

# How to make an Appliqué and Stitch Dormouse



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## Spinning a Yarn

**Wool** is amazing. Not only is it natural, renewable, biodegradable, and sustainable, but it is also an adaptable craft material. This is one of four worksheets which will help you learn about Somerset's rare and endangered species as well as different wool crafts.

**Appliqué** is a fabric and stitch craft that uses layers of fabric, and this technique is well suited to reusing and recycling woollen textiles and yarn. The other worksheets include; wet felt, punch needle and needlefelt.

**Dormice** are difficult to catch sight of for many reasons: they spend most of the day asleep, they hibernate, and they are seriously endangered. They live in Hedgerows and Woodlands, but you will probably only be able to spot signs that they are there - look out for hazelnuts with smooth circular holes in the shell.

### You will need:

Fabric to create the appliqué shape of the dormouse and some backing fabric of your choosing.

The colours you need are tan (approx. 14 x 14 cm), creamy-brown (9 x 4 cm), pink for feet, nose and ear (7 x 7 cm).

#### Tip

Recycled fabric is perfect for appliqué. Choose old wool blankets, or offcuts of felted wool.

#### Some wool yarn.

The colours you need are black for eyes and whiskers (small length), and more to match your fabric colours, tan, brown and cream. A metre or 2 of each would be plenty.

Cotton thread for whiskers.

Scissors for cutting fabric and paper.

A sewing needle plus a darning or embroidery needle - make sure you choose a needle that has an eye big enough for your yarn/thread to go through, but that it will also pass through your fabric easily.

A pen and pencil.

#### Extra handy tools

Embroidery hoop

Sewing Pins

Pink wool thread or embroidery floss

Materials Resources sheet available  
at [spinning-a-yarn.org](http://spinning-a-yarn.org)

## Step 1

Use template 1 provided or draw the outline of your dormouse onto the tan fabric. Cut it out and place it onto your backing fabric. If you have pins, use these to keep the fabric in place. Then stitch around the edge of the tan fabric using a running stitch.

**Running stitch:** thread your needle with matching coloured thread. Tie a knot in the long end. Push the sharp end of the needle through the fabric. Bring the thread all the way through until you reach the knot. Push the needle back up through to the other side of the fabric, not far from where the first stitch went in. Repeat. You can use this stitch to join fabrics together, or to draw lines on pictures.

## Step 2

When the whole of your first piece of fabric is stitched down, take your needle and thread back through to the reverse and create a knot to hold it in place. Snip off the end of the thread and remove the pins. Does it look like it is holding? Great.



## Step 3

Use template 2 to draw the outline of the dormouse belly onto the lighter cream fabric. Cut this out, place it carefully, then pin in place. Stitch with matching thread as you did in Step 1.

## Step 4

Use template 3 to draw the outline of the feet and nose and ear in the pink fabric, cut these out as before and stitch. Now, this bit is fiddly - if you give it a go and decide it is too fiddly for your hands, or your scissors, then there's an alternative way to create the feet and nose, using a basic satin stitch. Satin stitch is a way to fill in small areas with smooth, close stitches that lay flat on the fabric.



## Satin stitching option

Before you start, it is always a good idea to try something new like this on a piece of scrap fabric to get the feel of how it works. Thread your needle with a pink colour suitable for feet, you can use wool or embroidery thread, knot it, and bring the needle up through the back of the fabric, at the bottom of one of the feet. Then, take the needle down to the opposite side of the foot, and stitch down. Come up again, very close to where your last stitch sits - you are creating parallel stitches. Continue stitching in the same manner, repeating the steps above and making stitches side by side, covering your foot shape.

### Step 5

Now you can bring your piece to life by adding stitches to create areas of detail. Using a needle and thread follow the template provided and add a little satin stitch for the eyes in black. Long running stitches work well for the whiskers, use a cotton thread for this as it is finer.



### Step 6

You can also add stitches to the body to make it look more furry. Add small stitches for the details on the nose and toes to finish off your dormouse.

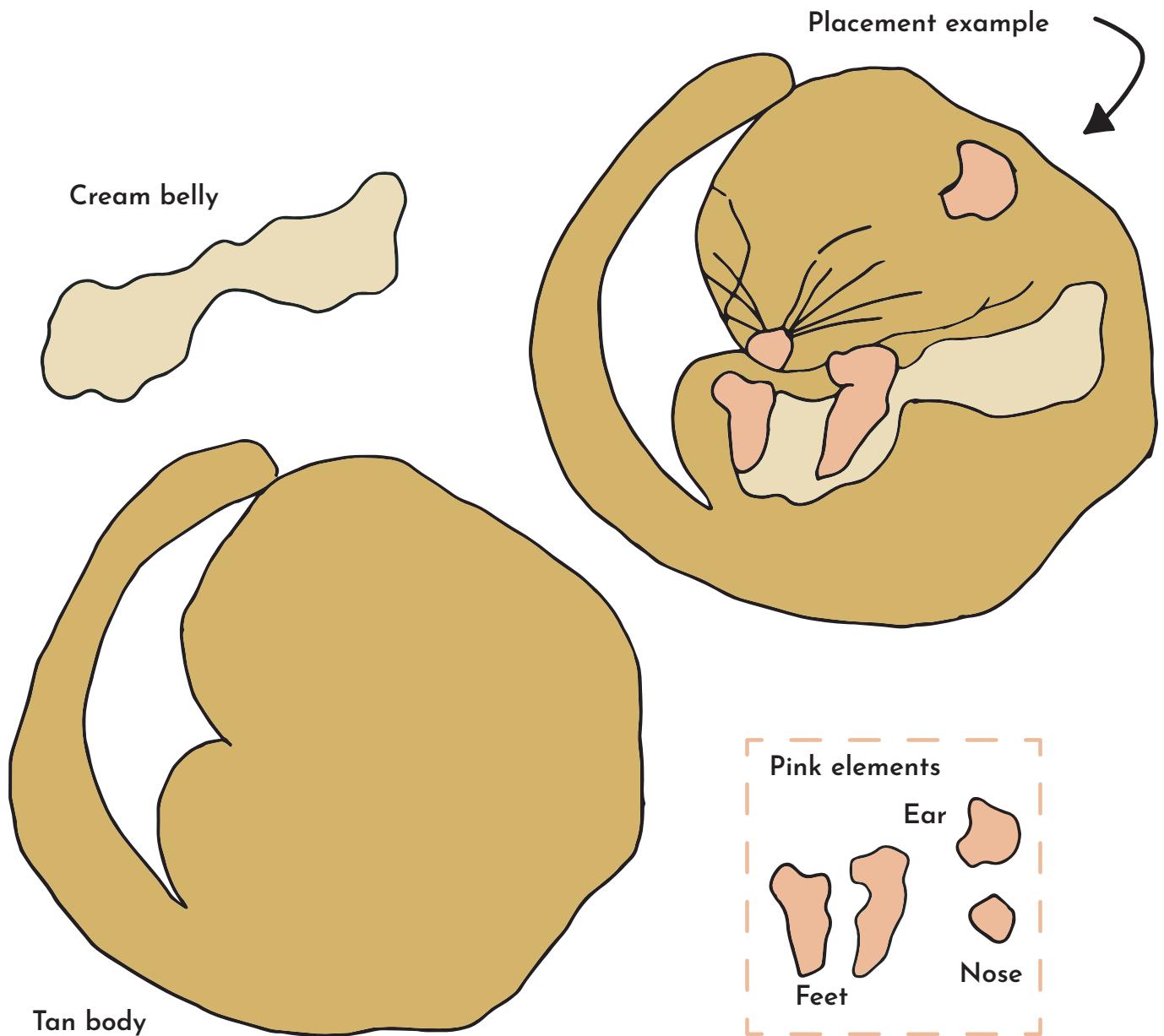


## What next?

Hopefully, you are feeling confident in how appliqué and stitch works and that you can do it! Have you caught the appliqué and stitch bug?

Have a look at our Nature Resources sheet to get more ideas of flora and fauna linked to the dormouse. Or you might like to try one of the other worksheets linked to wool. [spinning-a-yarn.org](http://spinning-a-yarn.org)

## Dormouse template pieces



## Spinning a Yarn

Take Part Resources created by Lydia Needle and Nina Gronw-Lewis

If you would like your work to be part of an exhibition at the Somerset Rural Life Museum in September, as part of Somerset Art Weeks Festival, please send your completed pieces to: ACEarts, Market Place, Somerton, Somerset TA11 7NB by 31 August 2024.

Max dimensions 20 x 20 cm

**DISCLAIMER:** Due to the nature of this project, we are unable to return any work after the event. Please note we may not be able to accommodate all the works submitted.

Spinning a Yarn: Telling the Story of Wool in Somerset,

[spinning-a-yarn.org](http://spinning-a-yarn.org) #wildforwool #countyofwool