

# HUMMINGBIRDS

## sewing tutorial

kata golda  
handmade



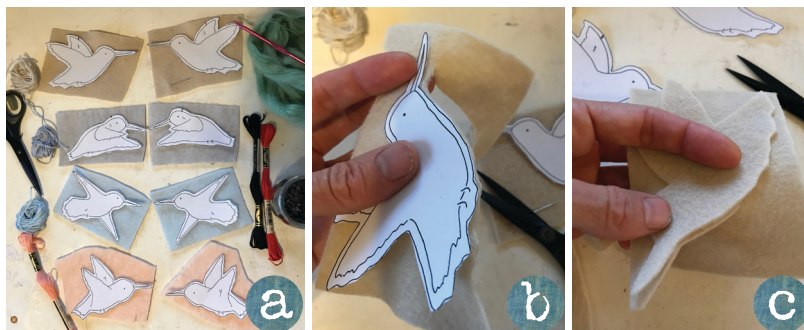
Is there a more beautiful delight than watching a hummingbird? I have spotted some magnificent moments: observing a tiny nest with a hummingbird sitting on her eggs, watching their wings flutter unimaginably fast and keeping the tiny bird suspended in the air while gathering nectar, seeing territorial fights as they dive at each other amidst the blooms. At times I feel like they are following me (or I am chasing them?) because this time of year they are always close by.

### MATERIALS & TOOLS:

- Wool felt (I used off-white, gray, light blue, and peach)
- Embroidery floss (I used black, coral, and a complimentary color to the felt)
- Stuffing (I used buckwheat hulls)
- A thread, a ribbon, or a crocheted chain to hang your hummingbirds at various lengths (I used crocheted mohair in a variety of colors)
- Sharp scissors
- Sewing needle
- Crochet hook (optional)

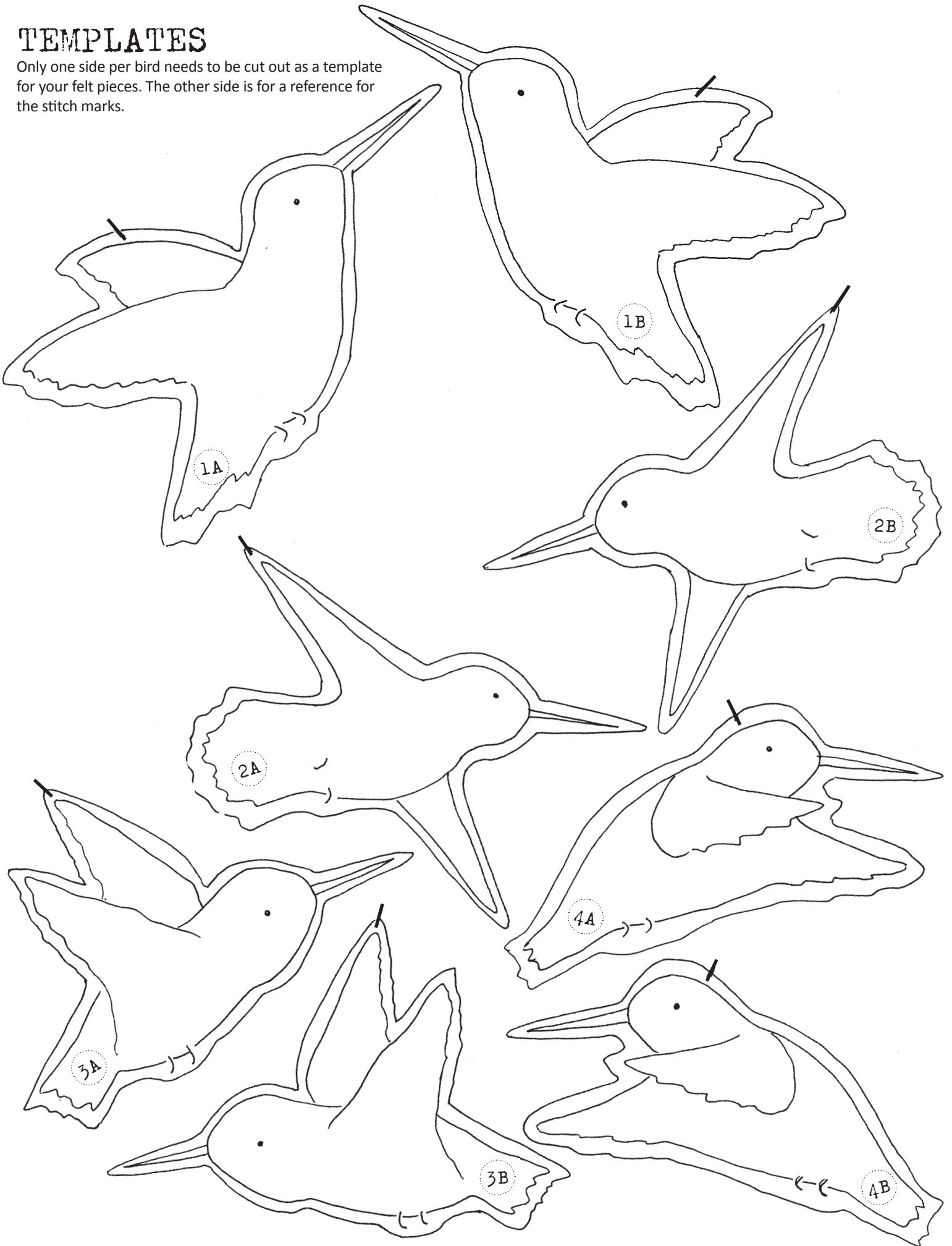
Choosing colors for this project was an interesting challenge and I changed my mind many times. I will be so curious to see some of your hummingbirds and your color choices. Hummingbirds are like opals to me, no distinguishing color, changing color depending on the way the light hits, and full of color all at the same time. Here are four patterns of the dear little bird in motion. They are stitched with mirror images on both sides, ideal for hanging in a window so when you look out or look in, they are always showing themselves.

1. Refer to "Notes & Tips" and the stitch guide on page 3.
2. Cut out the paper templates on page 2 (**photo a**) and use the template to cut out the first hummingbird side. Note that there are drawings of both sides of each hummingbird, but these are just for stitch reference in step 3. You only need to cut out one side to use as a template. Because the pattern pieces are small, I prefer to hand hold as I cut as opposed to pinning the template to the felt. (**photo b**) Use the first felt cut-out as the template for the second side. (**photo c**) This way the felt pieces are perfectly matched and they are stacked on top of each other as they should be stitched.
3. Use the pattern pieces as a guide for where to make your lines of stitching. Make sure you are stitching mirror images for the 2-sided hummingbird, when you match up the 2 sides together the stitched sides will face out. Use 2 ply black thread and the double running stitch for the beak and legs and use the satin stitch for the eye. Use 2 ply of thread and the double running stitch to 'draw' the outline of the hummingbird. I recommend a little color here; I used a single ply of black and a single ply of coral together. Much of the outline 'drawing' of the bird is about 1/8" in from the edges of the felt and there are also lines that define the bird's shape inside the felt piece. Take note of the zig zaggy line quality of the outer edges of the wing and tail feathers. It is helpful to consider the relationship of the stitch marks: how close is the eye to the top and front edge and how close is it to the wing, etc. Considering these relationships will help you place your stitches in the right places. (**photo d**)
4. Prepare the length of material you are using to hang your bird. I crocheted long strands of mohair in various colors. You may choose a single thread, a ribbon, a braided thread etc.
5. Using 1 ply of embroidery floss that is the same color as your felt, blanket stitch the perimeter of the hummingbird sides together. Begin at the top where you will be attaching the string for hanging (there is a mark that indicates this on each template) and catch the string in your blanket stitch. (**photo e**) The stitches should not be very deep, try to keep them outside of the 'drawn' edging line of the bird (those stitches will pull out of place if the blanket stitch interferes with them). Consider how far apart and how even you want your blanket stitch. This is an aesthetic decision and also relates to what you plan to stuff your bird with. If you are using a little fluff like wool batting, shredded cotton balls, or poly-fill, your blanket stitches do not need to be as close. If you are using a loose material like buckwheat or lavender, your stitches need to be quite close.
6. Continue stitching all the way around the perimeter leaving a 1-1.5" opening. Stuff lightly, but do not push any stuffing in the beak. (**photo f**) 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 hummingbird is complete! (**photo g**)



# TEMPLATES

Only one side per bird needs to be cut out as a template for your felt pieces. The other side is for a reference for the stitch marks.



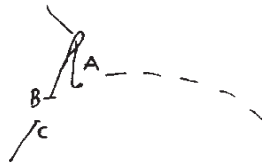
## NOTES & TIPS

- 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.
- 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.

## GUIDE TO BASIC STITCHES

### 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 all the 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.

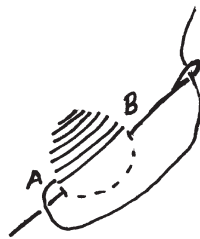
- Start with a running stitch. When you reach the end, reverse your direction and fill in the space between the stitches with another running stitch so you have a solid line.



### SATIN STITCH

*This stitch is used to fill in a space.*

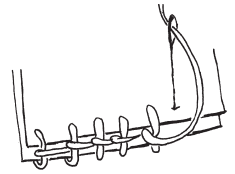
- Begin by stitching the perimeter of the space you plan to fill.
- Start with the threaded needle on the back side of your felt and bring it up through the felt (A) and back down into the front side (B).
- Place the stitches close together so that they create a solid shape.



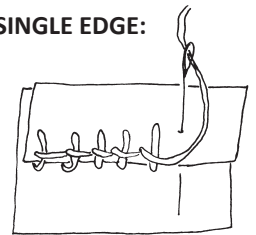
### BLANKET STITCH

*This stitch is used to connect two pieces of fabric along the outer edge or two layers along one edge. 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.



#### **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](http://www.katagolda.com)

