

# bear pocket pal sewing tutorial



Everyone could use a pal right now. This sweet friend can tuck into your pocket, can be mailed off to someone you love, or can hang as a decoration. Wool felt is such an approachable material to work with because it can stretch a bit and the edges do not fray. This is an easy, satisfying little project for all ages. You can shrink or enlarge the templates to make a bear family of different sizes.

## MATERIALS:

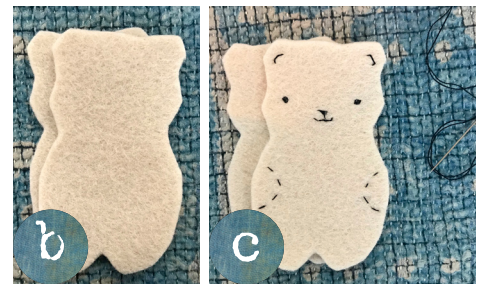
- 4.5 x 3.5" piece of wool felt (I used off-white, light brown, and dark brown)
- sharp scissors
- straight pins
- sewing needle
- cotton embroidery floss (I used black and ochre)
- stuffing

## NOTES:

- Embroidery floss has 6 plies (threads) and the plies are easily separated. Most embroidery patterns use 1 to 3 plies. Long strands can get easily tangled, cutting them to 18-inch strands helps prevent this. It also helps to very gently separate the pieces from the center of the strand instead of starting at one end.
- If your thread becomes too short while you are sewing, attach a new piece of thread to the end with a knot. Tie it close to the felt and hide the knot.
- Keep stitches even and hide knots.
- Felt is very flexible to work with; it can be pulled and stretched as needed, and because it doesn't fray you can trim as you work if your pieces are not lining up.

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Print the template on page 2 and cut out the paper pieces. You can play with the size by reducing or enlarging the templates when you print them. Refer to the Guide to Basic Stitches on page 2.
2. Pin the template to your felt and cut out the first bear. Then use the first cut out bear as a template to cut out the back side of your bear. (photo b) This ensures that the front and back match up.
3. Using a single ply of embroidery floss, stitch the facial features, the ear lines, and the paw marks. (photo c) You can do this by referring to the template for placement, or you can make a few stitches directly through your template onto the felt and then gently rip the template away. If you choose to stitch through the template, just make a few stitches to indicate placement. Too many stitches and it will be difficult to rip the template away. Consider the placement of the stitches in relation to the edges and to each other. I recommend stitching the nose/mouth first and then place the eyes and paws accordingly. You will use the double running stitch for the ear marks and the mouth, the satin stitch for the eyes and nose, and the running stitch for the paw marks.
4. With right sides facing out and using a single ply of embroidery floss, blanket stitch the perimeter of your bear. Begin your stitching at the dip in the neck and work towards the head. Stop just above the second paw, leaving a 1.5" opening.
5. Lightly stuff your bear. (photo d) It is helpful to tear your stuffing in small bits and use the eraser end of a pencil to push stuffing into the little ears and feet.
6. Continue with the blanket stitch to close the gap and secure with a knot. To hide your knot, pull the needle between the two layers of felt into the stuffing. Trim the strand as close to the felt as you can, it will sink between the stuffing and disappear. Your pocket pal is complete! (photo e)

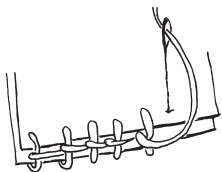


## GUIDE TO BASIC STITCHES:

### BLANKET STITCH

Note: these instructions are much easier to follow with your actual needle and thread in hand. The stitch is simple; the instructions sound complicated.

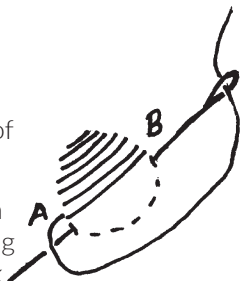
- Thread your needle and tie a knot at the tail.
- Starting between the sandwiched pieces, poke the needle through your top layer of felt about 1/8" from the edge. The knot will be between the two layers of felt where it will not be seen.
- Bring the thread around the edge of the two stacked pieces of the felt and poke it through the same spot as the first stitch.
- Pull your needle through the stitch you just made at the top edge. This anchors your thread but is not a true stitch.
- TO CONNECT TWO PIECES ALONG THE OUTER EDGES: Start a new stitch through the back side, 1/8" from your first stitch, and 1/8" in from the edge of the felt. Before you pull the stitch all the way, catch the loop through the top with your needle and pull tight. The thread should create a straight line that lies along the edges of your two pieces of felt. Continue your evenly spaced stitching (1/8" over, 1/8" in), pulling each stitch through from the back side and catching the loop as you go.
- TO CONNECT TWO LAYERS ALONG A SINGLE EDGE: push your needle from the top down through both layers. Dip through the back side making a small stitch and bring your needle up through the single layer, just outside where your first stitch went in. Before you pull the stitch all the way, catch the loop through the top with your needle and pull tight. The thread should create a straight line that lies along the edge of your top piece of felt. Continue your evenly spaced stitching (1/8" over, 1/8" in), pulling each stitch through from the back side and catching the loop as you go.
- To finish, connect your last stitch to your first stitch by sliding your needle underneath your first stitch and knotting it at the back. Push your needle between the layers and out through the front about 1 inch from the edge. The thread will be pulled inside, hiding the knot from view. Then cut off the excess thread very close to the top layer of the felt.



### SATIN STITCH

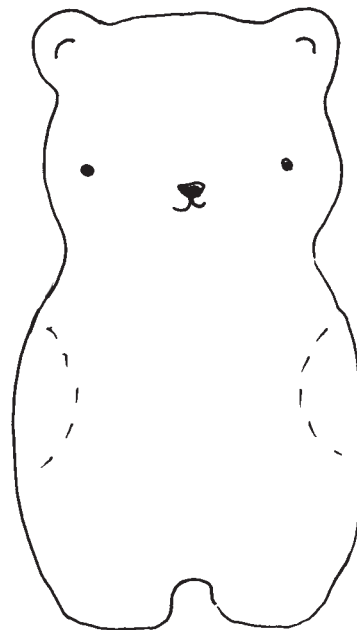
This stitch is used to fill in a space.

- Begin by stitching the perimeter of the space you plan to fill.
- Start with the threaded needle on the back side of your felt and bring it up through the felt (A) and back down into the front side (B).
- Place the stitches close together so that they create a solid shape.



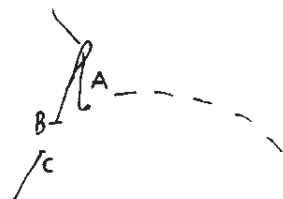
## TEMPLATE:

Print this at 100% to make the bear pictured in the tutorial, or experiment with shrinking and enlarging the template to make a family of various sized bears



### RUNNING & DOUBLE RUNNING STITCH

- Start with the threaded needle on the back side of your felt and bring it up through the felt (A) and back down into the front side (B).
- Pull it the whole way through, then bring the threaded needle back up through the felt from the back side (C).
- Try to keep the size of the stitches and the space between them consistent.
- A double running stitch is used to make a solid, connected line.
- Start with a running stitch. When you reach the end, reverse your direction and fill in the space between the stitches with another running stitch so you have a solid line.



#### ABOUT KATA GOLDA:

Alison Kaplan is the creative force behind Kata Golda, a craft studio in the mossy seaside town of Port Townsend, WA. Kata Golda is a flourishing business that explores crafts such as needlework, letterpress printing, bookbinding, block printing, hand-thrown pottery, hand-dyed textiles, and jewelry making. Alison finds inspiration in the woods, farmlands, and beaches of her Pacific Northwest wonderland. See her work at [www.katagolda.com](http://www.katagolda.com).

