

Mouse Pincushion

adapted from *1, 2, 3 Sew* by Ellen Lockett Baker

This triangular mouse pincushion is useful, adorable, and simple to make. The three top sides provide enough surface area to store all of your straight pins and the ears can hold sewing needles. The flat bottom allows the pincushion to sit upright beside you as you sew.

Options:

-You can switch out the ears to make other types of animals. You could make one of these for a baby's nursery or fill it with catnip to be used as a cat toy.

-If you want to use your favorite patterned fabrics in patchwork, simply cut the template into four triangles and each side can be a different fabric.

-You could make a larger version of this and fill it with rice to make a doorstop. Or make a group of them for a bean bag toss game.

-For the tail, you can use braided trim, rick-rack, twine, ribbon, yarn, or whatever you have on hand. Wool roving is used here for the stuffing because it packs tightly, but you can use any filling you choose.

Finished dimensions: 3 1/2" x 3 1/2" x 3 1/2"



Supplies:

Cotton fabric, 9" x 8"
Felt for ears, 6" x 6"
Twine, ribbon or trim, 6"
Fabric marker
Matching thread
Embroidery needle
Brown embroidery thread
Polyfill stuffing
Chopstick
Sewing needle

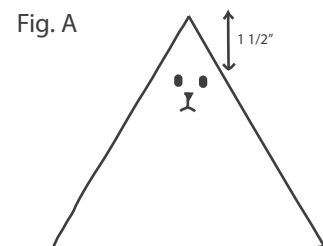
Seam allowance: 1/4"

Step 1: Cut fabric.

Using the attached templates, cut the large triangle from the main fabric and the two ear pieces from the felt. Also cut a 6" length of twine for the tail.

Step 2: Mark fabric.

On the wrong side of the fabric, mark 1/2" from each tip of the triangle with a fabric marker or chalk. This will be your stopping point as you sew. Then, on the front of the fabric, draw the mouse's face starting about 1 1/2" from a tip of the triangle. See fig. A below. Embroider the face.



Draw face 1 1/2" from tip on the right side of the fabric.

Step 3: Attach ears.

Fold over one side of an ear by about $\frac{1}{4}$ " as shown in fig. B. Stitch in place. Place one ear at the top right of the triangle with the straight side of the ear even with the edge of the fabric and right sides facing. It should be about 1" from the tip of the triangle, with the fold of the ear facing the tip of the triangle as shown in fig. C. Stitch (or glue) in place $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the edge. Then pin this ear out of the way. Fold the other ear in the same manner and attach it to the opposite side of the head.

Step 4: Sew together.

Putting this pincushion together is a bit like origami folding. First, fold the bottom right corner up to align it with the top corner over the face and right ear. Move the left ear out of the way and pin to hold it in place. Beginning at your mark on the tip, begin sewing along the edge all the way to the bottom with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance, as shown in fig. D. Then fold the left corner up and repeat, being sure to again pin the right ear out of the way. See fig. E.

Step 5: Insert tail and sew back points.

Finally, insert the tail on the inside of your pyramid with the raw edge protruding between the layers at the bottom point. Sew about $1\frac{1}{2}$ " along both the top and bottom to close the corners, leaving the center open for filling as shown in fig. F. Be sure to start from your mark at the top to make the top point of the pyramid.

Step 6: Overcast and turn right sides out.

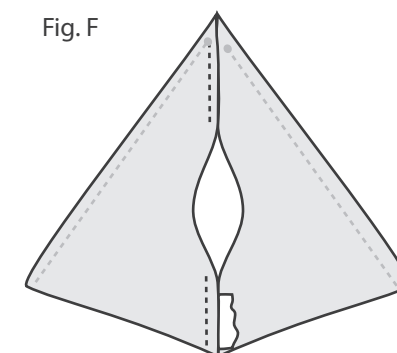
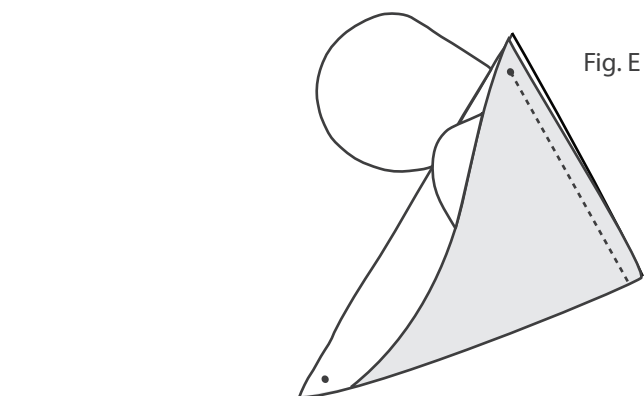
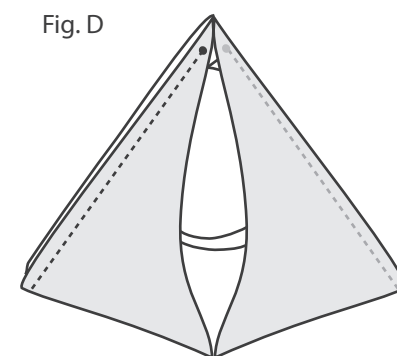
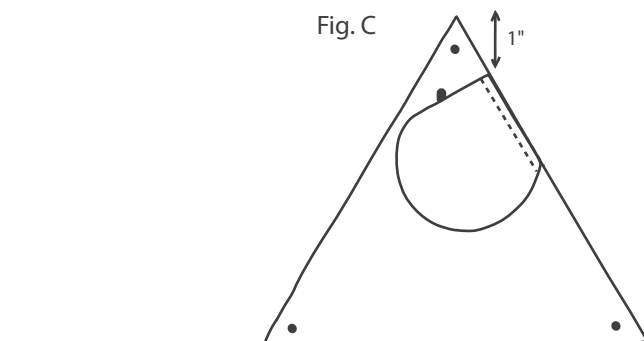
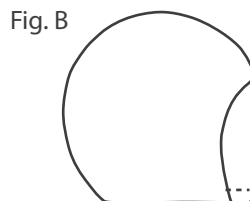
Sew an overcasting or zig-zag stitch along all the seams. Turn the pincushion right sides out and gently push out the corners with a chopstick.

Step 7: Fill with polyfill stuffing.

Pull the polyfill stuffing apart into small pieces and then begin stuffing it into the hole, pushing with your chopstick as you work. Be sure that the filling gets into the corners and is evenly distributed. Pack it tightly with as much filling as possible.

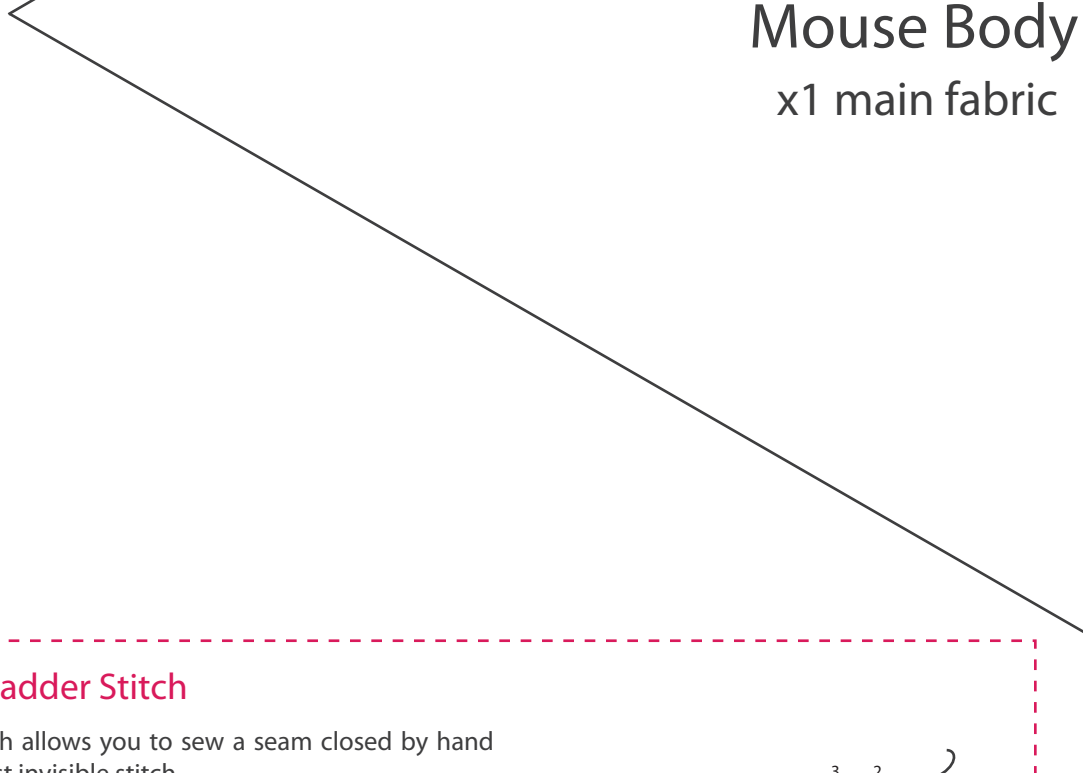
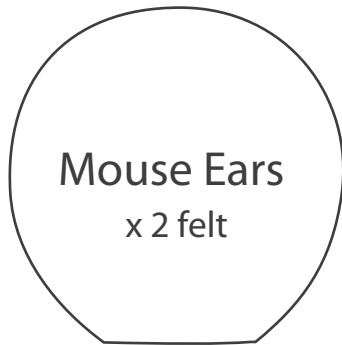
Step 8: Sew opening closed by hand.

Pin the opening closed and sew it together by hand using a ladder stitch, as illustrated on the template page.



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Templates (adapted from 1, 2, 3 Sew by Ellen Lockett Baker)



How-To: Ladder Stitch

A ladder stitch allows you to sew a seam closed by hand with an almost invisible stitch.

1. Thread the needle, and then tie a knot at the end of your thread. From the back side of the fabric, insert the needle, pulling it through to hide the knot.
2. Stitch into your fabric, pulling the needle back out after you take a 1/8" stitch. Insert your needle into the other side and make another 1/8" stitch under the fabric. Continue until you have closed your opening.
3. Tie a knot by forming a loop with your thread and pulling the needle through the loop. Pull through twice and then insert the needle into the fabric and pull it out a few inches along the seam line, clipping off the excess and leaving the tail inside the fabric.

