sure to leave the opening for turning that you marked.
- Open up your **HEAD BACK** piece and grab the **HEAD FRONT** piece you have so far. Align them with right sides facing. Be sure the top of the back pieces (marked with a circle symbol) are aligned with the top of the front piece. The **back seam** should also match up with the **top and bottom dart** on the front.

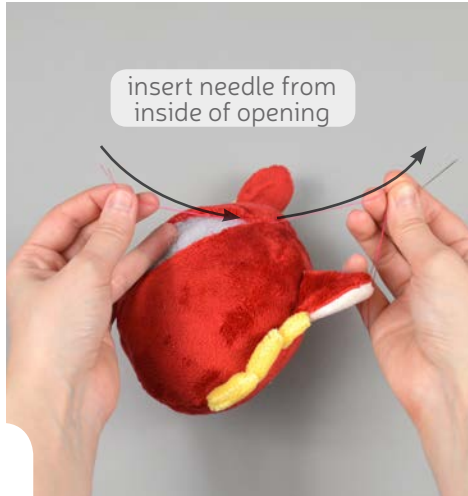


9. SEW AND TURN THE HEAD

- Sew around the perimeter of the head completely.
- Turn the head right side out through the opening you left in the back.
- Stuff the head firmly with stuffing, pushing the stuffing towards the bottom and face until it gets completely full.

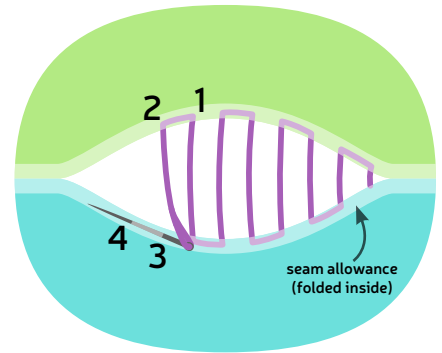
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10. CLOSE UP THE HEAD

- After the face is full and has no wrinkles, then fill up the sides and top of the head.
- 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.



11. SNIP THE THREAD

- 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!

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12. ATTACH THE BELLY

- Grab your **BODY FRONT (F)** and **BELLY PIECES (E)**. Align the belly over the body front with both right sides facing up using the paper pattern lines as a guide.
- Secure the belly to the front either by pinning or using a bit of glue stick to hold it in place.
- Stitch the belly to the front either by using a zigzag stitch or a straight stitch along the edge of the piece. You can also top stitch along the curved lines going horizontally along the belly as well.



13. SEW THE ARMS

- Grab your **ARM** pieces (G). Take two of them and align them with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.
- Sew them together along the curved edge, leaving the short straight edge free for turning right side out.
- Turn the arm right side out. Repeat with the remaining two arm pieces for two complete arms total.

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14. BASTE THE ARMS

- Stuff the arms lightly with stuffing toward the end. Keep the opening empty so it's easier to sew to the body next.
- If you haven't already, locate the **arm placement lines** on the paper pattern for the **BODY FRONT**. Transfer them over to the right side of the fabric. Align the open ends of the arms within these placement lines. Note that they should be pointing downward. Pin them in place.
- Baste the arms to the body within the seam allowance to hold them for future steps.



15. FOR WESTERN DRAGON: SEW THE WINGS

- Grab your **WING** pieces (H). Take one from the inner wing fabric and one from the outer wing fabric. Align them together with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.
- Stitch the two wings together along the pointed edge, leaving the short straight edge free for turning right side out. Make sure to pivot at the corners.
- Once complete, trim the seam allowance at the corners and curves. This will reduce bulk and increase flexibility once the wings are turned later. Repeat with the remaining two wing pieces for two completed wings total.

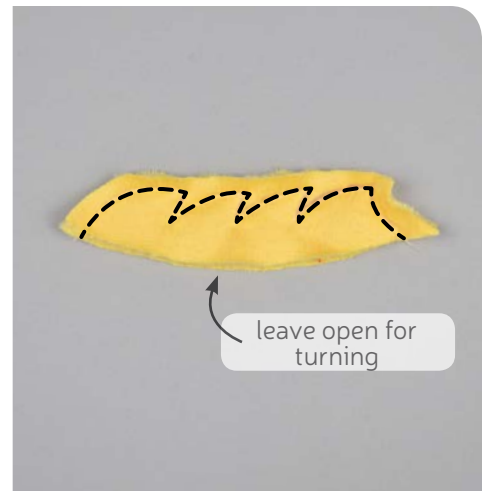
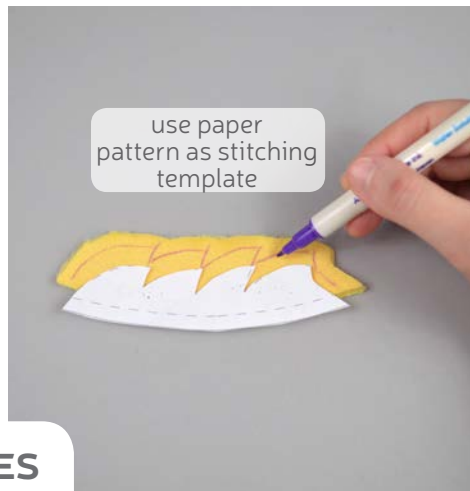
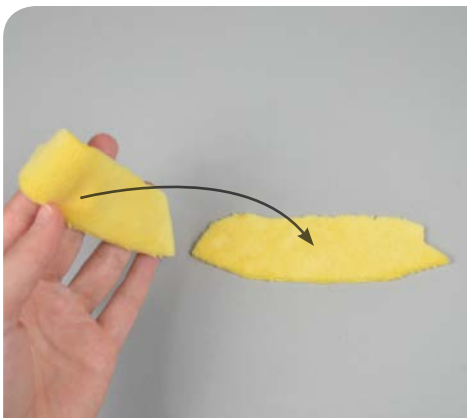
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16. FOR WESTERN DRAGON: BASTE THE WINGS

- Turn the wing right side out through the opening and define the corners with a chopstick or similar turning tool.
- For an extra bit of detail, transfer the top-stitching lines from the paper pattern to the wing. Stitch over them with a slightly longer than average straight stitch. Repeat parts a & b with the other wing.
- Get your **BODY BACK** piece (J). If you haven't already, locate the **wing placement lines** from the body back and transfer them over to the right side of the fabric. Align the open end of the wing within these placement lines with the inner wing fabric facing down. Baste the wing in place within the seam allowance.

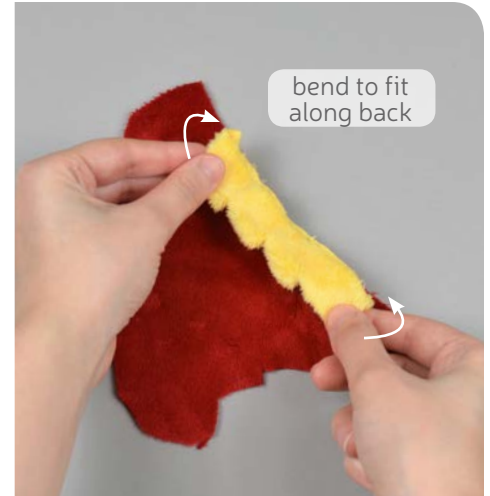


17. SEW THE BACK SPIKES

- Grab your **BACK SPIKE** pieces (I). Take two of them and align them with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.
- To get the detailed jagged lines for the spikes, use the paper pattern as a template. Trim off the seam allowances and trace the sewing lines onto the wrong side of the fabric.
- Sew the spikes along the traced lines, being sure to pivot at each corner.

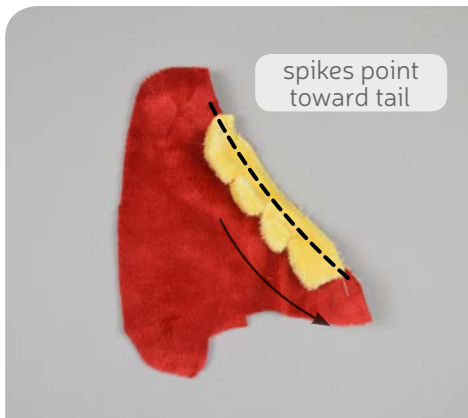
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18. TRIM AND TURN THE SPIKES

- Trim the seam allowance at the inner and outer corners of the spikes. This will increase flexibility and decrease bulk. Be sure not to cut your threads when trimming.
- Turn the spikes right side out, defining each corner with a chopstick or similar turning tool.
- If you haven't already, locate the **spike placement lines** found on the paper pattern for the **BODY BACK**. Transfer them over to the right side of the fabric. Align the open end of the spikes within these lines. Be sure the tips are pointing toward the tail.



19. BASTE THE BACK SPIKES

- Baste the spikes to the **BODY BACK** within the seam allowances to hold them in place for future steps.
- FOR WESTERN DRAGON:** place the second wing on top of the first with the inner wing fabric facing up. Baste the wing in place.
- Get your remaining body back piece and align it over the first with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.

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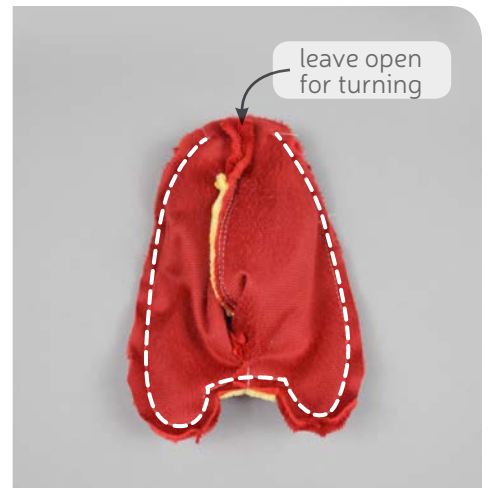
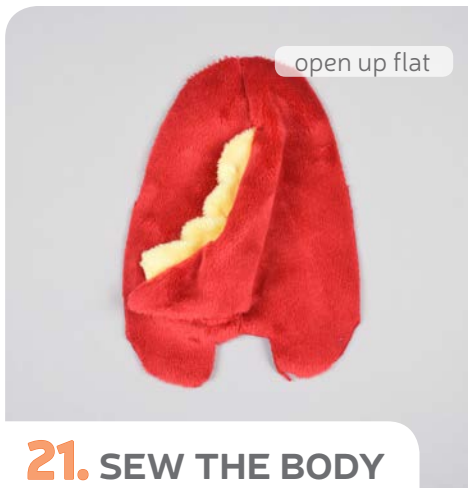


20. SEW THE BODY BACK

- Sew the **BODY BACK** pieces together along the tail edge. Go down the back, under the tail, and lastly sew the small corner beneath the tail.
- Clip the seam allowance at the corner beneath the tail so it's more flexible when turned.
- Turn the tail right side out.

tip:

If your machine has trouble sewing through all the layers in part A, try lowering the tension of your top thread. Or lower the presser foot pressure of your machine (if it has that option). Regardless, going slowly always helps too.

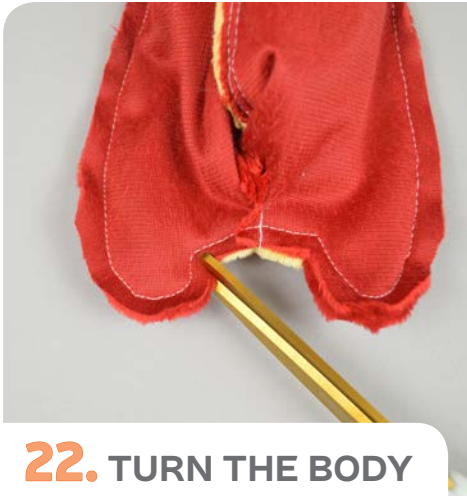


21. SEW THE BODY

- Open up the **BODY BACK** pieces so the tail is in the middle. Keep it tucked in the center so it doesn't get in the way for the next steps.
- Align the body back with the **BODY FRONT** from before. Pin them together with right sides facing and raw edges matching up. Be sure the arms and tail are tucked inside.
- If you haven't already, locate the opening for turning markings found on the body front paper pattern. Transfer them over to the wrong side of the fabric. Sew the two body pieces together all around the perimeter except for the opening near the neck that was just marked.

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22. TURN THE BODY



- a.** Clip the seam allowance between the legs so the body turns more cleanly.
- b.** Turn the body right side out through the opening in the neck.
- c.** Begin stuffing the body. Get small balls of stuffing in the legs and tail tip first.

- a.** Once the tail and legs are stuffed, proceed to fill the rest of the dragon body with stuffing.
- b.** Ladder stitch the neck closed just like with the head back in step 10.
- c.** Align the head over the body so they're both facing forward. The side seams should match up as well as the back seams.
- d.** Ladder stitch the head to the body. Stitch about 1" away from the seam in part B of this step, going all the way around.

→ **TIP:** take big basting stitches for the first pass to make sure the head placement is right. Then go around again with neater, tinier stitches for the second pass.

23. ATTACH THE HEAD



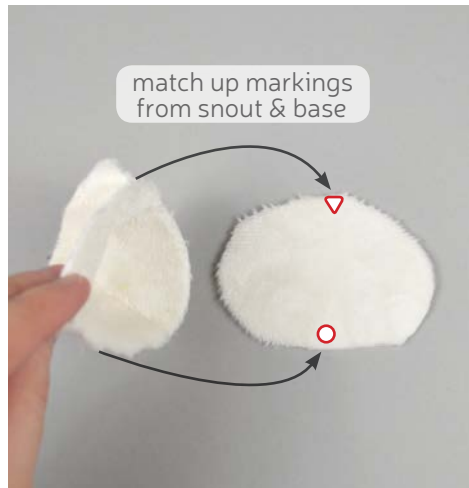
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24. SEW THE SNOOT DARTS

- a. Get your **SNOOT** piece (K). Applique the nostril pieces onto the snout just like with the face back in steps 1-2.
 → Alternatively, you could also stitch nostrils onto the same area with embroidery floss, since the nostrils are so tiny.
- b. Sew the tiny darts found on the snout by folding the snout piece along the point of one of the darts, bringing together the edges.
- c. Sew the dart similarly to previous ones by starting at the opening and moving down to the point. Blend the seam with the fold for a rounder result.



25. SEW THE SNOOT

- a. Repeat step 24 with the remaining 3 darts found on the snout. There should be 4 darts total.
- b. Get your **SNOOT BASE** piece (L). If you haven't already locate the placement markings on the snout and snout base. The notches from both pieces should match up (the top) as well as the circle markings (the bottom). Pin the snout to its base around the edge.
- c. Sew around the shape entirely.

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26. TURN AND STUFF THE SNOOT

- To turn the snout, cut about a 1" slit through the snout base only. Turn the snout right side out through this opening.
- Stuff the snout until it looks round and no longer wrinkles.
- To add whiskers, thread an embroidery needle with embroidery floss and knot the end. Bring the needle out about 1/4" outside of the nostril. The paper pattern also has a guide. Once the knot stops you, trim the whisker to about 2". Repeat on the other side.



27. ATTACH THE SNOOT

- Hand stitch the snout closed with a quick whip stitch.
- Align the snout on the face of the dragon with the whip-stitched side facing down. Be sure the nostrils are pointing up as well. The sample has it just above the bottom dart, barely covering the corners of the eyes. Push pins into the base of the snout into the head of the dragon to hold it in place.
- Ladder stitch the snout to the face with a ladder stitch just like in step 23.

whip stitch:

A kind of overhand stitch where the needle is brought from the back of the seam to the front. The thread wraps around the fabric edge and the process is repeated for each stitch.

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28. SEW THE ANTLERS/HORNS

- Grab your **ANTLER** or **HORN** pieces (M or N). Take two of them and align them with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.
- Sew the pieces together along the curved edge, leaving the short straight edge free for turning right side out.
Repeat this step with the remaining two antler/horn pieces for two completed antlers/horns total.



29. TURN AND STUFF THE ANTLERS/HORNS

- For the antlers, trim the inner corner to increase flexibility when the antlers are turned.
- Turn your antlers or horns right side out.
- Stuff both antlers or horns with stuffing.

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stitch around
opening



pull at thread to
cinch up opening



align between
front dart & ear

30. CINCH THE ANTLERS/HORNS CLOSED

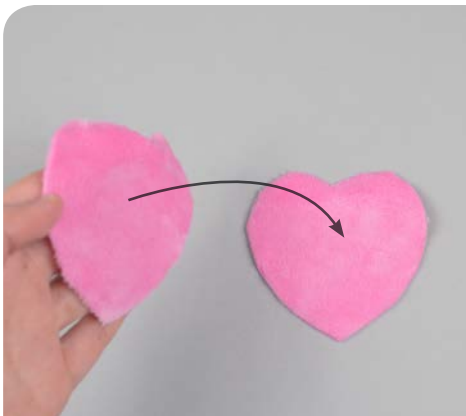
- Thread a hand sewing needle with thread and knot the end. Sew a long gathering stitch around the opening of the **ANTLER/HORN**, about $\frac{1}{4}$ " away from the edge.
- Once finished, pull at the thread to gather the fabric and cinch up the opening. Sew a few knots at this opening to hold it closed. If you have a lot of thread left, consider leaving it attached for adding to the head.
- Align the antler/horn between the **front head dart** and the **EARS**. Hold it in place by sticking pins into the base of the antler/horn and into the head. Stitch the antler/horn in place along the base with a ladder stitch.

gathering:

The process of shortening the length of a piece of fabric by sewing long stitches through it. When the thread is pulled, it forms small folds that ruffle the fabric.

gathering stitch:

A long version of the running stitch, which is a stitch done by weaving the needle in and out of a length of fabric going along a line. The long stitches (about $\frac{1}{4}$ " - $\frac{1}{2}$ " long) gather the fabric when pulled later.



leave open
for turning



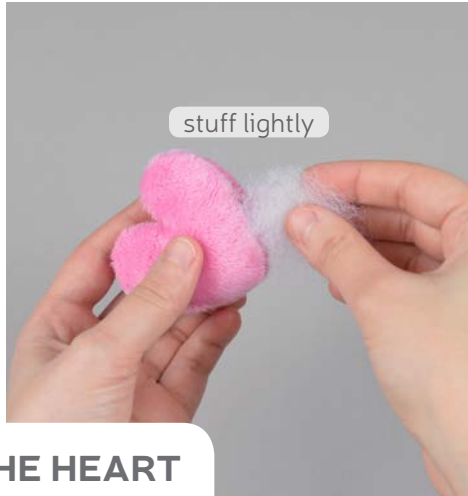
clip seam allowance
at inner corner

31. SEW THE HEART

- Get your **HEART** pieces (O). Take them and align them with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.
- If you haven't already, locate the **opening for turning** markings found on the paper pattern. Transfer them over to the wrong side of the fabric. Sew around the heart shape, leaving an opening where you marked before.
- Clip the inner corner seam allowance of the heart to increase flexibility when it's turned later.

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32. TURN AND STUFF THE HEART

- Turn the heart right side out through the opening for turning.
- Stuff the heart lightly with stuffing, just enough so it takes shape. Make sure each lobe gets enough to look puffy.
- Sew the heart closed with a ladder stitch, similar to back in step 10.



33. STITCH THE HEART TO THE DRAGON

- Pin the sides of the heart to the dragon arms to hold them in place for sewing. Alternatively, you could also use a bit of hot glue for a quicker hold.
- Use a ladder stitch (similar to back in step 23) to secure the heart to both arms.

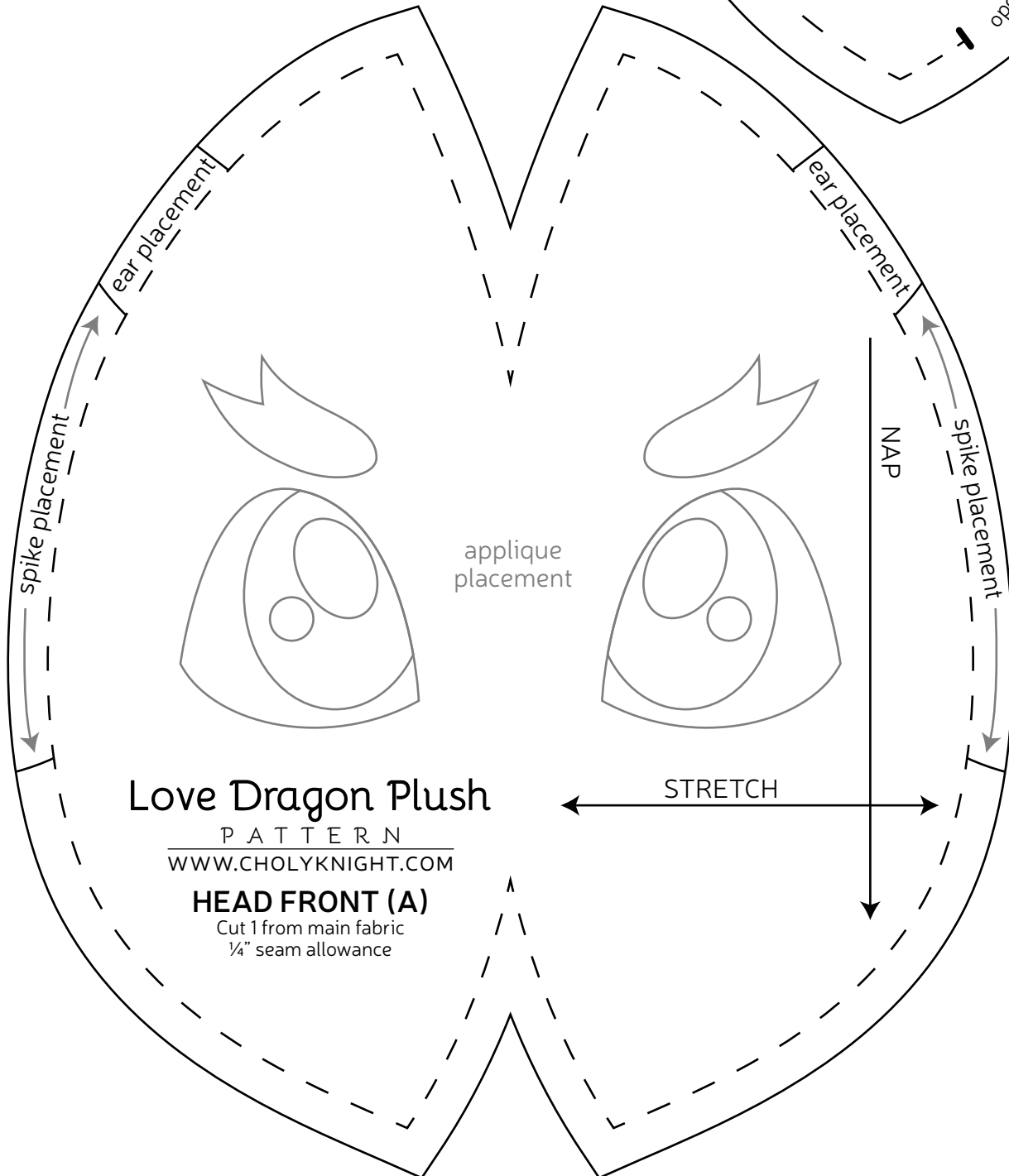
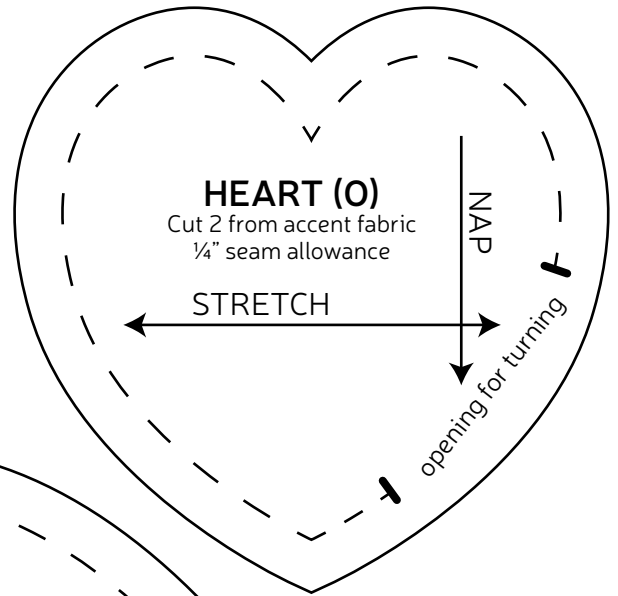
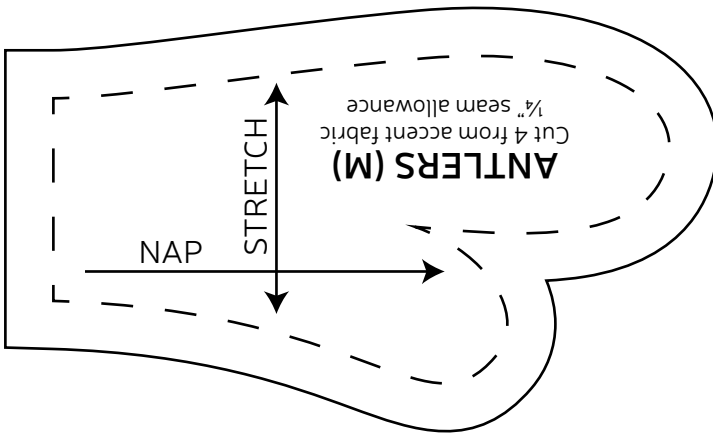
variation:

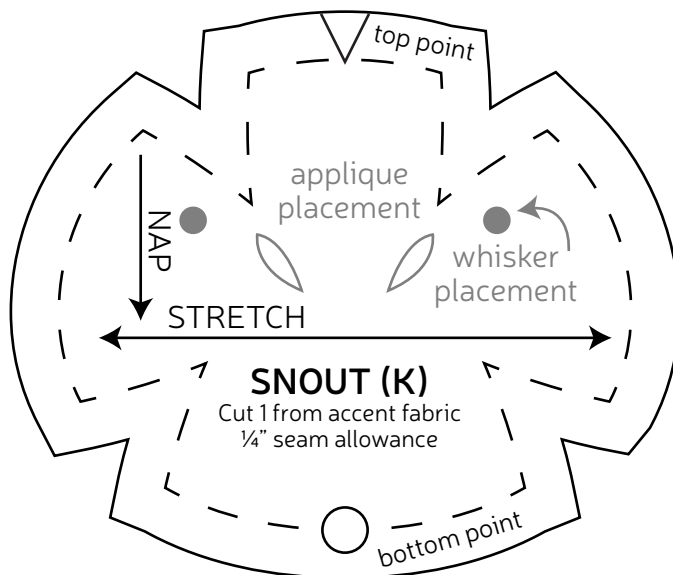
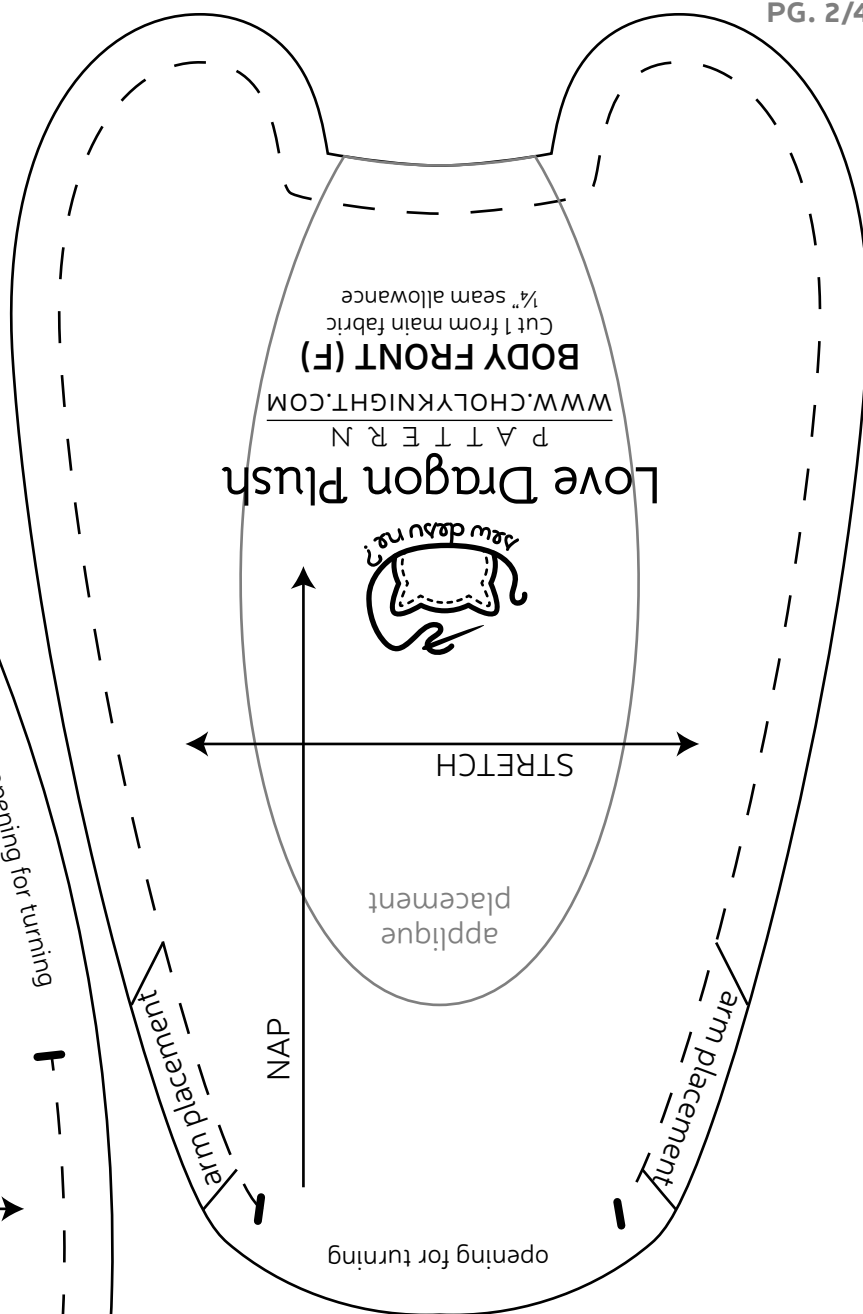
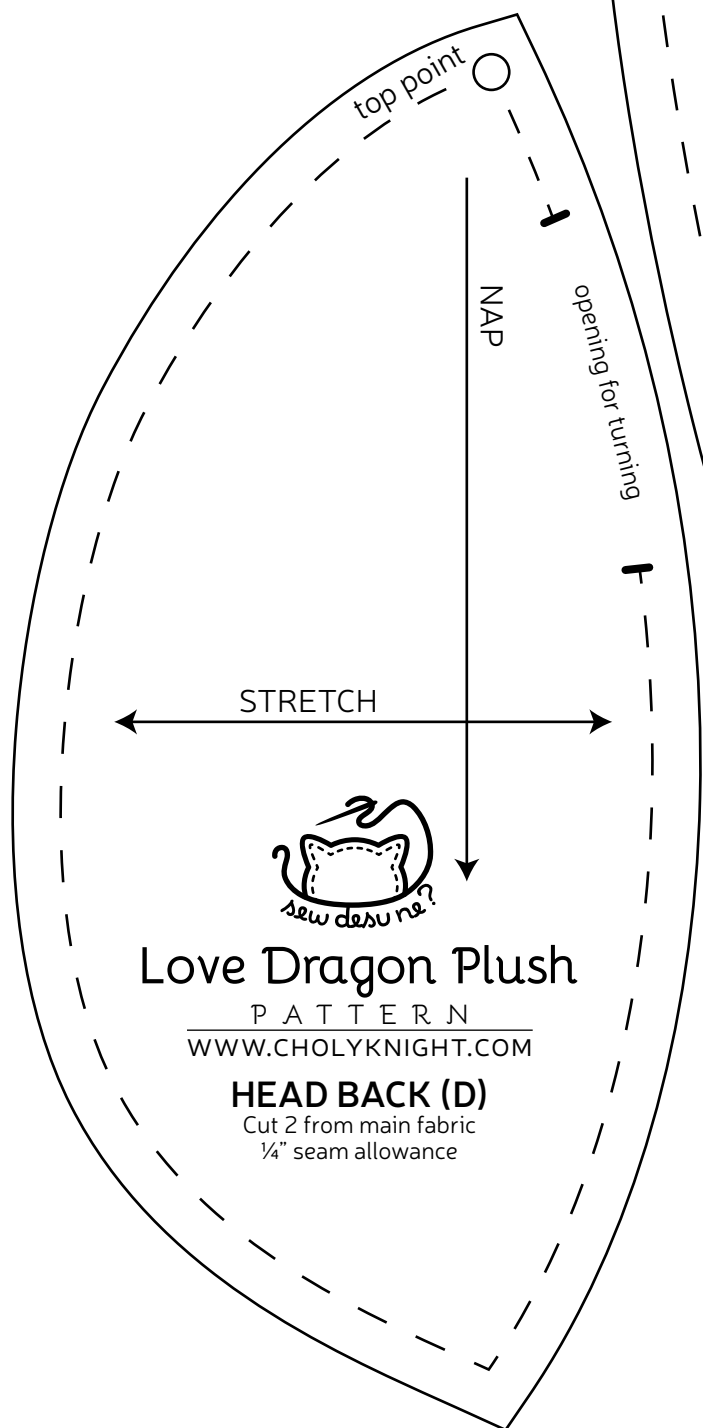
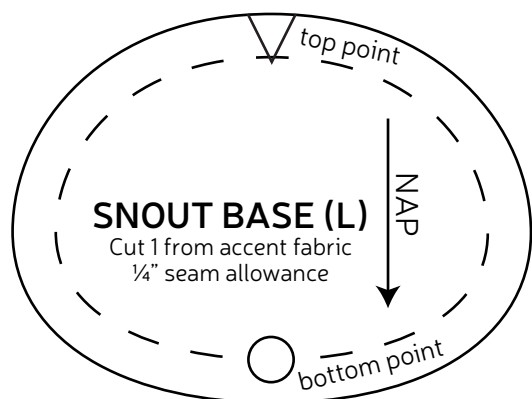
You could also sew snaps to the heart and arms so the heart is removable!

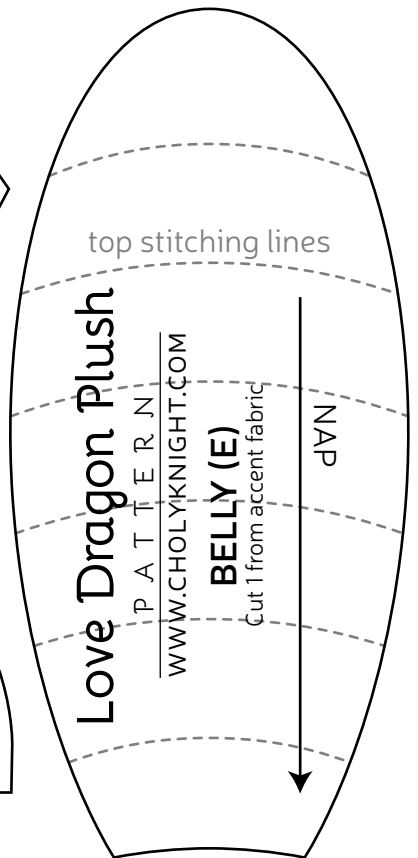
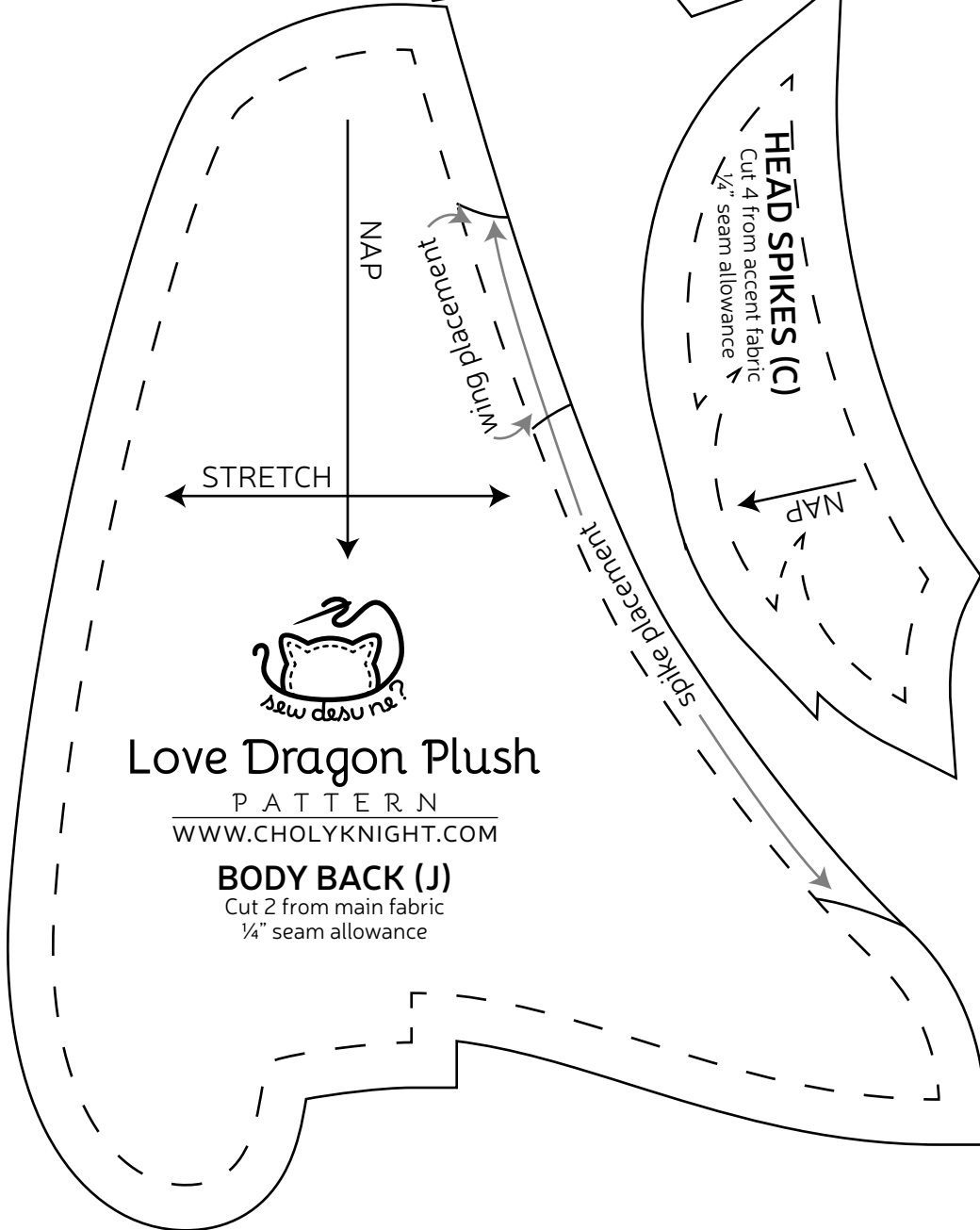
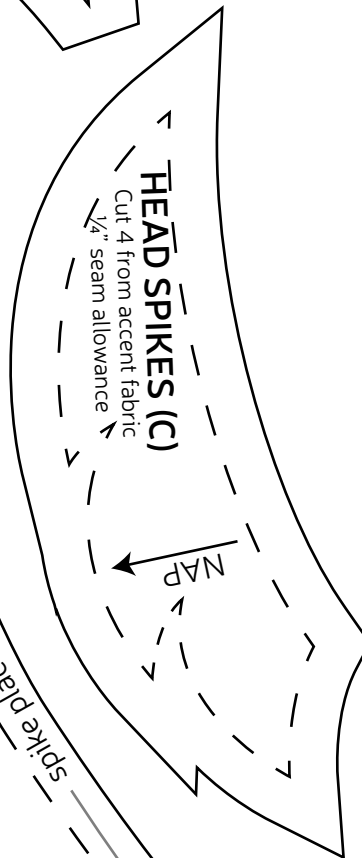
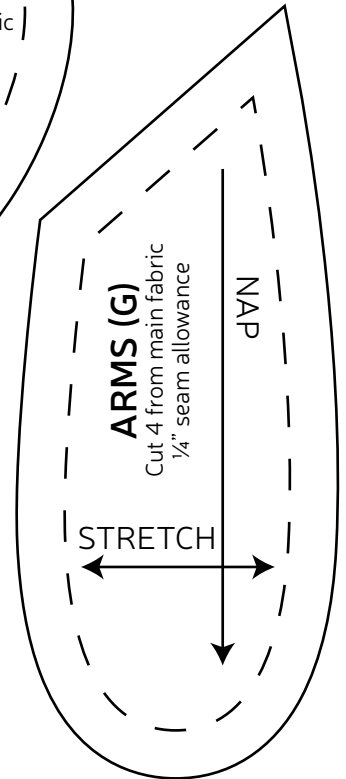
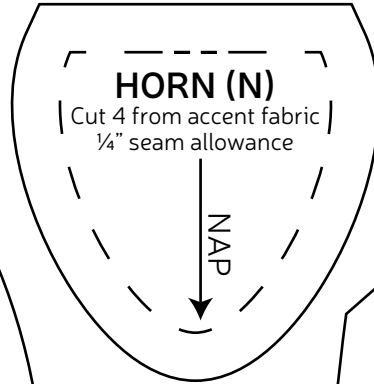
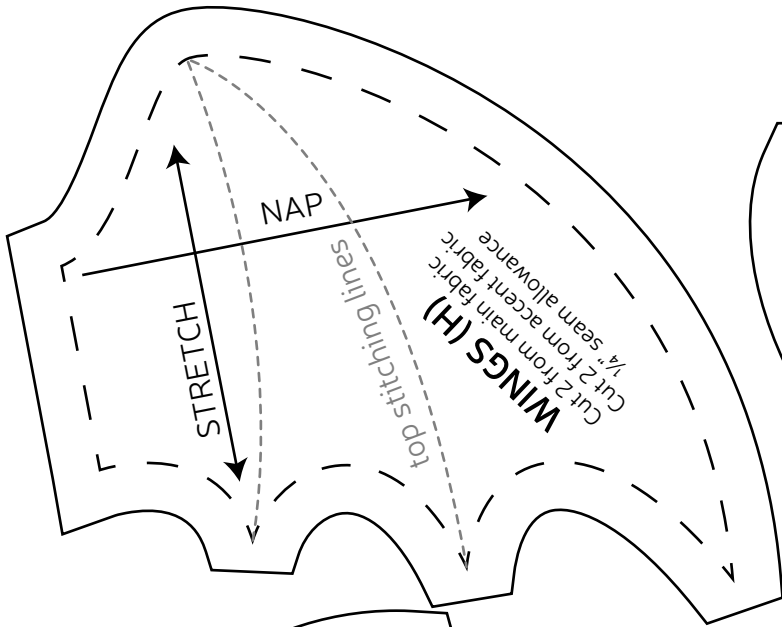
congrats!
this completes
your plush! Now
give it a big
hug!

sew desu ne?

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BODY BACK (J)
Cut 2 from main fabric
1/4" seam allowance

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BELLY (E)
Cut 1 from accent fabric

