

# RAT PLUSH



A FREE SEWING PATTERN BY



# RAT PLUSH

Whether you think rats are adorable or excitingly scary, this pattern is sure to make something you'll love! The instructions here go over making a sweet little rodent with a chubby body, curvy tail, and belly-down pose. For some extra fun, you have your choice of a sweet appliqued face or a sinister one, complete with scar and bitten ear!

## MAKES:

One plush: about 3" tall, 4" wide, and 8" long (not including ears and tail)

## DIFFICULTY:



The hardest part of this plush is definitely the neck, as it needs to be aligned right so the body can lie flat. Try to baste the head with big stitches first before sewing it properly with neat and tight stitches.

## SKILLS USED:

- Fusible web applique
- Basting
- Darts
- Ladder stitch
- Sewing curves



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## materials & tools:

- ¼ yd. of fabric for main body
- ⅛ yd. or 17" x 4" of inner ear fabric
- 3" x 3" piece of black applique fabric for eyes
- **OPTIONAL:** 2" x 2" piece of accent applique fabric for eye
- **OPTIONAL:** 2" x 2" piece of pink applique fabric for nose and/or scar
- 1" x 1" piece of white applique fabric for eye shines
- 5" x 5" 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**

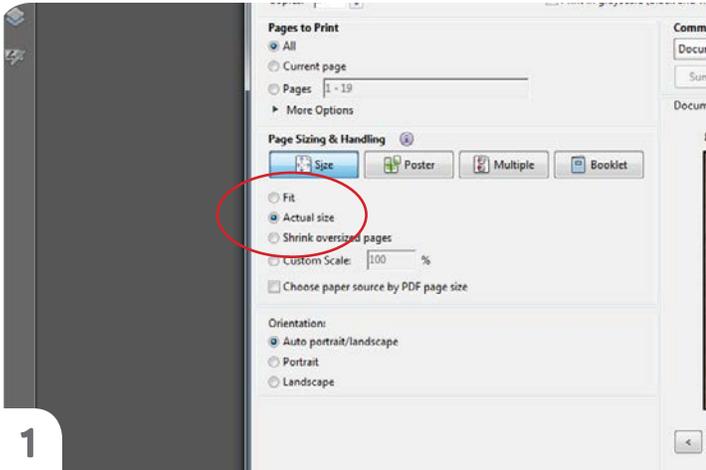


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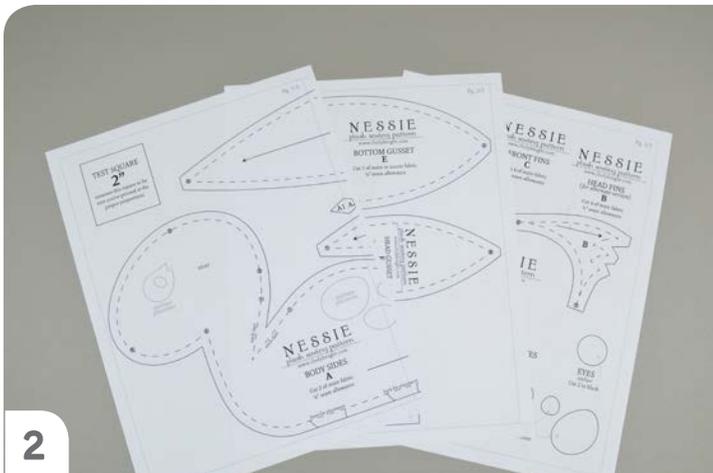
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## printing the pattern:

To print the pattern, set your computer to print **PAGES 14-16**. 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.

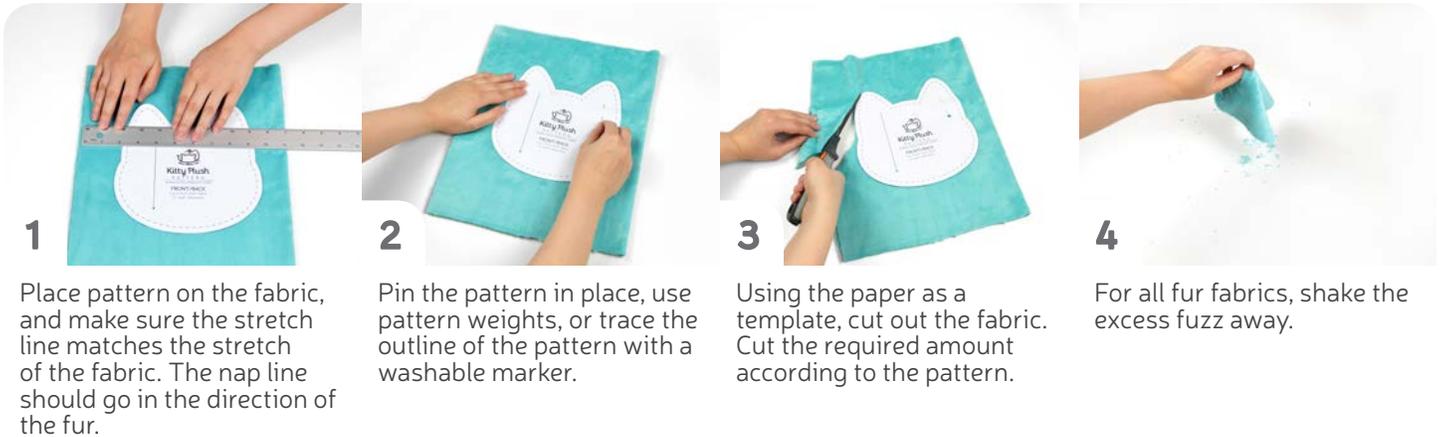


You can trace the patterns onto a different paper, or you can also just cut them straight from the printer paper. They might be a little hard to pin through, so you might want to use your longest pins. But you could also use pattern weights or trace the outlines onto the fabric with a washable marker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

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## cutting the fabric:



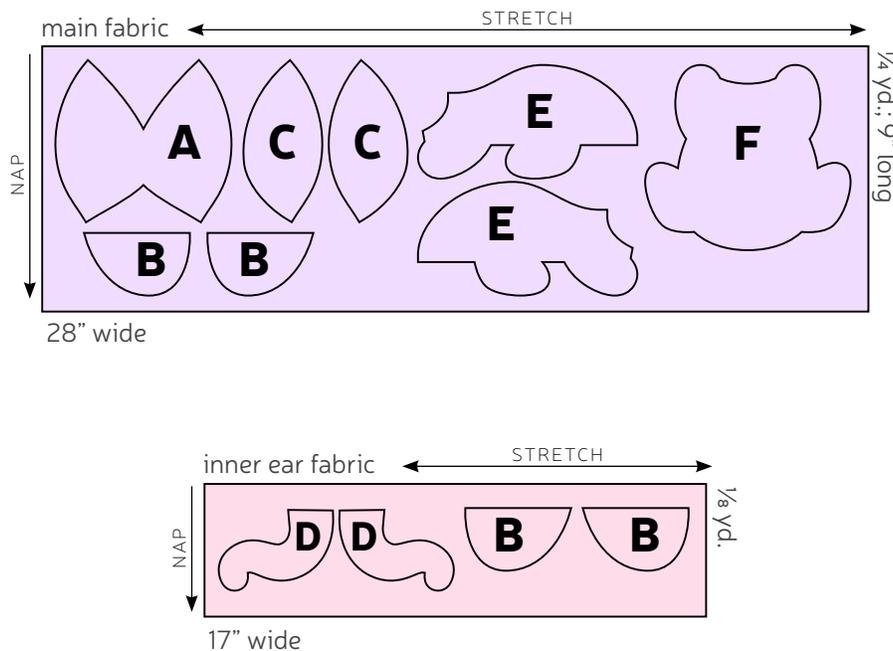
Place pattern on the fabric, and make sure the stretch line matches the stretch of the fabric. The nap line should go in the direction of the fur.

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

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

For all fur fabrics, shake the excess fuzz away.

## 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 of your applique pieces onto the smooth (paper) side.  
**FOR A SWEET FACE YOU SHOULD HAVE:** two lashed eyes, one nose, and two eye shines.  
**FOR A SCARY FACE YOU SHOULD HAVE:** one eyelid, one eye, one eye shine, one eye slit, one scar, and one nose
- Fuse the bumpy (adhesive) side onto the wrong side of your coordinating applique fabric colors.
- Cut out the eye(s) and arrange it 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.



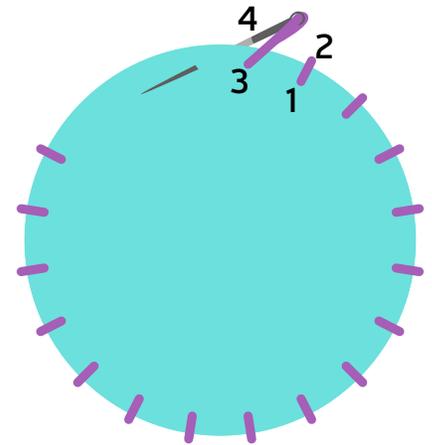
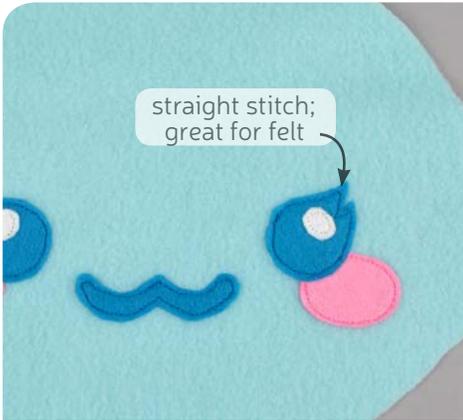
## 2. FUSE THE APPLIQUE

- Fuse the eyes 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 other smaller pieces, like the nose and eye shines. 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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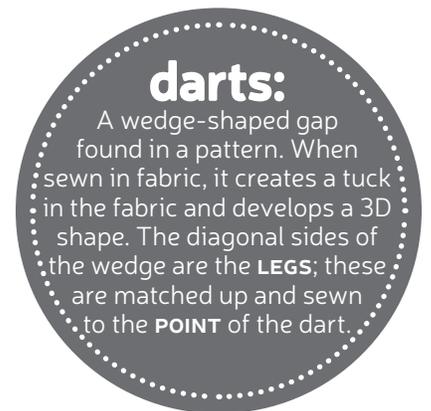
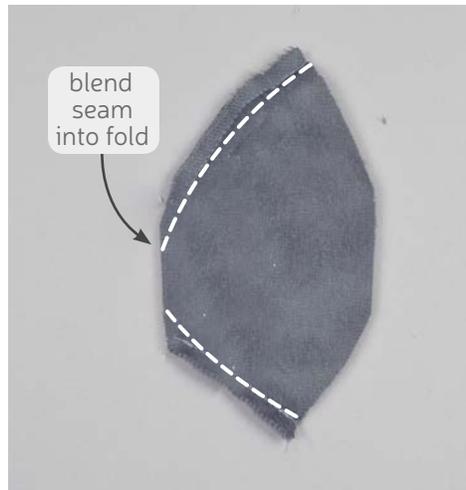
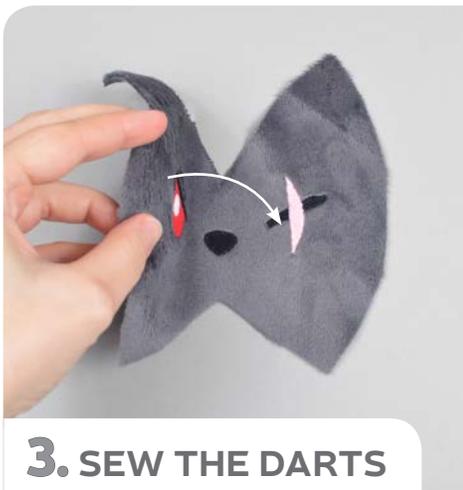


## 2a. OTHER APPLIQUE OPTIONS

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 wedges found on the top and bottom of the **HEAD FRONT (A)** 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.

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#### 4. SEW THE EARS

- Grab your **EAR** pieces (B). Take one from inner ear fabric and one from body fabric. Line them up with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.
- Sew them together along the long curved edge. Leave the straight edge free for turning right side out.
- Repeat this with the remaining ear pieces and turn them right side out for two finished ears total.

**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).

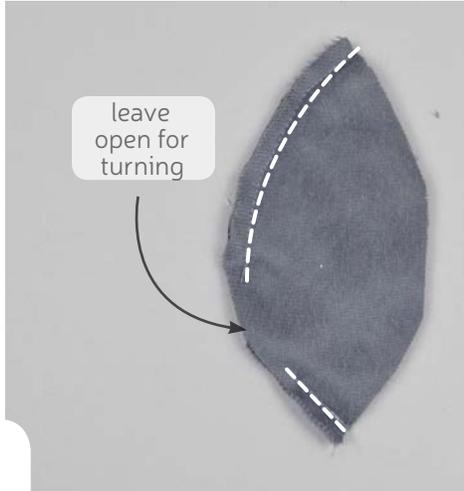
- If you haven't already, locate the fold line for the **EAR** on the paper pattern. Use it as a guide to fold the ear with inner ear fabrics facing.
- Baste the ear along the open edge to hold the fold in place. Repeat with the other ear so you have a mirrored pair.
- If you haven't already, locate 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. The folds of the ears should be pointing toward the center.
- Baste the ears to the head 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 BACK

- Grab your two **HEAD BACK** pieces (C). 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.



## 7. SEW THE HEAD

- Grab the **HEAD FRONT** piece you have so far. Align it with the **HEAD BACK** 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.
- Sew around the perimeter of the head completely.
- Turn the head right side out through the opening you left in the back.

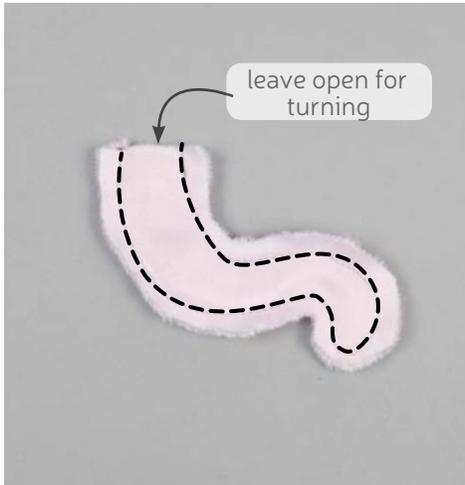
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- a. Stuff the head firmly with stuffing. Focus most of it on the nose area until it fills out and has no wrinkles in the fabric.
- b. After the nose looks full, fill the rest of the head.

## 8. STUFF THE HEAD



## 9. SEW THE TAIL

- a. Grab your **TAIL** pieces (D). Align them with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.
- b. Sew the tail pieces together along the curved edge. Leave the short straight edge free for turning right side out.
- c. Before turning, clip the seam allowance at the tight curves along the shape. This will help increase the flexibility of the shape when it's turned later.



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## 10. TURN AND STUFF THE TAIL

- To turn the **TAIL** right side out, you could use hemostats. But if you don't have them, a straw also works. Insert the straw into the tail until it reaches the end.
- Take a chopstick or similar blunt tool and push the tip of the tail into the straw. Continue pushing as the straw comes out and the tail will begin to turn right side out. Keep going all the way until the tail is completely turned.
- The tail doesn't absolutely need stuffing, but if you like the look of it, stuff the tail at this time. Hemostats make the job much easier.



## 11. BASTE THE TAIL

- Grab your **BACK** pieces (E). If you haven't already, locate the tail placement lines located on the paper pattern for the back. Transfer them over to the right side of the fabric. Align the open end of the tail within the placement lines. Be sure the tip is curling up as shown. Baste the tail to the back within the seam allowance at this point.
- Grab your remaining back piece and align it over the first, lining up the edge that you've just attached the tail to.
- Sew the back pieces together along this edge only. The tail should be successfully sandwiched in between.

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## 12. SEW THE BELLY

- Grab your **BELLY** piece (F). Open up your **BACK** (E) pieces from the previous step. Align the open back pieces over the belly, matching up the small arms and legs and the spaces in between.
- Sew the back to the belly around the arms, legs, and tail end. Leave the neck at the top free for turning the body right side out. For best results, be sure to pivot at the spots between the arms, legs, and neck.
- Clip the seam allowances at the corners you've just sewn to increase flexibility when the body is turned next. Turn the whole body right side out.

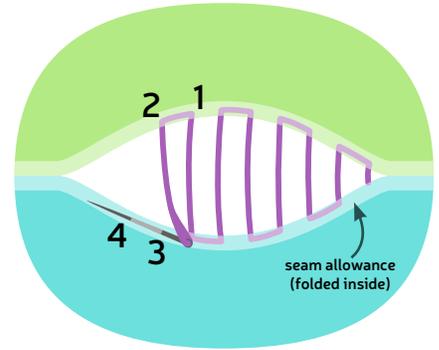


## 13. STUFF THE BODY

- Stuff the body by starting with the front legs and back legs. Make sure they are full before moving on.
- Finally, move onto filling the rest of the body with stuffing. Once complete there should be no wrinkles in the fabric.
- Align the opening in the head over the opening in the neck. The neck opening is larger than the head opening, so arrange them so the neck opening covers the head opening.

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## 14. ATTACH THE HEAD

- Thread a hand-sewing needle and knot it at the end. Insert the needle from the inside of the neck opening and out. This will leave the knot inside the plush. Continue from here doing a ladder stitch. Start by taking a 1/8" stitch into the back seam of the neck and another into the top edge of the head opening.
- Continue working around the head toward the front. To make things easier, take big basting stitches just to be sure you have the placement right. Keep stitching around the neck until you reach where you started. Check to be sure you're happy with the placement. Then go around again with tinier, neater stitches for extra strength.

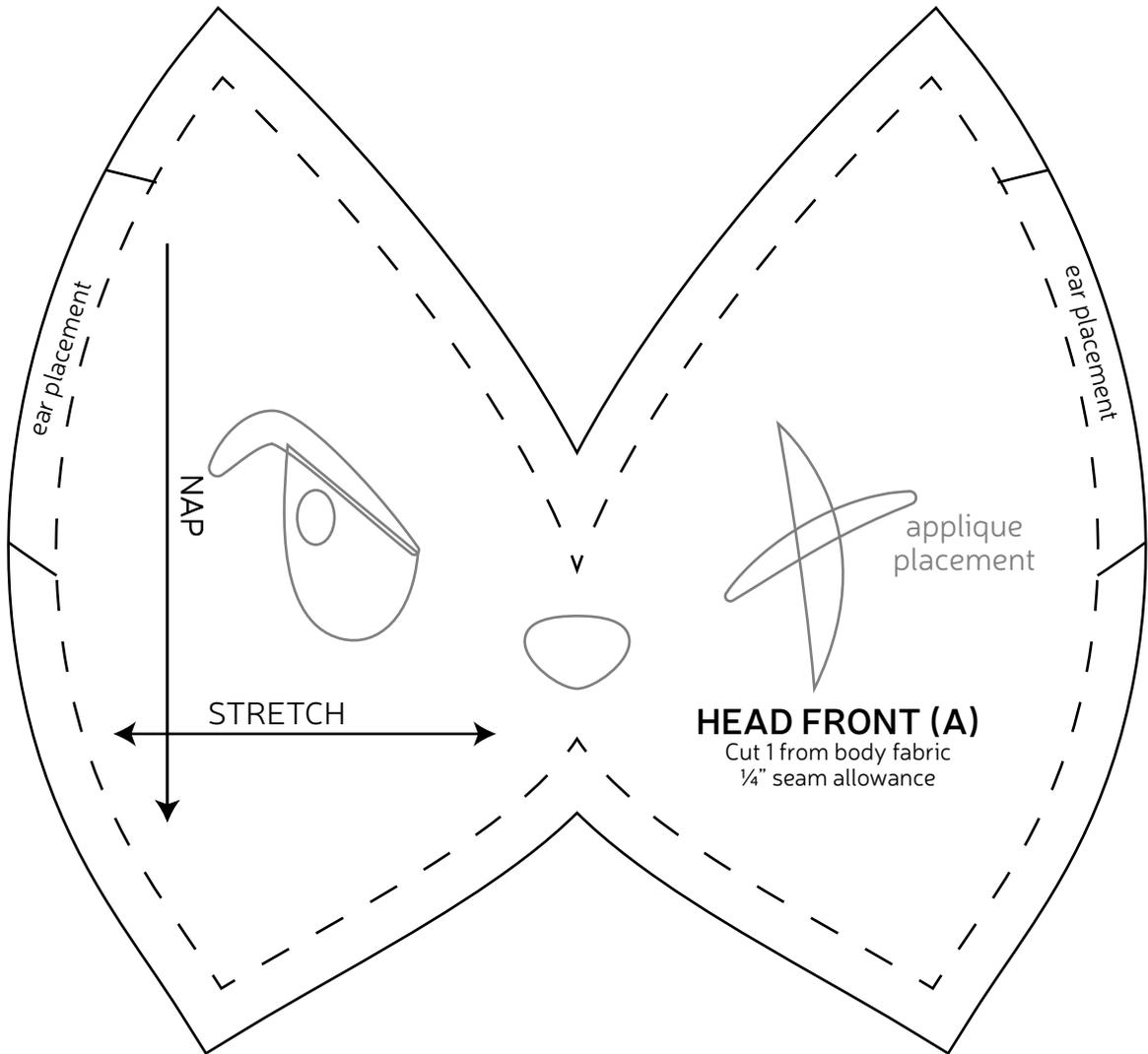
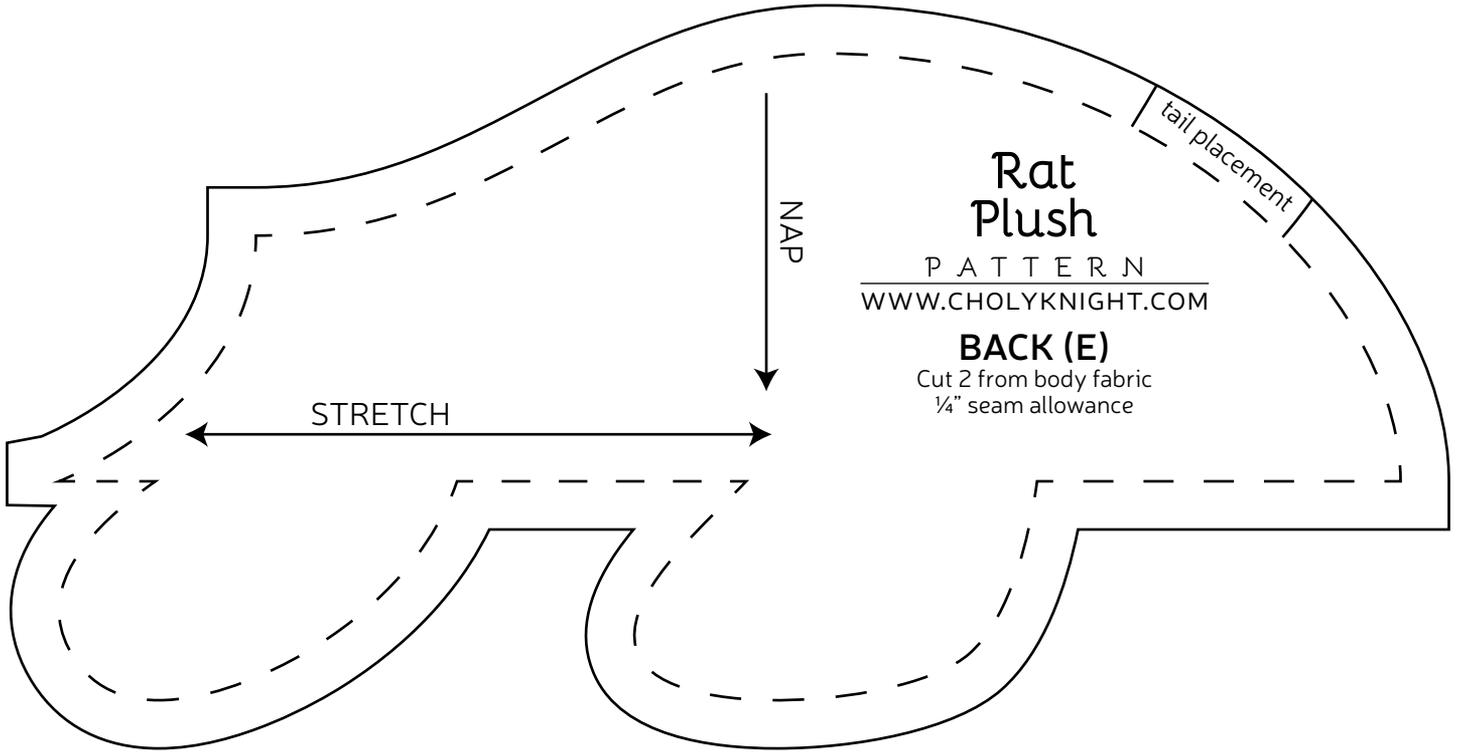
When you're finished, stitch a knot into the end of the seam. Then insert the needle near the finished knot and out of the plush about 1-2" away. Pull the thread through and hold it taut while snipping the thread. The excess thread should sink back inside the plush -- all hidden!

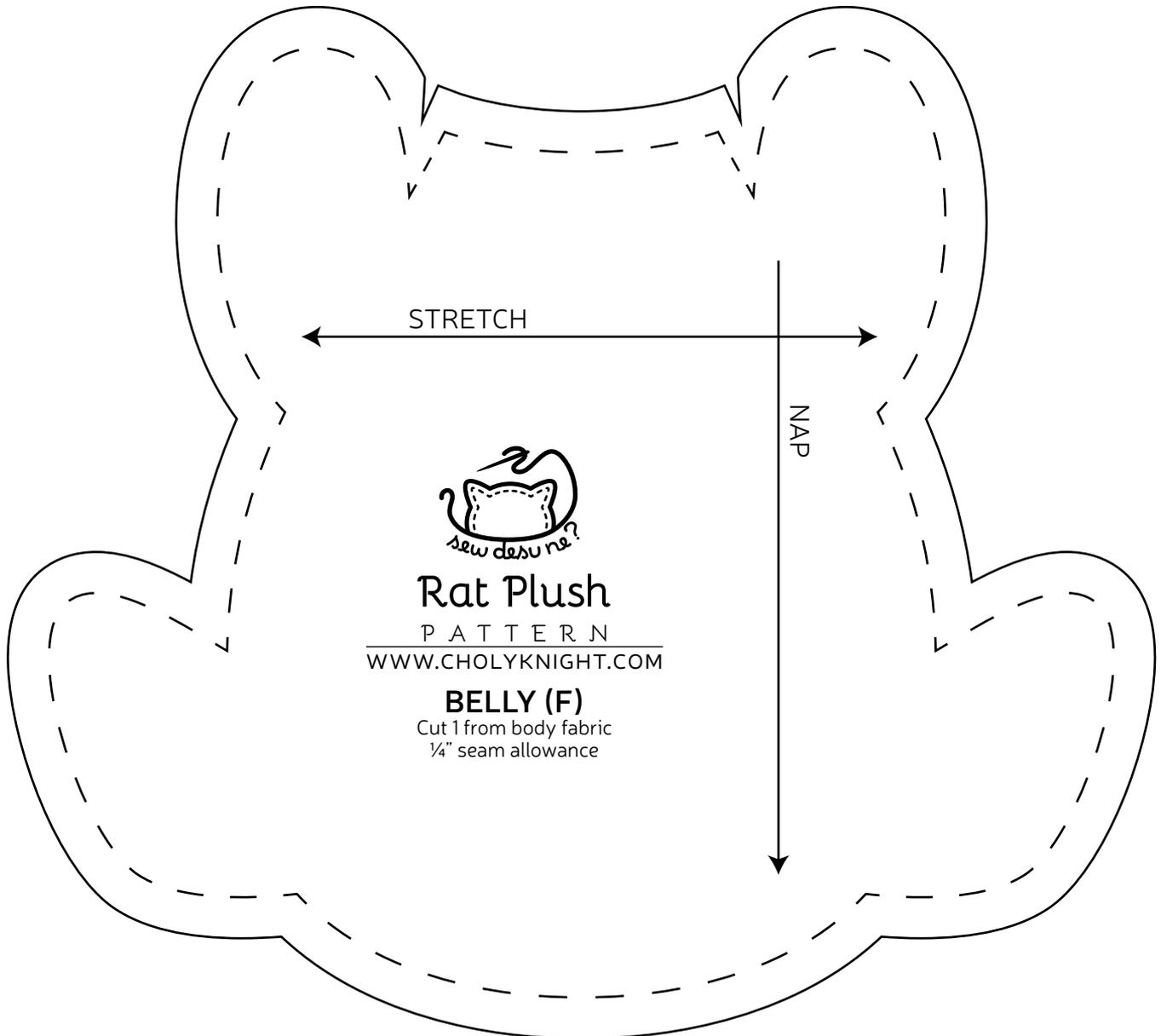
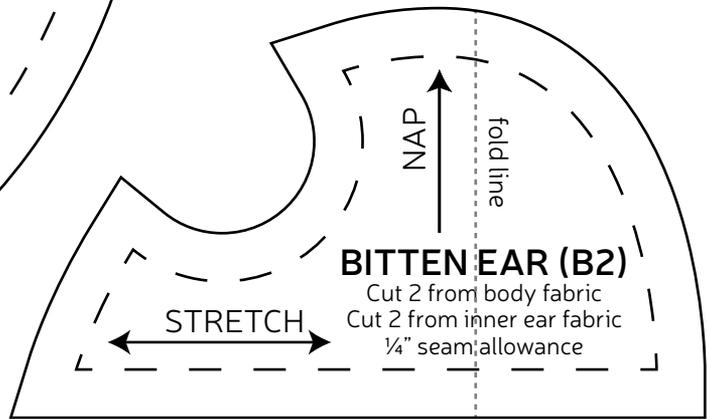
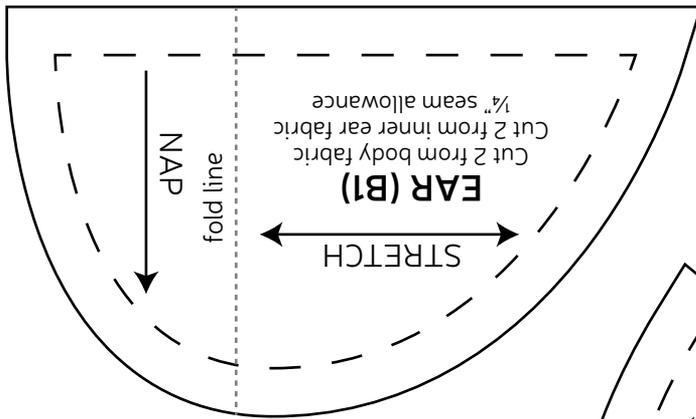
**congrats!**  
this completes  
your plush! Now  
give it a big  
hug!

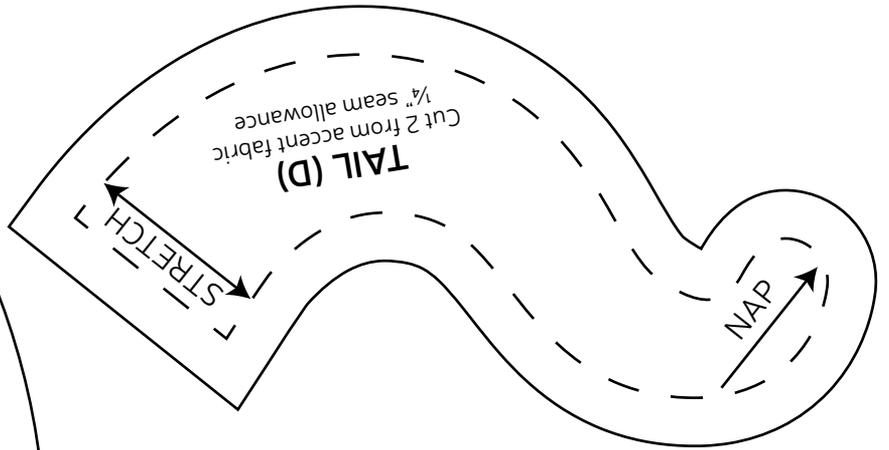
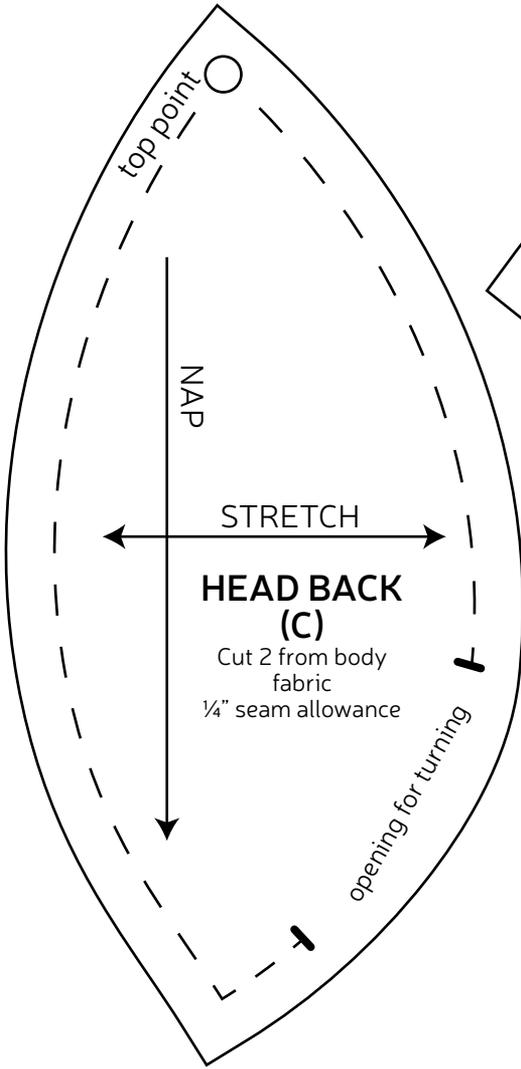


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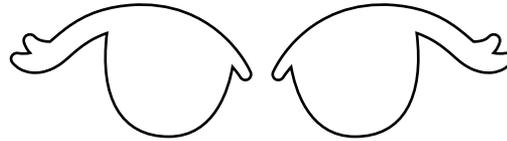
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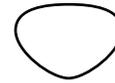




**SWEET EYES**  
*applique*  
trace & cut  
1 each of black



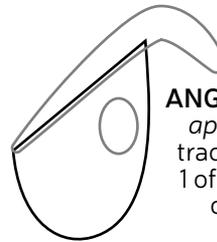
**NOSE**  
*applique*  
trace & cut  
1 of pink or black



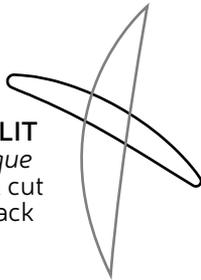
**EYE SHINE**  
*applique*  
trace & cut  
1-2 of white



**ANGRY EYE**  
*applique*  
trace & cut  
1 of accent color



**EYE SLIT**  
*applique*  
trace & cut  
1 of black



**EYE SCAR**  
*applique*  
trace & cut  
1 of pink



**EYE LID**  
*applique*  
trace & cut  
1 of black

