

Custom Mini Stocking Ornaments

<jensoriginalsembroiderydesigns.yolasite.com>

Posted 2024 Feb 23

My sister has loved these mini stocking ornaments since I made the very first ones, back when she was a little kid. What fascinated her then – and still

does -- is the little felt toys that I tucked into each stocking. I started with miniature teddies like this one, but the collection has grown to include many other animals and characters.



Over the years, she's gifted many friends with mini stocking ornaments. Recently, though, she made a special request.

One of her friends has a pet pug who just adores my sister, and she wanted a mini sock with a pug inside. With the image at right as inspiration, I drew my own version and got busy digitizing.



My tiny pug toy is just a touch thinner than the original drawing, so it will fit nicely inside the mini sock.

You can see the preliminary stitch-out at right. (As it turns out, the real-life pug is actually black, so I'll use a dark grey when I do the final stitch-out.)

My sister says this little pug is adorable, and I guess I did such a good job that she had another idea



While she was thinking about it, my sister decided that it would be great if I could make mini socks for her friend's whole family (five in all), with tiny toys that are look-alikes for all the animals in the household: not just the pug, but the other two dogs (a labradoodle and a mutt) and two cats (a fluffy orange one and a black-white short-hair).

As a starting point, she sent me these photos. It's going to be a challenge, all right.

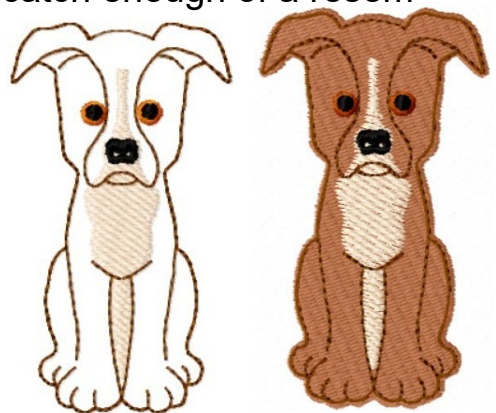


Although the little animals I've been making for the stockings have been getting more detailed and realistic over the past few years, like this raven at left, I haven't really been doing "portraits" of specific pets, so at first I wasn't sure about the idea. But . . . emboldened by my success with the pug, I thought I'd give it a shot.

I started with the mutt. Of necessity, the little felt version has to be somewhat stylized; I just need to catch enough of a resemblance that his family will be able to recognize him.



When I stitch him, I'll use a background of tan/ginger felt.

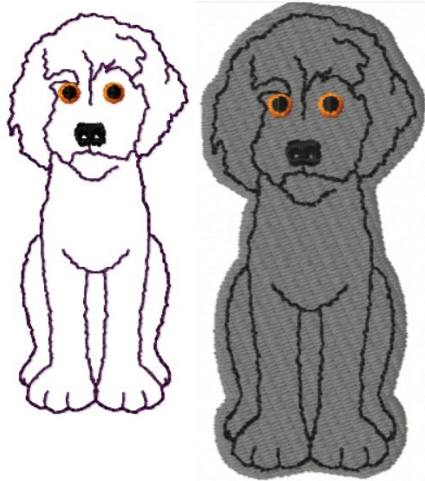


I've just finished digitizing this one, and haven't yet done a test stitch-out, but I'm happy with the design,

and it's already been sister-approved.

Next on my list was the labradoodle: I wasn't at all sure how I was going to approach it. Once again, as with all the toys, I was constrained by the necessity to fit the finished toy into the mini stocking.

I already had a basic dog body shape to work with, so I really just needed a labradoodle head. Taking as my



inspiration this image of a labradoodle face, I drew a dog that I could digitize to fit into the mini stocking. I'll stitch him on dark grey felt to make the toy.

With the dogs done, I turned my attention to the cats. I already had a simplified cat design, made specifically as a companion for the mini stockings, but I wanted something a little more realistic for this project. I started with the fluffy cat.

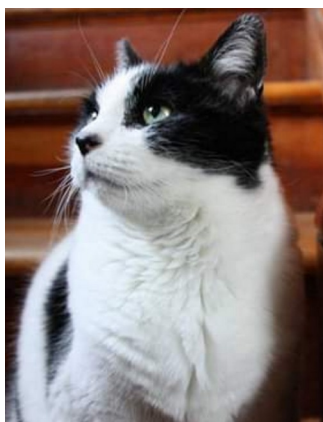


companion for the mini stockings, but I wanted something a little more realistic for this project. I started with the fluffy cat.



I re-drew my original cat, adding a bit more shaping and some details to make him look fluffier. In this screen shot, the white details look fuller than they will in the actual stitch-out.

I'll make him from light orange felt, close to the colour of the actual cat.



For the short-haired black and white cat, I kept more or less the same body shape, but without the "fluffy" look, since he's a short hair. I'll sew him on white felt, leaving the back plain, without embroidered details.

See the first stitch-outs on the next page.



Here are the first stitch-outs, just finished this morning. I can see a couple of small changes to make, but overall I am pleased.



I'm wondering whether a pinkier orange felt might do for the fluffy cat for next time. But I am happy with the stitch-out itself.



I chose a dark grey for this pug to show up the black stitching. In general I think I prefer the look of the tan one, but this is cute.



I very definitely have to do the outline stitches with a light grey thread instead of the white; it just doesn't show up well enough on the white felt. Otherwise I'm happy with how this B/W cat looks.

As I look again at the photos, it seems that the labradoodle might have a bit of a brownish tinge, which this grey felt doesn't capture. Otherwise he may just be my favourite.



I like how Caesar turned out, though he could perhaps be a touch bigger.



Not bad for a first draft; overall, I think I caught the pets well enough for them to be recognizable. My sister will be tickled pink.