



Make Your Own Stuffed Hobbes (Free Pattern!)



by seamster

The comic strip Calvin and Hobbes was wildly popular through its run in the papers. Like most people, I've always been a fan, and now my kids are as well. For Christmas a few years ago, I thought a stuffed Hobbes doll would make a great gift for one of my sons.

The artist of the strip, Bill Watterson, famously refused to allow his characters to be licensed and capitalize on their popularity, feeling that doing so would undermine the integrity of the strip. Despite obvious interest, Calvin and Hobbes merchandise was never available. Thankfully, you can buy all the comics in book form. I recommend picking up the box set if you don't already have it.

Since you cannot buy a Hobbes doll, I figured I'd make my own!

For anyone interested in duplicating this Hobbes doll, I'm sharing the pattern I came up with for free. The pattern produces a Hobbes that is about 16 inches tall.

The pattern shared here is for personal, non-commercial use only.

My son loves his Hobbes and has been happily dragging him around for years. If you make one, please post a photo in the comments!





1. Classic red scarf.



1. Calvinball mask!



1. Dressed up for the ladies.

Step 1: Pattern

I spent a while digging through my Calvin and Hobbes books studying the Hobbes character when he was in the stuffed-toy form.

Early versions of Hobbes were very cartoony, and things like the shape of the nose and the number and placement of stripes were not always consistent. His proportions also appear to have changed slightly over the years. Later versions were crisp, clean and very consistent in the features. I based my Hobbes doll off of pictures that appear in the later strips.

To create the pattern, I broke the doll down into separate basic shapes. After some trial and error, I had a pattern that yielded all the needed body parts that fit together to my liking.

This pattern requires creating and stuffing all of the different body parts separately, hand stitching them all in place, and then hand stitching all of the stripes in place individually.

If that wasn't completely clear, this project requires a ton of hand stitching. You've been warned!

Begin by printing out my [homemade Hobbes pattern](#), preferably on stiff paper like card stock.

You will need about 1/3 yard of orange fleece, some little bits of black, and a couple small pieces of white. You will also need some polyester stuffing, poly stuffing beads if you want, two black 3/4" plastic buttons, and some thin black cording or yarn.



Step 2: Body

Print and cut out all the pattern pieces, and tape the two pieces together that form the pattern piece for the body.

Use the pattern to cut out all the various shapes from fleece, according to the colors and number of pieces needed as indicated on the pattern.

Sew the white belly piece to one of the orange body pieces. I did mine on the machine with a zig-zag stitch, although now that the doll is finished I wish I had sewn it on by hand so it matched all the other exterior stitching on the doll.

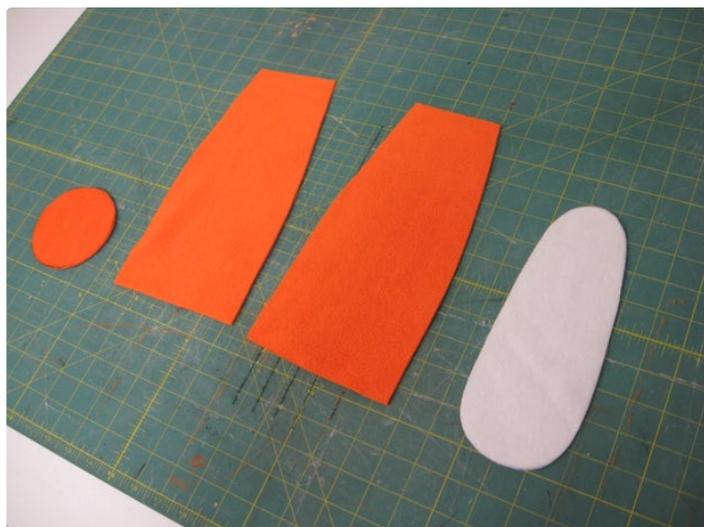
With the white belly facing in, sew the two body pieces together along the longer sides only.

Sew the round orange bottom piece into the bigger end of the body section.

Turn the completed body right-side-out, and fill it with polyester stuffing, leaving the stuffing about 1/2" from the top. Hand stitch the top of the body closed as shown in the last photo.

I filled my Hobbes doll pretty firmly with stuffing, figuring it would break down and become more floppy over time. However firmly you choose to fill your doll, just make sure you do it consistently in all the different body parts. I didn't do it on anything but the tail, but you could add stuffing beads to the ends of various body parts to add weight if desired.

As far as seam allowances, I usually just line my material up with the right edge of the presser foot on my machine, which is about 1/4".





Step 3: Arms and Legs

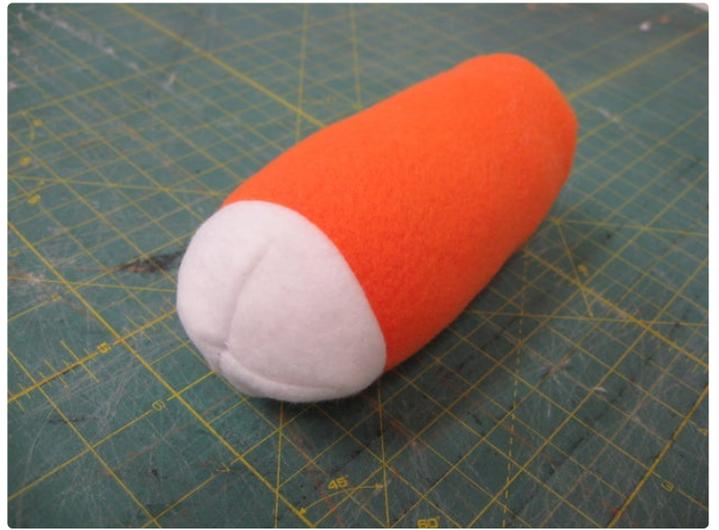
Sew the white ends onto each arm and leg piece as shown in the photos.

I tested out sewing some stripes onto a practice arm (at the point shown in the third photo), but I didn't like the way the machine-stitched stripes looked on the completed arm. I decided to complete the entire Hobbes doll without stripes and sew them all on by hand at the end. This proved incredibly tedious, but allowed for very precise sizing and placement of stripes, which I

appreciated.

Please examine the last three photos carefully if you have any questions on how the rounded ends of the arms and legs are accomplished.

Turn the arms and legs right side out, and fill with stuffing. Do not sew them shut at this point.



1. Pattern pieces.





1. Sew like this on both sides.
2. Pull open here from both sides and lay flat. Then sew across the curved edge like shown in the last photo.



Step 4: Ears

Sew both pairs of ear pieces together, and turn them right-side-out.

To get a nice curve to the ears, fold the bottom half of each ear in half and place a few hand stitches to hold them in place, as shown in the photos.



Step 5: Head

Sew all the pleats on both pieces of the head as shown in the photos and indicated on the pattern.

Before sewing the two head pieces together, sew the ears in place onto one of the head pieces, right side to right side, just outside of the top two pleats, as shown in the fifth photo. (The ears appear different because this was an earlier test piece, but the method is the same.)

Note that the pattern for the ear pieces is not round, but they will appear so once they are sewn into the head. I sewed the bottom 1/2-inch or so of each ear into the head . . . just a bit more than a typical seam allowance.

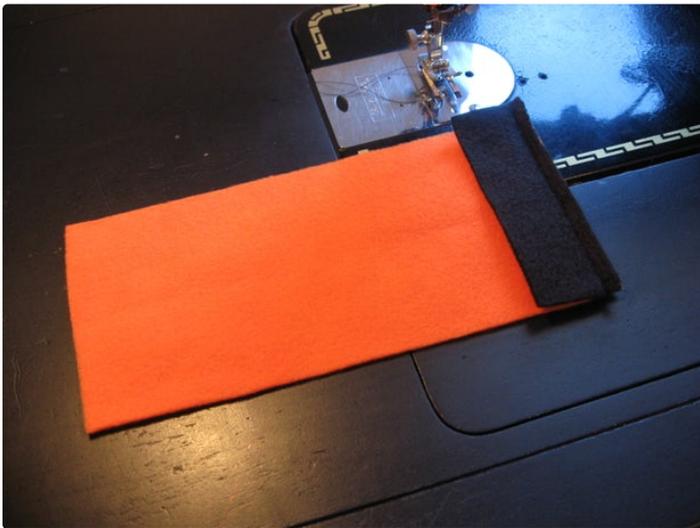
With the ears in place where you want them, sew the two halves of the head together, and turn right-side-out. Fill the head with stuffing, but do not sew it shut.

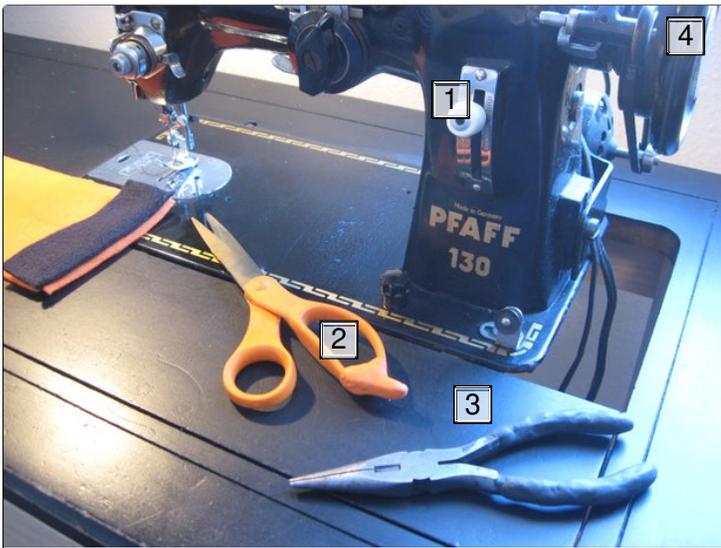




Step 6: Tail

Sew the tail pieces together in the same manner as the arms and legs, according to the pattern, and fill with stuffing. I added some stuffing beads to the end of the tail to add some weight so it would flop around.





1. Sugru.
2. Sugru.
3. Sugru. Yep, I'm a believer. It's good stuff.
4. The mighty Pfaff 130. I've got two. One for traveling and one for staying put in this table. It is one of the best machines I've ever used.

Step 7: Attach Head to Body

To attach the head to the body, begin by folding in about 1/2" of the fabric at the bottom of the head, like in the second photo.

Use orange thread to hand stitch the head in place. Nice, tight slipstitches work best for this, as well as for attaching the arms, legs and tail to the body. Learn how to do the slipstitch [right here](#). (Thank you jessyratfink.)

I didn't like the way the head looked after my first attempt (shown in the first photo), so I took it off and added more stuffing and then re-sewed it in place. The extra stuffing helped create a more defined transition from head to body, which I thought more closely matched the Hobbes doll as he appeared in the strip.

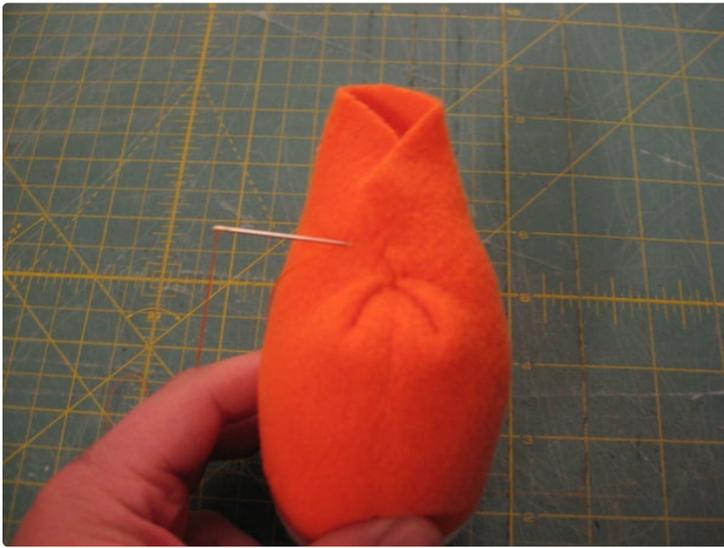


Step 8: Prep Arms for Attaching to Body

Use a needle and thread to nip and tuck the arms as shown to create a shape similar to what is shown here in the first three photos.

Examine photos 4 - 7 carefully to see the steps I took to achieve this shape. The completed arm should be about 5 inches long.

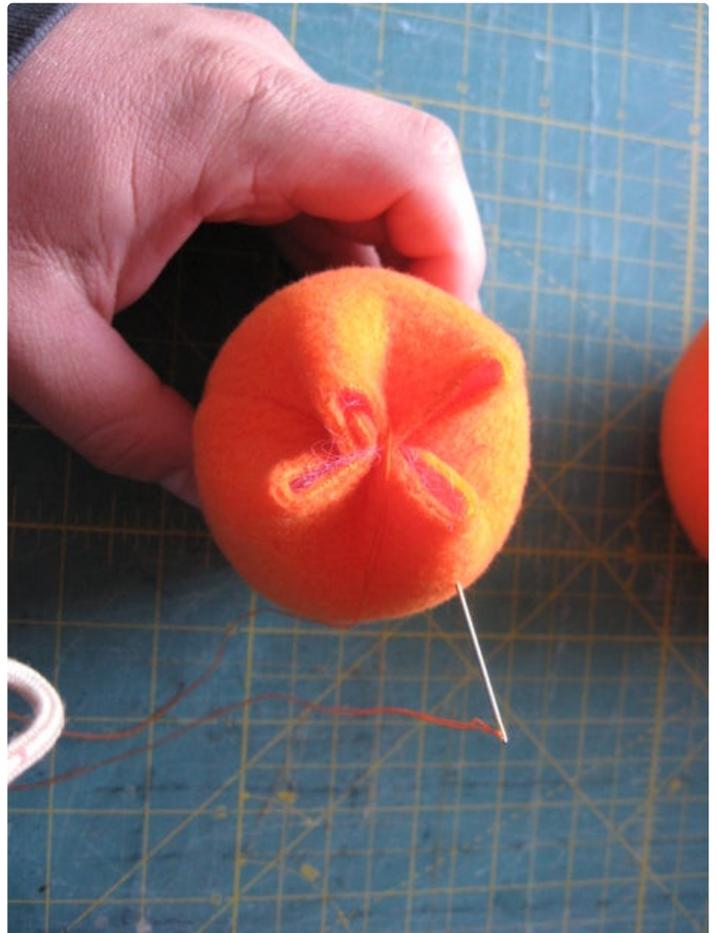


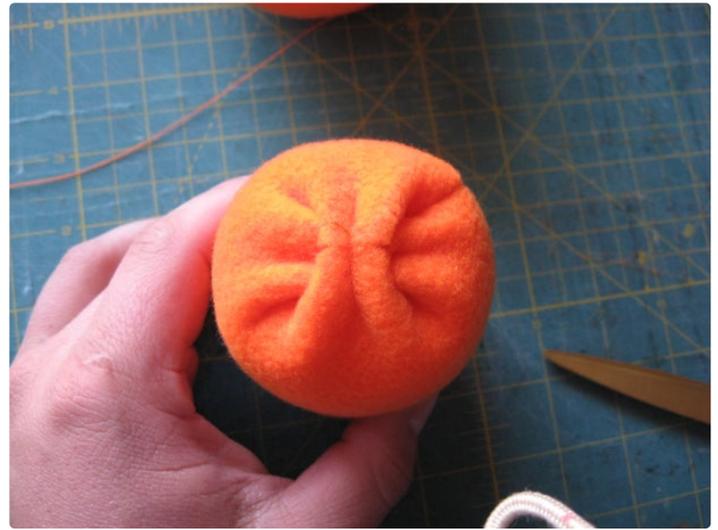


Step 9: Prep Legs for Attaching to Body

Sew the tops of the legs shut as shown in the photos.

I guess it's not completely necessary to do it this way, but I thought it was nice and tidy.





Step 10: Attach Arms and Legs to Body

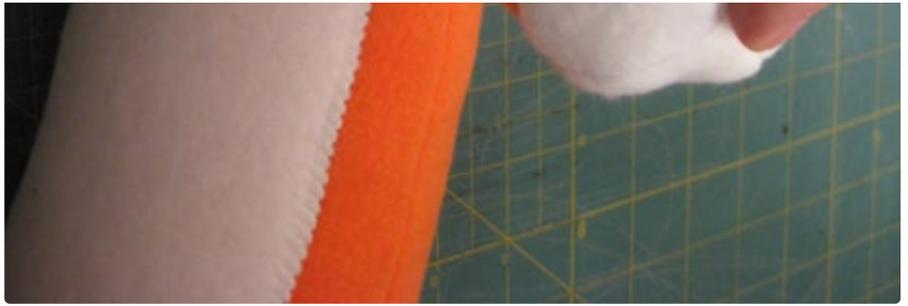
Use a needle and thread to attach the arms and legs to the body as shown. A curved upholstery needle may make things a bit easier when you're working in the tight crevices where the arms and legs meet the body.

When the arms are attached, they should be positioned about 3/4" down from the head, and about 1/4" away

from the white belly.

Disregard the muzzle showing in these photos. It was a first attempt which I wasn't happy with, so it was removed and replaced with a new one which is shown in the next step.





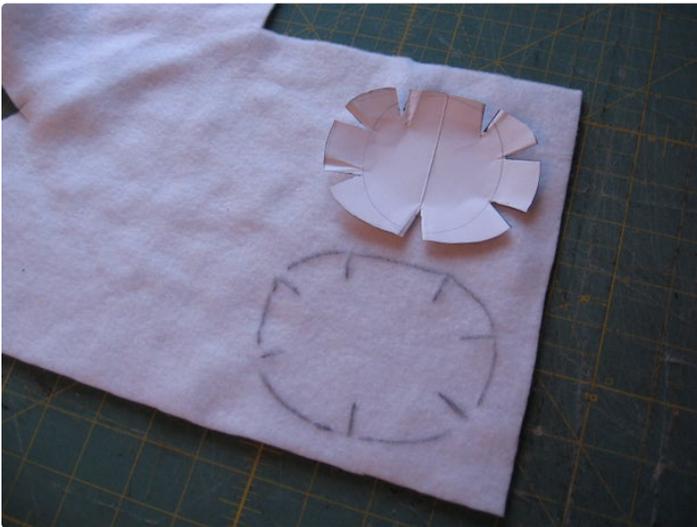
Step 11: Muzzle

Begin the muzzle by sewing all the pleats as indicated on the pattern piece.

I recommend hand stitching the nose and mouth in place before attaching the muzzle to the head. I used a simple whipstitch (thanks again jessy) to attach the nose to muzzle, and muzzle to head, as well as for attaching all the stripes later on.

The mouth was made with some thin black cording and was stitched in place with a heavier needle.

Stitch the muzzle in place, but leave the bottom inch or so open. Fill it with stuffing and then stitch it all the way closed.





1. I went back after the black cording was in place and whipstitched it down securely with black thread.

Step 12: Eyes

I wanted to use buttons for the eyes, but I couldn't find any in the shape was looking for.

I ended up buying some simple black plastic buttons that were 3/4" in diameter, and used a sanding attachment on my Dremel to carefully sand them down to the oval shape seen in the photos.

You could sand them down by hand, but it's much quicker with a Dremel. Just be careful, work slowly, and don't sand off your finger tips.

Stitch the eyes in place, positioning them as shown in the photos.



1. This photo was taken with the original muzzle in place, which was replaced by the wider one seen in the other photos. I just really liked this photo, so I had to include it.



Step 13: Stripes

The two bottom-most stripes on the both the arms and legs, and the five stripes on the tail are all made from 3/4" strips of fleece.

The upper-most stripes on the legs were made from strips that were about 1/2" wide.

All other stripes were custom made as I went along, but I've included them in the PDF pattern. (You're welcome!)

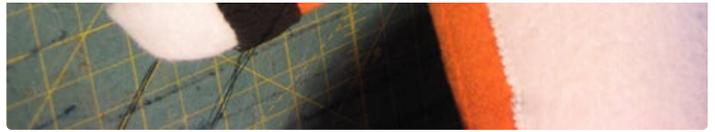
Hand stitching on all of the stripes is a tedious process, but it's rewarding each time you see a newly completed stripe and you're one step closer to a completed Hobbes.

In the pattern, I've numbered and labeled all the stripes to help you know where to put them. Note that the first stripe below the neck stripe is number 1 in the pattern, and so on down his back. Note that depending on the placement of your arms and legs, you may need to make adjustments to the size and shape of the back stripes, mainly numbers 1, 2, and 6.

The tail is the one piece of the body I left off until the very end. It was easier to sew the stripes onto it first, and then attach it to the body after.

Take a close look at all of the photos for placement of the stripes.





1. This is extra and wasn't used.



1. The stripe showing here on his bottom would have been number 7... but it looked out of place, so I removed it.



Step 14: Accessories

No homemade Hobbes would be complete without at least a few accessories.

Through the strip, Hobbes is seen wearing a variety of different things. I made him a tie, a Calvinball mask with flag, and his classic red scarf. Maybe I'll get around to making him some other items as well when I get a chance. (A cool sombrero, perhaps?)

For anyone that decides to make this, I'd love to get some feedback on how it goes. Please let me know if

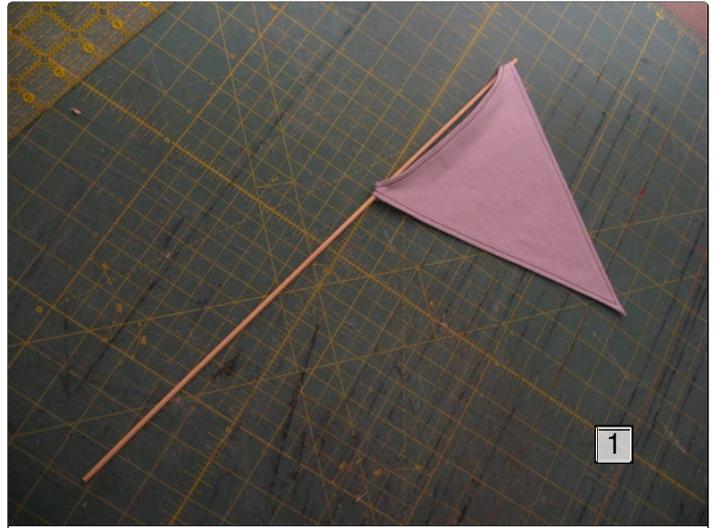
there are any parts that need more clarification or detail.

My kids love it. I'm kind of nervous that they're going to destroy it, but I guess I could always fix it, or at least make a new one . . .

Let me know what you think, and if you make yourself a Hobbes doll please post a photo in the comments below!



1. The tie was made with some scraps of fabric, a bit of cardboard and hot glue, and a little velcro.



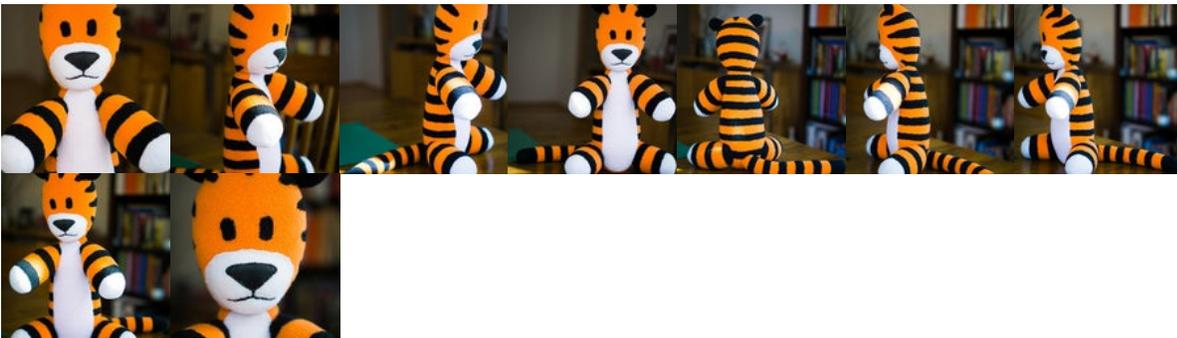
1. The Calvinball flag.



I began making Hobbes a couple years ago and had to put it on hold due to life. I recently pulled it back out when my eldest began reading the books at 6 y.o. I ending up using fabric glue for all the stripes as I couldn't bring myself to do all that hand stitching. My boys love it. I have a toddler too so I wanted the eyes to be friendly for him so I used to felt eyes rather than buttons but otherwise followed the pattern almost exactly.



I used a modified version of these patters, mixing in some design cues from <https://www.behance.net/gallery/33319787/Hobbes> which I found a lot more accurate to the "real" Hobbes. I'm quite happy with the overall result, slight imperfections would been the mouth line which isn't as downward sloped at it should, and he's more buff than he ought to be since i slightly overstuffed the limbs. But nonetheless I'm proud with how it turned out considering it's my very first major sewing project.



I like it, nicely done! When I was making up the pattern it was pretty tricky to interpret the 2D Hobbes into a 3D plush version, since across different strips and even through the years, Hobbes' appearance differed and evolved depending on which strip I was looking at. Thanks for sharing your photos, this really makes my day to see. Cheers!



Hi, thank you so much for posting this pattern online. I made Hobbes 5 years ago so that my oldest son could be Calvin for Halloween. I then adapted the pattern for my other two sons, and now each of my 3 kids have a stuffy - a tiger, lion and wolf! The kids sleep with them every night.

Thanks again!



Nice pattern!



Thank you so much for the pattern. I modified it because I could not cope with all that hand sewing. I first tried flannel. Don't do that! Then I decided to split his back so the tail could be sewn in by machine. I also used your pattern as a starting point to divide the front, so that I could sew the limbs into the seams. Then I machine sewed the stripes before sewing up the belly. I didn't plan to change the face to the other style, but as I worked it, it happened organically. He's a bit too fat, but I was able to use the machine for almost all of it. My daughter says my grandson is "Going to lose his mind". I'm taking this to be a good thing!



Awesome! I really dig it, very nicely done. Thank you for the comment and for sharing a photo of your Hobbes. This always makes my day, so *thank you!*



Just came across this - and for the first time 'EVER' I'm actually tempted to not only follow instructions, but to create a 'cuddly' - for no-one but myself...!



Awesome, I hope you make one! :D



He was so fun to make! Lots and lots of hours it took to get him done for our son's 7th birthday!



Excellent! And the tie looks like it came out great. So good to see. Thank you for sharing the photos - it always makes my day!!



Our oldest LOVES Calvin and Hobbes. Weeks ago I set out on a quest to find him a gift relating to the comic, and I quickly learned that there's not much out there because of the lack of license. I did a quick search for a homemade version of Hobbes, I'm not a yarn artist so doing one via crochet or knit was out of the question. And there was a lot of patterns for that. And then I came across this amazing tutorial you put together!

Thank you so much for doing this! He was a really great project to do and it took me a couple of weeks because I could only work on him when my son was in bed or having quiet time....so there were a couple nights of staying up until 2:30-3:30am!

My son's birthday is today and he was thrilled to receive him!

Thank you so much!

Do you happen to have instructions for making the tie?



Awesome, I'm glad you were able to find this and make one for your son!

Unfortunately, I don't have a pattern or anything more than what I've shared here. It's more of a tie-like shape though, and I cheated with hot glue and velcro, so hopefully you can piece together something similar. Go for it, you can do it! :D



Here he is! Made his accessories this morning. He will get his red scarf this fall.



It's such a success for a first project! Thanks a lot for your precious help!!!!



Awesome! Glad you were able to make your own Hobbes!! :D



I mounted the arms, legs and tail in the seams to make it more resistant (plush intended for a baby). I also slightly enlarged the proportions of the trunk to make it more cute. Do not hesitate to lightly stuff the muzzle and the belly before you finish applying them, it will give relief to the face and a small, round belly!



Took a LONG time to put on the stripes, but finally done!



Lots of fun to make and play with!



Love it - have a kiddo who loves Calvin & Hobbes!!



You are SO The Best!!! Thank you thank you thank you ! I'll post the one I will make for my son as soon as finished. It's a luck I still have a few weeks until his birthday! Lots of love from Argentina!



I made this about a year ago for my niece's first birthday. She loves it! Just made another for a friend who wanted a smaller version. This is a great project. Easy to follow and gives a very good Hobbes! Thank you for the awesome Instructable!



just download it! ill do it for my son who loves it, but anyway my thing is... THANK YOU! BEAUTIFUL GENEROUS MOM! cant love you more right now. have all our love energy. and ill definitely add my pic when its done :* blessings and have a beautiful day.



Glad you found this! Good luck as you make your own :)

 I used safety button eyes. My boyfriend of 39 loves it.



 Finally finished mine! This got me into sewing. Thanks a lot for the easy to follow instructions! :)



 Your #IMadelt was featured on our social media channels for #IMadeltMonday!

You can see the posts here:

<https://twitter.com/instructables/status/116097424...>

<https://www.instagram.com/p/B1Er77Hh3iR/>

We'd also like to send you a prize, so make sure to check your PMs!

 Foi aniversário do meu namorado, quem eu chamo como Calvin por ser muito arteiro e esperto. Nada como algo personalizado <3



 The accesories for when he "has to entertain female friends" is a nice touch :)

 Oh my gosh! My favourite cartoon character in the "flesh"! Hobbes looks just fantastic!

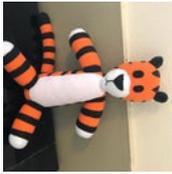
 Thank you!! My kid still has the original Hobbes I made for this instructable, although he's become quite tattered at this point :D

 Thank you so much for teaching me step by step how to make Hobbes! I truly love it! Made it for the daughter of my husband's best friend. (That's why I replaced the buttom eyes with felt eyes, so she could not swallow them)



 Your Hobbes looks fantastic! A lot of people have opted for sewn eyes instead of buttons, which I think is a great idea. Thank you so much for taking the time to share a photo and comment - it always make my day, for real!! :)

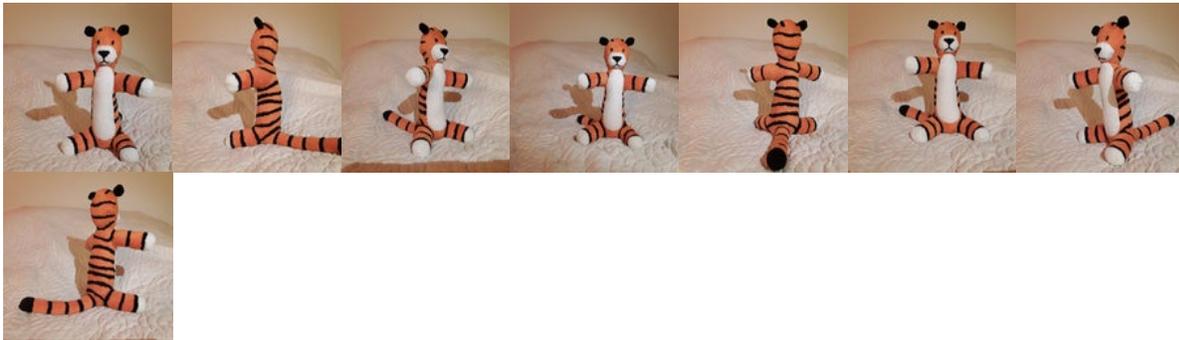
 This was a fun challenge since I haven't sewn anything since I learned about 10 years ago. I ended up using iron on patches for the eyes since I made it for my baby niece and didn't want her to chew off/swallow the buttons, but it did end up *slightly* melting the fleece creating a flat area on the face. Other than that, I'm excited to give it her!



Hi, thanks for the pattern. I finished in time for Christmas! It took me two months and a week or so to finish him but I made for Christmas. I made him from a blanket, two bathrobes, shoe lace and leather for the eyes. I chose to make thin stripes and made them a bit organic.

I read all the comments and altered the pattern from some comments. I adjusted the arms and legs so they are more in the position of the Hobbes from the comic strip.

I'm really slow, I worked on it virtually every day for hours but I got it done...yay. Here's some pics...



Love this! Wonder if there's any way to modify the arms/legs attachments so the arms and legs fall forward instead of to the side?

I did it. I basically tweaked the legs and arms a little and then rotated them from the pattern so they are more like the strip. Now he's in a seated position. You really don't need to do much except attach them differently. Also note that this will affect the stripes later on which I discovered...later on.

How did you do the muzzle? Mine is really small and doesn't cover as much of the face as I would like . . .

Mine also is much, much smaller than it should be, and I laser cut mine the exact size of the pattern. The material I used for the white is a furrier one, and so much stretchier I think--which could be why it's so small.

I'm still working on it. I'm seven weeks in. I see people made it in 4 days...can't imagine how. Anyway, it's going well. I'm finished except for the stripes. There's several things I've learned and a couple I was told...after the fact.

I wanted him firm so he sits well and doesn't flop but I put too much stress on the seams and there were a couple of holes. I had to patch them which went well and with the stripes, you hardly notice.

also, my mom told me not to stress the fabric...after I already had. I'll be finished by Christmas. I may make a second one with the lessons I've learned.

Hello everyone,

I would love to make this, but I am not near a fabric store. Trying to order the fleece online is a little nerve-wracking since the color on the computer never seems to be quite right.

If anyone goes to Joann Fabrics, could you recommend a nice orange fleece? The Blizzard Make Your Own Stuffed Hobbes (Free Pattern!): Page 25

Narcissus Gold looks like it would be a much nicer color than the Blizzard Persimmon Orange, but I am worried about buying a "gold" instead of "orange" for the fur. Otherwise is there another online store that you can recommend?

Also, the pattern doesn't have sizes... for a final product of maybe ~16" high, I am guessing I need about 1/2 yard orange, 1/4 yard black, 1/4 yard white, and maybe 16 oz of fiberfill?

Thanks in advance for any advice!

Anna



Try Burnt Orange. Jo Ann's carries it. Has a nice warm, autumn look.



I love that you have made this pattern available, but am having difficulty getting the muzzle to look right! Help?



The muzzle takes practice. Just follow Seamsters pattern and cut the pleats out and use a tight stitch. I was worried about this part as well, but mine came out pretty good.



P.S... this is my second attempt on the muzzle... The first looked even worse - was more boxy and didn't cover nearly as much of the face as it should.



Made it for my grand daughter, but used felt sheets instead. This first one was a test run, plan on making her one out of fleece after I get a bit more practice. First time I ever tried a project like this. Wifey helped with the hand stitching. This baby is entirely hand stitched. Great instructions BTW. Pretty much fool proof if I can do it. Thanks Seamster!



My sister made one of these for me, complete with the tie. He oversees my office and makes sure I don't take things too seriously.

Of course, now I have to make a mask for playing Calvinball!



How about a tuna fish sandwich accessory ? Tigers love tuna fish sandwiches!



Hi I noticed that you stated that if you were to redo the body you wouldn't have done the zig zag stitch. What if it was a single line using the sewing machine instead? How close can you get to the edge with that? Would that even work? Or what stitch would someone recommend for the hand stitch? I just don't understand how a hand stitch could possibly be better than the machine. I don't know too much about sewing but would love to make this for my first kid due in July. Thanks!



For hand stitching I'd use a buttonhole stitch along the edge. It gives a cleaner finished look. For the white parts on orange use white thread, for the black stripes use black thread.