

**In-the-Hoop
Kawaii Octopus**



SILVER SEAMS
open source sewing

**For
Any
Hoops**

Preparations

You can use minky, fleece, or other fabric with a little stretch. You can use a woven fabric for the underside, if you prefer.

All you need is two pieces of stabilizer (tear-away is best), two squares of octopus-body fabric, one square of underside fabric, and some stuffing.

Cut your fabrics 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.

StStitch Color 1: 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 three face choices - don't stitch more than one! The first one is the smiling face. Stitch it in a contrasting thread, or skip to the next thread color.



Stitch Color 2: Face Embroidery (Frown)



For a less-happy octopus, use the second thread color to stitch the face. If you've already stitched the smile, skip this one.

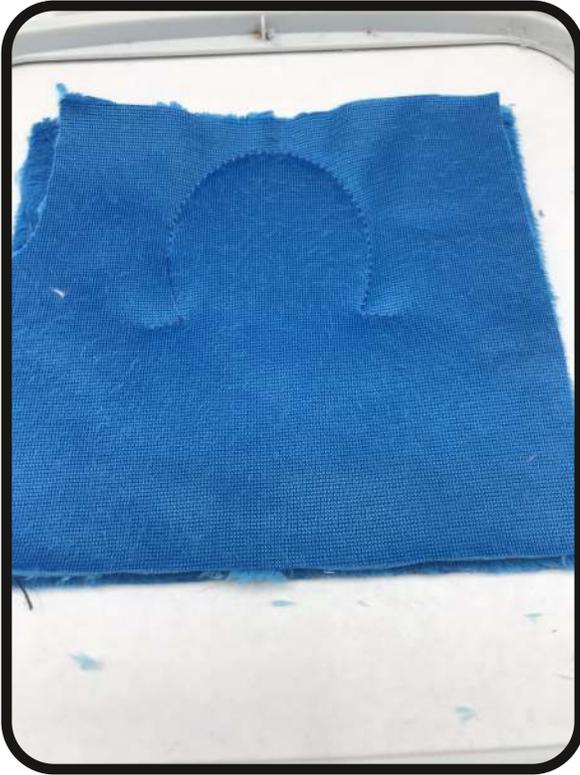
Stitch Color 3: Face Embroidery (Siphon)

For a more Japanese-style plushie, try the siphon face with closed eyes.

If you'd like to mix and match the eyes, edit the SVG version in Ink/Stitch. Try the closed eyes with the smiling mouth, or invert them with the frowning mouth, or either of the dot eyes with the siphon.



Stitch Color 4: Body



Float the second body 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 fabric.

Unhoop the piece and remove the stabilizer.

Matching Up The Pieces

Open up the unsewn top of the body piece, and place it right-sides-together with the underside piece. You're making a sort of single-page book, where the octopus' body is the page.

(Yes, the legs are already partially sewn here, yours shouldn't look quite like this yet.)

The next ten stitch colors are for two different leg shapes. If you're stitching the rounded legs, move on to Stitch Color 5. If not, move on to Stitch Color 10. Both are the same steps - only the pictures will vary.



Stitch Color 5: Tackdown



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 underside piece and one thickness of the body.

Stitch the tackdown stitch in thread that matches the fabric.

Stitch Color 6: Lower Left Legs

The needle will move to the other side of the body. Adjust the body 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 lower left legs. Watch out for the upper fabric curling back under the needle on the second pass.



Stitch Color 7: Lower Right Legs

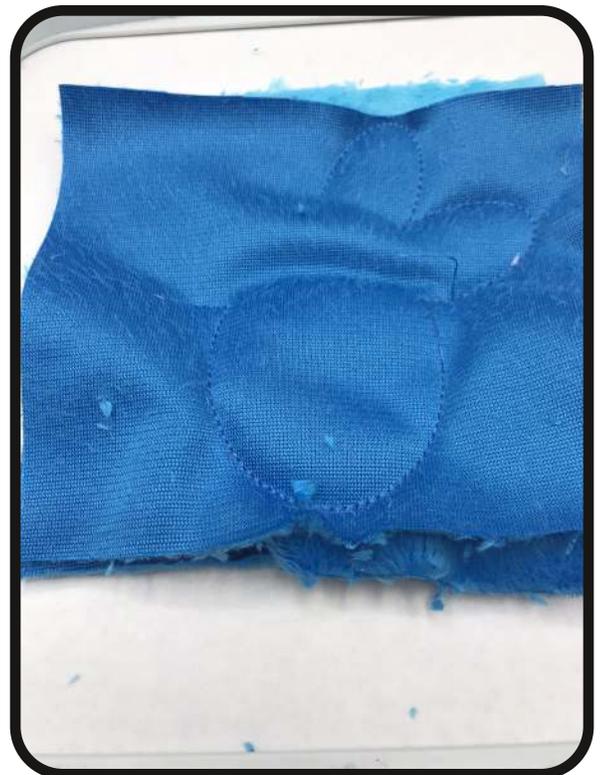


The needle will return to the right. Make sure everything is still in place - the stitching will begin where the body stitching meets the tackdown, and join the other legs.

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 body layers are out of the way of the needle at both ends, and stitch the other half of the lower legs.

Stitch Color 8: Upper Right Legs

The needle will remain over the right side of the body. Raise the presser foot, and flip the "page" of the "book" to the bottom of the hoop. Again, make sure all but one of the body layers are out of the way of the needle at both ends, and that the needle will come down right at the end of the body stitching. Stitch the next pair of legs.



Stitch Color 9: Upper Left Legs



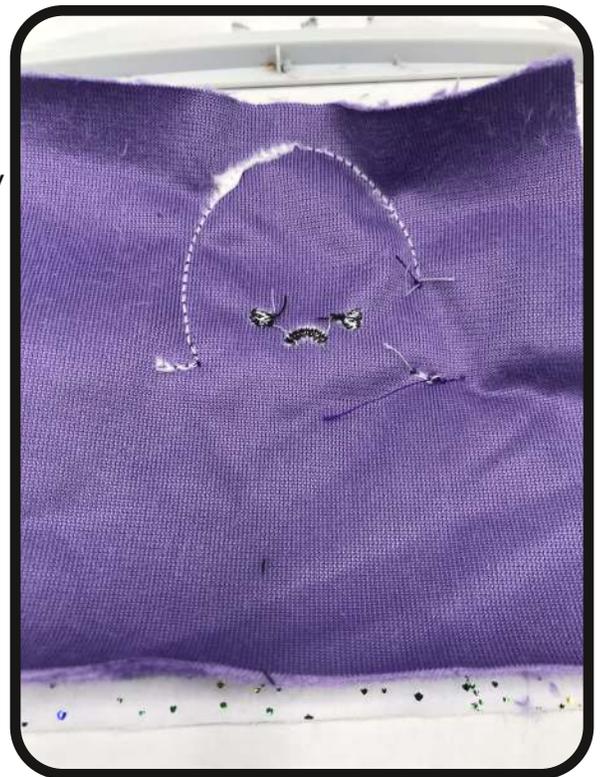
You know the drill by now: make sure the needle will come down at the left end of the body stitching, and stitch the last pair of legs. You're done!

Stitch Color 10: Tackdown

This is the same set of instructions, but for the pointy tentacles. Only the pictures and stitch color number are different.

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 underside piece and one thickness of the body.

Stitch the tackdown stitch in thread that matches the fabric.



Stitch Color 11: Lower Left Legs



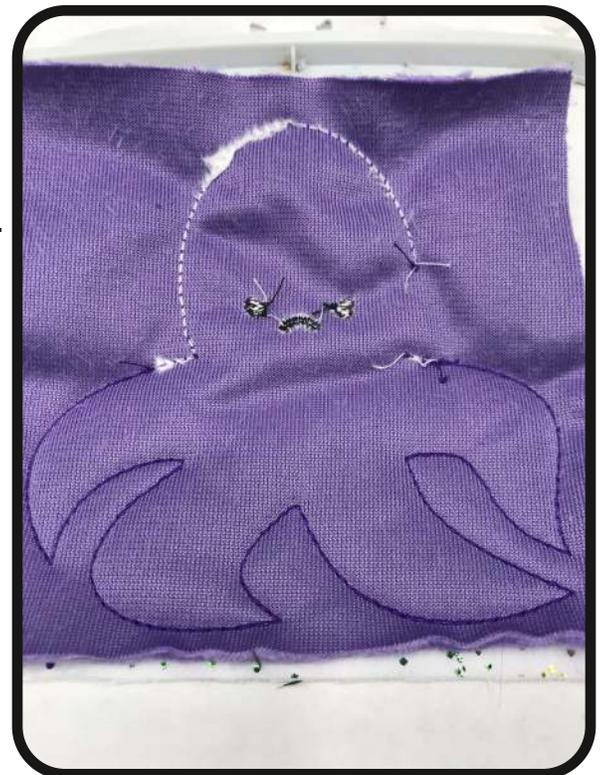
The needle will move to the other side of the body. Adjust the body piece so the end of the stitching is directly under the needle. Be careful not to pull the tackdown out of the stabilizer at the other end!

Stitch the lower left legs. Watch out for the upper fabric curling back under the needle on the second pass.

Stitch Color 12: Lower Right Legs

The needle will return to the right. Make sure everything is still in place - the stitching will begin where the body stitching meets the tackdown, and join the other legs.

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 body layers are out of the way of the needle at both ends, and stitch the other half of the lower legs.



Stitch Color 13: Upper Right Legs



The needle will remain over the right side of the body. Raise the presser foot, and flip the "page" of the "book" to the bottom of the hoop. Again, make sure all but one of the body layers are out of the way of the needle at both ends, and that the needle will come down right at the end of the body stitching. Stitch the next pair of legs.

Stitch Color 14: Upper Left Legs

You know the drill by now: make sure the needle will come down at the left end of the body stitching, and stitch the last pair of legs. You're done!



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 ends of pointy tentacles, if your octo has them. Cut notches up to (but not through!) the stitching line in inner points at the body/legs meeting, and at each point between the legs.

Using a turning tool or hemostats, poke one of the far legs out through the turning opening. Keep going, working your way to the closer legs, and skipping any legs that end up inaccessible. When you've got enough of the underside fabric out, pull the leg cluster through and turn the legs from the inside. Finally, turn the body through the opening.

Stuffing and Finishing

Using hemostats or a stuffing stick, stuff the legs. Make sure each one gets a reasonably equal amount of stuffing; the middle will take care of itself.

Then stuff the body from the top of the head down to the leg join. If you leave the middle of the leg area relatively unstuffed, your octopus can lean back and look up more, or you can fold its legs together for it to lie flat. Firmer stuffing will lead to an octopus that sits more securely upright, and whose legs are a more rigid disk. It's up to you.

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

You're all done!



In-the-Hoop Kawaii Octopus

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