

Tiny Cat Toy (To Fit Mini Stocking Ornament)

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Tiny 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 him after stuffing.



Three versions are included in the design: striped cat, tuxedo cat (with white belly), and plain cat.

When stitched, the Cat toy measures approximately 1.5" x 3.1" (38 x 79 mm), and fits into any of the stocking ornaments on the site.

You will need

- Two 3x4.5" pieces of felt in the color of your choice
- A tiny amount of polyester fiber stuffing

Tiny 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 colored felt approximately 3" x 4.5" in the color of your choice. (I am using orange because I am making an orange striped cat, but you can of course use whatever color you wish). 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. Remove the hoop from the machine but do not unhoop the design.



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



5. Lay a second piece of 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.



6. Change the bobbin thread to an appropriate color for the final line of stitching. I am using the same brown that I used for the stripes on my cat.



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

7. Take the hoop from the machine. Remove the plastic from around the stitched design – it should tear away easily.



7. With small sharp scissors, trim neatly around the edges of the toy, leaving a border of about 1/8" around the stitching. Leave the area at the bottom untrimmed for now, as shown in the photo.



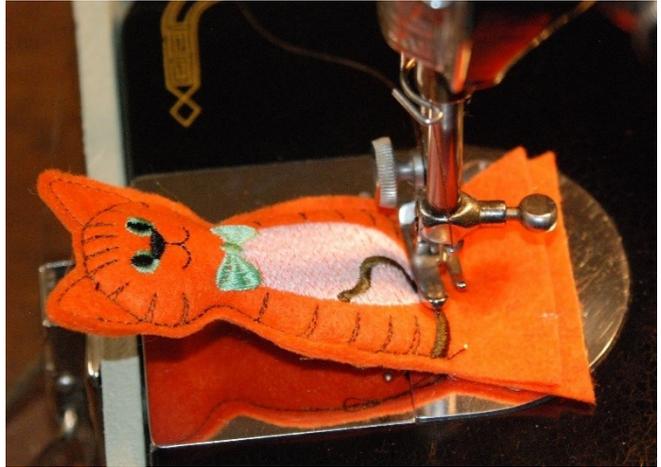
8. The next step is to add a tiny bit of polyester stuffing to the toy, just enough to give it shape. I use a thin bamboo skewer as a stuffing tool.



9. Using tiny bits of polyester stuffing (about the size of a pea), work stuffing into the toy using the skewer. Fill the head first and then the belly, right to the bottom.



10. When the body of the toy has been filled, stitch the bottom closed by hand or machine, using matching thread or invisible (nylon) thread. Trim the excess felt away from the bottom of the toy, leaving a scant 1/8" border.



11. All three cats stitch using the same instructions; you can vary the colors to suit your preference. These three are ready to slip into some mini stockings.

