



Before You Begin

General instructions for making Poekie clothes and furniture*

The patterns are for big Poekies and small Poekies only. Sorry, the teeny Candy Poekies are too small to make patterns for. They fit the following Poekies: mouse, cat, gnome, elephant, duck, penguin, raven, wolf, frog, monkey, bunny, pig, alligator and lion.

Of course, just like humans, Poekies all differ a little bit in size. Yours may be short and skinny, or big and chubby. So when you have cut out the pattern, put it on your Poekie to see if it will fit.

Below is a list by subject. Many instructions in the patterns will bring you back to this page in case you forgot how to do it.

- 1- Materials Needed
- 2- Printing and Cutting the Pattern
- 3- Fabric
- 4- Placing, Tracing and Cutting
- 5- Needle and Thread
- 6- Stitches Used
- 7- Knots Tied
- 8- Sewing on Buttons
- 9- Stuffing

1- Materials needed:

Paper for your printer • Ruler • Scissors • Fabric • Marker or pen for tracing • Pin • Needle • Thread • Buttons or snaps (for some styles) • Stuffing (for some items)

2- Printing and Cutting the Pattern

- This is probably the hardest thing, because I don't know whether everyone's printer will print the patterns to the actual size. After you print it, you have to use the ruler to see if the size of the pattern is indeed the same as the measurement written on it. If not, you will have to figure out how to change the print-size (maybe ask your parents), or you can try to copy the pattern and draw it a little bit bigger/smaller. It really doesn't have to be exactly the same.
- Cut the pattern out right ON the line.
- Some patterns need to be marked with an X on one side and an O on the other. We always write it with a bright color pen, so that we don't forget.

3- Fabric

Our favorite fabric is fleece. We call it Poekie Fabric. It's made from recycled plastic bottles. It is stretchy, which is the easiest to work with. You can also use t-shirt material. Any stretchy fabric will do, because it doesn't fray. Stretchy velvet can be beautiful, but is difficult to work with because it often rolls up at the edges. We all love really fuzzy fabric, but we all dread sewing it. It's hard to do.

If you use a fabric that frays, the clothes and furniture will fall apart unless you hem all edges, which is a lot of work. You can try using jeans material, but you must pay close attention to making it the right size, since it doesn't stretch. It really looks cute with overalls!

4- Placing, Tracing and Cutting

- There is a 'right side' and a 'wrong' side to fabric. The right side is the side you want to see when your Poekie wears the clothes, the wrong side is on the inside. Always place and trace the pattern on the wrong side of the fabric, so that the possible marker-lines don't show when you're done.
- All the patterns are marked with a stretchy direction. This is to make sure that the clothes will properly fit your size Poekie. All stretchy fabric has one direction in which it stretches the most. To find out, pull the fabric in different directions. Once you find the most stretchy way, you place the pattern with the arrow in that direction.
- When a pattern is marked with an X and an O, you need to trace it one time with the X side showing, then flip it over, and trace it one time with the O side showing.

- Regular markers will smudge your fabric. Permanent markers work great, but they mark your hands all over. So even though they are a little bit difficult to use, we prefer to trace with gel pens.
- Cut ON the lines you traced on the fabric.

5- Needle and Thread

Use the thinnest sewing needle you can find and are able to thread. You can use any type of sewing thread. At the Planet we only use black or white, and experience has taught us that the waxed beading thread is the strongest and easiest to sew with. The wax makes it easier to thread the needle because the end doesn't fray, and it also helps the thread slide smoothly through the fabric. We always use 'Nymo Beading Thread Size D.' It's inexpensive and you can get it at any bead store.

6- Stitches Used

(One day I will include pictures of these stitches.)

- Running Stitch:

In a straight line, go up and down through the fabric as if your needle is a dolphin surfing through the water.

- Whip Stitch:

'Whip' your thread around the edge of the fabric, always sticking the needle through the bottom up, towards yourself.

- Back Stitch:

Stick down one 'step' behind the knot and come up two 'steps' ahead. Stick again one 'step' behind your thread and come up two 'steps' ahead.

7- Knots Tied

Knots are very difficult, but the beginning knot is pretty easy, just try to tie the end of your thread like your shoelaces but without a bow. Put two or more knots on top of each other. And when you make your first stitch, don't pull it too tight, but do two more stitches right over the knot (whip-stitch is fine). Pull the second whip-stitch really tight.

To tie off is not so easy if you don't know how to do the fancy 'European' knot. You can try tying knots as follows: make a backstitch but before you pull it tight you stick your needle through the loop of the thread, then pull it tight. Do that three times. Then, to make extra sure that it doesn't come out, do two more whip-stitches over the 'knots.' That should be good enough, and if you ever want to learn the fancy 'European' knot, or 'French knot,' I'd be happy to teach you at the Planet.

8- Sewing on Buttons

It's easy! Hold the button on the fabric where you want it to be. Start your knotted thread from the wrong side of the fabric, Come up and go up through one of the button holes, then go down through the other button hole into the fabric. Come up again through the first hole and go down through the other. Repeat three times. If the button has four holes, just go up and down through all four, two times.

9- Stuffing

- Fluffy pillow stuffing:

Any pillow stuffing from the fabric store will work, but the cheapest kind is not so good. The brand 'Mountain Mist' works best. If you don't have any stuffing in the house you can always use little fabric scraps.

- Pellets:

The poly doll-stuffing pellets work the best. You can buy them at some craft-stores and on-line (Amazon). In a pinch you can use uncooked lentils or rice. They work really well, but you can't get them wet!

With love from the Poekies,
sophia

* For children age 8 and up, with parental guidance.

Warning: 1. Pins and needles' mission in life is to poke, and scissors only know how to cut. You must be careful and make sure that they poke and cut only the things that you want them to! 2. None of the materials used belong in a person's mouth, so be careful when you make this while little children are around you.

©2009 Sophia van der Harst