

Tiny Mermaid Toy (To Fit Mini Stocking Ornament)

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Tiny Mermaid stitches up in approximately 5 minutes. She sews almost entirely in the 4x4" hoop except for a line of machine stitching to close her up after stuffing. When finished, she stands approximately 1.8" x 3.2" and fits nicely into the Mini Stocking Tree Ornaments.



You will need

- One 2.5x4.5" piece of pink, peach, or tan felt
- One scrap of green felt approx. 2.5x2.5"
- One 2.5x4.5" piece of green, black, or white felt OR
One scrap of orange and a second scrap of green felt, each approx. 2.5x2.5
- A tiny amount of polyester fiber stuffing

Tiny Mermaid 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.

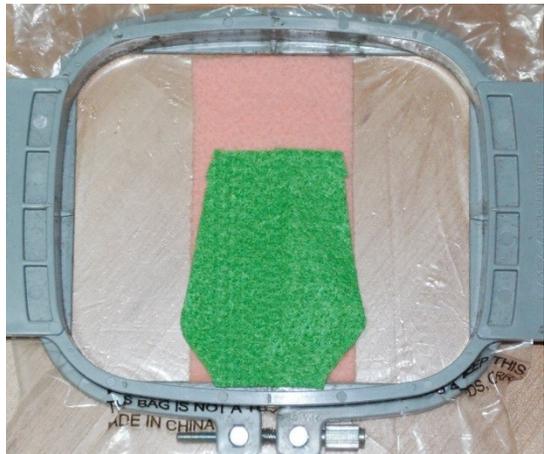


You really want the lightest stabilizer you can find so the toy will be pliable enough that it can be stuffed when it's finished. Don't use tear-away or cut-away stabilizers, which tend to be too heavy and stiffen the toy too much. Having recently read that sturdy plastic bags can be used as stabilizer 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. Place a piece of pink or peach felt approximately 2.5" x 4.5" against the sticky Press N Seal in the center of the hoop, pressing to hold it in place. If you are using a stabilizer other than Press n Seal, you will need to lightly spray the felt with temporary adhesive before pressing it into position.



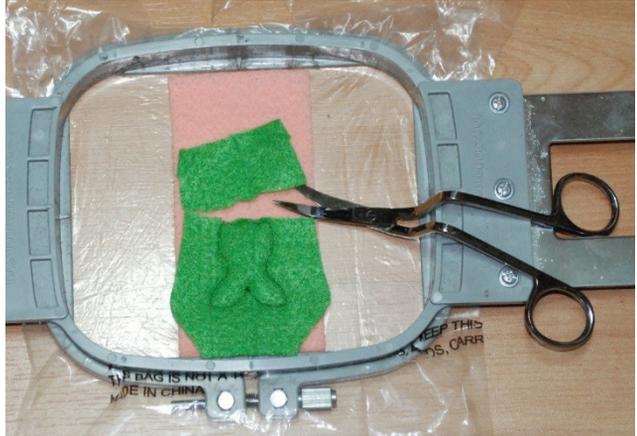
3. Lightly spray a small piece of green felt approximately 2.5"x 2.5" (I am using an irregular scrap from my stash) and position it over the bottom of the pink felt. Place the hoop in the machine and sew the first color.



4. Remove the hoop from the machine but do not unhoop the design. You will be able to see the stitched outline of the tail.



5. Using curved scissors or a sharp nail scissor, carefully trim away the green felt across the top of the tail piece, leaving it untrimmed around the remainder of the tail outline.



6. Return the hoop to the machine and stitch the next 6 colours, stopping after you have stitched the mouth. **Do not stitch the final two colours yet.** Remove the hoop from the machine again, but do not unhoop the design.



7. Turn the hoop face down; you will be able to see the stitching clearly.



9. In this step you will be covering the back of the stitching with a second piece of felt. If you like, you can use a plain piece of black, white, or green felt for this step. Secure the felt with masking tape as shown.



10. Instead of the plain felt, you might prefer to use a two-tone backing as I have done, in colors to match the tail and hair (here, green and orange). To make this backing, I overlapped the edges slightly and topstitched the two colors together using invisible thread in a conventional sewing machine.



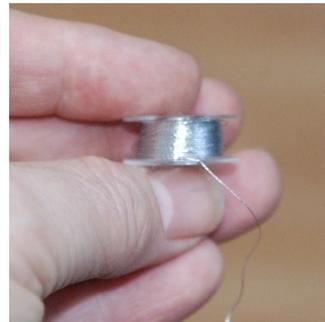
11. With the hoop still face down, lay this combined piece of felt over the back of the hoop so that the seam lines up with the stitched line where the tail begins.



12. Tape the combo felt piece in position with masking tape, just as you would do for a plain color.



13. Change the bobbin to invisible thread for the final line of stitching.



14. Once the bobbin has been changed, carefully return the hoop to the machine and stitch the remaining two colors.



Remove the hoop from the machine and unhoop the design..

15. Remove the plastic wrap. It should tear out easily. If you are using a stabilizer other than plastic, trim it away in the next step.



16. Trim around the Mermaid with small sharp scissors. Work carefully, making as smooth a cut as you can, since this will be the outer edge of your toy. As you trim, leave a border of about 1/8" around the stitching. Leave the segment above her head untrimmed for now, as shown in the picture.



17. The next step is to add a tiny bit of polyester stuffing to the Mermaid, just enough to give her shape. I use the blunt end of a thin bamboo skewer as a stuffing tool.



18. Using tiny bits of polyester stuffing (about the size of a pea), work stuffing into the toy using the skewer. Fill the tail first, then the upper body, and finally the head. Use just enough stuffing to give her some shape, but don't overfill her.



19. When you have finished stuffing the body, close the top of the head with a line of stitching by hand or machine, using invisible (nylon) thread and following along the top edge of her hair. A straight-sew foot is helpful so you can see what you're doing.



20. When you have closed the top of the Mermaid, trim the remaining waste away, leaving a border about 1/8" around the top of the head. The Mermaid is now complete



21. Tiny Mermaid is adorable tucked into one this Wavy Starfish-Shell Mini Stocking.

