

Tiny Cartoon Cat Toy (To Fit Mini Stocking Ornament)

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This cartoon-style cat is quick to stitch and can be completed right in the 4" hoop, except for a line of stitching by hand or machine to close the toy after stuffing.

He is approximately 1.8" x 3.2" tall when stitched -- just the right size to slip into the tiny stocking tree ornaments.



You will need

- Two 3x4.5" pieces of black felt
- A tiny amount of polyester fiber stuffing
- Small red pompon (optional)

Tiny Cartoon Cat Toy Instructions

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1. Hoop a single layer of Glad Press N Seal or regular cling wrap in the 4x4" hoop. If you prefer, you can also use a light-weight water soluble stabilizer. Whichever you choose, make sure it is snug in the hoop.

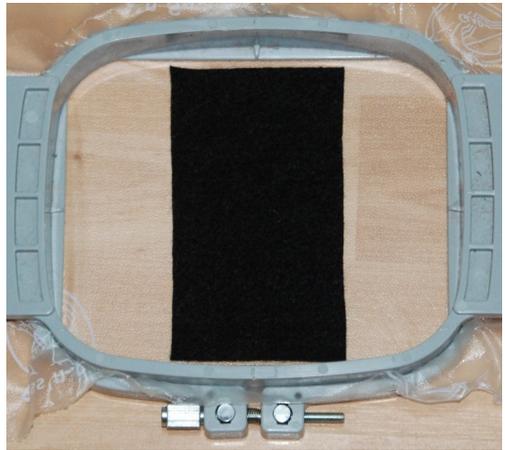


Note: Plastic wrap works well for this project, but if you prefer not to use it, choose a lightweight wash-away stabilizer instead.



You really want the lightest stabilizer you can find so the toy will be pliable enough that it can be stuffed when it's finished. Don't use tear-away or cut-away stabilizers, which tend to be too heavy and stiffen the toy too much. Having recently read that sturdy plastic bags can be used as stabilizer in some cases, I decided to try it for these tiny toys, and am happy to report that it worked well, at least for my machine. Although I am using Press N Seal in the photos, I now always use plastic bags for making the toys.

2. Select a piece of black felt approximately 3" x 4". Lay the felt on the sticky surface in the center of the hoop and press in place.



3. Place the hoop in the machine and stitch up to but not including the last color.



4. Remove the hoop from the machine but do not unhoop the design. The stitch-out will look like the image at left.



5. Turn the hoop face down. You will be able to see the stitching clearly.

6. Lay a second piece of black felt on the back of the hoop so that it completely covers the stitching. Use small pieces of painter's masking tape to hold the felt in position on the back of the hoop.



7. Change the bobbin thread to black for the final line of stitching

Once the bobbin has been changed, carefully return the hoop to the machine and stitch the final color.



8. Remove the hoop from the machine. Your stitched design is complete and can be removed from the hoop for stuffing and finishing.



9. Gently remove the plastic from around the stitched toy. It should tear away easily from around the stitching.

If you have used tulle, organza, or lightweight wash-away instead of the Press N Seal, you can simply trim it along with the felt in the next step.



10. With small sharp scissors, trim neatly around the edges of the toy, cutting away the white outline and leaving a border of about 1/8" around the stitching. Leave him untrimmed for now along the top of his head between his ears.

You should work carefully, making as smooth a cut as you can, since this will be the outer edge of your toy.



11. The next step is to add a tiny bit of polyester stuffing to the toy, just enough to give it shape. I use the blunt end of a thin bamboo skewer as a stuffing tool for tiny toys.



12. Using tiny bits of polyester stuffing (about the size of a pea), work stuffing into the toy using the skewer. Fill the legs, then the arms, belly, cheeks, and the rest of the head.



13. When the body of the toy has been filled, stitch the bottom closed by hand or machine, following the stitched outline. I like to use invisible (nylon) thread for this step, but you can use black if you prefer.



14. Trim the excess felt away from around the cat's ears, leaving no more than a 1/8" border.



15. The finished cartoon cat – all set to be slipped into a mini stocking ornament.

