

In-the-Hoop Kawaii Toadstool



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**For
Any
Hoops**

Preparations

You can use minky, fleece, or other fabric with a little stretch. You can use a woven fabric for the cap, but it'll be a little more likely to pucker around the edge.

All you need is two pieces of stabilizer (tear-away is best), one square of mushroom-top fabric, two squares of stem fabric, and some stuffing.

Cut your main fabric to one of the following sizes:

For a 4x4 (100mm) hoop: 4 1/2" wide by 4 1/2" tall

For a 5x7 (130mm) or larger hoop: 5 1/2" by 5 1/2"

Making this plushie will involve positioning the fabric under the needle so that a new seam matches up with the old. It's not too difficult, and minky fluff will hide slight imperfections. It's not so precise that you need to hold it in place, but if you decide you do, use tape. There's no reason to put your fingers near the running needle!

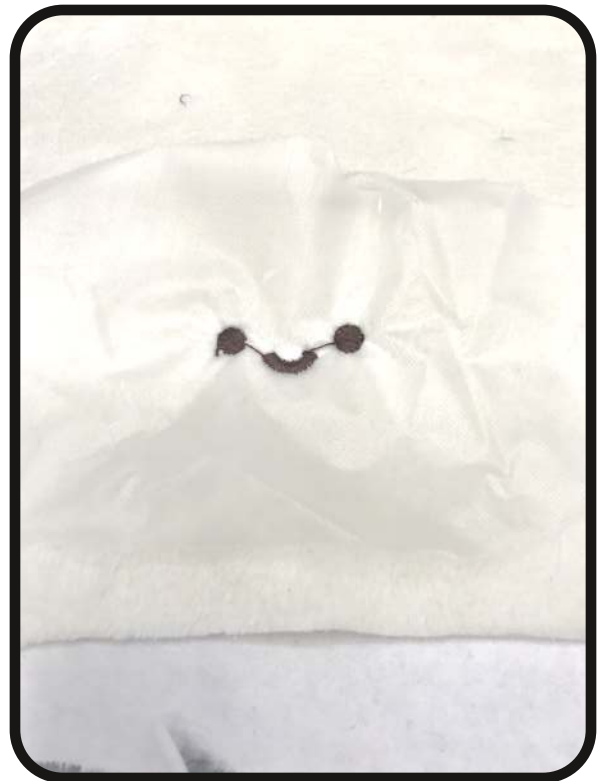
Mastering this technique lets you create much more dimensional plushies.

Each embroidery step below is a different color; the thread colors themselves don't matter, they're just there to ensure a stop between steps.

Face Embroidery (Smile)

Hoop a piece of stabilizer and float one piece of stem fabric, face up and centered. Use a scrap of top stabilizer if you'd like.

There are two face choices - don't stitch them both! The first one is the smiling face. Stitch it in a contrasting thread, or skip to the next thread color.



Face Embroidery (Yuk)

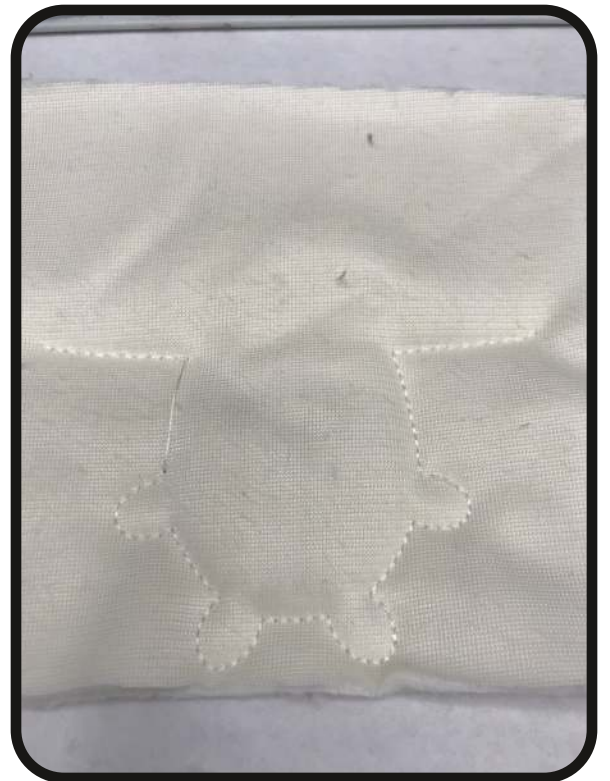


If you're making a poisonous mushroom, use the second thread color to stitch the face. If you've already stitched the smile, skip this one.

Stem

Float the second stem piece on top of the first, making sure the nap (if any) goes in the same direction. Stitch the body stitch in thread that matches the stem fabric.

Unhoop the piece and remove the stabilizer.



Cap Tackdown



Hoop a fresh piece of stabilizer, and float the piece of cap fabric, face up and centered.

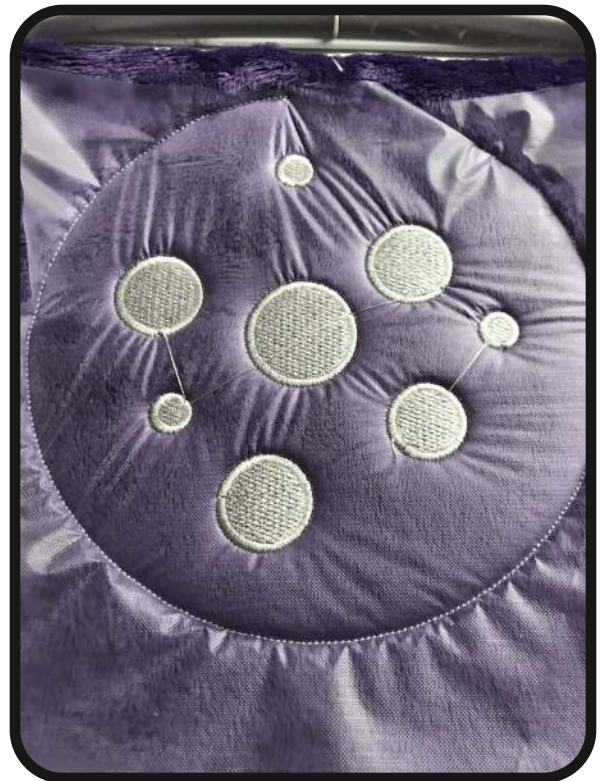
If you don't want spots on your toadstool cap, run this tackdown with no top stabilizer and skip the next thread color.

If you do want spots, place a piece of top stabilizer over it, and run this tackdown . Be careful at the end of it - there's a gap, and if your foot gets hooked under it it'll pull the stabilizer off, or even unhoop the whole assembly. It's better to leave a little more excess at the top than I did for this example.

Cap Spots (Optional)

Embroider the spots in a contrasting color. It doesn't have to be white. There's actually a purple mushroom with pale yellow spots, though I didn't know it until I had made this one.

Trim any jump threads and take off the top stabilizer.



Stem Tackdown



Open up the unsewn top of the stem piece, and place it right-sides-together with the cap piece. You're making a sort of single-page book.

Stem Tackdown (cont'd)

Position the end of stitching on the right side directly under the needle. Make sure the rest of the piece is out from under the needle - you should only be sewing through the cap piece and one thickness of stem.

Stitch the tackdown stitch in thread that matches the stem or cap fabric.



Cap Front



The needle will move to the other side of the cap. Adjust the stem piece so the end of the stitching is directly under the needle. Be careful not to pull the tackdown out of the stabilizer at the other end!

Stitch the cap front. Watch out for the upper fabric curling back under the needle on the second pass.

Cap Back

The needle will remain over the left end of the circle. Raise it, and flip the "page" of the "book" to the top of the hoop. Again, make sure all but one of the stem layers are out of the way of the needle at both ends, and stitch the other half of the cap circle.



Cutting and Turning



Unhoop the piece, and trim the seam allowances. For most fabrics a 5mm/scant 1/4" seam allowance is fine. Spandex/swimwear fabric can get by with even less.

Trim a little closer on the arms and legs. Cut notches up to (but not through!) the stitching line in inner points at the stem/cap meeting, and at each side of the arms and legs.

Using a turning tool or hemostats, poke the far edge of the cap out through the turning opening, and work the entire cap out. Then do the same with the far leg. Poke the arms and legs out carefully from the inside.

Stuffing and Finishing

Using hemostats or a stuffing stick, stuff the cap lightly. You want to work on getting a "doughnut" of stuffing around the edges; the middle will take care of itself.

Tip: Poly-fill tends to grab onto itself, which can pull the stuffing out of shallow spaces like the arms and legs. Instead, stuff them with tiny poms, or with scraps of minky.

Finish stuffing the body, and when you're satisfied with the shape of your toadstool, ladder-stitch the turning opening closed.

You're all done!



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