

Sweet Softies: Cuddly Cat

Editor: Liz Johnson

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Cuddly Cat is the final member of our Sweet Softies trio of stuffed toys, in which nubby chenille combines with the smooth, retro-inspired cotton of *Heather Bailey's Nicey Jane* for a sweet and soft vintage look. This friendly kitty has button eyes, and his little head and feet are sewn on by hand, so he's not the right choice for babies or young toddlers who are still rough on their toys. However, he'd make a great pal for older kids, and anyone else hanging on to at least a shred of childlike wonder.

For those of you who made our [Funny Bunny](#), you'll notice these instructions are almost identical. Isn't that handy? You've already had practice and can make Cuddly Cat with one hand tied behind your back... although that will make it challenging to cut out the pieces.

We found our chenille at [Chenille Magic](#). You can find *Heather Bailey's Nicey Jane* at most online and local retailers. It's in-stock all over for Spring sewing, including from our friends at [FatQuarterShop](#)

Like his brothers, [Eggy Pop](#) and [Funny Bunny](#), Cuddly Cat is one-of-a-kind, so the list below gives the exact elements you need to clone him. If you'd like to use your own collection of fabric scraps, go for it. Just one warning from Cuddly, '*Please don't mix paisleys and plaids; it makes me a tad bit queasy.*'

Sewing Tools You Need

- Any Sewing Machine (we recommend the [JNH 1860](#))

Fabric and Other Supplies

- ¼ yard of Cotton Chenille Dot in Mint
- ¼ yard of Heather Bailey's Nicey Jane in Church Flowers Pink
- Small bag of polyester fiberfill

- ½ cup small dry beans (optional)
- 2 small black four-hole buttons
- All purpose thread to match all fabrics and the buttons
- Embroidery floss in a soft pink for the mouth and nose
- Sharp scissors
- Straight pins
- See-through ruler
- Fabric pencil or marking pen or chalk
- Hand sewing needle
- Large safety pin
- Iron and ironing board

Getting Started

NOTE: *All seam allowances for this project are ¼". I'm mentioning this upfront, because the majority of our projects here at Sew4Home use a ½" seam allowance.*

1. Download and print out our two pattern sheets: [Cuddly Cat Pattern A](#) and [Cuddly Cat Pattern B](#)
IMPORTANT: *You must print these PDF files at 100%. DO NOT SCALE to fit the page.*
2. Cut out all the pattern pieces along the solid lines: arms, body, face, foot, ear, base, and back/side of head. Set aside.
NOTE: *Sometimes it's easier to use the pattern pieces as templates to trace the shapes onto the back of the fabric, rather than trying to cut around small pieces of fabric pinned to paper. It also helps to cut small pieces from fabric that has been ironed with spray starch .*
3. From the Mint Chenille Dot cut:
 - Two ears
 - Two back/side head pieces
 - Two arms
 - Three body pieces
 - Two feet
 - Plus: two 3" x 5" rectangles for the legs
4. From the Pink Church Flowers cut:
 - Two ears
 - One base
 - Two arms
 - One body
 - Two feet
 - One face
 - Plus: one 3" x 6" rectangle for the tail
5. Using your fabric pen, pencil or chalk, transfer the pattern marks and dots onto each fabric piece for: the ear placement on the face, the toe stitching lines, the ear pleat lines. Also cut all notches shown into the very edge of the fabric.

At Your Sewing Machine & Ironing Board

NOTE: *Another reminder that all seam allowances are ¼".*

Ears

1. Place one Church Flowers ear onto one Chenille Dot ear, right sides together, and stitch both sides to a point. Turn and press flat.
2. Using the placement marks you made as your guide, pinch a pleat into the raw edge end of the ear to give it some dimension.



3. Stitch the pleat in place.
4. Using the placement marks you made as a guide, pin the ear to the top edge of the face piece, right sides together (Church Flower sides together) and aligning the raw edges - so the point of the ear hangs down.
5. Repeat steps to create the second ear.



Arms

1. Place one Church Flowers arm on one Chenille Dot arm, right sides together. Pin in place.
2. Stitch all the way around leaving the short straight end (the top of the arm) open for turning.
3. Turn right side out and press.



4. Repeat for the second arm.

NOTE: Because we want a soft vintage look, we chose NOT to stuff Cuddly Cat's arms. We wanted the arms to hang close and floppy, right next to his body. If you want the arms to have more body and stick out from his sides, then stuff them lightly with the polyester fill at this point.

5. Using the placement marks you made as a guide, return to the machine and stitch from the curve end of the arm in about 1" twice to create Cuddly Cat's fingers.



6. Repeat for the second arm. Set both finished arms aside.

Feet, legs and tail

1. Place one Church Flowers foot on one Chenille Dot foot, right sides together. Pin in place.
2. Stitch all the way around leaving the short straight end (the back of the foot) open for turning.
3. Turn right side out and press.
4. Repeat for the second foot.
5. As you did above for Cuddly Cat's 'fingers', use the placement marks you made as a guide, and stitch two 1" seams to create 'toes' on each foot.
6. Turn in the back raw open edges of each foot and slip stitch closed.



7. Find the two 3" x 5" rectangles of Chenille Dot you cut for the legs.
8. Fold each leg in half to make a 1½" x 5" long tube. Pin in place.
9. Stitch along the 5" side, leaving both ends open.
10. Turn right side out and stuff LIGHTLY with the polyester fill.
NOTE: *Cuddly Cat's legs are designed to dangle below him as he sits, so we DID want these to have some dimension (unlike his arms as mentioned above), but not a lot. Use your fill VERY sparingly .*
11. Turn in the raw edges of ONE open end of each leg. Finger press in place.
12. Pair one foot to each leg. Make SURE the leg seam is positioned along the center of the tube (like a pair of fancy silk stockings). This seam should be matched to the middle of the back of the foot. The back of the leg 'tube' should be flush with the back of the foot. The front of the leg 'tube' should curve over the top of foot just a bit. You want the front of the leg to have some rounded dimension. Check again to make sure all your raw edges are turned in. Pin in place.
NOTE: *Stop and test. Set the legs down on the table to BE SURE that when the back seams of the legs are flat on the table, Cuddly Cat's toes are pointing up. It would make him very sad to have his feet sewn on backwards. In our design, we wanted the top of Cuddly Cat's feet to be the Chenille Dot and the bottom to be the Church Flowers.*
13. Slip stitch Cuddly Cat's feet securely in place.





14. Flatten the other raw-edged end of each leg and, making SURE the leg seam is still positioned like the pair of fancy silk stockings, stitch the end closed on each leg.
15. Find the 3" x 6" rectangle of Church Flowers you cut for the tail.
16. Fold in half to make a 1½" x 6" long tube. Pin in place.
17. Stitch along one end and the 6" side, pivoting at the corner and leaving the other end open. The seam allowance becomes a kind of 'self-stuffing' for the tail, so no additional fill is needed.
18. Turn right side out. Center the seam so there is a distinct front and back and press. Set aside.

Head

1. Find the two back/side head pieces in the Chenille Dot. Place right sides together and pin in place, matching the notches and taking note (based on your pattern piece) of which side is the center back, which is the neck and which is the chin.
2. Stitch together along ONLY the center back and the chin sides. Press both seams open.



3. Using your original placement dots as your guide, match the chin seam to the point of the nose on the face. Pin the curved edge of the sides to the face piece.
4. Stitch from the point of the nose up one side of the curve of the face. Sew slowly and carefully in a smooth curve. Stop and back tack.
5. Reposition to stitch from the point of the nose up the other side of the curve of the face. Stop and back tack.
6. Making sure the ears are hanging down into the center, line up the back of the face piece with the top of the head piece.

Stitch across the top of the head, capturing the ears in the seam and keeping the back seam centered.



7. Turn the head right side out and stuff firmly with the polyester fill.



8. Using your hand sewing needle, stitch a line of basting stitches around the open neck edge of the head and pull gently to encourage the fabric to fold inward.

Body

1. Find your three body pieces: one Church Flowers and three Mint Chenille Dot.
2. Fold each panel in half and snip a notch at the center of each bottom edge. The bottom edge is the wider of the two flat sides.
3. You need to stitch all four panels together along the long sides to create a kind of tube. This will become the body.
4. Place two chenille pieces right sides together and stitch one long seam.
5. Take the third chenille piece and stitch it, right sides together, to one long side of the two-piece unit you just created.
6. Take the Church Flowers piece, and stitch it, right sides together, to one side of the three-piece chenille unit. You now have four pieces stitched in a row: chenille, chenille, chenille, Church Flowers.
7. To create the final 'tube', match up the remaining Church Flowers and Chenille Dot long sides, right sides together, and stitch. The Church Flowers panel, now in the center, will be the tummy.
8. Place the legs onto the body, matching up the raw bottom edge of the body tube with the flattened edges of the legs. The legs are hanging down inside the body. One leg should be centered over each Church Flowers/Chenille Dot body seam. Pin in place and then baste the legs in position.
9. Pin the raw edged end of the tail, seam facing end, in the center of the back Chenille Dot panel. Baste in position.



10. Pin the body to the base, right sides together, matching the notches you just made to the pre-snipped notches on the base. Once pinned in place, you may need to make additional small notches in the body layer in order to more easily allow the fabric to curve into a neat oval to match the base layer.
11. Stitch all around through all the layers.
12. Turn right sides out and stuff firmly. We started with a layer of dried beans and then put the polyester fill over that. The beans help Cuddly Cat sit up more securely, but they are optional.



13. Find Cuddly Cat's arms, and pin them to the neck edge of the body. Position each arm just slightly forward of the side seam.
14. Test the position of the arms by setting Cuddly Cat's head in position. Take a look and make sure the arms look realistic (well ... realistic if you're a stuffed kitty) and equal.



15. Baste the arms in place by hand.
16. Set the head back into position on the body, tucking the in raw edges. Pin in position. You can pin to a certain extent, but you'll have to hold the head with one hand as you stitch.
17. Thread your hand sewing needle with the best match thread possible. Attach the head to the body using a double-length of thread and EVEN slip stitches. Stitch around the neck twice to secure tightly.
NOTE: If you're new to stuffed toys, take a look at our tutorial for [Funny Bunny](#); it has a few more detailed close-up shots of stitching the head in place. We used a common [slip stitch](#). You just need to be very diligent about keeping your stitches even. If you're doing it correctly, it will look like a little ladder. When cinched tight, the ladder 'rungs' pull together. This will cause the raw edges to fold in, securing the two pieces together and hiding all but some tiny vertical stitches. If you choose a thread that best matches your fabric, you'll barely notice the stitching.
18. Hand stitch the buttons for eyes. We used contrasting thread as an accent.
19. For the nose and mouth, hand embroider an 'X' as shown below and fill in the upper part of the X to form a nose.



Contributors

Project Concept: Alicia Thommas

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Other machines suitable for this project include the Elna 7300 and the Bernina aurora 430.

Tags:

- [Sweet Softies](#)

[Fabric Art & Accents](#)

Funny Bunny is a Sweet Softie

Sweet Softies: Funny Bunny

Sweet Softies: Eggy Pop

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