

Place the body-piece on your fleece and mark out an extension of the tail. You can decide how long or short you want it to be. Please be aware that except for the ears the pattern pieces have NO seam allowance included in the pattern.

Add a generous one because if your sewing machine is at all like mine it will not sew properly if there's too little fleece under the foot. When cutting the belly-part for the bi-color version please take care to leave one of the long sides of your fabric intact because you'll need it for the spikes later.

Cut out 2 body pieces, 4 ears, 8 feet, 2 heads. If you're doing the bi-color dragon cut out half of each part in one color, except for the head which is a single color.



Cut a long strip of approximately 4" x 30", or as long as the back of your dragon is long. Sew two strips together if your fabric isn't long enough. It should stretch lengthwise. Fold in half and pin together.

Cut out triangles getting smaller towards the end. These will be the spikes along your dragons back.

Now for some quick embroidery!

Hoop a piece of cutaway stabilizer, then spray the back of one of your head-pieces and smooth it onto your stabilizer. I put mine fairly towards the top so I would have enough space for the nostrils.

You can see a basic pattern for positioning in the photo. I rotated my cat eyes design 10 degrees so they would fit better onto the head and give the dragon a more vicious look. The nostrils are simply Os from one of the fonts on my machine.



Once your embroidery is done, un-hoop your dragon head. Cut away the excess stabilizer and fold the head in half. Mark a wedge about 1" from the bottom and 1/4" from the middle and sew.

Cut away the excess fabric. Repeat this on the other piece (the bottom) of your dragon's head.

Pin both head-parts together right sides in and sew together, leaving the neck open.





Trim the excess the seam allowance and turn him right side out. Now you can stuff him with polyester and sew the neck shut.

To make your ears, put your 2 ear pieces on top of each other and sew together, using a wide seam near the inside of the ear, like shown.

Once it's stitched together, cut away some of the excess red fabric so it now looks like the inside of your dragon's ear.

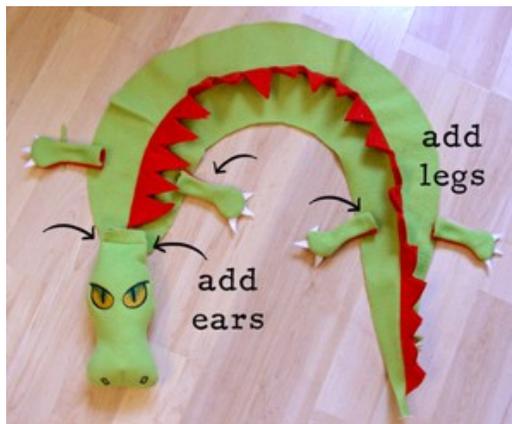


Now on to the feet. Cut some triangles from the felt for claws. Be generous with the length because most of it will end up in the seam allowance anyway. Place them on a foot-piece, pointing inwards.

Place second foot piece on top and sew together, leaving the upper part open. Trim the seam allowance and turn right side out. I didn't stuff mine, but you could if you wanted to. Repeat to make all four legs!

Now for the body, open your long strip with the triangles and pin along the back of your dragon. Sew a seam all the way down it, securing it to the dragon's back.

Now pin the triangles back together and sew them together. Don't forget to change your bobbin!



By now you'll have a pretty good idea about how the dragon will look. Place your feet where you want them to be (keeping in mind that the dragon is meant to be placed around the neck).

Once you have the placement you like, fold your dragon legs inward and sew them onto your dragon. You'll also want to stitch the ears onto the end of the body, where the head will join.

Put the back and belly right sides together, left sides facing outwards. Make sure you get the legs and ears out of the way. Sew the two sides together, leaving the neck and the opening along the side open.





Stuff the head into the body through the opening you left at the neck, and sew it into the body. Trim the seam allowance, turn right side out and take a first look at your new pal.

Now it's time to make the hot pack!

Cut 2 body-pieces from the plain cotton, using the same template as the body (but without the tail extension).



The next few steps might seem a waste of time, but believe me, they add a lot to the comfort of the hot pack. Mark the middle of your body-piece and then fold the sides towards the middle. Mark those fold-lines as well.

This doesn't have to be too exact, but once it's marked you should have 4 approximately equal parts. Starting about 2" from the first mark, sew along the short inside edge of the curve, stopping again about 2" before you reach the mark on the other side.

Turn inside out. Now tuck in your seam allowance and pin together. Leave openings as indicated in the photo. What we're doing here is making four compartments for your fill so it sits more evenly in the heat pack.





Close seams using a zigzag-stitch, then sew three straight lines across your pouch to separate the 4 parts.

If you're using a smaller grain like rice for your heat pack, you may want to add an additional seam to the edge to keep the small grains from escaping.

Divide the spelt or rice into 4 equal parts, fill one into each compartment and sew the openings shut after you fill each one (or you'll have it rain out of one opening again as you try to fill the other). You could also add some lavender if you feel like it.



Now it's time to fill your dragon's belly with the hot pack! To finish off the dragon, add a snap in his belly. Now you can stuff the heat pack inside and snap shut the opening in his tummy.

You can warm the hot pack in your microwave and wash the dragon if necessary. It loves snuggling around your neck and will scare away all tension or muscle-pain!





Want to make even more cuddling heater pals? Tanja has even provided us with a [pattern to make a fox version](#) too! The instructions are basically the same, though you may wish to stuff your fox's tail and attach him in a similar manner to the head.

With this basic template and all kinds of crazy creature eyes at your disposal, you can make all kinds of heat-pack critters!

A big hearty thanks to Tanja this winter for showing us all how to keep is in good, warm company.

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