

festive DONKEY wall charm sewing tutorial



kata golda
handmade

MATERIALS & TOOLS:

- 7 x 4" piece of 9oz muslin (light canvas or heavier cotton fabric): I used tea-dyed organic cotton/hemp.
- 2 x 1½" piece of ocre wool felt for blanket
- ½ x ¼' piece of deep pink wool felt for 2 flowers
- Embroidery floss: black for eye and nose, brown for donkey details and assembly, various colors for flowers and blanket
- 24" of 3/8" wide green silk ribbon
- Buckwheat hulls for lightly stuffing
- Scissors
- Straight pins (optional): helpful for cutting out donkey and for sewing felt blanket on to donkey.
- Hand sewing needle

1. Refer to "Notes & Tips" on page 2 and the stitch guide on page 3. Gather your materials (**photo a**)
2. Cut out the paper templates on page 2 (**photo b**) and use the template to cut out the first donkey side. Use the first cut-out donkey as the template for the second side. (**photo c**) This way the donkey pieces are perfectly matched, and they are stacked on top of each other as they should be stitched.
3. Using 1 ply embroidery floss, stitch the details on the mirror image of donkey sides. Refer to the templates for stitch placement. Stitch an outline around each donkey with the back stitch about 1/8" from the fabric edge. (**photo d**)
4. Place the flowers on each side of the donkey head at the base of the ears. Using 2 ply of embroidery floss and the satin stitch, sew a circle in the center of each flower, attaching it to the donkey head. (**photo e**)
5. Make a small slit with the sharp tip of your scissors in the center felt for the blanket (the dashed line on the template indicates placement of the slit).
6. With 2 ply embroidery floss, stitch details on wool blanket piece. Leave space for a perimeter line of stitching that will attach the blanket to the donkey in step 9. Refer to the template for stitch details. (**photo e**)
7. Using 1 ply of embroidery floss in the same color you used for the donkey outline, blanket stitch the perimeter of donkey sides together with right sides facing out. Begin at the base of the neck below the ears and work in the direction of the face. (**photo f**) Be mindful of the distance between stitches as you don't want the stuffing material to escape. The head and legs will be challenging to stuff once the full perimeter is stitched, so lightly stuff them as you go. (**photo g**) I used the eraser end of a pencil to help push the stuffing in to small places and I added a little stuffing at a time. When you are about 1 ½" from where you began, pause stitching and finish lightly stuffing the donkey. (**photo h**)





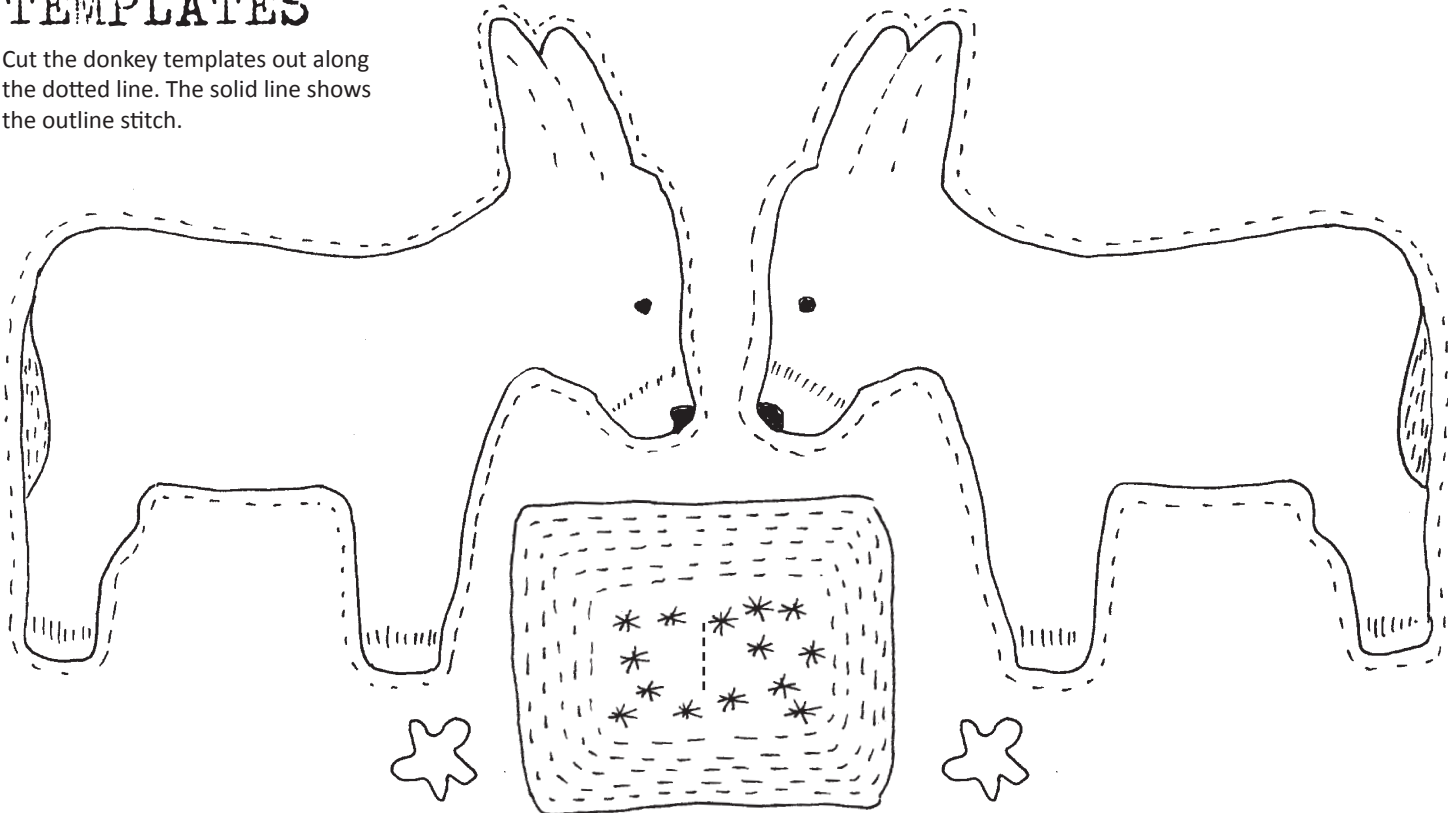
8. Before you finish blanket stitching the perimeter, determine the placement for the ribbon. The ribbon needs to be a bit off center in the direction of the head (this is because you want your donkey to hang evenly, and the front end of the body is heavier than the back end). Lay your ribbon in place and continue with the blanket stitch to close the opening, sandwiching the edge of the ribbon between the two fabric layers. **(photo i)**
9. Pull the ribbon through the slit in the blanket. Center the blanket on the donkey's back and pin in place. Using 2 ply embroidery floss and the running stitch, stitch the perimeter of the blanket on to the donkey's back. Start with thread sandwiched between the the back side of the blanket and the donkey's back and work your way around the blanket edge. **(photo j)** Tie off between the 2 layers. Pull your thread ends through the body of the donkey and cut off close to the fabric, the ends will sink into the stuffing and disappear.
10. (Optional) Make some decorative stitch marks on the ribbon. Be mindful of the way the stitches will look on both sides. Your donkey is complete! **(photo k)**

NOTES & TIPS

- 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.
- 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.

TEMPLATES

Cut the donkey templates out along the dotted line. The solid line shows the outline stitch.

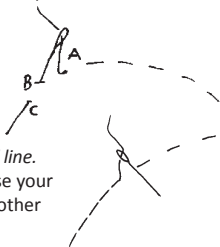


GUIDE TO BASIC STITCHES

the running & double running stitch

Note that keeping stitches even is an aesthetic decision. Stitch size, distance between stitches, and uniformity of stitches is something to pay attention to, but it is a choice.

- Start with the threaded needle on the back side of your fabric and bring it up through the fabric (A) and back down into the front side (B). Pull it all the way through, then bring the threaded needle back up through the fabric from the back side (C).



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.

the back stitch

The back stitch is often preferred to a running stitch when sewing through multiple layers or thick fabric. You can use this technique to create a running stitch or a continuous line, like the double running stitch. It is perfect for outlining or filling in space. Note that keeping stitches even is an aesthetic decision. Stitch size, distance between stitches, and uniformity of stitches is something to pay attention to, but it is a choice.

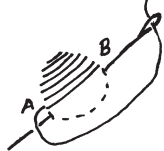
- Pull the thread up through your fabric (A) and back down (B). This is your first stitch.
- Pull your thread up through your fabric one stitch length away (C) and pull it back down through your second stitch (B), creating a stitch by taking the thread backward. Repeat.



the satin stitch

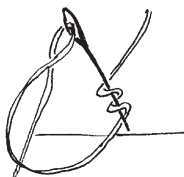
This stitch is used to fill in a space. If you like, you can begin by stitching the perimeter of the space you plan to fill.

- Start with the threaded needle on the back side of your fabric and bring it up through the fabric (A) and back down into the front side (B).
- Place the stitches close together so that they create a solid shape.



the french knot

- Work with 2 or 3 plies of thread that you have doubled and tied at the base (4 or 6 plies total).
- Bring your needle up through the fabric where you want to place the knot.
- Wrap the thread around the needle very close to the fabric. Wrap once for a small knot, twice for a larger knot.
- Push the needle back through your fabric, close to the place where the needle came out, keeping the wrap snug. Slowly pull the needle and working thread down through the wraps to complete the French knot. Hold the working thread taut as you pull the needle and thread through; this tension helps create nice, even French knots.



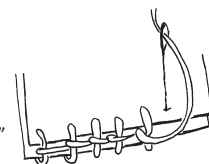
the blanket stitch

This stitch is used to connect two pieces of fabric along the outer edge or two layers along one edge. These instructions are much easier to follow with your needle and thread in hand. The stitch is simple; the instructions sound complicated. Note that keeping stitches even is an aesthetic decision. Stitch size, distance between stitches, and uniformity of stitches is something to pay attention to, but it is a choice.

- Thread your needle and tie a knot at the tail.
- Starting between the sandwiched pieces, poke the needle through your top layer of fabric about 1/8" from the edge. The knot will be between the two layers of fabric where it will not be seen.
- Bring the thread around the edge of the two stacked pieces of the fabric 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.

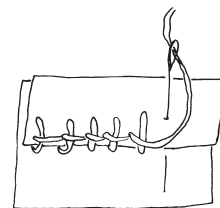
TO CONNECT TWO PIECES ALONG THE OUTER EDGES:

Start a new stitch through the back side, 1/8" from your first stitch, and 1/8" in from the edge of the fabric. 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 fabric. 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:

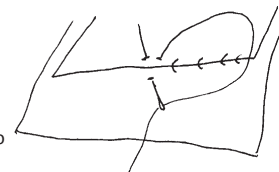
Push your needle from the top down through both layers. Dip through the back side making a small stitch and bring your needle up through the single layer, just outside where your first stitch went in. Before you pull the stitch all the way, catch the loop through the top with your needle and pull tight. The thread should create a straight line that lies along the edge of your top piece of fabric. 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.



the whip stitch

This stitch is used to connect two pieces of fabric along the outer edge or to connect two overlapping pieces. Note that keeping stitches even is an aesthetic decision. Stitch size, distance between stitches, and uniformity of stitches is something to pay attention to, but it is a choice.

- **TO CONNECT TWO PIECES ALONG THE OUTER EDGE:** Thread your needle and tie a knot at the tail. Start your first stitch between the two layers of fabric to hide the knot. Wrap your thread around the two lined up edges and push your needle up through the two layers of fabric. Repeat.
- **CONNECTING TWO OVERLAPPING PIECES (ie: attaching an inner ear piece to an ear cutout or adding a nose or eye piece on top of a larger piece of fabric):** Thread your needle and tie a knot at the tail. Starting at the back side, poke your needle up through both layers of fabric, 1/8" in from the edge and then push your needle through the single layer of fabric, directly across from your first stitch and close to the overlapping edge. Continue your next stitch up through both layers, and then straight down through the single layer again. Make sure you are not pulling the stitches so tight that you cause the fabric to bunch.



ABOUT KATA GOLDA:

My studio, the home of Kata Golda, is nestled snugly in the small, mossy seaside town of Port Townsend, WA. I work with organic, sustainable, and plant-dyed fabrics. Much of the inspiration for my designs comes from the subtle details in the woods, farmlands, and beaches near my home, where nothing is straight and nothing is perfect. I create slowly and with intention, with a commitment to reusing supplies as much as possible and using up every little scrap of fabric. Find more at www.katagolda.com

