



Bear Making Club Booklet

Here's a list of all the supplies you'll need to make your first teddy bear. Some of these supplies will be provided for you as they're better bought in bulk, but you will need to have access to some tools and supplies before we start our classes.

Things You'll Be Given

Item	Approximate Cost	Notes
Mohair Fabric (Fat eighth)	£15	Bought in bulk in white, can be dyed.
Glass Eyes (6mm) and black or brown nose thread	£2	Slightly larger or smaller eyes may be used. Other colour threads could be bought by students.
25mm cotter pin joints	£1	
100% wool felt	£1	Used for paw pads, can also be dyed.
Polyfil stuffing	£2	
Dye	£1	Provided colours will be: red, blue, yellow, brown. Other colours may be mixed or bought.
Extras: beeswax, glass pellets...	£3	Depends on techniques used.

Things You'll Need to Buy or Share with Friends

Item	Approximate Cost	Notes
Extra Strong Thread (week 2)	£3.50	Used to sew bear seams
Small sharp scissors	£4	
Sewing needles	£1	

Stuck?

Try Google and YouTube for some basic tutorials on stitches and bear making techniques. I learnt all I know from a forum called 'Teddy Talk'.

Lesson Break Down

Week	Class Work	Homework
1	Introduction and Dyeing Fabric	Cut out pattern, buy thread
2	Laying pattern, cutting	Cutting fabric and trimming
3	Sewing, stuffing and jointing limbs	Finish limbs
4	Sewing, stuffing, jointing head	Sewing ears and body
5	Trimming face, eyes and nose	Attaching ears to head
6	Jointing full bear, detailing	

Basic Facts

You will learn to make a bear that is 8" (20cm) standing, with 25mm cotter pin joints and glass eyes. He should not be given to small children without supervision as the eyes and metal joints may break under extreme circumstances. His fur will be a luxurious mohair fabric, which is made from the fur of a goat sewn through a cotton backing (it does not harm the goat). This is the same fabric as was used to make the very first teddy bears over 100 years ago.

You can chose to make him a different colour, or even multiple colours if you like. You can also buy a non-traditional nose colour for him, or add a squeaker or different paw pad fabric. His expression will change based on how you stitch his mouth and nose and how you position his ears and eyes. Even though we all start with the same pattern, our bears will be very different by the end of the classes!

Please make sure you read over the class instructions **before** coming to class as you may need extra supplies. It's probably best to use one bag to keep your bear parts together.

Week One: Introduction and Dyeing Fabric

- ☆ Please bring in a waterproof plastic bag to take your dyed fabric home in!

Your pattern includes seam allowances, so cut on the pattern lines.

We will use the Food Technology room this week to dye our fabric. You will need to use lab coats to protect your clothes from the dye and be confident about working with very hot water.

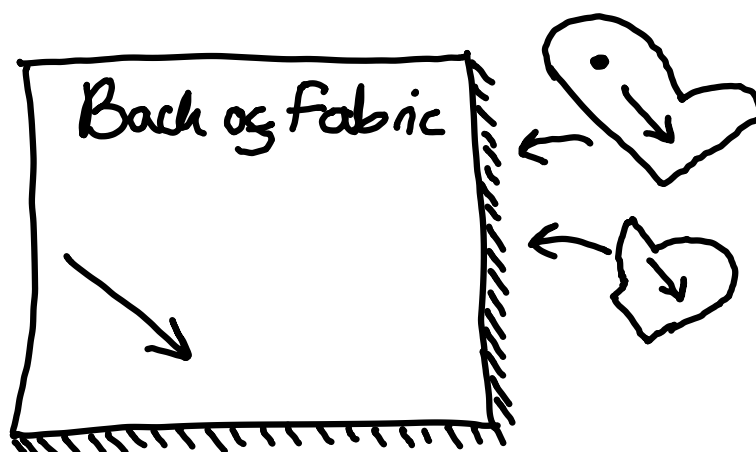
At home please dry your fabric and brush it carefully to fluff it out. Carefully cut out all your pattern pieces on the lines and pierce them where there is a marking for a joint.

- ☆ Remember to buy matching extra strong thread for your fabric. You can get this at John Lewis in the Queensgate Centre.

Week Two: Laying Out the Pattern and Cutting the Fabric

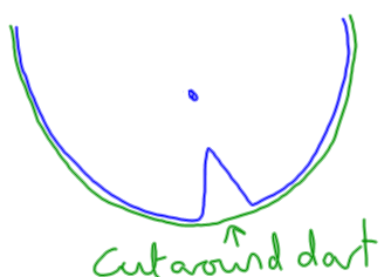
- ☆ Please bring in sharp scissors, extra strong thread, fabric and pattern.

All pattern pieces have to be laid out so their arrows match with the direction of the mohair. Draw an arrow on the back of the mohair showing the fur direction so you can see where to line them up. Aim to use as little fabric as possible: fit the pieces together like a jigsaw!



After laying out the pattern so all pieces fit on, draw around them carefully with a coloured crayon. All the extra markings like joint holes and places to leave open should be added. Paw pads need to be cut from felt.

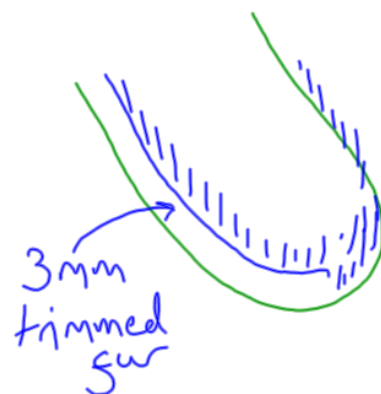
When cutting your fabric, take tiny snips through the backing cotton only. If you take big cuts you will cut the fur as well, making your bear look a bit scruffy!



The body piece has two darts which are used to make your bear a bit tubbier. You need to keep those triangular pieces of fabric in, so cut the body out as shown in the image.

After cutting out your pieces, you need to trim away some of the fur from the edges. The outer 3mm of the pattern is the seam allowance: you need to trim off the fur from this section.

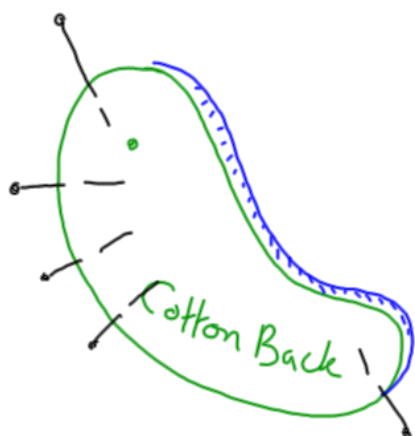
- ☆ All your pieces must be cut out and trimmed ready for next week.



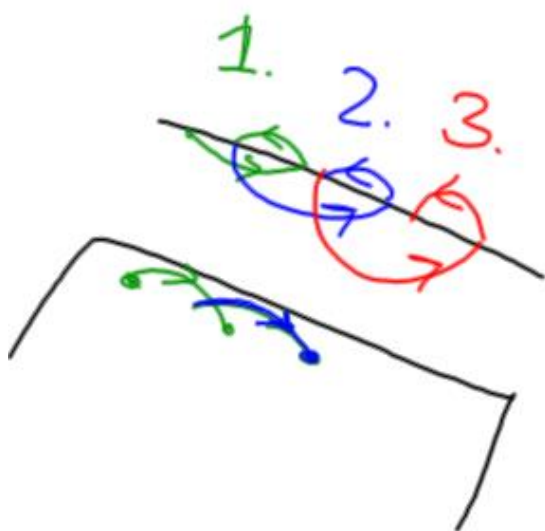
Week Three: Limbs

- ☆ Please bring in sharp scissors, extra strong thread, needles, fabric and pattern. If you have pins please bring them too.

Sewing Limbs



To sew pattern pieces together, first you must pin them with the fur sides facing inwards. This is so that your seams end up on the inside of the bear. I put the pins facing inwards so you get fewer scratches as you sew!

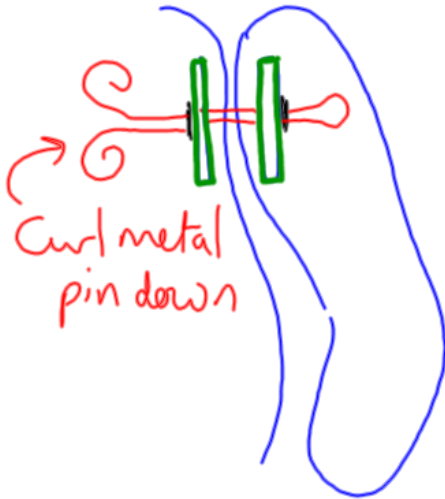


I prefer a backstitch for bears as it's much stronger than a running stitch. To do this, pick a starting point on your bear. Sew a few tiny stitches in one place to lock the thread in, then stitch one big stick forward. On the other side of the fabric, bring the needle back half way and push in back through, before taking another big stitch on the front. If you're stuck, try YouTube for a backstitch tutorial.

To sew the arms, first sew the pawpads into place, making sure you have the right pad on the right arm. After that you can put two arms together, pin and sew them.

The legs are a bit trickier: first sew the outside of the leg and then pin the foot pad so the edges of the pad match the edges of the leg opening. Sew the foot pad in place carefully.

Joining Limbs



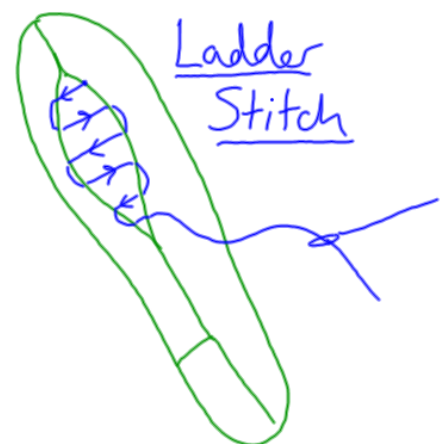
To make up a cotter pin joint, a metal cotter pin is pushed through a metal disc and then a larger wooden joint disc. The pin is then pushed through the limb from inside to outside, and the limb is stuffed and sewn up. When the bear is ready to be completed, the pin will be pushed through the body of the bear, and another two

discs will be added. The legs of the pin are then curled down to hold the limb in place.

To prepare the limbs, first turn them so they are fur side out. Then find the hole marking on the inside of the limb and gently use a pencil to open a small hole without snapping threads. The cotter pin will go through it from inside to outside.

Stuffing Limbs

The key to stuffing limbs is to make sure you use little pieces of stuffing and push them as far away from the opening as possible. I use a rubber tipped pencil to push stuffing in. Make sure no stuffing gets under the joints. You should aim to have a nice even filling that's quite firm as you'll be moving the limbs a lot. After stuffing, use a ladder stitch to sew up the openings: this stitch makes rungs of thread from edge to edge to pull them closed neatly.



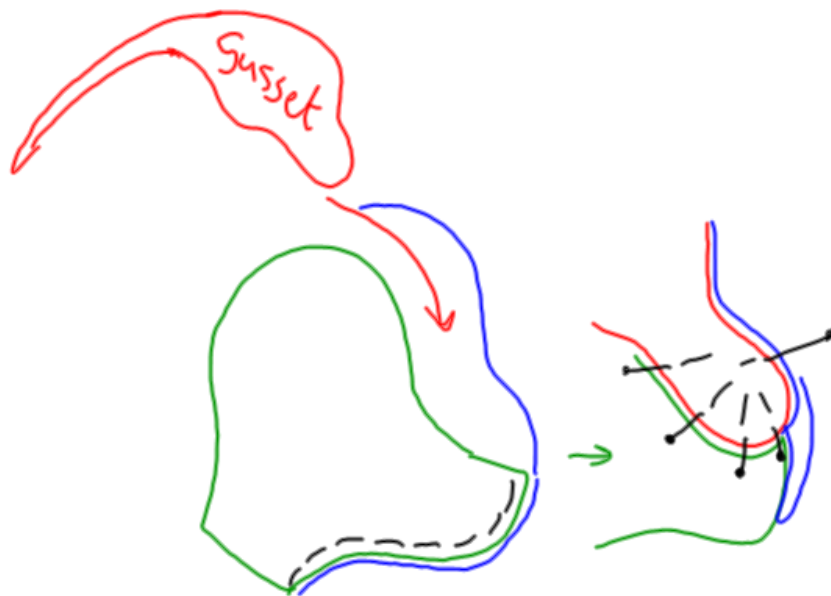
Week Four: Head

☆ You'll need all your head pieces, sewing needles, thread and pins.

The head is the most important part of your bear, so make sure you take your time!

Sewing the Head and body

First sew the two sides of the head together along the chin from neck to nose. You have to insert the gusset (forehead) into place using pins. Make sure it is perfectly even before you start to sew or your bear will be lopsided!



Once your bears head is sewn together, turn him right side out. Again, stuff him carefully, pushing the stuffing into his nose first and using bigger bits to fill the head. Make sure he's completely even before jointing.

When sewing the body, please sew the dart sides together before sewing the body pieces to each other.

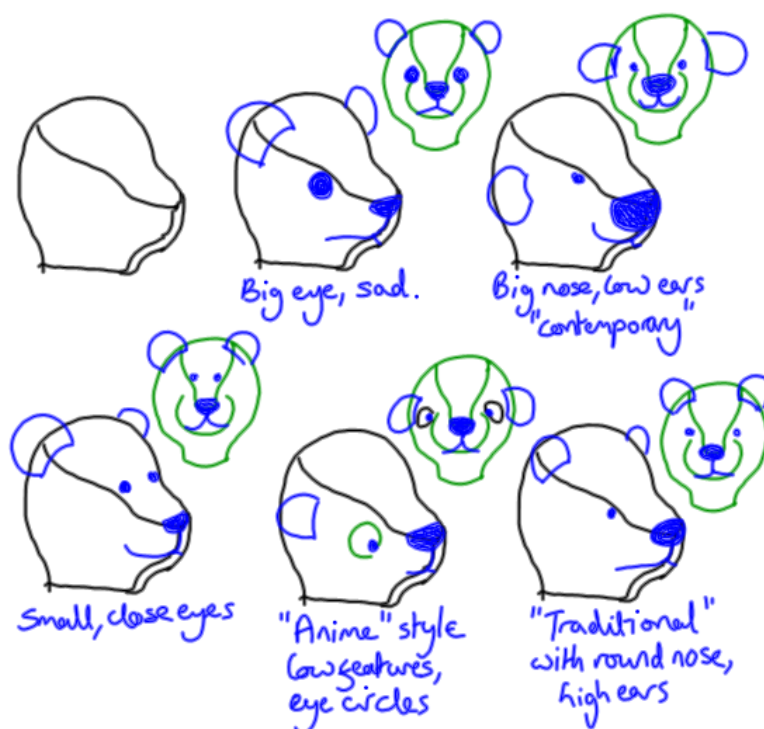
Joining the Head

The head joint is a bit different: you just push the joint into the neck with the pin facing out, and then use a running stitch to gather the neck in around the pin. To do this, lock your thread at the back of the neck, and then use a large running stitch around the neck surface. As you pull on the thread, guide the fabric into place before tying the thread securely with a few small stitches in one place.

Week Five: Making This “Your Bear”

- ☆ If you'd like a different colour for the nose than brown or black, buy embroidery perle cotton (small size) for this lesson.
- ☆ Please bring bear head, scissors and extra strong thread.

Now the fun begins! Even though we're all working on the same pattern, our finished bears will all look very different depending on the placement and size of eyes, ears, mouth and nose. Below are a few possible styles.

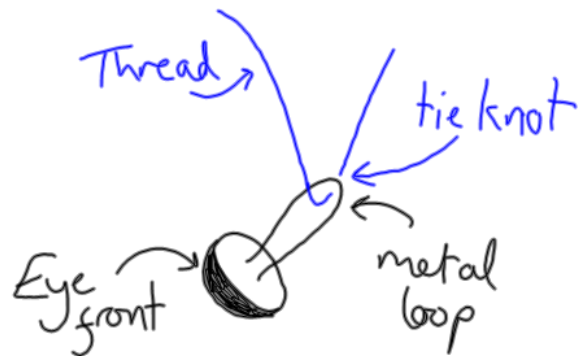


Inserting the Eyes

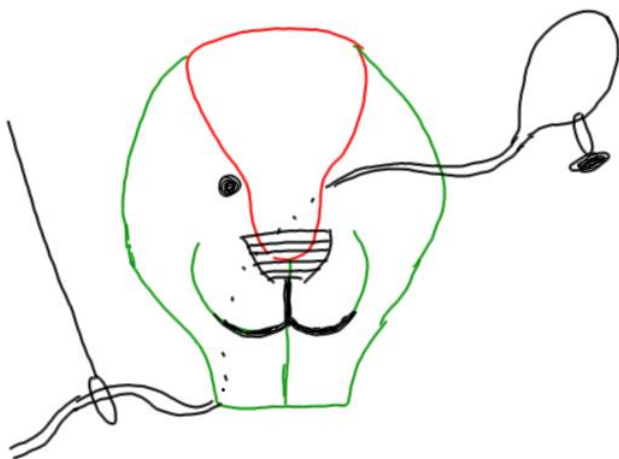
I would suggest 6mm eyes for this bear, but you could use 4mm or 8mm if you like.

The eyes need to be sewn in using a long needle called a doll needle (I have these). To begin, pull a long piece of thread through the metal shank of the eye as shown and knot it. Repeat with the other eye.

Pick a point on your bears face where the eye will be inserted: you can use glass headed pins to see how the eyes will look. Mark that with a small dot.



Then carefully insert the needle with the ends of both the threads from one eye into the eye dot, and bring it out at the base of the neck near to the joint. Repeat with the other eye, bringing it out around 2mm away from the first threads.

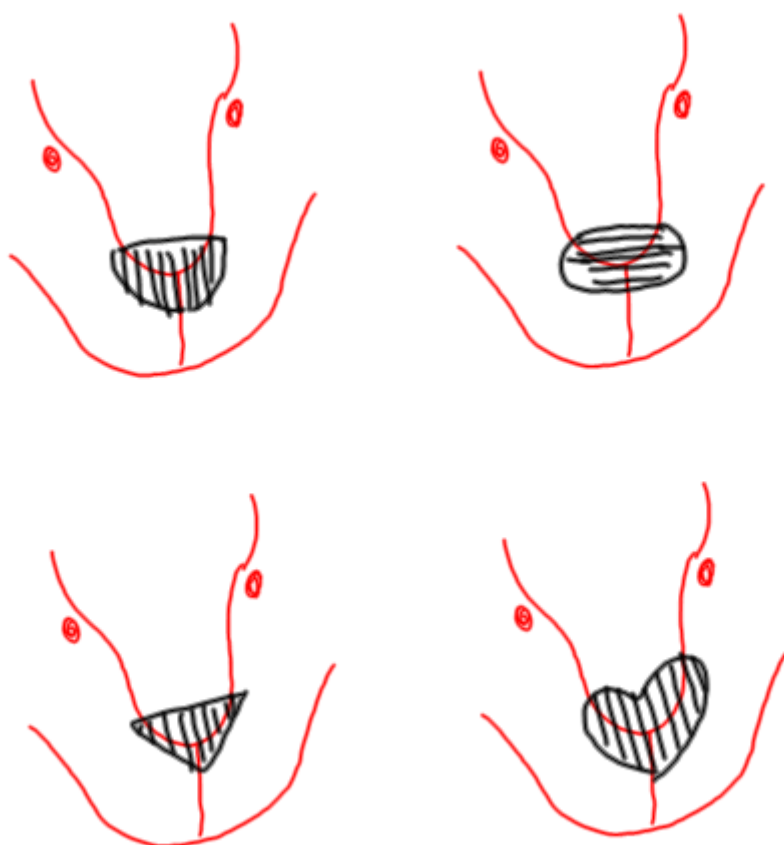


Tie a double (or triple!) knot using all the threads, then use the needle to draw the ends back through that spot and out further up the head. Give them a tug so the knot 'sinks' into the fabric, and then carefully trim them off.

Sewing the Nose

The nose can be tricky to sew, remember to take it slowly and line the threads up perfectly!

First pick a nose shape. I'd recommend drawing it carefully on the bear's nose, slightly smaller than you'd like it to end up. It should be on all three pattern pieces. The easiest of the options shown below is the first: the shield shape.



To sew the nose, pick up a large piece of embroidery cotton or perle with your doll needle and pull it through the bottom of the neck up to the top centre of the nose (if you want to stitch across the nose, bring it out at the centre side). Leave a small tail hanging (wrap it around your cotter pin). Take one stitch down the length of the nose from top to bottom, then bring your

needle back out the top of the nose, around 2mm on one side. Repeat until you have a set of stitches running along the shape of the nose, and then fill the gaps in a single layer. You will probably need two layers to finish the nose.

When you have completed all the downwards stitches you can outline the nose with an extra thread: this makes the nose look neater.

Sewing the Mouth

The mouth should be stitched on using the last of the nose thread, so make sure the last stitch comes out the bottom of the nose.



There are a few possible styles and expressions here too: you can choose to stitch a septum (line from the nose down) or not, and you can also decide on the angle and curve of the mouth. I'd suggest you pin an extra bit of thread in place first to decide if you like the look of the bear.



You have to be sure that the lines are completely mirrored and that you don't have one shorter than the other or in another position, so check your bear from all angles.



Attaching the Ears

First turn your ears right way around using tweezers or forceps if it's hard. Whipstitch over the open end of each ear so the edges are held together, and leave the thread hanging from the end.

To decide where your bears ears will go, pin them on first and look at him from different angles. You can make them more or less cupped, higher or lower, further from or closer to his nose. I like my bears' ears to be positioned on the crown of the head, overlapping the gusset seams. Once you are sure of where they will fit, use a ladder stitch on both sides of the ears to attach them to his head properly. You can sink the end of the thread into the bears head to hide it.

Trimming

If you like, you can trim down some of the fur on his muzzle using short, careful snips from your scissors. This is permanent so don't make large cuts straight away! Just take a few mm off each time, and your bear should look more grown up and 'bear-y'.

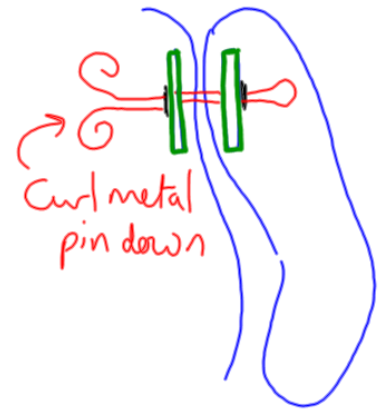
Needle Sculpting

This is an optional technique and involves using thread and a doll needle to sculpt your bears face in certain areas: ask me for help or try google.

Week Six: Pulling Your Bear Together!

- ☆ Please bring all your bear parts, sewing thread, anything you wish to place in your bears' body.

Jointing



Time to joint your bear! By now you have a collection of completed limbs and other body parts. Now you must insert the parts into the body at the correct point, starting with the head.

Find the point on your bear's body where the darts and the side seams meet in a cross. Carefully ease the head through that centre part. On the inside of the body, add a large wooden disc and a small metal disc to the cotter pin and slowly curl one leg of the pin back towards to metal disc using needle nose forceps or a cotter pin key. You should aim to have the curls resting on the metal ring only.

For the limbs, find the spots on the body where the limbs need to go and carefully ease a hole using the end of a pencil. Insert the limb pins (check they're the right way around!) and complete the joint as above. It's easiest to do head first, then arms, them legs.

Stuffing

Last but not least, time to fill your bear with stuffing. You can stuff the body more softly if you like as long as it can hold the weight of the bears head. If you would like him to feel heavier steel shot or glass pellets may be added (I can provide these). Finally, stitch up the back seam using a ladder stitch, check any last details, and give him a name.