cut & sew
narwhal plush

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If you're reading this, then you likely purchased some of my Cut & Sew Narwhal Plush fabric from Spoonflower. So thank you!
These instructions will go over how to sew up your fabric to make an adorable narwhal plush. It comes together quickly and is great for a beginner that's ready to move onto more complex projects. It features two side fins, chubby body, tiny tail, and of course a spiral horn. It's perfect for any nautical lover!

SKILLS USED:

- Basting
- Darts
- Sewing small pieces
- Gathering stitch, gathering
- Ladder stitch

MAKES:

One plush: 4" wide (6" if you include fins), 6" long, and 3½" tall (4" if you include horn)

DIFFICULTY:

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If you're new to sewing, the hardest parts of this plush will likely be placing the fins, and sewing the body to the bottom. So be sure to use lots of pins and sew carefully for these parts.

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materials & tools:

- your pre-printed cut & sew narwhal plush fabric from Spoonflower (at least one fat quarter)
- sewing thread to match fabrics
- poly-fil stuffing
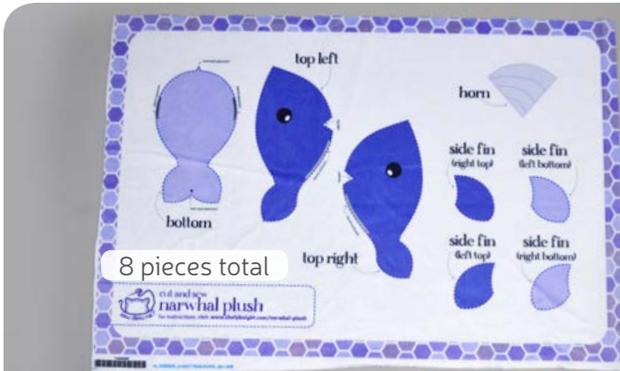- basic sewing tools (sewing machine, scissors, needles, pins, seam ripper, etc.)

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- Briefly read the project instructions so you know what to expect.
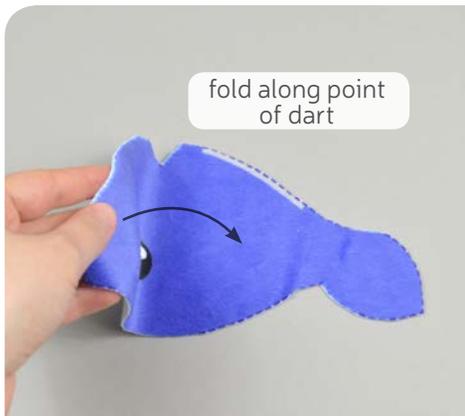- Note that a ¼" seam allowance is used throughout the project -- already included in the fabric.

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cut pieces right before you need them

1. ASSESS YOUR FABRIC

- Grab your printed Spoonflower cut & sew fabric. If you ordered ¼ yd. of minky or fleece, it should include all the pieces needed (surrounded by a border).
  There should be 8 pieces included: **BOTTOM**, **TOP** (left & right), **TOP SIDE FIN** (left & right), **BOTTOM SIDE FIN** (left & right), and **HORN**.

- If you're new to sewing, you might want to wait until the applicable step before cutting your fabric so you can refer to the notes and labels.
  Once you need a piece, cut it out along the dotted lines outside the shape.

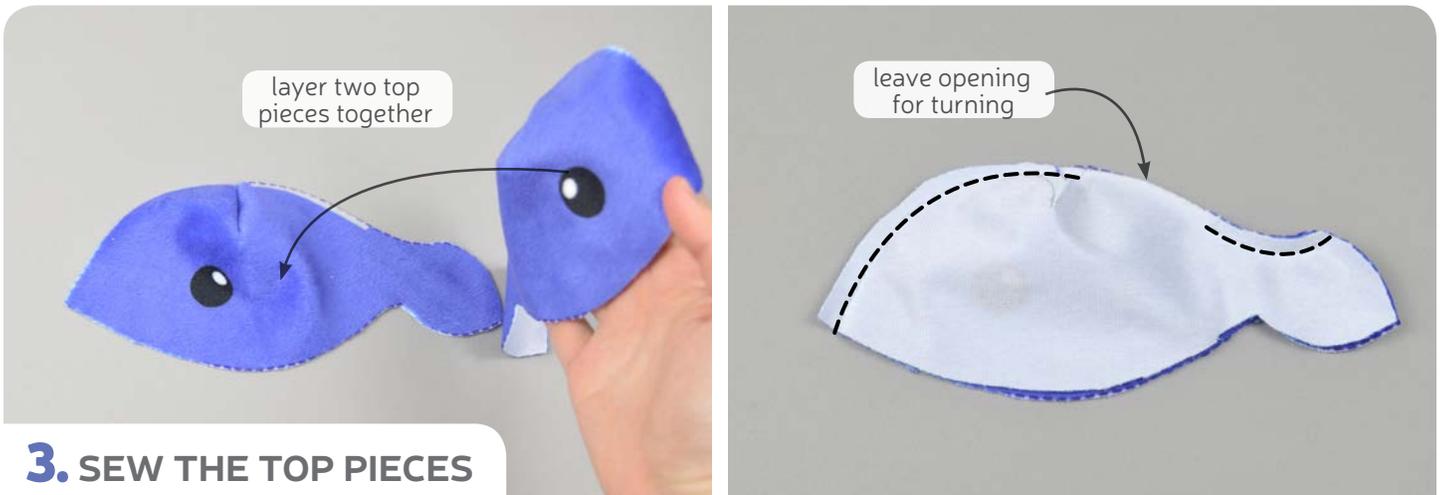fold along point of dart

blend seam into fold

2. SEW THE TOP DART

- Cut out both of your **TOP** pieces. Locate the open wedge along the top of each piece -- these are the *darts*. To sew them, start by folding the top piece in half along the point of the dart and match up the slanted lines that make the wedge shape.

- Sew the darts by starting at the opening and moving down to the point. When sewing the point, try to blend the seam in with the fold so it makes a smooth transition and a rounder finished plush.

- Repeat steps these steps for the other **TOP** piece for two complete pieces total.

darts:
A wedge-shaped gap found in a pattern. When sewn in fabric, it creates a tuck in the fabric and develops a 3D shape. The diagonal sides of the wedge are the **LEGS**; these are matched up and sewn to the **POINT** of the dart.
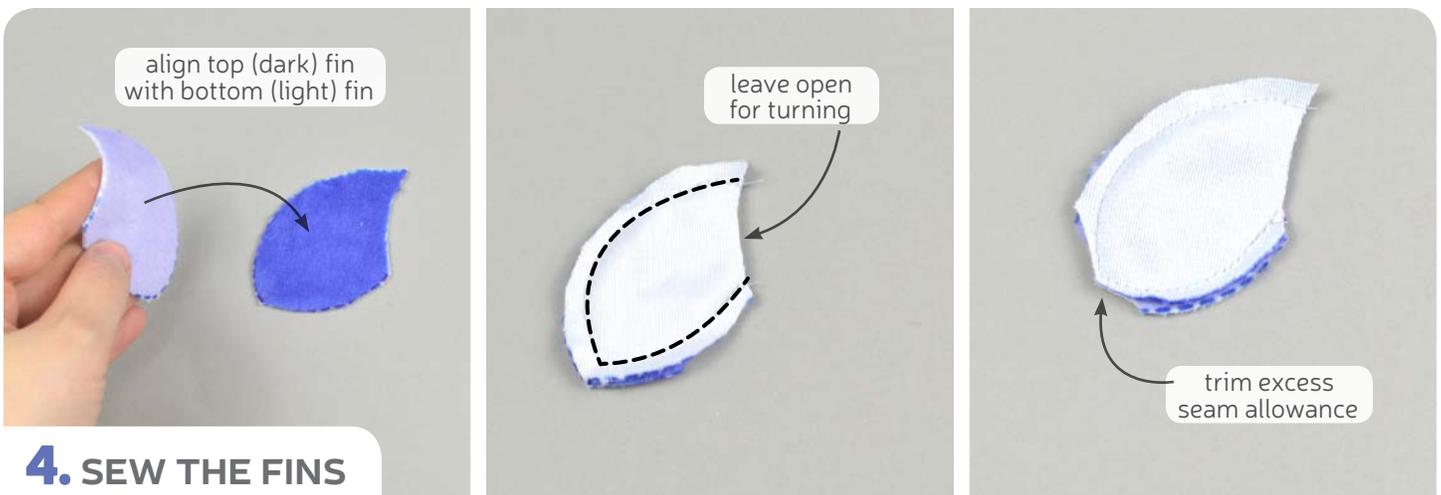
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layer two top
pieces together

leave opening
for turning

3. SEW THE TOP PIECES

- Align your two **TOP** pieces together with right sides facing and raw edges matching up. Line up the top darts and pin the two pieces along this edge only.

- Take note of the *opening for turning area* marked in a contrasting color band. Pin this edge of the narwhal together.
  Sew the two pieces together along this edge, being sure to leave an opening where it's marked for turning later.

align top (dark) fin
with bottom (light) fin

leave open
for turning

trim excess
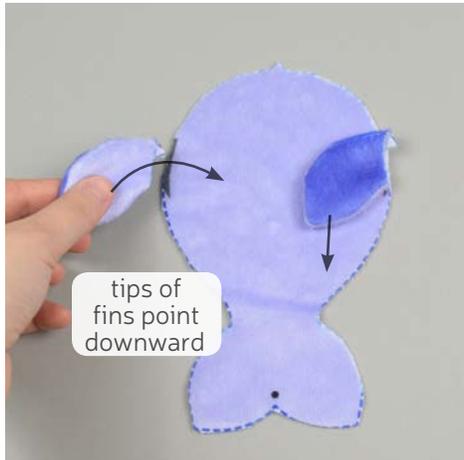seam allowance

4. SEW THE FINS

- Cut out all four of your **SIDE FIN** pieces. Take the two **RIGHT SIDE FINS** (top & bottom) and align them together with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.

- Sew the two pieces in together along the pointed end, leaving the short straight-ish edge free for turning right side out later.

- Trim the excess seam allowance near the corner to decrease bulk.
  Repeat this with the **LEFT SIDE FINS** (top and bottom) for two complete fins total.
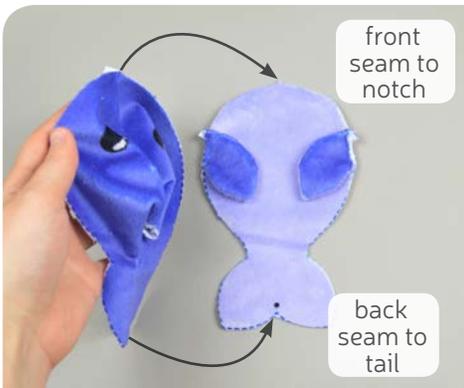
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5. BASTE THE FINS

- Turn them both of the **FINS** right side out.

- Cut out your **BOTTOM** piece. Find the colored bands that indicate the fin placement. Place the open end of the fins within these bands. The lighter fabric should face the bottom and the tip of the fins should point down toward the tail.

- Baste the fins in place by stitching them within the seam allowance to the **BOTTOM** piece.

tips of fins point downward

baste within seam allowance

basting:
A form of temporary sewing meant to hold pieces in place. A long stitch length is often used for this reason. The finished result is not meant to be seen and sometimes is even removed later (depending on your project).

front seam to notch

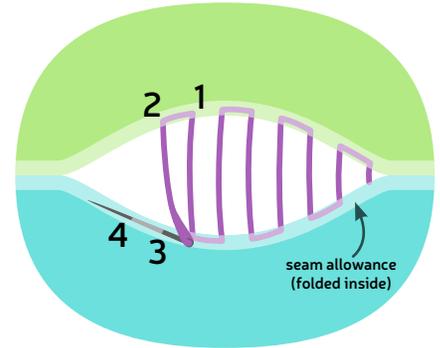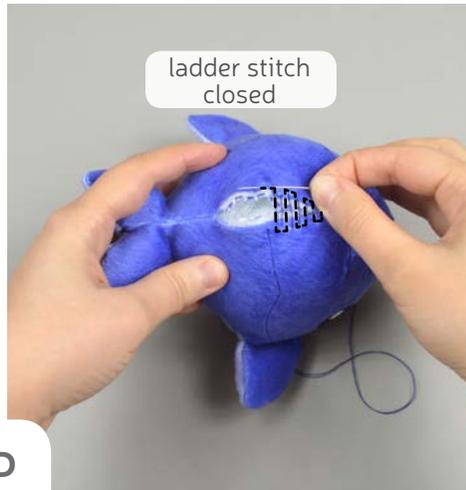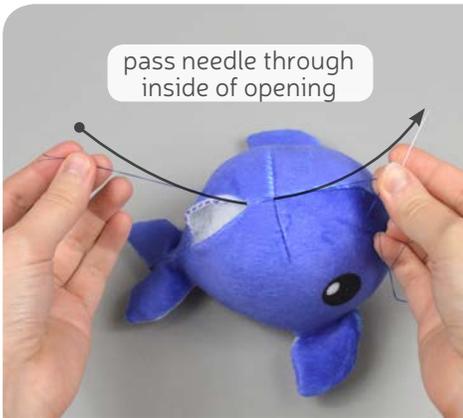**back seam to tail**

clip corners

6. SEW THE BOTTOM

- Grab the **TOP** pieces you've sewn so far. The open end of the **SIDE** pieces should fit completely around the edges of the **BOTTOM**.
  Start by locating the notch marking on the **BOTTOM** piece. This should match up with the front seam of the **TOP** pieces. The circle marking found between the tail fins on the **BOTTOM** should match up with the seam on the tail for the **TOP**. Once those are matched up, pin around the entire body.

- Sew around the entire perimeter of the narwhal body. Be sure to pivot at the corners near the tail and that the **SIDE FINS** are tucked inside.

- Once complete, trim the excess seam allowance at the outer corners to reduce bulk, and clip the seam allowance inner corners to increase flexibility once the plush is turned.

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pass needle through inside of opening

ladder stitch closed

2 1

4 3

seam allowance (folded inside)

7. STUFF & SEW CLOSED

- Turn the narwhal body right side out through the opening you left in the back. Stuff it firmly with stuffing, being sure to put small bits in the tail first so those get full.

- Make sure the seam allowances in the opening are tucked inside and prepare to ladder stitch it closed. Thread a hand-sewing needle and knot it at the end. Insert the needle from the inside of the opening and out of the plush near one edge of the opening. This will leave the knot inside the plush.

- Continue from here doing a ladder stitch. Take a 1/8" stitch into the fold of one side of the opening, then go across and take another. Keep going down the opening until you reach the end.

bring needle out 1-2" away

hold thread taut while clipping

8. CLIP THE THREADS

- When you're finished, stitch a knot into the end of the seam. Then insert the needle near the finished knot and out of the plush about 1-2" away.

- Pull the thread through and hold it taut while snipping the thread. The excess thread should sink back inside the plush -- all hidden!

tip: if you stop now, you've got a whale instead!

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fold in half lengthwise

trim seam allow-ance at corner

leave open for turning

9. SEW THE HORN

- Cut out your **HORN** piece. Fold the horn in half lengthwise to make it into a skinner triangle. Bring right sides together and align the diagonal edges.

- Sew the horn along this edge, leaving the bottom curved edge free for turning later.

- Trim the excess seam allowance near the tip of the horn to reduce bulk.

turn right side out

stuff from tip and work to the opening

stitch around horn opening

10. TURN AND STUFF THE HORN

- Turn the horn right side out and define the point with a chop-stick or similar turning tool.

- Stuff the horn lightly with stuffing. Be sure to put small bits in the tip to start, then work your way up.

- Thread a hand-sewing needle and knot the end. Run a gath-ering stitch around the opening of the horn.
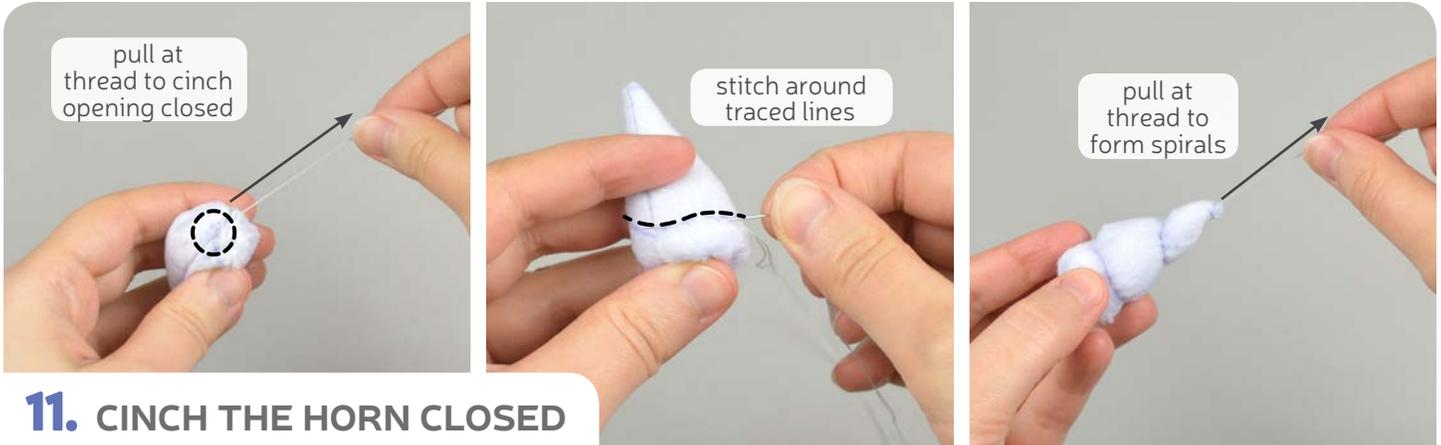
gathering:
The process of shortening the length of a piece of fabric by sewing long stitches through it. When the thread is pulled, it forms small folds that ruffle the fabric.

gathering stitch:
A long version of the running stitch, which is a stitch done by weaving the needle in and out of a length of fabric going along a line. The long stitches (about ¼"-½" long) gather the fabric when pulled later.
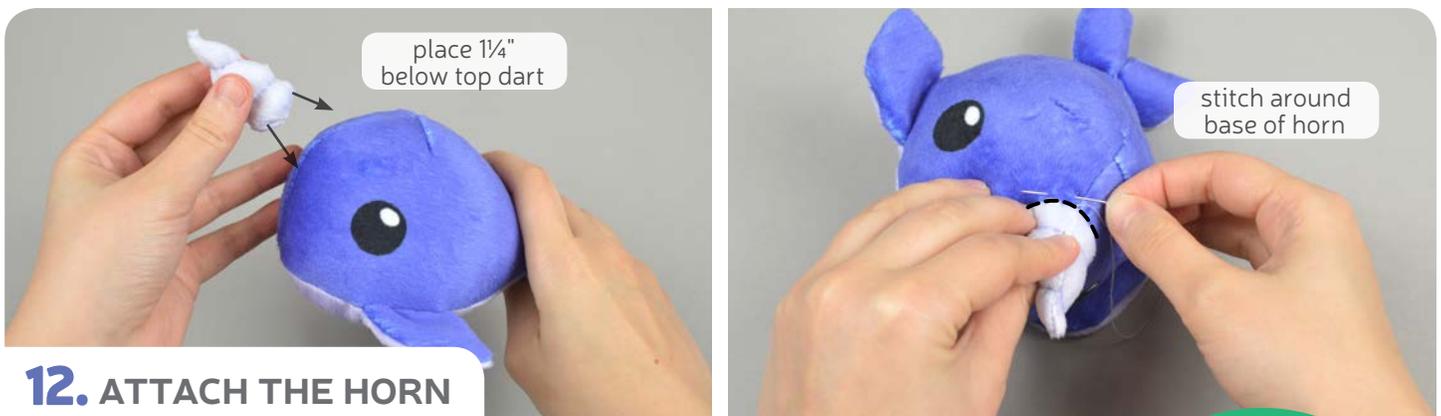
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pull at thread to cinch opening closed

stitch around traced lines

pull at thread to form spirals

11. CINCH THE HORN CLOSED

- Pull at the thread to cinch the horn closed. Tuck in the fabric edges so nothing is poking out.

- Next, sew a gathering stitch along the spiral line printed on the horn. Start from the bottom working around the horn. Try to make the stitches slightly shorter and more even for the best look.

- Keep working in a spiral making gathering stitches all the way to the tip of the horn. Pull at the thread lightly to form the spirals and stitch a knot in the tip of the horn while the thread is lightly cinched. Clip the thread like when closing up the opening in the plush (bring the needle out about 1" away and pull while clipping.)

place 1¼" below top dart

stitch around base of horn

12. ATTACH THE HORN

- Place the cinched bottom of the horn on the forehead of the narwhal. Some people like it at different heights; mine is 1¼" down from the top dart. Pin the horn in place by sticking pins down into the base of the horn into the plush body.

- Stitch around the base of the horn with a ladder stitch similar to how you did back in step 7.

congrats! this completes your plush! Now give it a big hug!

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