

DRAGON BIRD GREAT-EARED NIGHTJAR PLUSH



a free sewing pattern by



DRAGON BIRD PLUSH

The dragon bird is another name for the great-eared nightjar, a species of bird native to parts of southwest India and southeast Asia. It received a bit of internet fame because of its distinctive ears and head shape that make it look like an awesome dragon! This plush version has similar assembly to my previous Bird Puffs plush, so you can expect a round cuddly body. The head is changed up to capture the curved ear tufts, flat head top, and accent neck band that make the bird so recognizable.

SKILLS USED:

- Fusible web applique
- Curved sewing
- Ladder stitch
- Sewing small pieces
- Matching notches and points
- Basting
- Darts

DIFFICULTY:

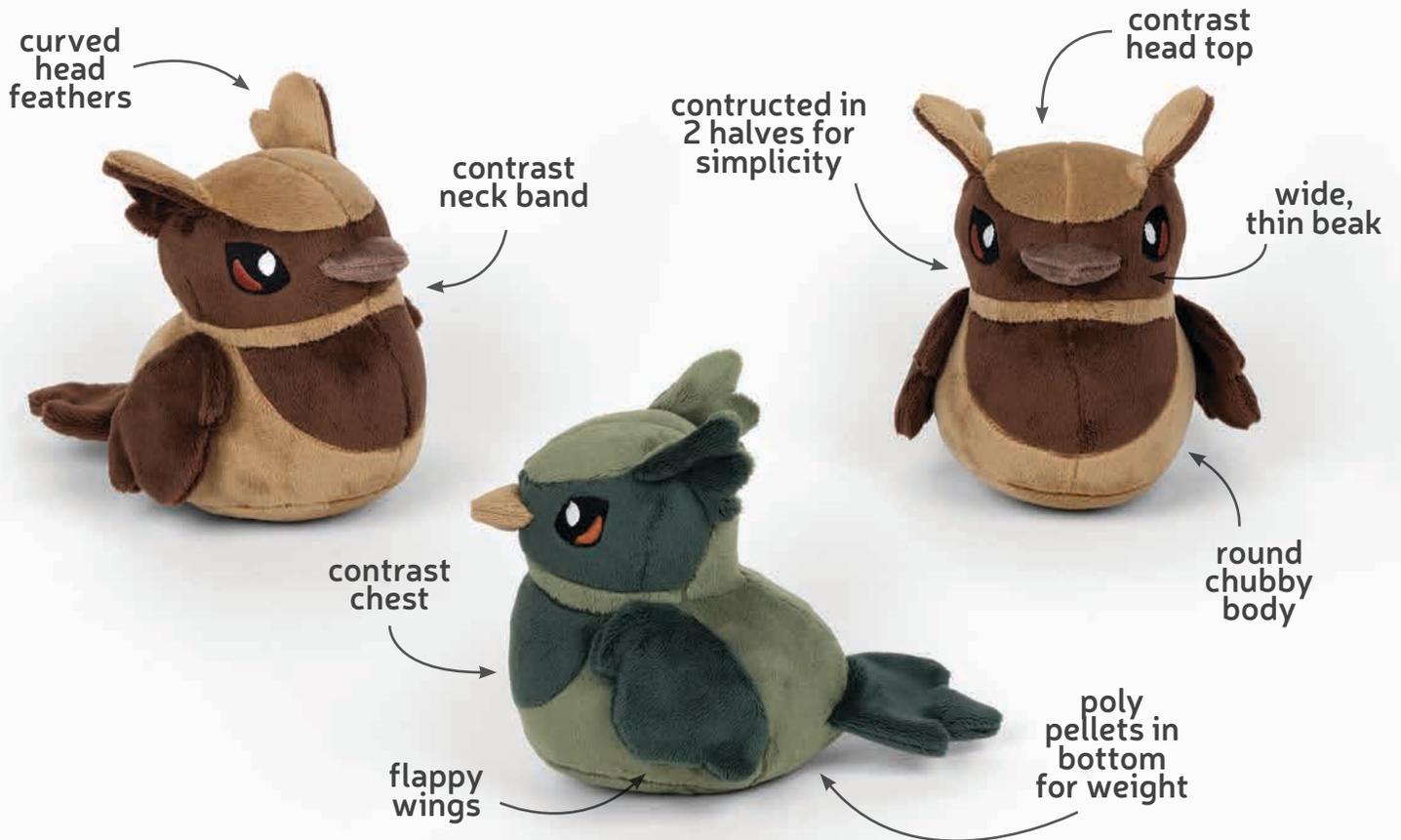


The hardest part of this plush is likely the curves in the top of the head. It helps to work one section at a time and bend the fabrics to make them fit. Both the head top and chest piece are split in half to make the assembly a little simpler.

MAKES:

ONE PLUSH:

About 6½" tall from bottom of body to top of head, 6" long from front of face to back of body (not including beak and tail), and 4" wide from each side of body.



sew desu ne?

| WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM |

MATERIALS & TOOLS:

- ¼ yd. of light brown fabric for body and accents
- ¼ yd. of dark brown fabric for face and wings
- ⅛ yd (or 4" x 5") of greyish brown fabric for beak
- 8" x 5" of scrap fabric for poly pellet pouch
- 3" x 3" of black applique fabric for eyes
- 2" x 2" of brown fabric for eye highlights
- 2" x 2" of white fabric for eye shines
- 4" x 4" of light or heavy duty fusible web
- sewing thread to match main fabric and applique fabrics
- poly-fil stuffing
- basic sewing tools (sewing machine, scissors, iron, needles, pins, fabric marker, seam ripper)
- poly pellets
- spoon or funnel for filling poly pellets

POLY PELLETS:

- Plastic pellets are used to provide weight and texture in plush toys.
- In this project they're optional and used as insurance to keep the plush sitting upright.
- A pouch of scrap fabric is filled with the pellets and inserted into the body.
- It helps to use a spoon or funnel when filling the pouch.
- Brands of poly pellets include **POLY-FIL.**



FUSIBLE WEB:

- Fusible web adhesive is a sheet of adhesive with a paper backing.
Not to be confused with fusible interfacing, which is adhesive attached to a fabric/fiber backing.
- Some common brands are **Pellon & HeatnBond**
- In countries outside the US, it may also be known as **bondaweb**
- It comes in **light** and **heavy duty** varieties. Lightweight strength is meant for applique you intend to sew later. Heavy duty versions are for a no-sew bond. If you try to sew them later your machine might have trouble penetrating the glue.



APPLIQUE FABRICS:

- Good applique fabrics include **flannel, cotton, felt, minky, and fleece.**
- Flannel and cotton are best for detailed applique with a lot of layers because they're thinner. Meanwhile felt, minky, and fleece are better for simpler applique like body markings.
- **Flannel** is used in the example instructions (page 7).



sew desu ne?

| WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM |

fabric comparison:



SUGGESTED BODY FABRICS:

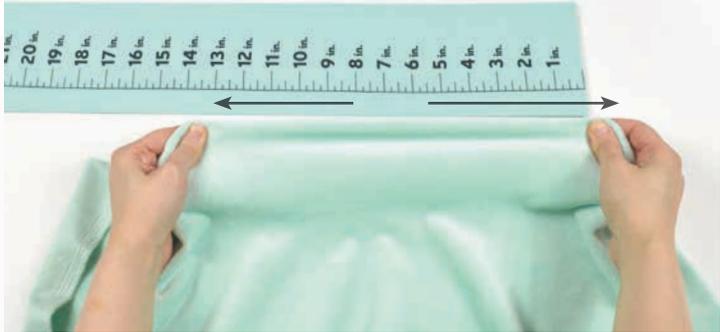
MINKY OR FLEECE

Medium weight, plush fabrics with about 20%-30% stretch along the crosswise grain work best for this project. The varieties shown to the left are some good options and names to look for. Try to avoid heavyweight versions of fleece that are intended for outdoor apparel or they may cause trouble for the detailed areas.

You can also use non-stretch fabrics (such as felt), but be aware that the curves will be more difficult to sew and the result will look different. The plush will become more elongated and the edges will look sharper.

10" of minky stretches to 13" = 30% stretch

MINKY VS. FELT



sew desu ne?

| WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM |

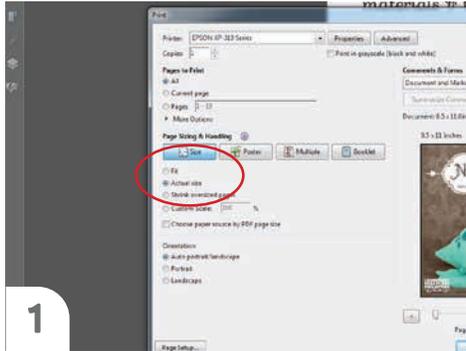
// ©2026 Choly Knight // Items sewn using this pattern may be sold. Credit to "Choly Knight" or "Sew Desu Ne?" is appreciated. You may not reproduce, share, freely distribute, or sell this pattern as your own in digital or printed form.

PRINTING THE PATTERN:

Set your computer to print **PAGES 20-22.**

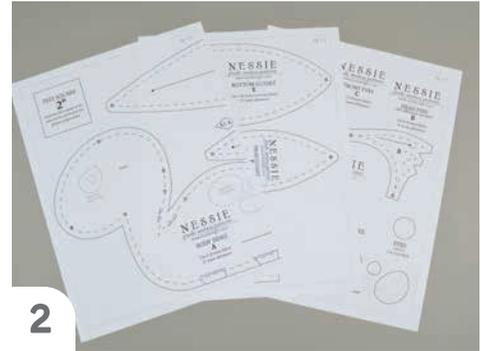
If you're unfamiliar with printing and assembling a .pdf pattern, read the steps to follow.

For the best results, use a .pdf reader like **ADOBE READER**. That's what is shown here and will give you the most control over the settings.



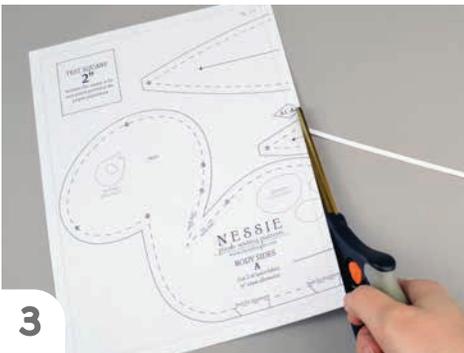
1

At the print dialog box, check the box that says print at "Actual Size" or 100%. Any other selection (such as "Fit to page") will distort the pattern so it's slightly larger or smaller and we don't want that.



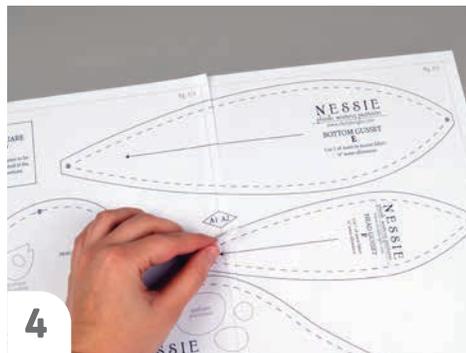
2

Print the pages needed for the file. You might have one or more. Either way, be sure you have the full collection by noting the page numbers in the corner.



3

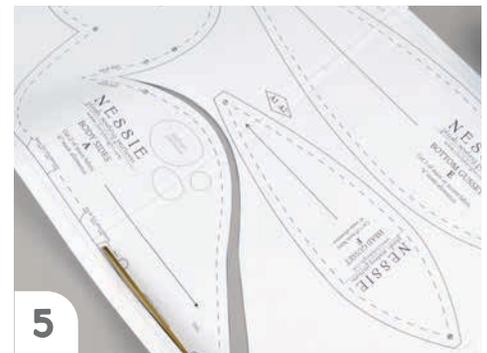
It's likely your printer will have a margin that ensures your image doesn't print to the very edge. Assembly will be easier if you trim off this blank margin edge. This will give you pages that overlap slightly during assembly. If you trim across the gray outline boxes, this will give you pages that don't overlap but rather butt against each other.



4

To line up the pattern pages, match up the corresponding diamond shapes. Each diamond will have a letter, so it's simply a matter of matching A1 to A2, B3 to B4 and so on. The faint gray lines indicate the border of every page, you should be able to line those up as well. When the diamond goes together, tape it in place.

If you have many pages, it's easier to tape up the pages into rows first. Then tape the rows together into a full block.



5

You can trace the patterns onto a different paper, or you can also just cut them straight from the printer paper -- be sure that each piece is fully taped together along the joins so they don't fall apart when you cut them.

sew desu ne?

| WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM |

CUTTING THE FABRIC:



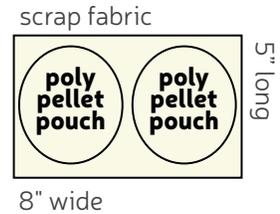
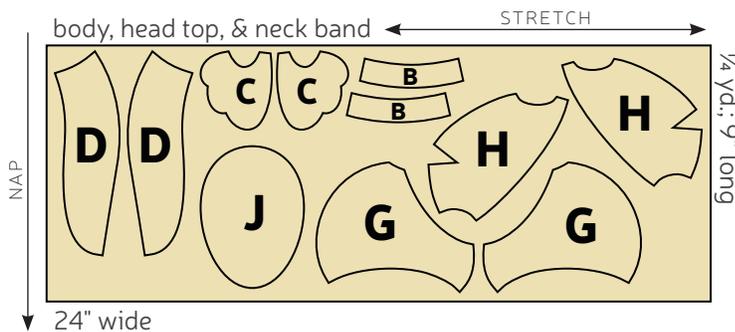
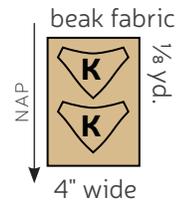
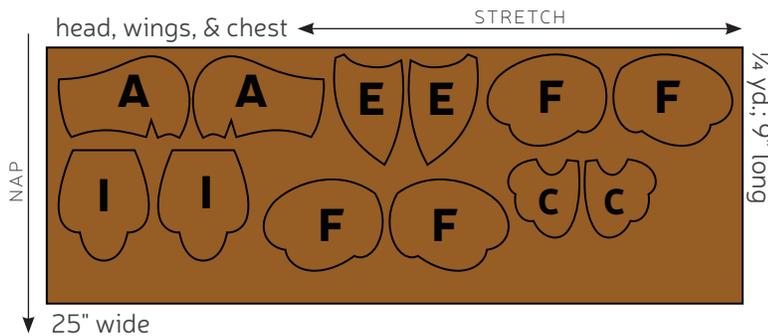
1 Place pattern on the fabric, and make sure the stretch line matches the stretch of the fabric. The nap line should go in the direction of the fur.

2 Pin the pattern in place, use pattern weights, or trace the outline of the pattern with a washable marker.

3 Using the paper as a template, cut out the fabric. Cut the required amount according to the pattern.

4 For all fur fabrics, shake the excess fuzz away.

CUTTING LAYOUT:



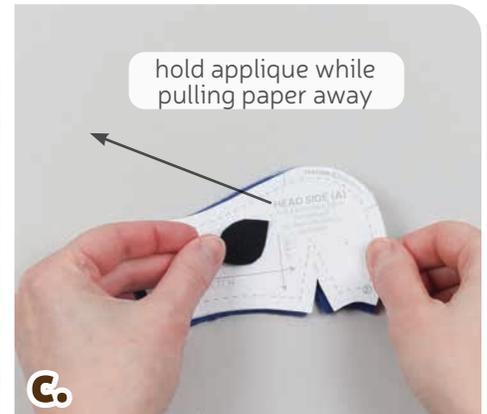
sew desu ne?

| WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM |

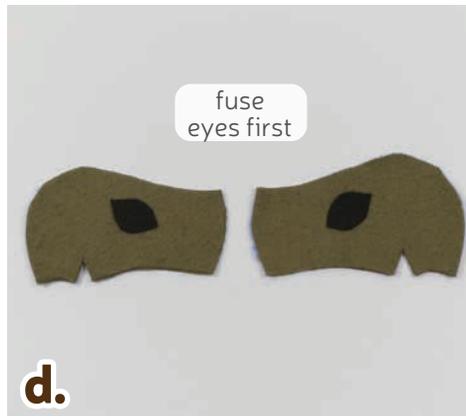
BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- Briefly read the project instructions so you know what to expect.
- If desired, mark the cut fabric pieces with the markings and symbols from the pattern. Or wait until the applicable step before transferring.
- Note that a ¼" seam allowance is used for the project unless otherwise mentioned. The seam allowance is included in the pattern templates.

1. FUSE THE EYE APPLIQUE



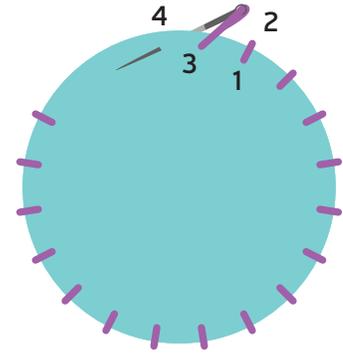
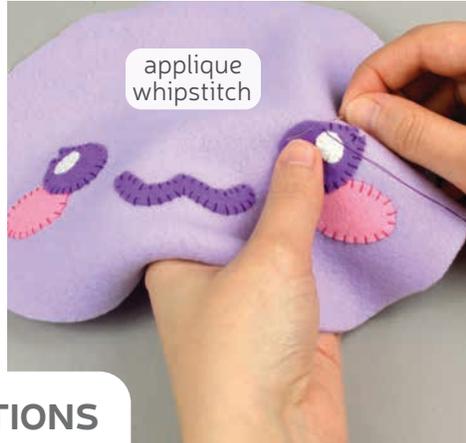
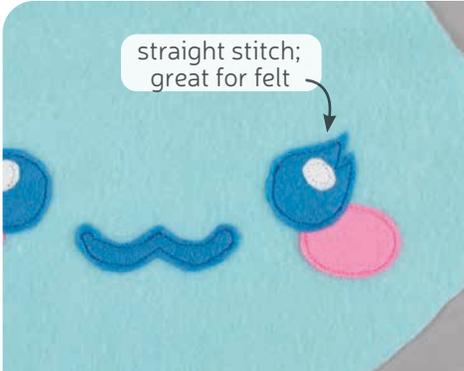
- a.** Grab your fusible web and applique templates. Trace the pieces for the **eyes**. You should have:
- **eyes** (2, black)
 - **eye highlights** (2, brown)
 - **eye shines** (2, white)
- b.** Fuse the bumpy (adhesive) side of the fusible web onto the applique fabrics.
- c.** Cut out your applique pieces and grab your **HEAD SIDE** piece (A). Grab the **eye** applique piece. Set your paper pattern on top of the head side piece. Align the applique piece on top where the placement markings are. Next, carefully pull the paper pattern away while holding the applique piece in place.
- d.** Fuse the applique pieces with your iron. Use a press cloth, such as a scrap piece of cotton. This will help protect any polyester or fuzzy fabrics from melting or scorching.
- e.** Continue with the smaller eye pieces, like the highlights and the eye shines. Fuse them the same way using the paper pattern and photos as a guide.



- This should complete the applique. If you used heavy duty fusible web, you can keep the pieces fused without sewing. If you used lighter fusible web, you'll want to stitch the pieces in place. A zigzag stitch with matching thread works nicely around the edges. For hand sewing options, see the next page.

sew desu ne?

| WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM |



2. OTHER APPLIQUE OPTIONS

- a. Other good options for applique include a straight stitch, which involves sewing around the edge of the applique pieces with a straight stitch using matching thread -- about 1/8" in from the edge.
- b. You can also applique by hand; I prefer a whipstitch. Thread a hand-sewing needle with some matching thread and knot it. Bring the thread up from the back of the project; about 1/8" in from the edge of the applique shape. Bring it down perpendicular from the curve, just outside of the applique shape. This completes one stitch.
- c. For the next stitch, bring the needle back up about 1/8" away from the previous stitch and 1/8" in from the edge just as in the first stitch. Once again, bring it down just outside the applique shape. Continue this way until you've sewn around the shape.



3. SEW THE HEAD DARTS

- a. Grab your **HEAD SIDE** pieces (A). These pieces have small **darts** along the bottom edge. These are the wedge shapes marked on the paper pattern. To sew them, start by folding the fabric along the point of the **dart** so right sides are facing and the slanted edges match up.
- b. Sew from the opening of the **dart** into the fold of the fabric. Try to blend your stitching into the fold for a smooth transition and a rounder finish to the plush. Repeat this with your other head side piece for two 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.

sew desu ne?

| WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM |



4. ATTACH THE NECK

- Grab your **NECK** pieces (B). Also grab your **HEAD SIDE** (A) from before. The neck will join to the bottom of the head along the inner curves as shown. But you can also look for the **numbered points** for help with alignment. Look for **points 1 and 2**.
- Flip over the neck so it's now right sides facing with the head side. Line up **points 1 and 2** along the bottom edge.
- Sew the neck to the head side from **point 1 to 2**.



5. SEW THE HEAD FEATHERS

- Grab your **FEATHER** pieces (C). Take one from your darker fabric and one from your lighter fabric. Align them with right sides facing and the raw edges matching up.
- Sew the pieces together around the outer curve, but leave the inner curve open for turning the piece right side out later.
- Trim the excess seam allowance around the tight corners and curves. Trim around the outer curves to reduce bulk in those areas so the curve looks smooth. Then trim at the inner corners to increase flexibility in those areas so the piece turns more cleanly. Repeat this step with your remaining head feather pieces so you have two total.

sew desu ne?

| WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM |

6. BASTE THE HEAD FEATHERS



- a.** Take your **FEATHERS** (C) and turn them right side out. Also grab your **HEAD SIDE** so far (A&B).

If you haven't already, note the *feather placement lines* found on the paper pattern for the head side. Transfer these markings onto the right side of the fabric if you haven't already.

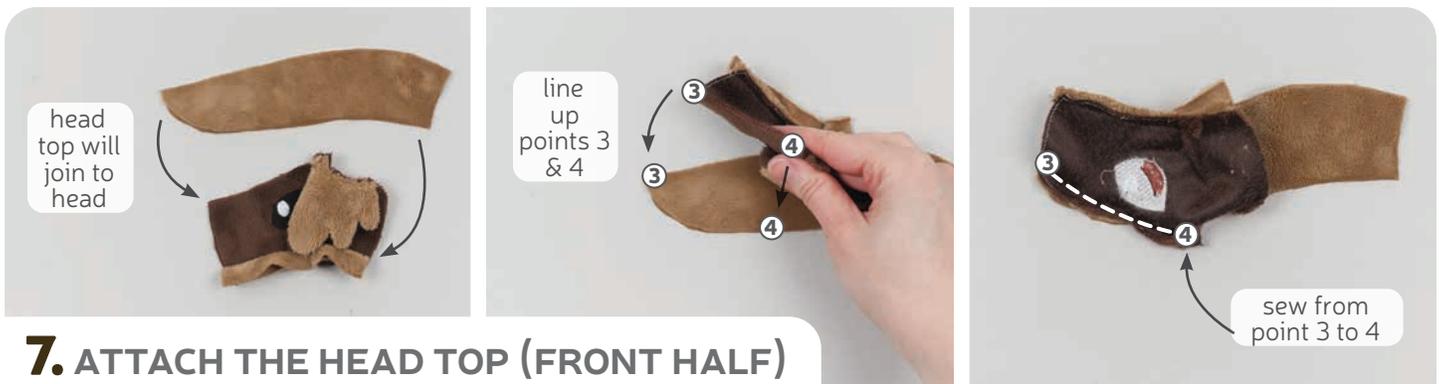
Take your head feathers and align them between these lines. The darker fabrics should both be facing up as shown.

- b.** Now take your feathers and flip them so the darker fabric is facing the head. Bend the inner curve of the opening to match up the raw edges of the feathers with the head. Make sure the dark fabrics are facing and pin the feathers to the head.

→ *This bending will make the feathers a little curved in the finished plush.*

- c.** Baste the feathers to the head within the seam allowance to hold it in place for future steps. Repeat this with your other feather piece and other head piece for two sides total.

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).



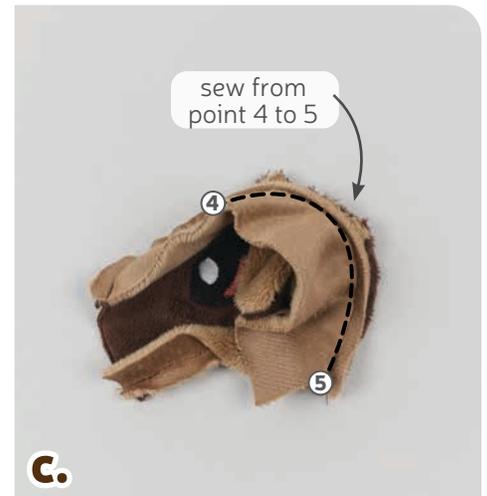
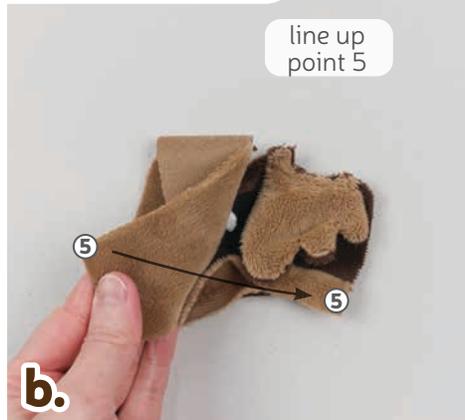
7. ATTACH THE HEAD TOP (FRONT HALF)

- a.** Grab your **HEAD TOP** piece (D). Also grab your **HEAD SIDE** so far (A,B,&C). The top piece will join around the top and back of the head side, but it's very curved so there are extra *numbered points* for help. Look for *points 3, 4, and 5*. Experts can sew this all in one go, but the next few steps will break it down.
- b.** Start by lining up the front half of the head top, *points 3 and 4*. Grab your head side piece and flip it over so it's right sides facing with the head top. Line up *points 3 and 4*. Pin the fabrics together.
- c.** Sew the head side to the top from *point 3 to 4*.

sew desu ne?

| WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM |

8. ATTACH THE HEAD TOP (BACK HALF)

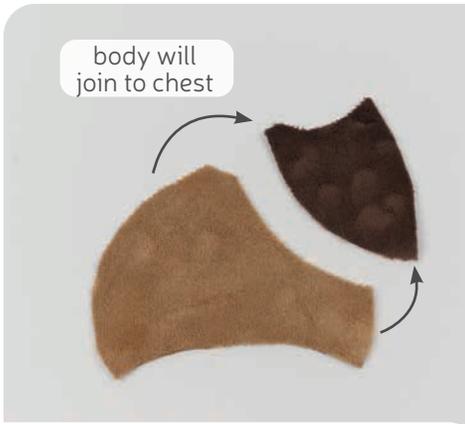


- a. Open up your head pieces when complete, and they should look something like photo A. Up next is attaching the **HEAD TOP** to the back edge of the **HEAD SIDE**, going from **point 4 to 5**.
- b. Line up the head top with the head side with right sides facing. Bend the top piece around the curve of the side. This should sandwich the feathers in between. Pin the fabrics together from **point 4 to 5** at the bottom corner of the neck.
- c. Sew the head top to the head side from **point 4 to 5**. This should secure the head feathers in between the layers. You should end up at the bottom corner of the **NECK** (B).
- d. If you're looking from the other side, it will look something like photo D.
- e. Open up the pieces when complete, and the feathers should be secured within the seam. Repeat this once more with your other head pieces for two total.



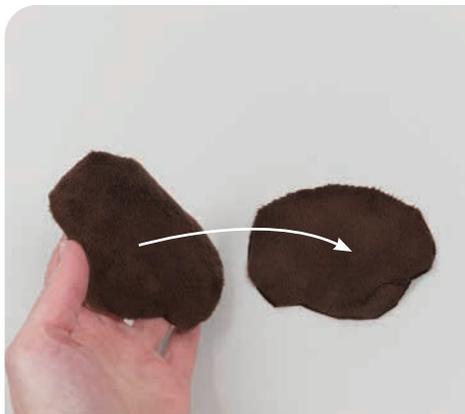
sew desu ne?

| WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM |



9. ATTACH THE CHEST

- Grab your **BODY SIDE** piece (G) and your **CHEST** piece (E). These pieces will join together along the inner curves as shown, but they're also marked with **numbered points** for help with alignment. Look for **points 8 and 9**.
- Flip over your body piece so it's now right sides facing with the chest. Line up the raw edges and **points 8 and 9** at the corners.
- Sew the body piece to the chest from **point 8 to 9**. Then repeat this once more with your other body and chest pieces for two total.



10. SEW THE WINGS

- Grab your **WING** pieces (F). Take two of them and align them with right sides facing and the raw edges matching up.
- Sew the pieces together along the short curved edges, but leave the longer curved edge open for turning. This can be a little difficult to see in this template, so it's marked on the paper pattern with **circle markings** and a **notch** for help with alignment. Sew around the longer edge of the wing from one **circle** to the other. Leave the **notched edge** open.
- Trim the excess seam allowance around the corners and curves of the piece to reduce bulk and increase flexibility in those areas. Repeat this with your other wing pieces for two total.

sew desu ne?

| WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM |



11. ATTACH THE WINGS

- Turn the **WINGS** (F) right side out and define the little curves with a chopstick or similar turning tool.
- Grab your body so far. If you haven't already, note the **wing placement lines** found on the paper pattern for the body side. Transfer these markings onto the edge of your fabric. Take your wing piece and align it onto the body so both right sides are facing up. The **notches** should also align at the edge. Pin the wing to the body.
- Baste the wing to the body within the seam allowance to hold it in place for future steps.



12. ATTACH THE BODY BACK

- Grab your **BODY BACK** pieces (H). Also grab your body so far. The body back will join to the body along the inner edges as shown here, but you can also look for the **numbered points** for help with alignment. Look for **points 10 and 11**.
- Flip over the body back piece so now it's right sides facing with the body. **Points 10 and 11** should match up at the corners and the wing should be sandwiched in between. Line up the raw edges and pin the pieces together.
- Sew the body back to the body from **point 10 to 11**. Repeat this with your other body pieces for two sides total.

sew desu ne?

| WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM |



13. ATTACH THE HEAD



- Grab your body so far as well as your head from before. The head will join to the body at the neck edges. But you can also look for the **numbered points** for help with alignment. Look for **points 6 and 7**. **Point 7** will join at the center front with the **NECK (B)**, and **point 6** will join at the center back with the **HEAD TOP** piece (D).
- Flip over the head so now it's right sides facing with the body. Line up **points 6 and 7** at the front and back corners. Pin the fabrics together along this edge.
- Sew the head to the body from **point 6 to 7**. Repeat this with your other head and body pieces for two total.

14. SEW THE BODY HALVES TOGETHER

- Grab both of your head and body pieces and align them with right sides facing and the raw edges matching up. Pin the pieces together along the front, top, and back. Don't pin the pieces along the **dart opening** at the back. Line up the seams from the previous steps so they make a neat join.



- If you haven't already, **note the opening for turning** marked on the paper pattern for the **HEAD TOP (D)**. Transfer these markings onto the edge of the fabric. Sew the body pieces together along the front, top, and back. Skip over the **dart opening** and also the **opening for turning** along the head back. If you're keeping track, this should take you through **points 12, 9, 7, 3, 6, and 13**. This will leave the bottom open for the bottom piece later.

sew desu ne?

| WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM |



15. SEW THE TAIL

- Grab your **TAIL** pieces (I). Align them with right sides facing and the raw edges matching up.
- Sew the pieces together along the curved edges, but leave the straight edge free for turning the piece right side out later.
- Trim the excess seam allowance around the tight corners and curves to reduce bulk and increase flexibility in those areas.



16. PREP THE TAIL OPENING

- Turn the tail right side out through the opening in the base.
- If you haven't already, note the **clipping line** for the back **dart** found on the **BODY BACK** paper pattern (H). This is to open up the dart a little wider to make room for the tail.
- Reach into the body from the bottom to find the **dart opening**. This will be used to attach the **TAIL** next.

sew desu ne?

| WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM |

17. ATTACH THE TAIL

- Grab your **TAIL** (I) from before. Take the raw end and insert it up from the bottom of the plush.
- Now take the raw edge of the tail and sandwich it between the two sides of the **dart**. Pin the fabrics together so the tail is fully sandwiched between the pieces.
- Secure the tail in place by stitching along the raw edge with the regular $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. This section is technically a **double-ended dart**, so try to blend your stitching into the fold on each side and this will result in a smooth round finish to the completed plush.
- When complete the tail should be secured in the **dart** seam.



18. ATTACH THE BOTTOM

- Grab your **BODY** so far as well as your **BOTTOM** piece (J). The open edge of the body will join all around the bottom. But you can look for the **numbered points** for help with alignment. The center front will match up at **point 12** and the center back will match up at **point 13**. Make sure right sides are facing and pin the fabrics together.
- Sew the body to the bottom all the way around.



sew desu ne?

| WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM |



19. SEW THE POLY PELLETT POUCH

- Grab your **POLY PELLETT POUCH** pieces. If you haven't already, transfer the opening for filling markings found on the paper pattern for the pellet pouch. Take two matching pieces and align them together (either way facing; doesn't matter). Sew around the perimeter of the piece, leaving an opening as indicated by the markings.
- Fill the pouch with poly pellets. I like to use a spoon for this, but some people prefer a funnel.
- Once you're finished, thread a hand sewing needle and stitch the opening closed with a whip stitch or back stitch. You can also sew it by machine, but go very slowly or just use the hand wheel. Sewing over a pellet will very likely break a needle.



20. STUFF THE BODY

- Turn the body right side out through the opening you left in the back of the head.
- Take your sewn **POLY PELLETT POUCH** and insert it into the opening of the plush.
- Nestle the pouch into the center back of the body. This will help the plush stay upright and give it some weight.
You can now begin stuffing the plush. Start by filling up the body around the poly pellet pouch so the bottom looks firm and round.

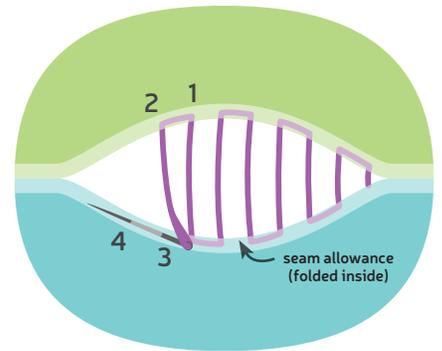
sew desu ne?

| WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM |



21. CLOSE THE BODY

- a. Continue stuffing the body until you reach the head. Then start filling up the head. Be sure to get enough near the seams so there are no wrinkles near the edges.
- b. Once the head is stuffed, 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.
- c. Ladder stitch the head closed. Take a 1/8" stitch into the fold of one side of the opening, then go across and take another. If the head seems a little flat at this spot, stop stitching about halfway. Sneak some more stuffing into the head until you can get it nice and firm and round. Once the head is full, keep stitching down the opening until you reach the end.



22. CLIP THE THREADS

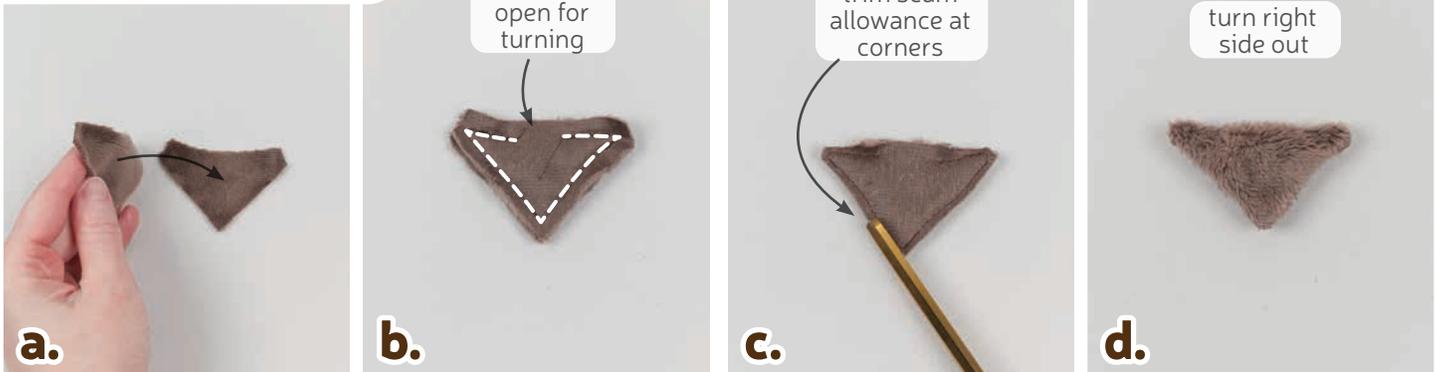
- a. When you're finished, stitch a knot into the end of the seam. Then insert the needle near the finished knot. Bring the needle out about 1-2" away and pull it through.
- b. Pull the thread taut while snipping the thread. The excess thread should sink back inside the plush -- all hidden!



sew desu ne?

| WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM |

23. SEW THE BEAK



- Grab your **BEAK** pieces (K). Align them with right sides facing and the raw edges matching up.
- If you haven't already, note the **opening for turning markings** found on the paper pattern for the beak. Transfer them over to the edge of the fabrics you've just aligned. Sew the pieces together all around the shape, but leave the **opening for turning** that you marked.
- Trim the seam allowances at the outer corners to reduce bulk.
- Turn the beak right side out, and define the sharp points with a chopstick or similar turning tool.



24. ATTACH THE BEAK

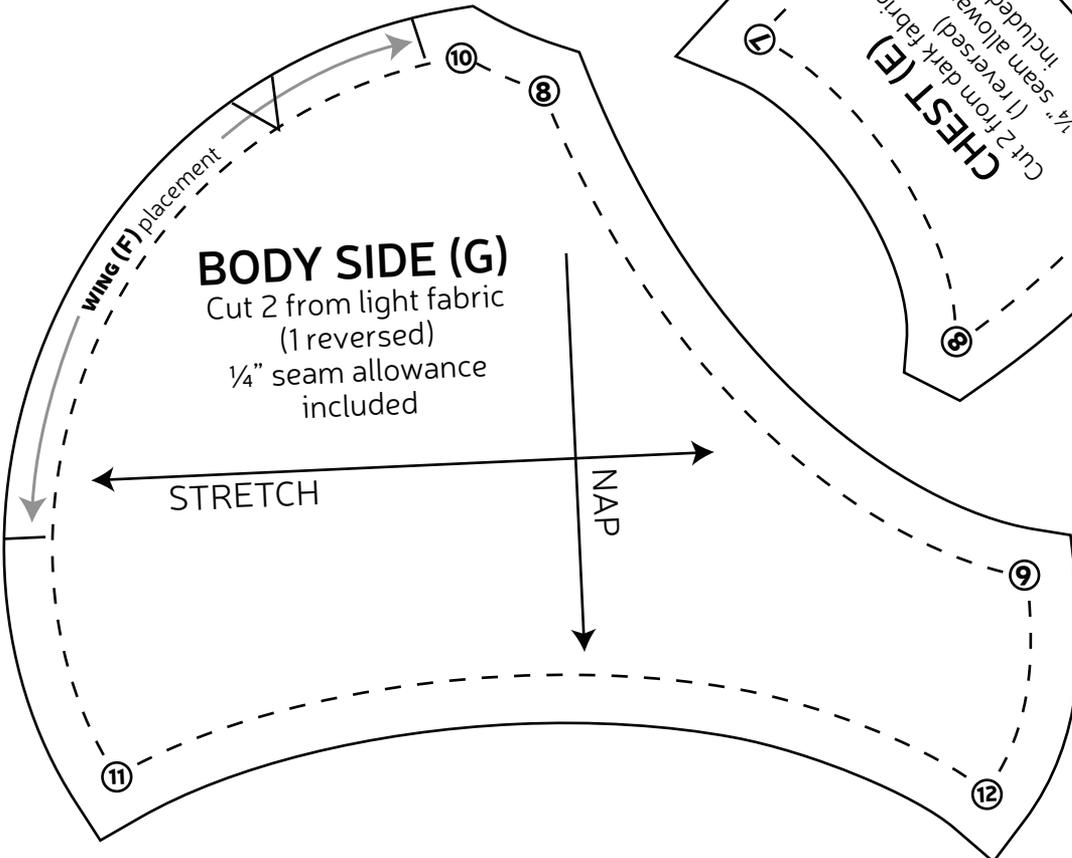
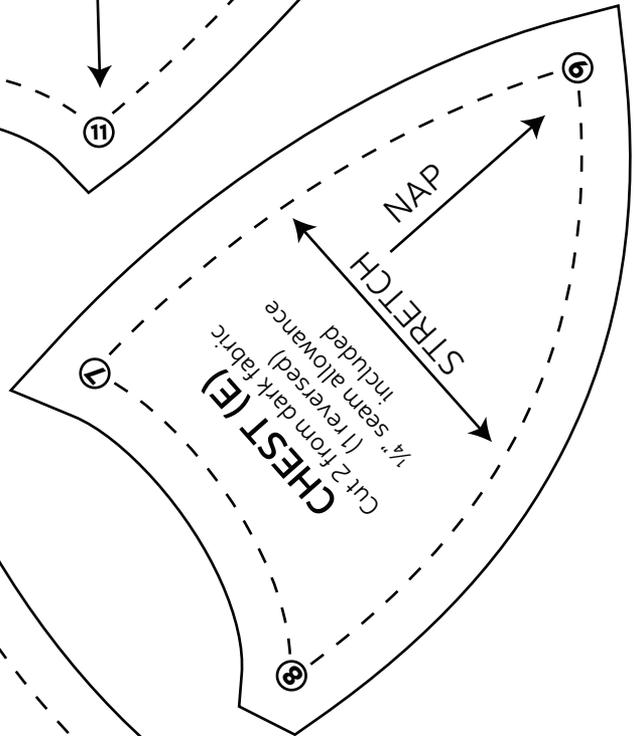
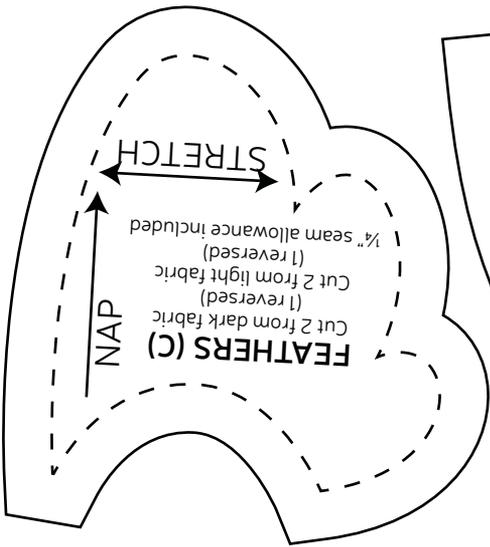
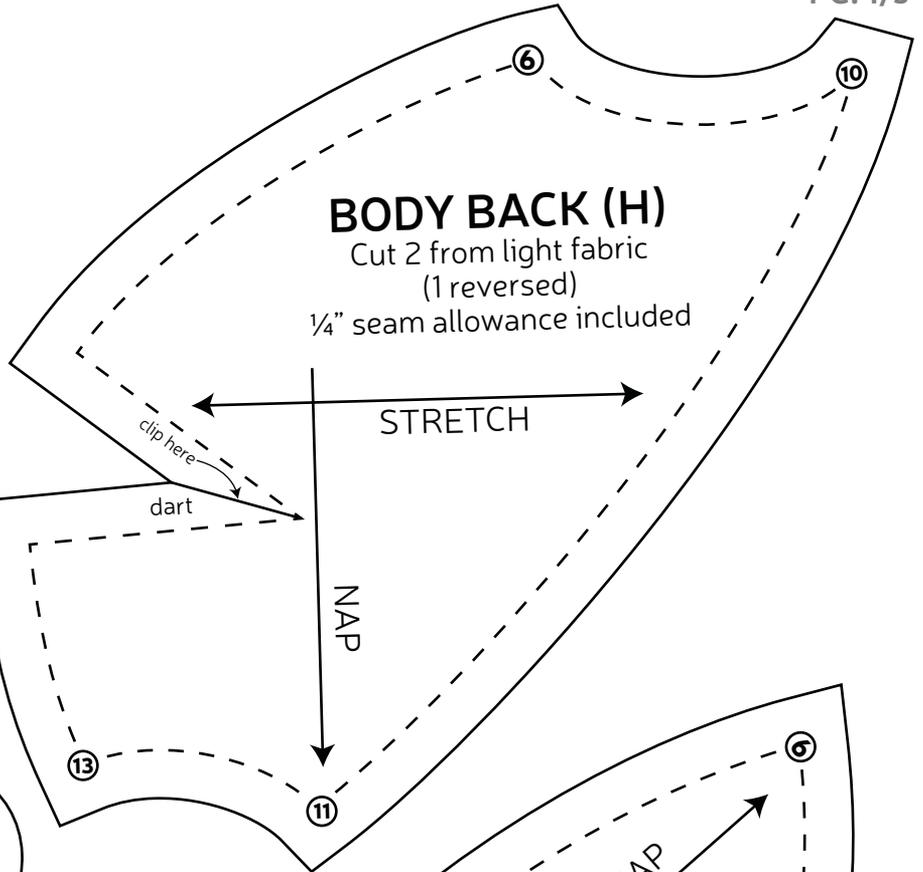
- Stuff the **BEAK** lightly with stuffing. Be sure to get small bits in each tip so they stay looking pointy and don't flatten over time.
- Tuck in the seam allowances of the beak, then align the beak onto the face of your plush. Center it horizontally between the eyes so the opening is facing the plush. Here they're centered right between the bottom corners, but you can adjust from there if you prefer a different look.
- Ladder stitch the beak to the face by stitching along the top and bottom.

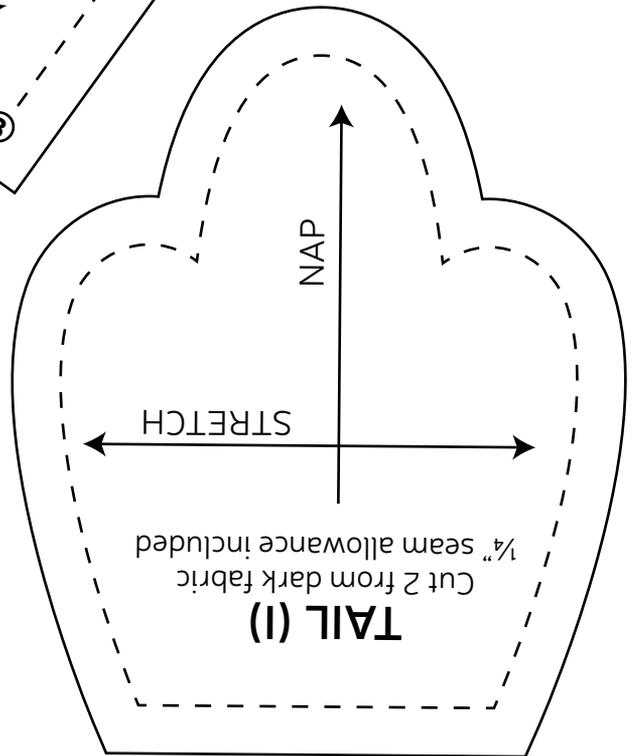
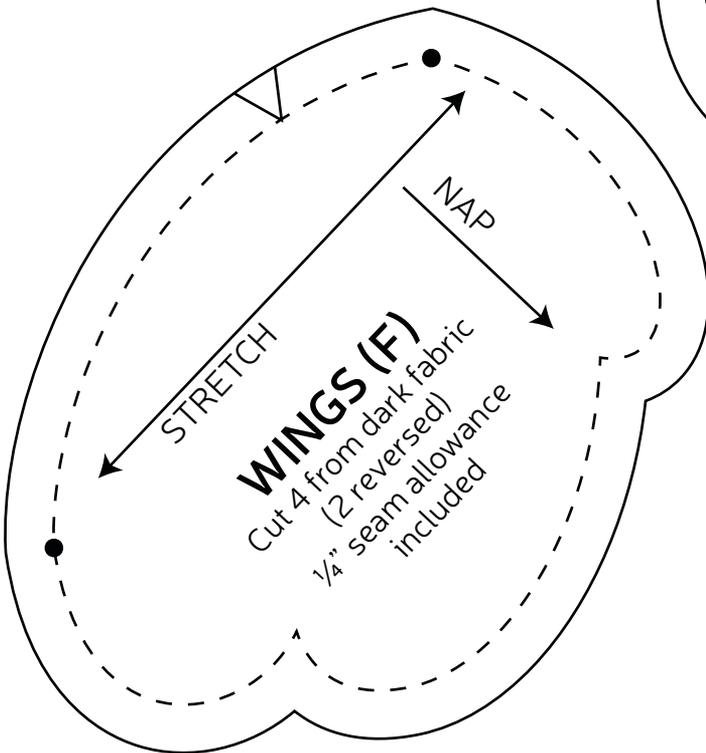
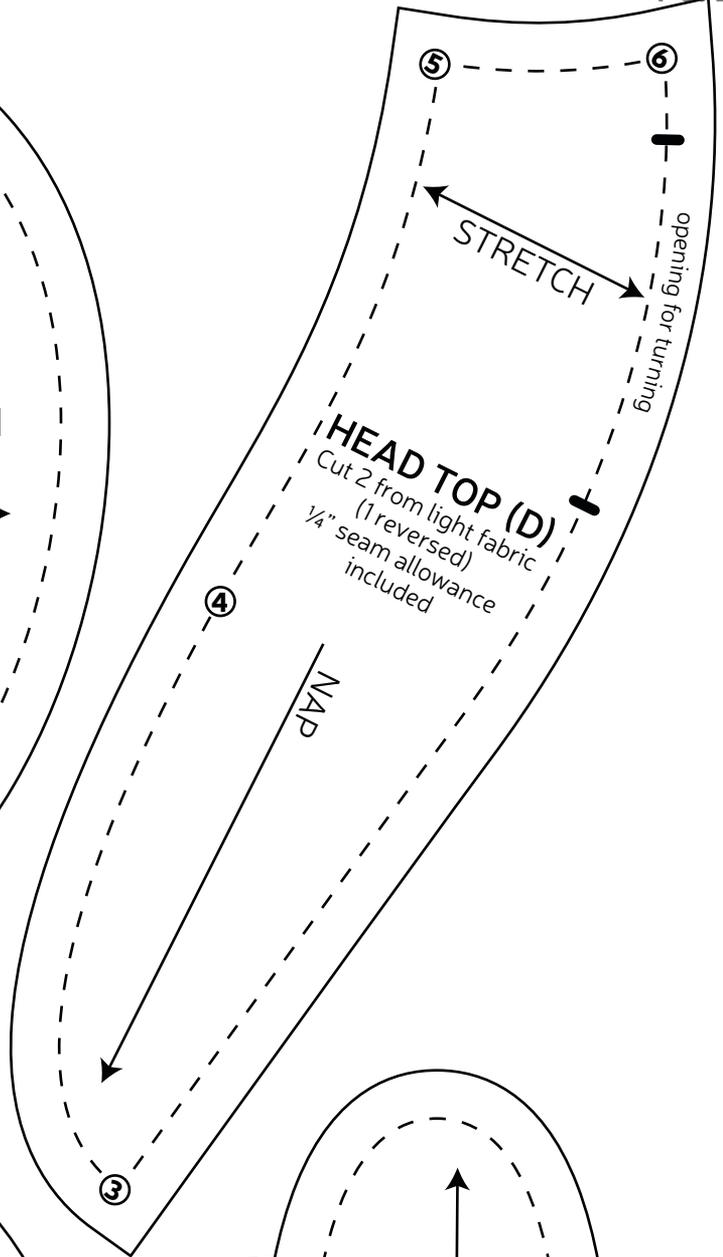
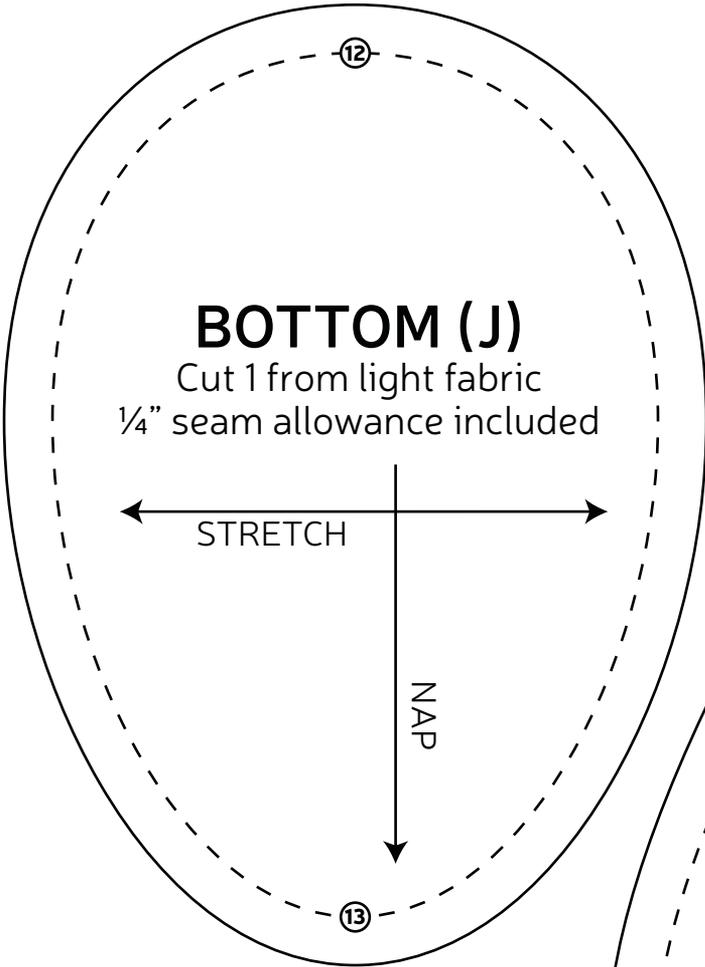
sew desu ne?

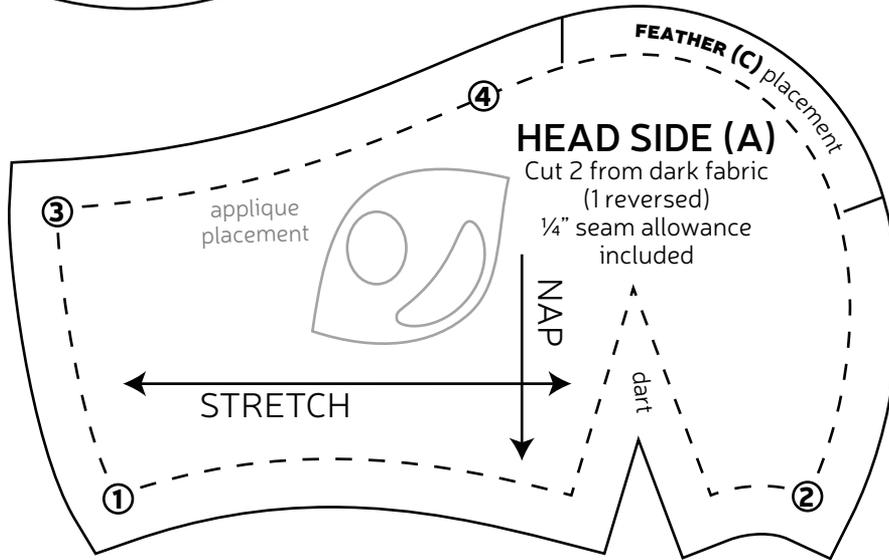
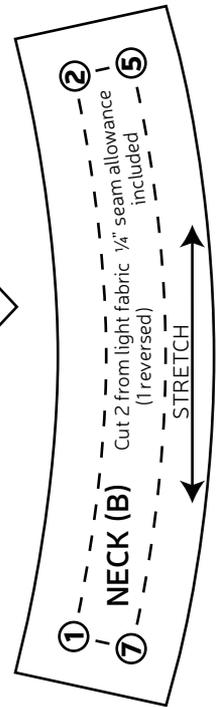
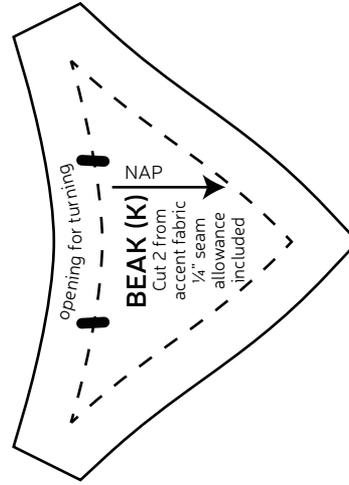
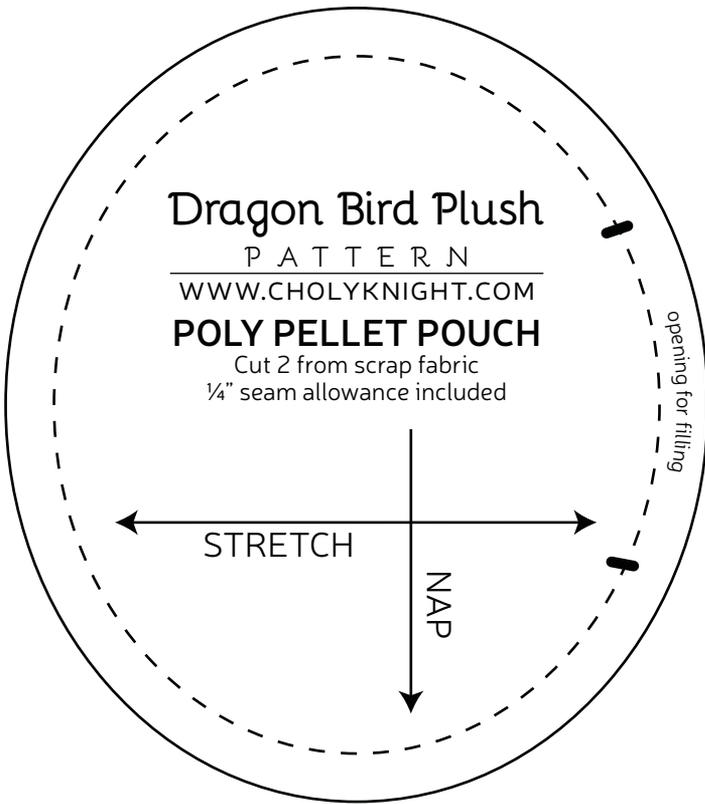
| WWW.CHOLYKNIGHT.COM |

TEST SQUARE 2"

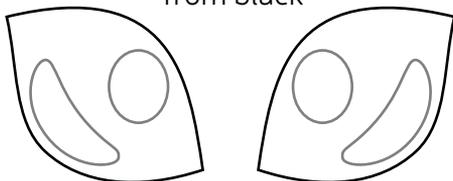
measure this square to
be sure you've printed
at the proper
proportions







EYES
 applique
 trace & cut 1 each
 from black



EYES HIGHLIGHTS
 applique
 trace & cut 1 each
 from brown



EYE SHINE
 applique
 trace & cut 2
 from white

