

Coolable/Heatable Soft Toy

Materials needed to complete project

Included in kit:

- 2 random felt fabric squares
- 2 random colored thread bobbins
- 1 sewing needle
- 2 cups of rice

Not included in kit:

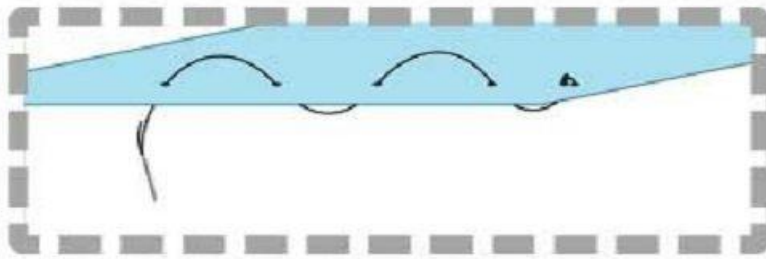
- Scissors

Instructions:

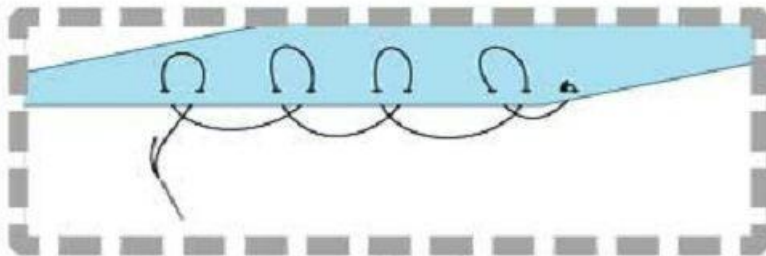
1. Decide on a shape for your stuffed toy. Freehand cut out 2 of this shape (make sure they are the same size) or trace the shape with a piece of chalk or marker onto the felt before cutting.
2. Cut a piece of thread to begin, about 2 feet long, knot the thread at the end and thread the needle.
3. Stack your two identical pieces of felt together - try to keep any marks from tracing the patterns onto the felt on the inside.
4. Choose where you'd like to start stitching and insert the needle between the two pieces of felt. Pull it through the top piece of felt until you feel the knot catch. This hides the knot in between the two pieces of felt. Start any new pieces of thread this way as well.
5. Now you can start sewing your pieces of felt together! Below is a chart containing some basic hand sewing stitches to try. For this project, the running stitch or the whip stitch will both be easy and effective. However, the basic idea of sewing is that you use your needle and thread to connect the two pieces of felt, so whichever way works for you to do that is a good place to start. Just remember that you will be filling this with rice, so you want your stitches to be close together so it doesn't leak out!



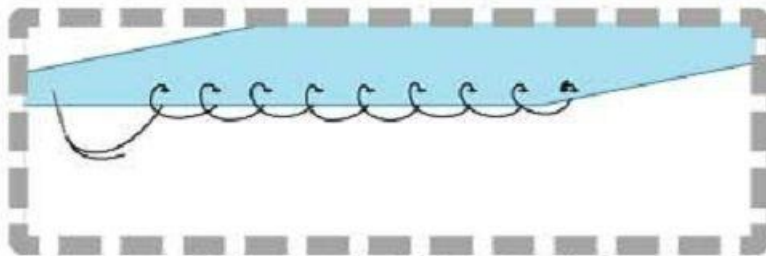
Basic Hand Sewing Stitches



Running Stitch



Back Stitch



Whip Stitch / Edge Stitch

6. When you're most of the way around your shape and have just a few inches left to sew, add the rice inside. The amount will vary based on the size of your shape. Use your finger to evenly distribute, but don't pack it in too tight because you'll need to be able to sew it shut!
7. Continue sewing your toy closed, being careful not to spill the rice.
8. If you get to the end of a piece of thread but still need to sew more of the edge, knot the thread tightly against your felt. Push the needle through only the piece of felt you tied the knot against and pull it out between the pieces of felt. Cut any excess strings after doing this - this will help hide your thread ends inside the heating pad. Then start with a new piece of thread, as you did at the beginning.
9. When you finish sewing, knot the thread tightly against your felt and finish as in Step 8.

To use as a cold pack, put your stuffed toy in the freezer for at least 30 minutes (or keep it in there until you want to use it!) and take out to use as you would any ice pack, or just to help cool things off.

Since they're filled with rice, you can use it as a heating pad, too! Just make sure you don't add anything else to the stuffing except for essential oils or dried herbs if desired, as they may not be microwave safe with other fillings. To use like this, stick them in the microwave for 20-30 seconds and then use them on cold fingers or other places you might use a heating pad!

Tips:

- *When cutting out shapes from the felt, using long, smooth cuts will give it the best look. A lot of little, short cuts can make the edge look "chewed up".*
- *If you have trouble getting the thread to go through the eye, or hole, in the needle, you can try using a little bit of water or wax on the end of the thread to make it stiffer and easier to manipulate.*
- *If you want to add some herbs or essential oils to your toy for a nice smell, go for it! Lavender is a good one to use if you're wanting to give these a calming scent. If you use essential oils, you'll want to add a few drops to the rice and let it sit for a few minutes before putting the rice in the toy.*
- *Another way to sew these would be to put the sides that have any stray marks facing outwards while you sew. When you are at the point where you add the rice, turn the toy inside out before stuffing it, so your stitches are on the inside. Then continue to sew it closed. This way your stitches won't be as visible, if that's the look you prefer.*