
Hand Sew a Teddy Bear with Kata Golda

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

(fun upbeat music) - Hi, I'm Alison and I have a company called kata golda. We make things out of wool felt, primarily, and we use a lot of hand stitching. I sell my things in boutiques around the country and I've been featured on Handmade Charlotte, Design Sponge, One Kings Lane and many others. Today we're gonna make a little teddy bear. This is an heirloom piece, one of my best items. It's very simple to make, and we're going to be using four different stitches. You're gonna be using the blanket stitch, the whip stitch, the running stitch and the satin stitch. And we'll be using this beautiful wool felt. This is the kind of thing that everybody should have, kids and adults, everyone needs a little stuffed companion. It's the kind of thing you can stick in your bag and bring along with you, or have on your bed at night when you come home. (fun upbeat music)

Chapter 2 - Materials

Materials

- Here are the tools and materials you'll need to make your stuffed companion. We have wool felt, brown is 12 x 11, the off-white is 12 x 6, the red is 2 x 3, and you'll need a scrap of brown. I love working with wool felt. It feels wonderful in your hands, it doesn't fray, it doesn't have a grain direction, it's very forgiving, and it's my favorite fabric to work with. I have kits available for this project. You can also find wool felt anywhere, and you can also use a recycled sweater as long as it's felted and it won't fray when you cut it. Then we have stuffing. I have recycled poly fiberfill here. You can use cotton, bamboo, wool, whatever you prefer. Then you have your downloadable templates. Tracing paper, pencil, fabric shear, paper scissors, snips, needles. I like to use 5 sharps because they have a long eye and a sharp point. They are easy to thread. Pins, embroidery floss. In this project we are going to be using brown, light brown, off white, and red.

Chapter 3 - Make Bear

Cut felt and stitch facial features

- We'll begin by cutting out our felt pieces. I've copied my templates onto card stock, and then I cut them out, and now I'm going to use my templates to cut out the felt pieces. Before I begin cutting, I wanna lay out my template pieces, to make sure that they're going to fit on the felts, and I'm using my felt wisely. I've positioned the piece I'm gonna cut, which is the front of the bear, on the piece of felt, gonna pin my bear piece onto the wool felt. I don't often use pins for smaller pieces, but when I'm cutting out a piece, of this size, I like to pin my template to my felt piece. And I'm gonna use my fabric shear, which I never use for paper. They're very sharp. And I love them. Moving around the perimeter of the template, I don't have to be super exact, with the wool felt, it's not like cutting out fabric that has a grain, or that frays. And when I'm done cutting this out, take the pins out here, and I've already cut the other parts of my bear. I need to make sure, that my front piece matches my back piece. And this is where I'm gonna do some trimming. You'll notice, that this is not a symmetrical piece. If I flip this over, it doesn't match. It matches better this direction. I've designed it this way on purpose. I like things a little bit asymmetrical, it gives it more of a life-like, hand-made quality, it also has a functional purpose, because it helps me match things up. I'm gonna go ahead and trim, make sure these pieces match. And, I will go back in and trim again, because as I stitch,

that will be required. This arm is a little longer. The nice thing about felt, is that it sticks to itself. It's very different than working with a fabric like silk. I'm gonna use the dark brown thread, and I'm going to attach my facial features. Before I do that, I'm gonna trace the features, because the muscle memory I get from drawing really helps me with my stitching. And use a pencil, and some tracing paper. Trace his head out a little bit. Now this is just to help me think about the placement. So I have the eyes here. They're fairly wide-set apart. They're about exactly in the center of the head shape. The nose, a bit lower than the base of the eye, in the center, and the mouth, off from the nose, but not as far out to the eyes. Of course, you can put any face on your bear. I'm fond of the wide-set eyes, and I'm fond of not the big smile, just the subtle, happiness smile. Now that I've practiced drawing those details, I'm gonna keep my template close by, so I can refer to it as I'm stitching these details. I'm working with three-ply embroidery floss. It comes six-ply, so I separate it into three-ply, and I have an 18-inch piece of thread. I do not like to work with a longer piece of thread than that, because it tangles up easily. I can always add more thread when I need it. Gonna tie a knot, the bottom of my thread, one, two, the goal here is to get the two knots to land on top of each other. And that looks sufficient. Now remember, I said wide-set, and midway down from the top of the head. So about there. I'm just stitching the top layer. So, I'm going to outline a little circle with stitches to make my shape. And then, I'm gonna fill in with the satin stitch. The satin stitch, is just stacking the stitches, one right next to the other, and filling in the space. And now I'm just going to move my thread over to the other eye space. So they'll be a long thread carried on the back. I use my thumb as a real guide, as for placement, and I'm thinking about how far I am from this edge, should be similar to that edge. It's really difficult to make things symmetrical. So, it seems like it should be simple, but it's not. Okay, I'm outlining the eye. And remember, if it's not perfect, that's just character. Because mine's not gonna be perfect. Now, when I'm looking to make the second eye, I'm not looking at the template. I'm looking at the first eye that I created. Okay, now I'm doing the satin stitch, and filling in this space. Gonna outline that a little bit better. And that eye looks a little bit smaller to me. So I'm gonna make another little line out here. Okay, I'm satisfied. Now I'm gonna go and there's the long thread between the two eyes. Now I'm going to make my nose. Centered, just below the eyes. Okay, I'm using my thumb as a guide. I'm using the running stitch to create this little space that I'm going to fill in. Look at my template, the nose on my template is significantly larger, gonna make this one a little bigger. Okay. I'm gonna tie off my thread on the back. Gonna knot it. And I've challenged myself a little here, because my thread is quite short. But I can do it. I'm trying to get the knot as close as possible to the felt. One, and we're gonna do one more knot to try to land it right on top. That's a little lesson, that I should have knotted off, when my thread was a little bit longer. So now we need to add another piece of thread to do the mouth. Starting with an 18-inch piece of embroidery floss, it's six-ply, you can see that I'm separating this in the middle of the piece of thread. Don't start at one end. Start in the center. If you start at one end, you'll create a big knotty mess. And pull gently. Thread my needle with three-ply. And I'm gonna tie a knot. One, two, making sure the knots fall right on top of each other. Okay. Looking at my template, for placement of the mouth, coming in from the back side, in the center of the bottom of the nose, I'm gonna go off to one side with a running stitch. Just going in, and out. Through one layer. And now, I'm going to fill in those spaces. I'm gonna go, in, right in the same hole. And then I'm gonna come out, here's where my thumb is really helpful. Out. And then back to the back side. I'm gonna try to repeat that, on the other side. Looking at my template. And I can see a little place when I'm looking at my bear. I can see a little empty space here. I'm gonna fill that in with a stitch. I'm pretty satisfied with that face. Now I'm gonna tie a knot on the back. It's much easier with a

longer thread. One. I'm using my thumb to push the knot as close to the felt as possible. Two. I'm gonna cut that off.

Sew bear front to back

- Now we're gonna switch the red colors to the lighter brown. We're also only using two-ply. So we did the facial features with three-ply. We're going to stitch the rest of the bear with two-ply. I already have one threaded. I'll place my ears on the back side. There's no right or wrong way, but I like the way that looks. And this part is gonna be covered. I'm going to attach them with the running stitch first. I'm gonna tie a knot in my thread. One... Two... I'm gonna go three times around since I'm using two-ply thread here. Inner thread, three. I'm gonna start on the inside because that's gonna be covered by the front part of the bear. I'm just doing a running stitch, traveling around the perimeter of the dark piece of felt, going through two layers, through the dark brown, through the light brown, back up through the light brown, to the dark brown. I'm gonna tie a knot using my thumb to push it as close to the felt as possible. One... Two... And three. Snip that off. Repeat the same thing on the second side. And then I tie it off. The bear comes together with the blanket stitch which is a very simple stitch. It gives a nice clean edge. I'm using my light brown two-ply thread. I am not tying a knot on my thread. Starting under the arm, going through the front layer, I'm going to sandwich this piece of thread between the two layers and leave a nice little tail and I'm going to wrap around the edge into the back side. Try to come out in the same hole or right next to the same hole. Don't pull all the way. Keep a little loop. Go through the loop. I'm gonna do the exact same thing again in the exact same place. This will serve as a knot. Give a little tug and into the back side, up to the front side, save a little loop there, go through the loop, pull snugly. Do not pull too tight; you will break your thread. And now we're going to move along the perimeter of the bear. Back side to the front side, wrap my thread, and pull. Back side to the front side, wrap my thread, and pull. Here's the nice clean line along the edge connecting the back and the front together. I tend to wrap my thread in this style when I have a long thread. And when my thread gets short, then I tend to go through the loop. It's the exact same thing. My thread is getting a little short, so I'm gonna do one more stitch and then I'm gonna add a new piece of thread. I'm gonna pull off two plys from this piece, again starting near the middle and gently pulling them apart. With the tail of the previous thread and the new thread, I'm going to tie a knot. I want that knot to fall as close to my last stitch as possible. I'm holding it with my finger. One... Two... Three. I don't cut 'em too short. I'm just gonna stick 'em back inside there. There's a reason I like to keep those threads long because sometimes they start popping up to the outside of my work. I can pull them back in from the inside. Continuing the blanket stitch Go in here and pull these in a little. I'm trying to keep my stitches evenly spaced from one another and going into the same depth of the felt. So when we get to the ear piece here we're gonna do a little bit of a modified blanket stitch. We're gonna grab a little bit of the back, come up through the front, wrap the thread around. Grab a little bit of the back, come up through the light brown, wrap my thread. My intention is to go through both layers, come up through the brown, wrap my thread. You can see that I'm creating that same line that I was creating on the seam right here. Grab a little bit of the back, come up through the front, wrap my thread, pull tightly. Grab a little bit of the back, come up through the light brown, wrap my thread, pull tightly. Now I'm back to the regular blanket stitch. If I didn't modify my blanket stitch there, I'd end up folding up his ear into my stitches. I need to change my thread again, add another piece, trying to get that knot to land as close to my last stitch as possible. One and... two. If I tug on these threads I can get the knot a little closer. And now three. I'm gonna trim that extra long one and tuck my threads inside and re-thread

my long piece. We're about to do that modified blanket stitch on the second side. Pull my thread a little bit, I can see the knot popping out. That's why I like that longer tail. Grab a little of the back side, come up through the front, wrap my thread. Grab a little of the back side, come up through the front, wrap my thread. I'm gonna show you on the back what it looks like. These little stitches are just grabbing the back side. We're going to continue blanket stitching until we're two inches from where we started and then we're going to stuff our bear.

Stuff bear

- I like a densely-stuffed bear, so I like this recycled polyfiber fill to use for my stuffing. It has a nice springy quality to it. But you can use what you'd like. When I'm stuffing the bear, I like to use smaller pieces and make these little balls, and I'm going to start pushing it up into the head area. That's where I have my pencil eraser. Helps me push the stuffing around inside. Ball it up. Push it up with the pencil. And use my thumb. When I go into the hand, smaller little ball. I'll place it in there with my finger. And then I'll use my pencil eraser and push it in even further. And push it in to the bottom of the leg. Use my pencil eraser. Push it in a little further. Don't use that side. Use the eraser. It's helpful to use small bits, not a big giant piece. Moving some of that stuffing into the arm. One more arm to stuff. I like to make sure I have a little extra stuffing in the neck area so he doesn't have a floppy head. Give him a little squeeze to make sure he feels nice and dense, and then I'm ready to stitch him up. I'm using the tail of the thread where I left off, this two inch gap. I'm using my finger on my left hand, as I'm closing this gap, to tuck the stuffing inside. My last stitch is going to be right next to the first stitch I made. Do a regular blanket stitch, then do it again in the same location. Again in the same location. Then I'm going to stick my needle inside and come out in another place, and clip off my thread. And there's our little bear.

Chapter 4 - Make Clothing and Finish

Cut and sew clothing

- Your bear could be done at this stage, but you may wanna customize him with a little outfit. Here I've chosen overalls with a little pocket to put on our bear. You could also, prior to assembling your bear, have embroidered a little heart on him, there's lots of options. This is a gender neutral outfit, you could do it in more boy colors. I also have a template for a little dress. We will start by attaching the pocket. I'm gonna eyeball where I want the pocket to land on the front of the overalls. So I'm gonna take one layer, front layer of the overalls, and the pocket. And I'm going to stitch it with a contrasting color thread. Gonna tie a knot. I'm using two ply thread, which is gonna require me to make three little knots that are gonna land on top of each other. And my thread is never longer than 18 inches. So I'm eyeballing where I want the pocket to land. Holding it in place. The felt will naturally stick to each other. That's another nice quality of working with it, so it doesn't require a pin. Start in the corner, gonna do two stacking stitches, like so. And then I'm going to do a running stitch, across the top of the pocket piece only. Trying to make my stitches consistent, evenly spaced. At this point, gonna go back into the overalls. Now I'm going through two layers, and I'm gonna repeat those two stacking stitches, on this side. Now I'm going to whip stitch the pocket perimeter onto the overalls. I'm going through two layers, coming out on the edge of the pocket. Going in through two layers, coming out on the edge of the pocket, right outside. And then going through the two layers, and going round and round. I'm working a little faster now, I'm doing the same thing instead of just going to the other side, coming out here on the edge and going back down. When I'm working faster, come up to this side, front side, dip through the both layers, and

then come out on the edge. It's the same thing, just moving quicker. Now I'm gonna tie it off on the back side. One... Two... Three, trim my threads. Line up my outfit. And I'm gonna start blanket stitching the edges. Gonna go in here first, then I'm gonna do a side, and another side. Then one shoulder, then I'll slip the outfit onto my bear, and do the last shoulder. I'm not gonna tie a knot, and I'm using two ply red thread. Gonna go in between the two layers. Leaving a tail, going around the edge, through the same hole, or right next to that hole on the front side. And through the loop. Pull my tail a little bit. And I'm gonna do the same thing again, in the same spot, and through the loop. And that will suffice as a knot. I like using a contrasting color thread when I'm stitching up the outfit for visual interest here. Thinking about keeping my stitches evenly spaced along the edge, and dipping into the felt evenly with each stitch. And for my last stitch, gonna do what I did with the first stitch. One... Two... Just sticking my needle in and out, so I can trim it. Gonna trim that now as well, and tuck it up inside. And now I'm gonna work one of the sides. Between the two layers, keep a tail, wrap around the edge, back into my felt out the same hole, and through the loop. Gonna show you, this is the point where the outfit dips in, this point right here is where I'm gonna stop. If I didn't stop in this location, I wouldn't be able to put the arm through, this is the arm hole. Two more stitches. And this last stitch I'm going one... And two... So I'll just do three there, two or three are fine to do in these starting and ending locations. Thread through, and snip. We're gonna repeat this exactly on the other side. Let's tuck in these threads, and then we're gonna sew a shoulder seam. Trim these a bit. Gonna tuck them in. And I'm gonna sew one of the shoulder straps. It's the same technique, go between the two layers, leave a tail, wrap around the edge, come out near or in the same hole, go through the loop, and pull gently. And repeat that again in the same location. And we'll do one blanket stitch, and then we'll tie off with this blanket stitch. Make a blanket stitch, repeat it in the same location. Make my thread come out in a random place like that, and clip, and clip. Let's put our outfit on our bear. Re tuck those threads in a bit. And let's sew our final shoulder strap. We'll go between the two layers, leave a tail... Wrap around to the back side, through the same hole, or right next to the same hole, through the loop, and pull. Repeat that again in the same location. Make a regular blanket stitch. This'll be our final stitch. Blanket stitch... Another blanket stitch right over that blanket stitch. Bear your thread in there, come out in a random location, clip our threads... Here is your adorable overall little stuffed companion.

Finishing and variations

- This pocket is a perfect little place to put a love note or you could use this as tooth fairy pillow, put a little tooth in there and the tooth fairy could leave a little note. I'm gonna show you how to personalize your pocket. You could personalize your pocket with decorative stitches. We're gonna work on a name. You want to stitch this name on or these decorative stitches on prior to attaching the pocket. Here I've written out a name on my paper template, which I'm going to attempt to stitch onto my felt piece. I still write out the name every time on the paper prior to stitching for spacing. We'll stitch in a two ply thread in an off white, which is a contrasting color to the red, and I'm not gonna worry so much about the shape of my letters. I'm worrying more about the place that they're falling so that I have enough space to get all my letters nicely on this piece of felt. Before I start, I'll tie a knot. Two, three. I'm using the running stitch, and I'm making a line that is not filled in when I start, but I'm gonna go back in and fill in that line after I've completed the name. Not filling in my stitches allows me to rip things out if I am not happy with my placement. I'm just gonna check in here. I'm on the middle letter and I want to fall about in the middle. I can see that I've come a little too close on the right side, so my solution here is I'm going to trim the left side, but I'm just gonna

trim it a bit because I need to leave enough room for the stitching of the pocket onto the overalls. Before I trim, I'm going to fill in the name. I'm gonna start going backwards because I still have some thread here. So I'm starting at the end of the A where I just stopped stitching. So I'm coming up from the back and filling in my stitches so it looks like one line. I'm attempting to come right up in the same holes to connect all these stitches. I kinda like the way that I drew that little H, so I'm gonna add that on. I'm just stitching along here and I'm at my last letter, and then I'm going to trim the red piece of felt in order to frame the letters nicely. I'll bring that S down a little like that. I'm gonna tie it off on the back. Feels a little less obvious to me now, but I feel like I could take off a little bit of fabric here on the side of the S. And there's my finished pocket. Remember, if you are personalizing your overalls with a name or a detail, you need to do that prior to stitching on the pocket onto the overalls. Here are some other little companions. This little bear, this outfit is the same outfit in the templates except that I just lengthened the pant leg, and instead of putting a pocket on, I just put some running stitches down the front. You also have a pattern to make a little bunny. You can see the different facial features, and they're indicated on the template, but it's sewn up exactly the same way, and lastly, you have a pattern to make this little dress. This little dress you add a little collar on and then I put French knots down the front, and you can see, I've played a lot with color here. Some other variations that I've made were these little outfits, and they're made of linen and I tea dyed the fabric, so you can incorporate other fabrics into the clothing. You could also put in some buttons, sequins. This guy is special on his own, but you might want to make him a little friend.