

# Stuffies

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I adore stuffed animals. You might notice that fact from the plethora of them I have strewn around my studio. They're cute, they liven things up, and they inspire me to create things. It seems only natural that here at Urban Threads we would have some for you to make, so I'm going to show you how to make 'em. I'm using my little voodoo dude pincushion as my example. To make a voodoo dude, you'll need some fabric suitable for stuffing, embroidery thread, stabilizer, and some embellishment material, such as yarn or feathers. I would advise these highly over the obligatory human hair and chicken bones route. Ick.

These instructions are for machine embroidery, but hand embroiderers can follow along too -- just get out your needle and thread and stitch by hand whenever you see an embroidery machine pop up.



To start, hoop up some fabric and stabilizer. Make sure you have enough fabric to hoop another of the same size, since our stuffy needs a back and front. When you start the file, your machine is going to embroider the stuffy outline first. If you're hand embroidering your little friend, be sure to keep this outline on your fabric. This will be used as a sewing guide later.





Sit back and relax as Mr. Voodoo's handsome features sew out before your eyes. If you're hand stitching him, you can't relax as much, but the principle is the same. Check to make sure that everything is sewing out correctly and Mr. Voodoo doesn't have any tension issues. Mind you, I wouldn't blame a voodoo doll for being a little tense ...



Success! We're halfway there



Carefully cut around the sewn outline, leaving about a quarter inch all the way around. For you over achieving people who sewed him out by hand, you can join us back at this step.

Repeat the process to get the back side of your stuffy. Hurrah! We have the parts we need. Now, Mr. Voodoo is cute, but he seems to be lacking in some character dimension... or any kind of dimension. Let's fix that.



Add some flair to your voodoo dude. Bald may be beautiful, but it doesn't afford us many opportunities for accessorizing or styling, so I went with bright pink yarn hair.

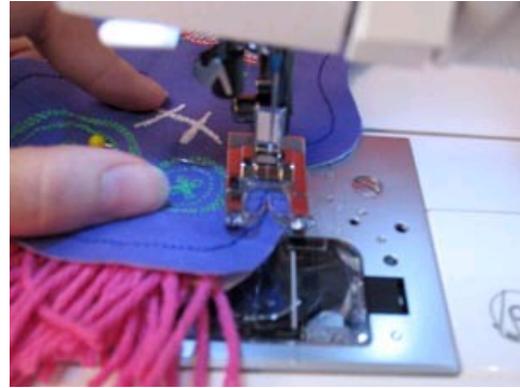
Use whatever you want, yarn, felt, feathers, grass, string... anything. If you don't want a bald stuffy but aren't really feeling that experimental, use the hair template that came with him.

Tape or otherwise secure your stuffy hair so it stays put during sewing.





It's time for Mr. Voodoo dude's first taste of pins, and I dare say not his last. Pin Voodoo dude wrong sides together so he doesn't move about too much during his sewing adventure. Stitch him together leaving about a 1 1/2 inch gap along his side for stuffing, following the guide as best you can. Keep in mind he's a voodoo doll, so he's allowed to look a little rough around the edges. To hide some of my stitches I used clear nylon thread for the top stitch and a bobbin the same color as his outline.



Now he needs some fattening up! Fill your little stuffy with as much stuffing as he can hold. I like a nice full stuffy, so voodoo dude got plenty of polyfill. You'll be surprised how much these little guys can hold. If you're stuffing an especially small stuffy with little arms or corners, you can use the end of a pencil or pen to help get the stuffing into all the little edges. Make sure your stuffy doesn't eat up so much polyfill that he doesn't fit under the sewing machine again.

Once you sew up his stuffing gap, it's time to attack him with scissors! It's for his own good, I swear.





To give Mr. Stuffie a more finished look, pull back the edges and trim away any visible stabilizer. For a nice raw-edged look, gently chop away at the edges of the fabric. He'll look nice and rough and crafty.



And here he is, armed with pins and ready to take on the world! He'll help you with your anger management problems and take care of your sewing pins all in one fell swoop.



So, are stuffies uses limited to occult pin storing? Absolutely not! You can do all sorts of things with them. What else, you ask, could stuffies possibly do for me? What indeed.

I bet you didn't know that stuffies can help you find your keys. Simply combine one mini stuffie with a needle, thread, and keychain, and you have instant stuffy key bling! Ta-da!



They can be badges, buttons, cat toys, keyrings, cell phone charms, zipper pulls and good luck charms. They can be anything you want them to be. So make, create, and have fun!

