Knitted Polar Bear with Megan Kreiner

Chapter 1 - Overview
Overview
(whimsical music) - Hi, I'm Megan Kreiner, author of "Crochet a Zoo" and "Bathtime Buddies", and mom to two little kids. Although we're very busy I really love making toys for my kids and I came up with this adorable polar bear pattern that's quick to work up but because we use extra super chunky yarn it's quite huggable. For this little polar bear he also has a little fish friend and for extra bit of magic we've installed some sew in magnets to allow our little polar bear to carry his fish around with him. We'll be creating our little polar bear and fish using some circular needles and working in the magic loop technique. We'll also go over how to create your own safe sew-in magnet set so you can also create a little bit of polar bear and fish magic. We'll also be talking about some simple shaping techniques to add some cute detail such as these little toes. We'll be going over a quick and easy assembly process for our polar bear and fish and your kids will have a cuddly and huggable polar bear of their very own. (whimsical music)

Chapter 2 - Materials
Materials
- For our polar bear and fish, we're going to need the following materials. We'll be using Knit Picks Biggo bare yarn. Asphalt heather and wonderland heather. You'll need two skeins of the Biggo bare yarn. And you'll want to make sure that you wind the skeins into a ball before you begin, otherwise it's going to get pretty tangled pretty quickly. I used the ball winder to wind these. You're going to need 140 yards of the bare-colored yarn. About 20 yards of asphalt heather and about 40 yards of the wonderland heather for our fish. We'll also need scissors, size 10 circular needles, that's a six millimeter size needle with a fairly long wire, 16 inches or above. Tapestry needle. For our project, we'll be using a 12 millimeter plastic safety eye. This is really appropriate for children three and over. If your polar bear is going to be going to a child younger than that, go ahead and make French knot eyes instead. For our project, we can also use stitch markers. This is a slip ring style. And these are really helpful for marking the beginning and end of our rounds as we work to help us keep our place. We'll also need polyester fiber fill to stuff our bear and fish. To attach your fish to your bear, you can use snaps or Velcro. For this project, we'll be using sew-in magnets and I'm going to show you how to make your own set. To make our sew-in earth magnets, you will need 18 to 20 millimeter rare earth magnets, a light-colored thread, sewing needle, a small swatch of cotton fabric, and fabric glue.

Chapter 3 - Fish
Make magnets and knit fish
- To make your sew-in magnets you can pick up a pair of 20 millimeter rare earth magnets from your local craft store or online. I also picked up fat quarter of white cotton fabric. Any sort of cotton fabric will do fine. We don't need very much of it. But a thin fabric is ideal. Go ahead and cut (scissors scraping) a four by six inch rectangle, and place your magnets on the material. Don't put them too close together, these may start to stick to each other, in fact go ahead and flip one of them over so that they actually repel. That way they won't smack together while you're trying to put this together. To assemble your magnets, protect your work surface by placing the fabric and

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the magnets on top of some wax paper, or some tin foil. To sandwich your magnets inside the material take your fabric glue and apply around the magnet spreading it out on the material. (light rustling) Then go ahead and fold your fabric down and press gently. Once you've allowed your glue to dry you can go ahead and cut your magnets apart and then trim off any of the excess fabric around the magnet. You wanna keep the magnet encapsulated in the fabric and then use your sewing needle and thread to sew the fabric right into your polar bear and fish. Once you've cut a square, go ahead and trim off some of the excess fabric. And be careful, that magnet's gonna wanna stick to your scissors. Once you've cut out some of the excess fabric we can go ahead and start working on our fish. To start your fish take your blue yarn, and put six stitches on your circular needles. (needles scratching) We'll be working in the magic loop technique. So slide your stitches onto the wire and split them in half drawing the wire out between them, we'll have three stitches on each needle. Hold your needles so that the points are pointed to the right and your working yarn and tail are both on the upper needle. To begin, draw the needle out, and start working on the three stitches on the lower needle. For this pattern we'll start by knitting one, knitting front back, knitting one. To move to the other three stitches draw your needle back onto these stitches, you may find they get a little tight on the first round. And draw the other needle out, freeing it up to allow you to knit. Knit one, knit front back, and knit one. You can also do this on double pointed needles, but I find that the magic loop technique tends to move a little more quickly, and is ideal for these smaller groupings of stitches. Moving on to round two, go ahead and knit all your stitches. And keep repeating that process of moving the stitches from needle to wire and wire to needle. For round three we'll be making some stitches, and you're welcome to make one left or make one right, whatever you prefer. I'll be doing a make one right. And just keep it consistent. Bring the bar up from in between your stitches, make one and knit. Go ahead and repeat that process again drawing the needle back onto your stitches and drawing the other needle off. (needles clicking) If you'd like a little extra help keeping track of where your round begins and ends you can also utilize the slip ring stitch markers, by slipping into a stitch at the beginning of your round to help indicate where you are. Let's go ahead onto round four. (needles clicking) Once you've moved the stitches to the other needle, go ahead and give that first stitch a little bit of a tug, just to help close up any holes or gaps that might happen as you move from one needle to the next. (needles clicking) We'll do one more increase round for five. (needles clicking) The great thing about making your own sew-in magnets is that if you'd like to make multiple fish, you can just make a few more sew-in magnets, and when you install them, just make sure that they're all facing the same way, so that the magnets will attract correctly when your polar bear decides he's hungry and needs a snack. After we're finished working straight for round six through eight, we're gonna work a slight decrease for the body shaping on round nine and then we'll go ahead and knit straight for rounds ten and 11. After which we'll go ahead and install our sew-in magnet. So go ahead and slide your stitches down onto the wires a little bit, just to give us a little more room. When installing your magnets it's good to kind of keep track of which sides actually connect to one another. So I'll do a quick check, make sure at least I have two sides that are going to connect, and I'll go ahead and insert this magnet. To install this magnet I'll be using a light colored thread, if you like you can even use a blue thread, but since I'll be putting all my stitches on the inside, you won't actually see them. I like to double up my thread before I begin, just making it a little stronger. And you won't need very many stitches, you just want to put in enough stitches to make sure the magnet's not gonna move around. If you like you can even turn your fish inside out before you start sewing. Which, you may wanna do, because it's really hard to sew this if it's not turned inside out. Go ahead and push your needle through the

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fabric. And do your best to catch just the inside of the stitches. And again this in no way has to be pretty, because you won't see it, this is just to keep the magnet from sliding around inside. Make sure as you sew, to not go all the way up to your last row of stitches, because you're going to need to leave those free so we can finish knitting our fish together. (needles clacking) I think that should work pretty well, our magnet's not going to move around too much. So once it's all sewn down, go ahead and fasten off. (needles clicking) Go ahead and trim that tail just a little bit shorter. And now we can turn our fish outside in, and we can continue on to round 12. We'll be working another decrease for round 12, once we reach the end of round 12 we can go ahead and stuff our little fish. When you're ready to stuff your fish, take a little bit of your fiber fill and work it in with your finger. He doesn't need to be stuffed to firmly, you wanna keep him relatively light, just because that magnet needs to hold him up, we don't wanna make him too heavy, but as you can see, you can test your magnet, and that's sticking pretty nicely to the other one, so when we install this into our polar bear he should be able to pick the little fish up. We'll be double checking this later when we install the second magnet into the polar bear. Obviously you wanna make sure you don't install it facing the wrong way, because then of course your magnet's not going to stick. So now our fish is stuffed, and we're ready to close up that hole. (needles clicking) Go ahead and slide those stitches onto your needle, and proceed to knit two together four times. (needles clicking) Go ahead and cut your yarn leaving a fairly long tail. (needles clacking) You wanna slide that needle back onto these stitches so you can pick them up with your tapestry needle. Since there's only two stitches left I feel okay about just sliding that needle off and grabbing those loops. And there you are. You can feel where the magnet is and when we install our fins we'll wanna keep this magnet oriented at the belly of the fish, so we'll be able to add the rest of the details around it. If you'd like to also, at this point, go ahead and remove that slip ring, we can take the tail in the beginning and wind it around these stitches on the cast on row, just to close up that little hole in the front. Let's go ahead and fasten that off, and then we'll pull that yarn through. (scissors scratching) (scissors thumping) I like to leave the yarn tail attached to the end of the fish, just so that I have the option of using it to attach the tail of the fish later on. So let's go ahead and make our fish tail, fins and dorsal fin. We're gonna go ahead and start with the tail, make sure we have eight stitches on our needle, two, four, six, eight. And we'll just be working in this straight. So after you've cast on eight, go ahead and turn your work. Begin by knitting two together four times. You might find this is a little tight since we're working into the cast on row. So if you can, try to cast on fairly loose. (needles clicking) Let's go ahead and purl. Go ahead and knit together two more times, then we'll be ready to finish our tail and move on to the next piece. If you're like me, and tend to knit fairly tight, you may have to fight with your needles a little bit, but hopefully it won't be too problematic. Go ahead and cut your yarn. (Scissors scraping) Weave the yarn onto your needle. Since we're only working with two stitches, I'm just gonna go ahead and remove that from my knitting needle and weave the yarn through the end. When we assemble our fish I'll go ahead and work this yarn tail in as well. So now let's go ahead and make our side fins. Go ahead and cast on three, starting with that slip-knot that's going to be our first, second, here's our third stitch. Go ahead and turn, and then bind off all your stitches. (needles clicking and scraping) Let's go ahead and cut our yarn, draw that yarn through your loop, and again, we'll work in these yarn tails when we assemble our fish. Go ahead and make a second side fin, and then let's move on to the dorsal fin. For the dorsal fin put five stitches on your needle, (needles scraping) here's five, and then go ahead and bind off. (needles scraping) Loosen up that last stitch, cut your yarn, and pull through to fasten off. We'll be working these yarn tails into our fish when we assemble it. Now that all our pieces are ready, we can assemble our fish. First we

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wanna go ahead and establish where the belly of our fish is, so go ahead and feel around for that magnet, this will be facing down. Let's begin by installing the dorsal fin, since we wanna make sure we keep our fish oriented properly. Locate the magnet on the belly of your fish, and install the dorsal fin along the top of the back. To keep things nice and even I like to tack down the front and back of the dorsal fin before sewing down the rest of the seam. So this is looking pretty good. Sew down the rest of that seam with a few whip stitches, and then draw the rest of that yarn to the back where we can then tie those yarn tails together, and then finish by pulling those yarn tails into your fish to secure. And watch out for that magnet in there, let's give it a bit of a tug, just to pull that knot inside, then we'll trim. (scissors scraping and clacking) Now that we have our dorsal fin in place it'll be easy to place everything else, while making sure that magnet stays oriented at the belly. So let's install our side fins next. First we'll tie the two yarn tails together to help shape the fin just a little bit more. So gently tie those tails together with a square knot. Let's do the other one so it'll be ready to go, and this is just to help round out that fin just a bit more. Okay, load one of the yarn tails onto your tapestry needle, and I'm gonna put this right about here. To install and secure, I'm just gonna go ahead and actually do another square knot, and then we'll bring these yarn tails through, since it's such a small contact point. Give it a tug to bring that knot into the material, and then we'll install the other side fin. It's starting to look very fishy. Finally we're ready to install our tail, and I think for our purposes, I'm actually gonna go ahead and sew this tail into the fish before we begin, since we already have a yarn tail on the actual tail piece, we can use that for installation. So I'm going to just draw this through and clean it up. (scraping and thumping) Next I'm going to draw this yarn tail down through our fin, and that will make it a little easier for me to pull it into the body when I'm ready to do the final cleanup. Then take the other yarn tail, load it up, and I think for our fish, I'll have it oriented to the side, you can also orient it this way, it's totally up to you. Let's go ahead and install our tail fin so our little fish can swim. (rustling) and a few stitches should do it, you won't need very much. Okay, before I secure this, I'm gonna actually go ahead and draw this yarn tail into the body, just to clean it up, only because it's a bit in my way at this point, so I just want it out of there. We'll see whether or not I need to put a few more stitches in to hold everything in place before I finish up. Maybe one more will do it. And feel free to put as many stitches in as you think is necessary just to get the shaping you want. With toys feel free to customize, stitch, to get the look or shaping that you feel is best for your toy. There we are, let's secure our yarn and draw through. The final step for our fish is to add some eye details. To begin, load up your tapestry needle with a little bit of the asphalt heather yarn. I'm going to insert my needle at a point about an inch from where I'm actually going to be installing my eyes, and leaving a bit of a tail. I'm gonna sew this tail in at the end, but no need to secure anything at this point, just work gently. I think I like this spot for my eye, so I'm just gonna put in a very simple short little line. Let's go ahead and do it on the other side as well. If you'd like your eye to be a little thicker, you can either double this up, and I'll go over it one more time, or you can even install french knots if you like. But the little short stitch seems to do the trick for our fish. Once our eyes are in place, draw your yarn back out to where your other yarn tail is and to secure I'm just gonna tie these together, and then with my tapestry needle draw them right back into the fish. This alleviates the necessity to fasten off more than once. Lost one of our, one of our tails, let's reload that and give it another shot. Now that both of our tails are through, just give it a bit of a tug to pull the knot into the body, and there you are, that's gonna be pretty secure, so you can go ahead and trim. If this happens just use the back of your tapestry needle to push those ends back into the fish. And here we have our little fish all ready to go, so let's go ahead and start on our polar bear now.

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Chapter 4 - Knitted Bear

Knit the head

- To begin our polar bear, let's start with the head. To begin, put 12 stitches on our circular needles. We'll be working the head in the round. Using our magic loop technique that we worked for our fish. Two more, alright, that gives us 12. We'll go ahead and split these stitches in half using the wire, four, six, go ahead and pull your wire through. With six stitches on each needle and we'll make sure that these two rows of stitches, this detail right here are facing each other, make sure that you don't have any twists in there before we go ahead and join them up. So with your needles facing the right, go ahead and draw that top needle out leaving the stitches on the wire. And we'll start working on those bottom stitches first using our working yarn, for our first round, knit one. Give that a pull, knit front back. And repeat all the way around, turn your work and draw that needle back into the stitches. Draw the other needle out and continue with that pattern of knit, knit front back to the end of the round. We'll be knitting round two straight. So one stitch in each of our stitches and again, don't forget to give that first stitch just a little bit of a tug. I'll be knitting 18 stitches for round two. When we start increasing on rounds three and five, you may notice that the increases are gonna be clustered on the ends of the rows and this is just to create that shaping of our polar bear head which is going to be a little more of an oval shape. So let's go ahead and take care of that. To begin round three, we'll knit four and then we'll start doing our increases. Just like with our fish, we'll be doing make ones in the bars between the stitches and then knitting. We've done, we'll do it four more times. And with these makes ones, just make sure you're keeping them consistent. You're welcome to do them either as a make one right or a make one left, whatever you find to be easiest for you. Now we'll repeat that by knitting four on our other needle. Before working our increases. We'll make one knit one and then repeat four more times. We can now knit these 28 stitches and then we'll do one more increase round. To begin round five, knit eight. And then proceed with make one, knit one increases. Here's our eight. Make one, knit one, repeat that five more times. This will give us a total of 20 stitches on this needles. Two, four, six, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, great. So let's go ahead and we'll do the other side. Start off by knitting six and then working your increases. Make one, knit one and then repeat that five more times. At the end of this round, we'll have 40 stitches. Continue to knit straight for rounds six through 16, after which we'll begin our decreases. We'll begin our decrease by knitting three and knitting two together. We'll be repeating this all the way around. By doing an even decrease, we'll be creating a rounded shaping for the top of the head while the increases that we did will allow for a more defined shaping for our polar bear's cheeks. We're doing a knit two together but if you decide you wanna do a different type of decrease, just make sure to keep it consistent all the way around so your stitches will all be oriented in the same direction. Continue to knit and decrease per the pattern until 26 at the top of the head, then we'll go ahead and stuff the head and close the seam. Once you've completed round 26, go ahead and cut your yarn. Once you have your yarn on your tapestry needle, weave the remaining stitches onto that yarn tail. Since there's only four, I'm gonna gently remove that needle and work through those remaining stitches and we'll be stuffing the head through the bottom hole so go ahead and close that top hole up. If you find that one of your loops starts to stick out kinda like this one, wind your yarn around it. And proceed to stitch it down until you have a shaping that is working for you, secure your yarn. And then draw it inside the body. We're actually going to add a small fringe to the top of our polar bear's head as well so we'll cover up anything else that may not look just right on the top. Let's trim some of the access and now we're ready to stuff our polar bear's head. I'll be using a polyester fiber fill. If you're interested in stuffing your toys with other types of materials than the polyester fiber fill,

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you can find organic wools and organic cottons on various websites. Once you finish working the stuffing into the head and filling out those cheeks on either side, you can then decide whether or not you want to close up this seam, if you're gonna be installing the plastic safety eyes, we'll wanna leave the seam open for now so we can install the backing. If you're planning on installing French knots, go ahead and load up this yard tail on your tapestry needle, close the seam and then sew it shut. Now let's make the rest of the features for the head. We'll link ears, muzzle and nose. The ear shape actually also doubles for the tail so we'll be making three of those. We'll be working our ear in the round. Put six stitches on your circular needle. Then go ahead and slide those stitches onto the wire. Split them into two groups of three. And then slide them onto your needles. The working yarn and yarn tail will be on the top needle when the needles face to the right. Slide the top needle out of your stitches and begin to work on the bottom three. We'll start by knitting front back on all our stitches which will give us a total of 12. If you find that the yarn tail and this will happen sometimes, if the yard tail accidentally twists over your yarn, just go ahead and very carefully slip that yarn off, it'll usually overlap so it'll be that top yarn that's over it. Once you slip that off, you should be good to go to continue so there we are. And we have 12 stitches so let's work those stitches straight. For this piece, we're starting at the top of the ear and we're working down to the base. Round three will be a knit one, make one round. We'll be working in a knit one, make one, knit one pattern for round three. This will give you 18 stitches to work in for the next round. Round five will be our decrease row. We'll be knitting two together nine times. Since we have an odd number of stitches on our needles, you'll most likely have to pull one of your needles right through to transfer one of the stitches from one needle to the other. Now we'll have an even number to work with. If you don't have a long set of circular needles handy, all of these pieces can also be worked on double pointed needles, we'll work one more round and then we'll bind off. Bind off the remaining stitches. We'll be leaving the ears unstuffed and placing a little bit of stuffing inside our tail just to give it a little bit of cute poof. There we go, let's trim that yarn tail leaving it fairly long so we can use it to attach the ear and tail to our polar bear when we are doing our assembly steps. Fasten that off, if you like at this point, you can also bring that yarn tail out the top through just to hide it. Give it a quick trim. We've made one our little ears. Go ahead and make two more ear shapes. We'll use the second one for the second ear and we'll use the other one for the tail. We'll also stuff the tail just a little bit before we assemble, after that's done, go ahead and start on your muzzle. Our muzzle will come together in a really similar way to how we did our ears. We'll start off with eight stitches on our needle. Go ahead and slide those stitches onto your wire. Split them into two groups of four and slide them down onto your needles. With our working yarn and yarn tail on the top needle, needles facing right, we'll draw that top needle out. And we'll begin by knitting front and back on each of our stitches. If you find that your stitches are getting a little too tight, sometimes pulling this the other needle out before you slide can actually free up enough tension so that they'll actually move. That's pretty common for the first round in particular since cast ons will sometimes be a little tighter than your normal tension. For our second round, we'll just knit straight. We'll be working one more round of increases for round three, working in a knit, make one, knit pattern. I like the make one as a method of increasing because the knit front and back sometimes has a tendency to form little holes in the knitting. We should have 12 on this needle now, two, four, six, eight, 10, 12. So let's proceed to increase on this needle for a total of 24. For round five, we'll be working 12 knit two togethers for our decrease. Bind off after round six, trim the yarn leaving a long tail. Pull this tail through the last stitch to fasten off. We'll wanna close up this little hole on the front of the muzzle before we install it. Load that yarn tail onto your tapestry needle. I'm working along the hole. Catch a few of these

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stitches, wind the yarn tail around then and then if you give it a little bit of a pull, it'll close much like a drawstring purse. Ready to fasten off. And then we'll draw that yarn tail through. Give it a quick trim. The other yarn tail we'll use to attach the front of the muzzle to the face. To finish off the muzzle, we'll need to add a nose. So go ahead and pick up your black yarn and let's get started. Start your nose by placing seven stitches onto your needle. Turn your work and knit seven. Cut your yarn leaving a fairly long tail. And then using your tapestry needle, weave the yarn through the remaining stitches on the needle. Keep the tension fairly loose so that you're able to work the needle through those loops one more time. And give it a pretty good pull to secure. The nose will have the type of shaping where it'll be a little round on top and have a little pinch on the bottom, if you are not totally happy with the way the bottom looks, feel free to grab a few more stitches and run your yarn through one more time until you're happy. This is looking pretty good so I think we're ready to go. We now have all the pieces we need to put together our head.

Knit the body

- We'll begin our bear body by casting on eight stitches. Then slide the stitches onto your wire. And draw the wire up through the center. Splitting the stitches into two groups of four. With your tail and working yarn, on the top needle, with the needles facing right, we can now working in our magic loop. Draw the needle out. And start by knitting front back in each stitch around. Again if you find these stitches are a little tight to slide onto your needle try sliding the other needle out first. To easy up the tension of it. For round two, knit 16. On round three our increases will be worked in a pattern of knit two, make one, knit two. Knit 20 for round four. We'll be doing one more set of increases for round five. And then we'll be working straight for round six to round 12. After which we'll start to taper the top of the body ^with a series of decrease rounds and knit rounds. ^I'm knitting the last two rounds before I bind off ^and stuff the bear's body. ^Let's go ahead and bind off before we stuff. Try to bind off fairly loose, because you'll want enough room to put the stuffing in. I'll go ahead and leave a long tail. Pull up that last stitch. Draw the tail through the stitch, to fasten off. Let's go ahead and close that hole at the bottom with the left over yarn tail so our stuffing stays in. Simply weave the yarn tail around a few of the stitches. And give it a gently tug to close the hole. Fasten off and draw the yarn through the body. Trim. It might be a slightly tight fit, just work your finger in there. And with our polyester fiber fill, go ahead and stuff your bear's body. Since we're using a thicker yarn with this project go ahead and firmly stuff your bear's body. You want to put enough stuffing in there to give your polar bear a nice round shape. And if you like, you can also roll it around your hands a bit, just to distribute the stuffing a little more evenly. Once you're happy with the shaping of your polar bear's body we can go ahead and start on the legs.

Knit the legs

- Ready to make our legs and then we'll be ready to put our polar bear together. All four legs are exactly the same and you wanna pay attention to the toe shaping at the front of the foot so that when we do put our legs on, they'll be pointed forward. To begin, put eight stitches on your needle. Draw the stitches unto the wire. Split your stitches into two groups. Draw the wire out. Put your stitches back on your needles. Brand your needles so that they're pointed to the right and the yarn tail and the working yarn are on the top needle We're ready to start working our magic loop. Draw the top needle out and work front back in each stitch. If you find your cast on stitches are a little tight to slide, slide the bottom needle out and then slide the stitches onto the top needle. Then proceed to knit. We'll do four more in front backs for a total of 16 stitches. Get all stitches around for

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round two. For round three, we'll begin by knitting four, then we'll start introducing our increases by making one and knitting one four times. As we move to the other side of the round, we'll be doing our increases first followed by knitting four stitches. By stacking our increases together on one side, we'll be creating the shaping we'll need for the toes. And this will be much more apparent once we've introduced the stuffing. We'll now knit rounds four through eight straight. For round nine, we'll be decreasing 12 times with a knit two together. This will be the ankle of our bear's leg. Finish decreasing on round nine. Then proceed to work straight four rounds 10 through 20 to form the rest of the leg. Then we can go ahead and stuff. Make sure there's enough material at the bottom of the foot to allow for the shape of the toes to be pretty well defined. You'll notice that as you place stuffing inside the foot, the front part of the foot where we did our increases will start to bulge out a little bit more than the back of the leg. This is where we'll be putting our toe detail later on. And when you attach this to the polar bear, you wanna make sure that the toes are facing forward. Once the toe is well shaped and firmly stuffed, go ahead and add a little bit more material. The leg. And you don't need to stuff the leg entirely right now. We can always add a little bit more stuffing after we do our last round. So let's go ahead and do that now. Go ahead and push that stuffing down there, so it doesn't interfere with your stitches. We'll be doing a knit one, knit two together. Knit one and two together. Keep that on the other side. Which will give a total of eight stitches at the end. We can now cut our yarn and leave a nice long tail. So we have enough to weave in the end and then attach our leg to the body when we do our assembly. Pick the stitches up off your vere needle. Gonna gently remove this needle and work the needle through those stitches. Now, I'm looking at my leg and I'm seeing that it's a little loose on top. But that's not a problem. I can go ahead and just open those stitches back up again. My finger. Grab a little bit more stuffing and work that in and then close up that hole again. I think that's working a bit better. So I'm gonna go ahead and secure my yarn. And then, since I'm gonna use this yarn to attach the leg to the body. I'm actually going to just work it through the top and leave it there for now. What I do want to do though is get rid of this yarn tail on the bottom of the foot. And we will go through the same process we did before with the other circular holes that we needed to close. And then work the yarn through the foot. And trim. Again, make sure you're paying attention to where this foot shaping is in the front. One of our legs is now done. We have some nice shaping in the front for our toe. So let's go ahead and we'll make three more and then we'll have all the pieces we need to put our polar bear together.

Chapter 5 - Assemble the Bear

Stitch and add head details

- We'll start assembling our polar bear by sewing the head together and installing our sewn in magnet. We'll be installing plastic safety eyes onto our polar bear's head. But if you like, go ahead and install french knots or black felt circles for eyes. To position our eyes we're going to count down 16 to 17 stitches from the top of the head. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. I'm actually going to mark that location off with my tapestry needle, just to hold of the place. The eyes are going to be installed about four to five stitches away from each other, on either side. So I'm going to put one eye here and put the other eye around here. Two, three, four, that's about four stitches away from each other and they look pretty even. So if you're happy with the placement, you can go ahead and install our backings. I like to install the backings by pushing the post out through the hole at the bottom of the head, so I'm able to see it a little more easily. Push this post out. Now our polar bear eyes are installed. Once our eyes are installed, we'll be ready to install the muzzle onto the front of our polar bear's head. We'll also want to install the other sewn

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in magnet, at this time. Began by taking your magnet and placing it inside the muzzle, against the side, we don't want to place it in the front because this is where our nose is going to go. To make sure your magnet is orientated the right way, place your fish against the muzzle and do a quick test. If your fish isn't sticking or is it repelling from the muzzle, you'll know you have to switch this magnet around, just go ahead and flip it over and give it another go. If it's sticking you should be good to go. Just to make it a little easier to sew the magnet on, I'm going to push this muzzle inside out so I have a little easier access. You may see that some of the fabric is hanging over the edge, but that's okay you will tuck that in, when we attach the muzzle to the head. You won't need too many stitches, here, just enough to keep the magnet from moving around inside the muzzle. It doesn't have to be pretty, because this is going to be inside, where no one's going to be able to see it. Go ahead and fasten off. Trim some of the excess string and then turn your muzzle outside in. Just give it one more quick test, before you install the muzzle. If your fish is sticking, everything should be good to go. Place this leftover yarn tail onto your tapestry needle and holding the seam closed, we'll sew it straight across. Give it a gentle tug to close that seam up and fasten off your yarn and then work the yarn tail into the head. And you'll want to place your muzzle pretty close to the eyes, almost close enough to allow it to overlap. We'll stuff the muzzle when there's a little bit of room left, after closing up most of the seam. Make sure that that magnet is pointed towards the bottom, where the mouth would be and start sewing around. A simple whipstitch will do the trick. If you find your yarn tail is a little unwieldy, you won't need too much for this, so, I'm going to trim mine. I'm going to actually draw my yarn out through the bottom of the muzzle to fasten off, so that I don't have to worry about any lingering knots being located in a easy to see place, like at the top of the muzzle. So once I fasten off, I'll draw that yarn through and trim, and give this another quick test, and it looks like our polar bear is able to hold it's fish, just fine. So we're ready to install our nose. For the nose we'll want to orient the curved part of the nose facing up and this pointed little bit facing down. To begin I will go ahead and load the yarn at the bottom of the pointy part, onto my tapestry needle and I'm just going to draw that through the front center of the muzzle and out through the head, just to temporarily hold it in place, while I use the second yarn tail to sew it on. Now ready to sew it and again a simple whipstitch should do the trick, catching our nose, as we work around. And as you our attaching your nose, stop every once in awhile, just to check for the placement, making sure that it's even. If you have to make adjustments as you're going along, it's easier to do this now then have to pull out a stitch or two. Alright, we'll just sew the bottom part. I'm going to sew the one little, quick stitch into the point, as well, just to keep everything nice and even. One more stitch ought to do it. Now that our little nose is sewn on I'm going to take advantage of this yarn tail I have here and add a couple of eyebrows. So let's draw that through the nose and I like my polar bears looking maybe a little sheepish, after all they are catching little fish. So to do that, I'm just going to give him a short little stich, titled slightly down, as a eyebrow. I think that placement looks pretty good. You can really adjust and change the look of your polar bear depending on where you actually want to put your eye brows. This one's looking pretty good, so I think we'll just go ahead and tack it in, right here. To finish it off, I'm just going to draw the eyebrow out where my other yarn tail is. Tighten these up, as much as you think you might need, then we will tie these together and weave the remaining yarn tails back into the head. Now that our knot is nice and secure we can trim and then move on to the ears. With our muzzle and our eyes in place, we're ready to install our polar bear's little ears on the sides of his head and then finally we'll add a little bit of a tuft of hair before moving onto the body. We'll be installing our ears in the upper corners of the head, using a simple whipstitch. Just to fix this little disconnect in our ring, I'm just going to

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throw a few stitches in here to clean that up, so we can have a nice straight line to work with. To get good placement on our ears, since our yarn tail is on one corner of the ear I'm going to insert my needle in here and then I'm going to draw it out, where I think the other corner of the ear is going to sit. That way I have a pretty quick idea of what the placement is going to to look like before I sew the rest of it down. Once it's in place whipstitch through the head and both layers. Once the ear is secure fasten off. If your yarn isn't fastening off correctly, check to see whether or not you might have split the yarn while bringing the needle through. You want actually go through the loop and not through the actual yarn. Alright, we're ready to go now, fasten off, trim. Go ahead and install your other ear. Our polar bear's adorable features are quickly falling into place. Let's go ahead and add a very small tuft of hair, just at the top of his head, to finish him off and then we'll go ahead and put the body together. We'll be installing one to three tufts of hair on top of your polar bear's head, so I'm going to go with two. To begin double up your white yarn, so we have a little loop and draw through at the top of the head. Might be a bit of a tight fit, so just work that needle out. Hold on to that loop and draw those yarn ends through. You can go ahead and secure by pulling the yarn ends right through that loop and repeating the process on the second piece of yarn. Draw the yarn ends through, leaving the loop, then draw those yarn ends through your loop. If you want to add a third one or even a whole mess of them for a really shaggy polar bear, you are welcome to do so. I think I'm happy with two, so I'm going to go ahead and cut these fairly short and then with my fingers separate those yarn strands out, and mess them up. We have our polar bear, a little tuft of hair. Our polar bear's features are all in place and his head's done, congratulations. Now let's go ahead and finish up his body and we'll be ready to give our polar bear a hug.

Stitching everything together
- We'll begin assembling our bear's head to our bear's body by taking the body piece and sewing it directly to the bottom of the head. To keep it centered, simply eyeball it because it's a pretty small shape that we're gonna be sewing down. You wanna keep this edge open and sew it directly underneath the head and chin. If you like, you can even add a little bit of extra stuffing right before you close up the seam. Just to give the head a little bit more support. Make sure to pull fairly firm on your needle and yarn so that all these stitches form a nice, tight seam. Once the body's attached to the head, you have to decide if you want to have your bear sit or stand. If you want it to sit, leave the head attached to the body as is. And position your legs to be attached at the shoulders. And at the hips, in a splayed position. Like so. If you'd like your bear to stand on all fours, first hold your bear horizontal and tilt the head up and then use the leftover yarn tail to secure the back of the head to the back of the body with a few extra stitches. Once this positioning is in place, you can attach all four legs at the shoulders and hips. We're gonna go ahead and actually do a standing-on-all-fours bear for this particular demonstration. To make it a little easier, I'm going to thread my leftover yarn tail up and through the bottom of the head to make it a little easier to put my first stitches in place. Tilt the head back and apply a few stitches between the back of the head and the body. Apply as many as you need... To keep the head in the position... That looks good for your bear. Once you're happy, go ahead and fasten your yarn off. And then work in that yarn tail. And trim. We're now ready to add our legs. Be sure to take note to where the toe shaping is at the front of each foot and make sure that's facing forward when you install your feet. To begin, let's start with the shoulders. The halfway point up the body is a pretty good place to attach. And you'll want this to be able to support your bear's head so keep it pretty far forward for the front legs. First, pull the yarn tail through. And just to keep things nice and even, what I like to do is actually

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bring in the second leg... And catch the top of that shoulder with the yarn I just brought through. This will help me keep everything nice and even. So that's looking pretty good. Gonna draw it back through. That height's working pretty well so I'm gonna go ahead and sew the top of the shoulders down using a whip stitch to the body. Check to make sure that your toes are still facing forward. And once you're happy with the placement... Go ahead and fasten off your sewing yarn. Draw through. Trim. If you find that your legs are splaying out, like this bear's legs are, there's another little trick you can do. Position the legs pointing straight down. And then, with the yarn tail from your other leg, which should still be there, I'm going to catch the inside of the legs and draw the yarn through the body... To help draw the legs in and keep them pointing down. We'll repeat this process on the back legs. To add the toe detail, we'll be just using simple long stitches. Bring the yarn up through the bottom of the foot leaving about a five-inch tail. And then back down again. Pull it fairly taut. And if you like, you can double it up, but this is pretty thick yarn so I think we're okay. Then do a second one four or five stitches away from the first one. And then draw the yarn out... So it's lining up with the other yarn tail. Tie together. And then trim. If you like, at this point, you can load these yarn tails onto your tapestry needle and sew them in, or you can leave them all 'til the very end and do them together. I'm gonna trim mine now just to keep things neat as I go through. That's one paw done, three to go. Go ahead and do all the other paws exactly the same. Our bear just needs a tail and we'll be all done. Go ahead and put a little bit of stuffing in the tail. Thread the yarn tail onto the tapestry needle. And pick a good spot for your tail to sit. Working around that open edge, install the tail on the back of the body. Once your seam is all sewn up, fasten off. Our polar bear is all done, he's got his tail. And a fish. He's very easy to customize, of course, if you want a brown bear or a black bear. And if you can bear parting with him, he makes a wonderful gift as well. Just make sure, if he's going to a little child under three that you're using French knots and not these little plastic eyes. Since we've made our own sewn-in magnets, feel free to make multiple fish as well. Certainly these fish look really cute in orange and yellow and green and really any color you like in addition to blue.

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