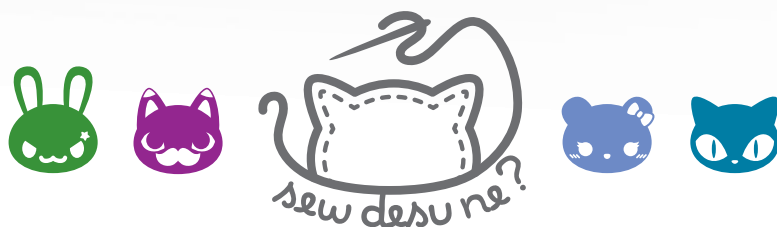


# CUT & SEW DRAGON PLUSH BACKPACK



A FREE SEWING PATTERN BY



# DRAGON PLUSH BACKPACK

If you're reading this, then you likely purchased some of my Cut & Sew Dragon Backpack Plush fabric from Spoonflower. So thank you! With this fabric kit you can take your favorite dragon pal with you wherever you go! It has an extra chubby baby style body so there's plenty of storage inside.

With a large zippered pocket in the back of the head, you can hold most of your essentials, including a phone, wallet, and a few other items.

You also have your choice of easier non-adjustable straps or more time-consuming adjustable straps depending on how much you want to invest in the project.

## MAKES:

One plush backpack: about 15" tall and 9" wide in the body (not including horns and tail)  
Zippered pocket is 7½" wide and 12½" long

## DIFFICULTY:



This plush is a little difficult because it's also a backpack, but if you have some knowledge both it will be a fun challenge. Experience with zippers helps a lot. Also, if you're not familiar with bag hardware, it's best to stick with the non-adjustable straps. Doing the adjustable version might bump this project up to a 6 if it's completely new to you.

## SKILLS USED:

- Curved sewing
- Basting
- Zippers
- Ladder stitch
- Top stitching
- Bag hardware
- Using interfacing



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## materials & tools:

- your pre-printed Cut & Sew Dragon Plush Backpack fabric from Spoonflower (at least one yard)
- sewing thread to match fabrics
- poly-fil stuffing
- one 8" all-purpose zipper (at least)
- **FOR NON-ADJUSTABLE STRAPS:** 1½ - 2 yds. of 1"-1½" wide strapping/webbing material (see page 15 for exact measurements)
- **FOR ADJUSTABLE STRAPS:** 2-3 yds. of 1"-1½" wide strapping/webbing material (see page 17 for exact measurements)
  - two tri-glides matching the width of your webbing
  - two rectangular rings matching the width of your webbing
- **OPTIONAL, BUT HIGHLY RECOMMENDED:** 14" x 7" piece of lightweight fusible interfacing
- basic sewing tools (sewing machine, scissors, needles, pins, seam ripper, etc.)



### WEBBING/STRAPPING:

The name for a thick, ribbon-like material used for backpack straps. It comes in both cotton and polyester/nylon versions and varies between 1"-3" wide.

The polyester/nylon versions come in more colors. It has a large weave so it can fray easily after cutting. It can be purchased by the yard at fabric shops -- usually in the notions, with the elastic, or with the trims. Can also be found by the roll online.



### TRI-GLIDES & RINGS:

A type of bag hardware used for adjusting the length of straps. They can be found in either plastic or metal varieties. They can be spotted by noting the 3 distinctive bars which give them their name.

For use in this project, they also need to be paired with rings, which are a more basic shape for looping strapping material. Rings can be circular, d-shaped, or rectangular (shown here).

### BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- Briefly read the project instructions so you know what to expect.
- Note that a ¼" seam allowance is used throughout the project -- already included in the fabric.

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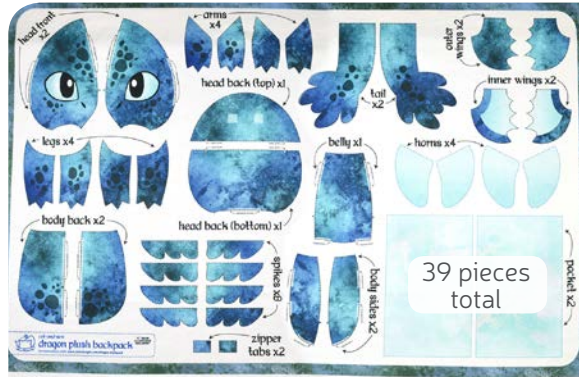
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- a. Grab your printed Spoon-flower cut & sew fabric. If you ordered 1 yd. of fleece, it should include all the pieces needed (surrounded by a border).

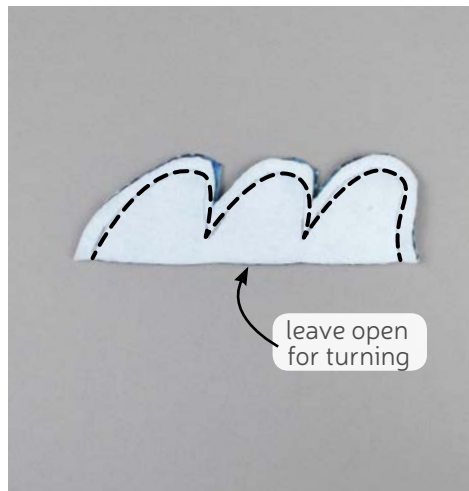
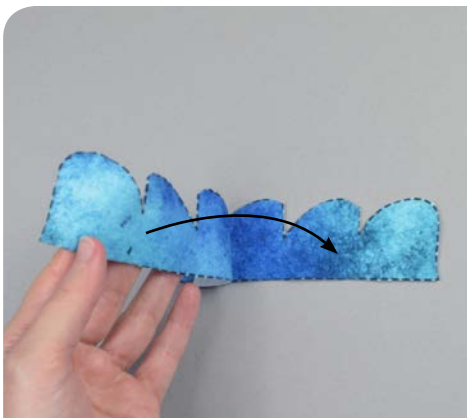
There should be 39 pieces included:

- HEAD FRONT (2)**
- LEGS (4)**
- BODY BACK (2)**
- ARMS (4)**
- HEAD BACK (TOP) (1)**
- HEAD BACK (BOTTOM) (1)**
- SPIKES (8)**
- ZIPPER TABS (2)**
- TAIL (2)**
- BELLY (1)**
- BODY SIDES (2)**
- WINGS (4)**
- HORNS (4)**
- POCKET (2)**



## 1. ASSESS YOUR FABRIC

- b. If you're new to sewing, you might want to wait until the applicable step before cutting your fabric so you can refer to the notes and labels. Once you need a piece, cut it out along the dotted lines outside the shape.



## 2. SEW THE SPIKES

- a. Cut out your **SPIKE** pieces. Take two of them and align them with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.
- b. Sew them together along the long scalloped edge. Leave the straight edge free for turning it right side out.
- c. Trim the excess seam allowance at the inner corners to increase flexibility.

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### 3. BASTE THE SPIKES

- Repeat step 2 with the remaining spike pieces so you have 4 complete spikes total.
- Cut out your **HEAD FRONT** pieces and grab one of your **SPIKE** pieces.
- If you haven't already, locate the **spike placement band** printed on the fabric for the **HEAD FRONT** in the forehead area. Place the open end of one of the spikes within the band so the edges match up. Make sure the spike tips are pointing up.



### 4. SEW THE HEAD FRONT

- Baste the spikes to the **HEAD FRONT** within the seam allowance to hold it for future steps.
- Grab your remaining **HEAD FRONT** piece. Align it over the first with right sides facing and raw edges matching.
- Sew the head front pieces together along the **notched edge** (with the nose point).

#### basting:

A form of temporary sewing meant to hold pieces in place. A long stitch length is often used for this reason. The finished result is not meant to be seen and sometimes is even removed later (depending on your project).

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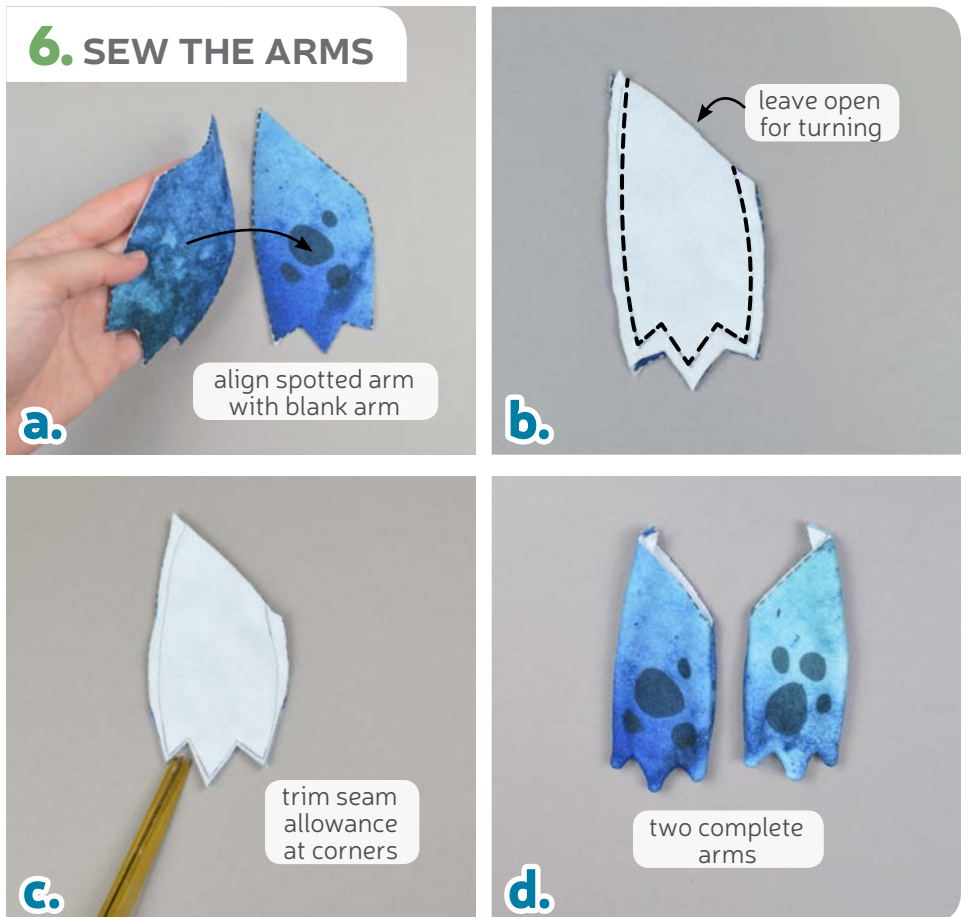
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## 5. BASTE THE SIDE SPIKES

- Open up your **HEAD FRONT** pieces.
- If you haven't already, locate the **spike placement bands** printed around the outside of the head. Grab two more spikes and align the open end within these placement bands so the edges match up and the spikes point upward.
- Baste the spikes to the head front within the seam allowance to hold them for future steps.
  - You're done with the head front for now. Set it aside while we work on the body front.

- Cut out your **ARM** pieces. Take two of them -- one with spots and one without. Align them with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.
- Sew the arm along the pointed 'claw' edge. Leave the slanted edge free for turning it right side out later.
- Trim the excess seam allowance at the inner and outer corners of the claws to increase flexibility and decrease bulk when the arms are turned next.
- Turn the arm right side out and repeat with the remaining arm pieces for two arms total.



## 6. SEW THE ARMS

align spotted arm with blank arm

leave open for turning

trim seam allowance at corners

two complete arms

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stuff  
lightlyplace  
arm  
against  
edge of  
bellyarms  
point  
downward

## 7. BASTE THE ARMS

- Stuff the **ARMS** lightly with stuffing. Keep it especially light at the opening, as we'll be sewing it to the belly next.
- Cut out your **BELLY** piece. If you haven't already, locate the **arm placement bands** printed on the edges of the fabric. Align the open end of the arm within the bands. Match up the raw edges and have the arm point down. The ones shown here have the spotted side facing up.
- Baste the arm to the belly within the seam allowance to hold it securely for the next step.

- Cut out your **BODY SIDE** pieces. Note the **notches** found on both the **BELLY** and **SIDE** pieces. These edges will be sewn together next.
- Flip the **SIDE** so the **notched edge** matches with the **BELLY** and right sides are facing. Pin the fabrics together.
- Sew the side to the belly along this **notched edge**. Repeat with the other side piece.
- When complete, open up the front so far. The arms should be securely sewn between the belly and side.

## 8. SEW THE BELLY



a.

match up  
notched edges

b.

flip side  
to match  
with  
belly

c.

sew  
sides  
to  
belly

d.

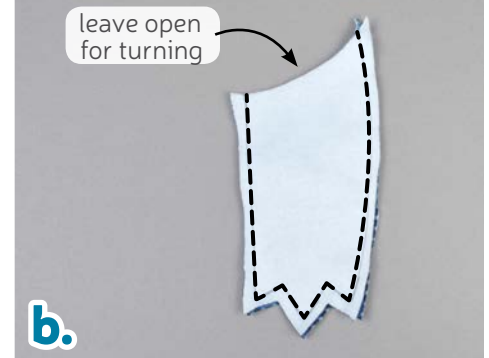
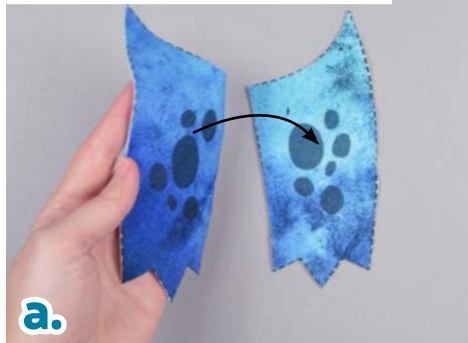
arms are secured  
between belly and sides

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- Cut out your **LEG** pieces. Take two of them and align them with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.
- Sew the leg along the pointed 'claw' edge. Leave the slanted edge free for turning it right side out later.
- Trim the excess seam allowance at the inner and outer corners of the claws to increase flexibility and decrease bulk when the legs are turned next.
- Turn the leg right side out and repeat with the remaining leg pieces for two legs total.

## 9. SEW THE LEGS



## 10. BASTE THE LEGS

- Stuff the **LEGS** lightly with stuffing. Keep it especially light at the opening, as we'll be sewing it to the belly next.
- Grab your front piece so far. Locate the **leg placement bands** printed along the bottom of the side and belly fabric. Align the open end of the leg within the bands. They should be about centered over the belly seam. You'll know you have it right when the slant of the leg opening matches the bottom of the body.
- Baste the leg to the body within the seam allowance to hold it securely for the next step. Note that the legs point inward when basted so they'll point straight down when flipped later.



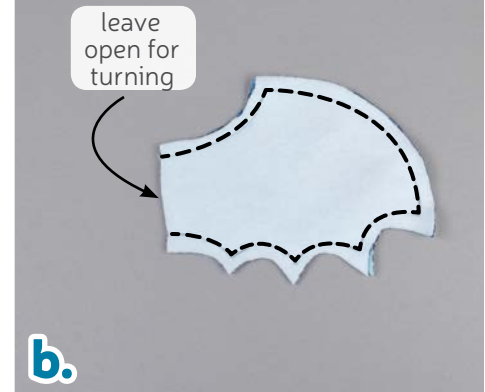
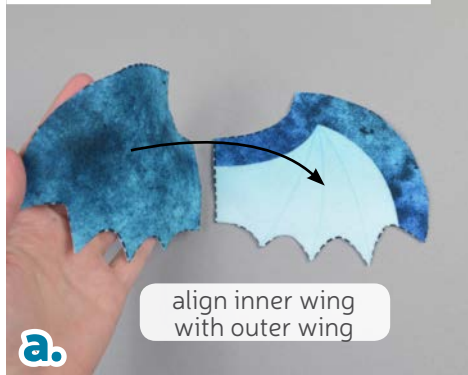
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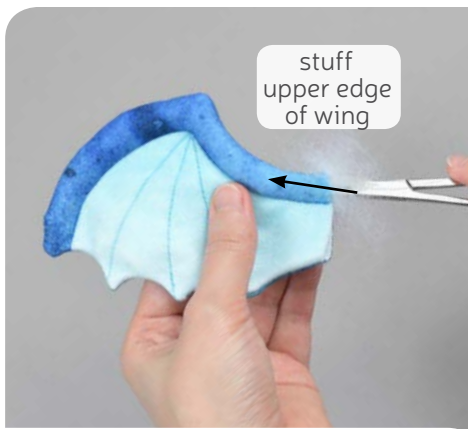
- a. Cut out your **WING** pieces. Take one inner wing and one outer wing and align them with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.
- b. Sew them together along the long pointed edge. Leave the short straight edge free for turning the wing right side out later.
- c. Trim the excess seam allowance near the tight corners and curves. This will decrease bulk and increase flexibility when the wing is turned later.
- d. Turn the **WING** right side out and repeat with the remaining wing pieces for two complete wings total. Top stitch the wings along the upper colored edge as well as on the faint lines found inside the wing.

## 11. SEW THE WINGS



**top stitching:**

one or several lines of stitching done on the right side of a project to serve a decorative purpose



## 12. BASTE THE WINGS

- a. This step is especially helpful for extra wing stability, though it might be troublesome without hemostats. You can also use chopsticks or something similarly pointy. Stuff the upper edge of the **WING** you've just top stitched with stuffing. Stuff it enough so the wing is rigid along the upper edge.
- b. Grab your body piece so far. If you haven't already, locate the **wing placement bands** printed on the edge of the **SIDE**. Align the open end of the wing within these bands so the raw edges match up and the tips of the wings point down.
- c. Flip the wings to the inside and baste the edges within the seam allowance to hold it for future steps.

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- a. Grab your **HEAD FRONT** and body piece so far. The curved edges at the bottom of the head and the top of the body will be sewn together next as the neck.
  - b. Flip the head so the neck edge lines up with the body. Pin the fabrics together.
  - c. Sew the head to the body along the neck edge.
  - d. Open up the pieces when complete.
- CONGRATS!** You just completed the front half of the dragon. Next up is the back half, so now would be a great time for a break.

### 13. SEW THE NECK FRONT



### 14. FUSE THE INTERFACING

- a. Cut out your **HEAD BACK (TOP)**, **HEAD BACK (BOTTOM)**, and **ZIPPER TAB** pieces. If you have fusible interfacing, take this opportunity to fuse it to your fabrics. Follow the manufacturer's instructions to secure it to your fabric. Cut out a piece using the **HEAD BACK (TOP)** as a template and fuse it to the wrong side of the fabric.
- b. Cut a 2" strip of the interfacing and fuse it to the straight edge of your **HEAD BACK (BOTTOM)** piece.
- c. And lastly fuse two bits to the back of your **ZIPPER TAB** pieces.

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## 15. SEW THE ZIPPER TABS

- Cut out your **LINING POCKET** pieces.  
If you have a longer zipper, take this opportunity to trim the ends off it so it matches the short side of your **LINING POCKET**. Make sure not to accidentally cut off the zipper slider.
- Take one of your **ZIPPER TABS** and align the short end with the cut end of your zipper.
- Sew the tab to the zipper along this edge. Sew very slowly and carefully over the zipper teeth (use just the hand wheel if necessary to avoid a broken or bent needle). Repeat with the other zipper tab on the other side of the zipper.  
When complete, press the tabs away from the zipper.

## 16. SEW THE HEAD BOTTOM

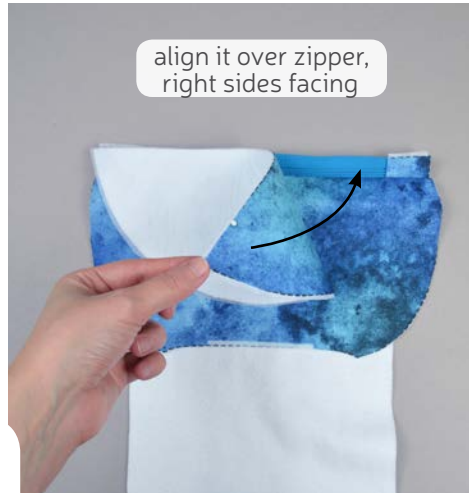
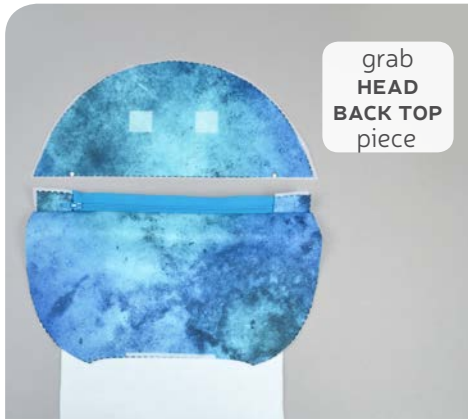
- Grab your **HEAD BACK BOTTOM** piece and your zipper with **TABS** attached. Align the zipper (right side down) over the straight edge of the head bottom so the edge of the tape matches up and the right sides are facing.
- Baste the zipper to the head bottom within the seam allowance to hold it securely for the next step.
- Align the **LINING POCKET** over the zipper tape edge as well. Center it over the zipper.
- Sew the lining to the zipper with a regular  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. Sew through all three layers to secure the zipper inside.



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## 17. SEW THE HEAD TOP

- Flip your **HEAD BACK BOTTOM** so the right sides are facing out and the other side of the zipper is exposed. Grab your **HEAD BACK TOP** piece. We'll be sewing this to the other side of the zipper next.
- Layer the straight edge of the head top over the zipper with right sides facing. Line up the edges.
- Baste the head back top to the zipper along this edge, similar to back in step 16.

- Flip the head over so you can see the back side of the zipper.
- Take your remaining **LINING POCKET** piece and align a short end along the zipper edge, just like before in step 16.
- Sew the lining to the zipper with the regular  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance through all 3 layers.
- When complete, press the lining fabric away from the zipper for a crisp edge.

## 18. SEW THE POCKET TO THE HEAD



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- a. Lastly, match up the lining pocket pieces so the raw edges align.
- b. Sew the **LINING POCKET** pieces together along the sides and bottom. Get as close as possible to the zipper without actually sewing over it. Back stitch several times near the zipper for a strong join. This completes the head back!

## 19. FINISH THE POCKET



- a. Cut out your **TAIL** pieces. Take them both and align them with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.
- b. Sew the tail pieces together along the long curved edge, going around each tail fin. Leave the straight edge free for turning the tail later. Clip the seam allowances at the inner corners found between the tail fins.
- c. Turn the tail right side out and top stitch in the faint line between the fins and the tail (printed on one side). This will separate them for stuffing later.

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## 21. BASTE THE TAIL

- Stuff the **TAIL** lightly with stuffing. Don't go too full here, as the tail will be against your back when wearing the backpack and you don't want it to be too bulky. Keep most of the stuffing in the tip.
- Cut out your **BODY BACK** pieces. If you haven't already, locate the **spike** and **tail placement bands** printed on the edge of the fabric. Grab one last **SPIKE** piece and align the open end along the straight edge of the body back, within the **placement bands** so the edges match up. Align the open end of the **TAIL** right below it, also between the **placement bands**. The tip of the tail should point up.
- Baste the spikes and tail to the body back to hold them securely for the next step.



## 22. SEW THE BODY BACK

- Grab your remaining **BODY BACK** piece. Layer it over the first so right sides are facing and the raw edges match up.
- Sew the body back pieces together along the straight edge (with the spikes and tail attached).
- Open up the back pieces when complete. The spikes and tail should be fully secured inside the seam.

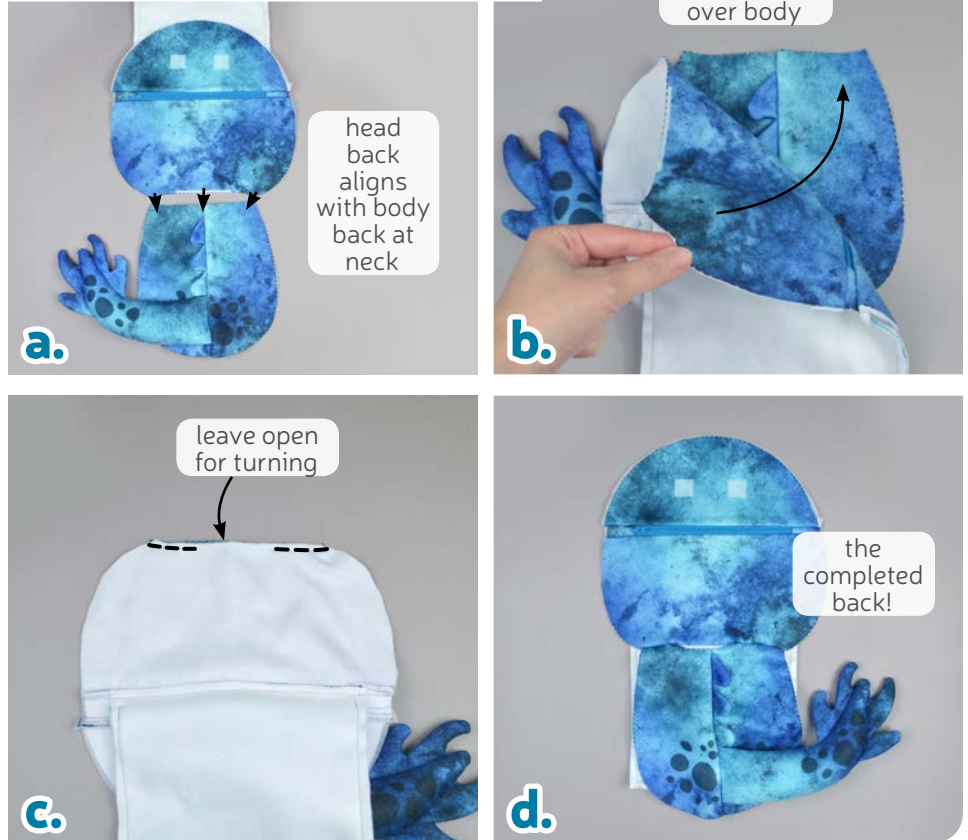
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- Grab your **HEAD BACK** and **BODY** piece so far. The curved edges at the bottom of the head and the top of the body will be sewn together next as the neck.
- Flip the head so the neck edge lines up with the body. Pin the fabrics together.
- If you haven't already, locate the **opening for turning band** printed along the **HEAD BOTTOM** edge. Sew the head to the body along the neck edge, but leave an opening where the band is marked.
- Open up the pieces when complete. Next up is to add the straps!

## 23. SEW THE BACK NECK



## STEPS 24-26: NON-ADJUSTABLE STRAPS

The next 3 steps go over how to make non-adjustable straps. It's a lot easier and faster than the adjustable version. But if you'd like to try making adjustable straps, skip ahead to step 27.

### 24. CUT THE STRAPS

- Grab your webbing/strapping material. Cut two straps from it using the chart as a guide for the length.
- Since the straps are not adjustable, it's difficult to predict the exact size, so it's highly recommended that you test the fit before moving past step 26.
- If you or the recipient are larger than the average person of the suggested height, consider going a size up.

APPROXIMATE SIZE	HEIGHT	STRAP LENGTH (CUT 2)
CHILD	50"-60"	26"
TEENAGER/ SMALL ADULT	60"-64"	30"
MEDIUM ADULT	65"-69"	34"
LARGE ADULT	70"-75"	38"

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- a. If you haven't already, locate the **strap placement squares** printed on the fabric for the **HEAD BACK TOP**.

Grab one end of one of your strap pieces and fold it under by about 1-1½". Take this folded end and layer it over the **placement square** with the fold pointing downward.

- b. Sew over the folded edge in a square shape to secure it in place. Repeat with the other strap piece and the other placement square.



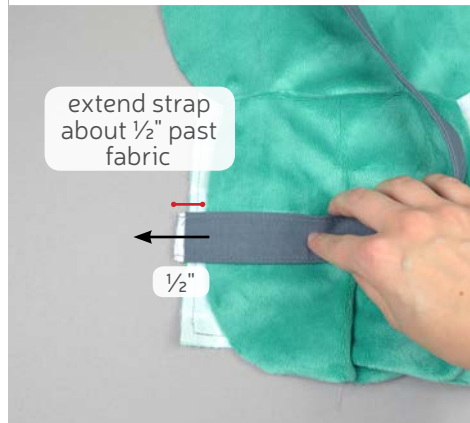
## 25. ATTACH THE STRAPS AT THE TOP

- a. If you haven't already, locate the **strap placement bands** printed on the edge of the **BODY BACK** fabric.

Take the other end of one of your strap pieces and align it over the **placement bands**. Extend it beyond the fabric by about ½" for extra strength and security.

- b. Baste the strap to the body fabric within the seam allowance. Repeat with the other strap on the other side for two complete straps.

## 26. ATTACH THE STRAPS AT THE BOTTOM



- If desired, take this time to test the fit of your straps. You can undo the basting stitches at the bottom of the strap to make them shorter if desired. If everything fits all right, go back and stitch over the straps several more times so the hold is very strong and secure.

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## STEPS 27-32: ADJUSTABLE STRAPS

The next 6 steps go over how to make adjustable straps. This version is more difficult and involved than non-adjustable straps, but in the end the backpack is more adaptable.

If you already did your straps in the previous step, skip ahead to step 33, page 20.

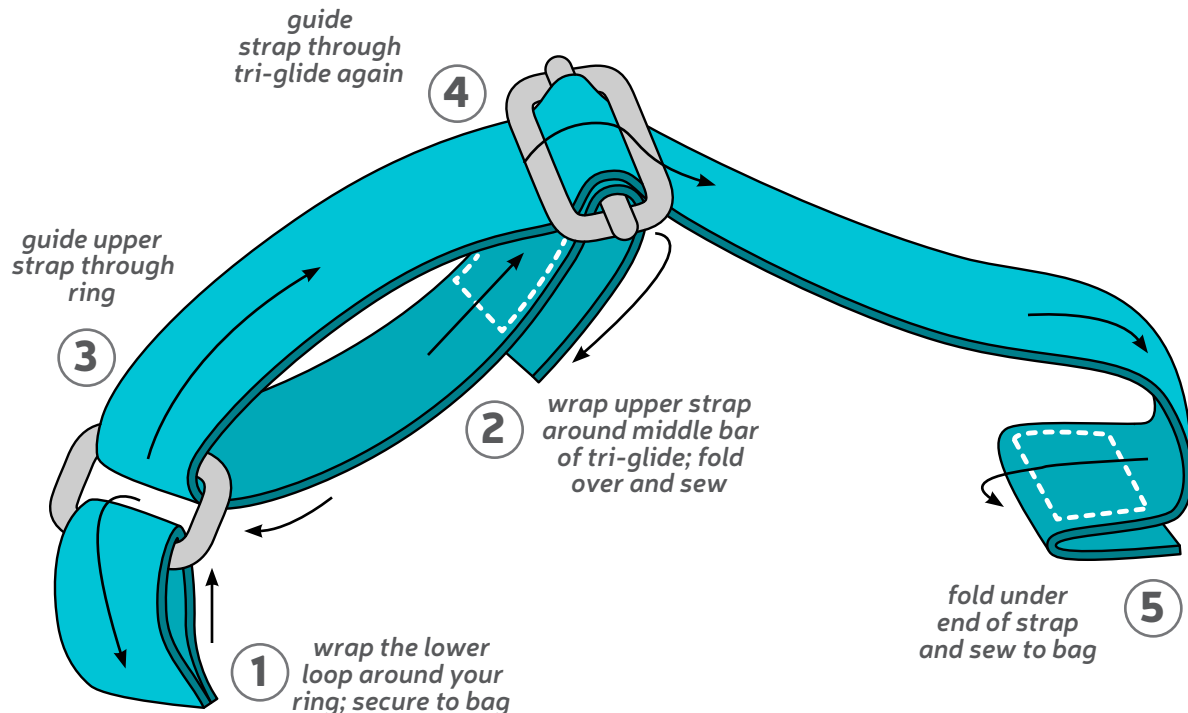
### 27. CUT THE STRAPS

- Grab your webbing/strapping material. Cut two lower loops and two upper straps following the measurement for your size.
- Since the straps are adjustable, there's some leeway in the sizing, but you can always shorten the straps later.
- If you or the recipient are larger than the average person of the suggested height, consider going a size up.

APPROXIMATE SIZE	HEIGHT	LOWER LOOP (CUT 2)	UPPER STRAP (CUT 2)
<b>CHILD</b>	<b>50"-60"</b>	<b>4"</b>	<b>29"</b>
<b>TEENAGER/ SMALL ADULT</b>	<b>60"-64"</b>	<b>4"</b>	<b>35"</b>
<b>MEDIUM ADULT</b>	<b>65"-69"</b>	<b>4"</b>	<b>39"</b>
<b>LARGE ADULT</b>	<b>70"-75"</b>	<b>4"</b>	<b>43"</b>

### strap assembly: at-a-glance

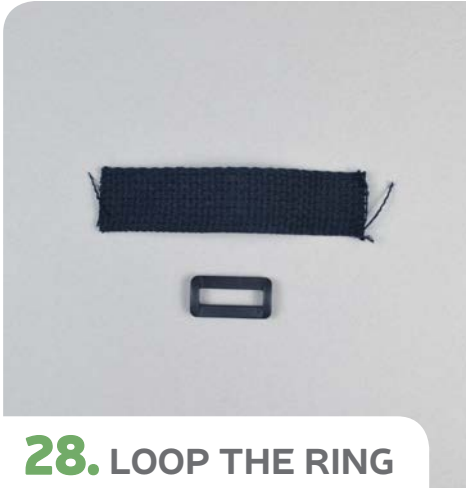
- The next 4 steps go over how to assemble the straps into your strap hardware. This illustration shows an at-a-glance view of what we'll be doing in more detail next.



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## 28. LOOP THE RING



- Grab one of your **lower loop** strap pieces and your **rectangular ring**.
- Wrap the loop around the ring and bring the short ends of the loop together.
- If you haven't already, locate the **strap placement bands** printed on the fabric for the **BODY BACK**. Place the ends of the lower loop over these **placement bands**. Make the strap extend about  $\frac{1}{2}$ " beyond the fabric for extra stability. Baste the strap to the fabric within the seam allowance. Stitch over the area several times for a very strong hold.



## 29. LOOP THE MIDDLE BAR



- Grab one of your **upper strap** pieces and your **tri-glide**.
- Take one end of your upper strap and insert it into one of the slots of the tri-glide from the bottom up. Then feed the strap into the remaining slot of the tri-glide from the top down.
- Fold over the strap so it overlaps by about  $1\frac{1}{2}$ ".

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- a. Stitch the **STRAP** where it overlaps with itself in a square around the edges.
- b. **ALTERNATIVELY:** you could also clip the strap here to temporarily hold it in case you want to try on the backpack first and stitch it later.

### 30. SECURE THE MIDDLE BAR

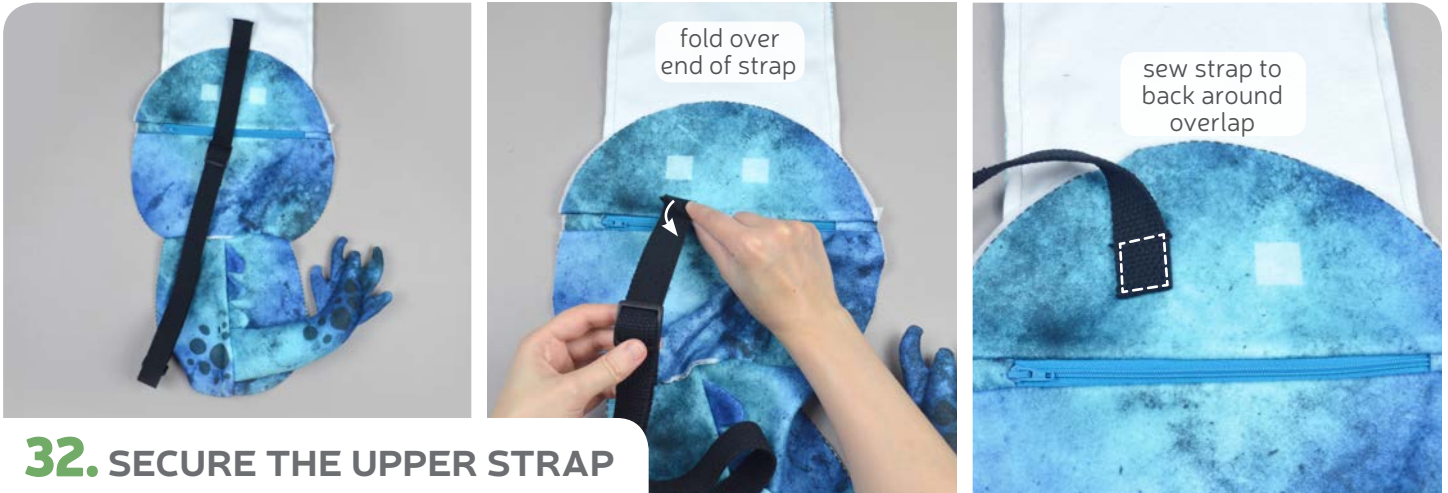
- a. Take your back piece so far and place it on your work table with right sides facing up. Place your **upper strap** on top with the folded end facing down.
- b. Grab the other end of your strap and feed it through the other side of your **rectangular ring**.
- c. Take that same end and feed it through one slot of the tri-glide again, from the bottom up.
  - Push the other end of the strap out of the way to make room.
- d. Feed it through the remaining slot of the tri-glide, from the top down.

### 31. LOOP THE TRI-GLIDE



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### 32. SECURE THE UPPER STRAP

- Pull the **upper strap** through the tri-glide and it should look as shown. All the looping is complete!
- If you haven't already, locate the **strap placement squares** printed on the fabric for the **HEAD BACK TOP**. Fold over the end of the strap by about 1½". Flip the strap so the folded end is facing down onto the **placement square**.
- Stitch the folded end of the strap to the **placement square** in a rectangle. Repeat steps 28-32 with your remaining **strap, ring, and tri-glide** pieces so the other side of the backpack now also has a strap. Now would be a good time to do a test fit of the strap length if that's a concern and stitch the clipped part of your strap if you didn't sew it in step 30.



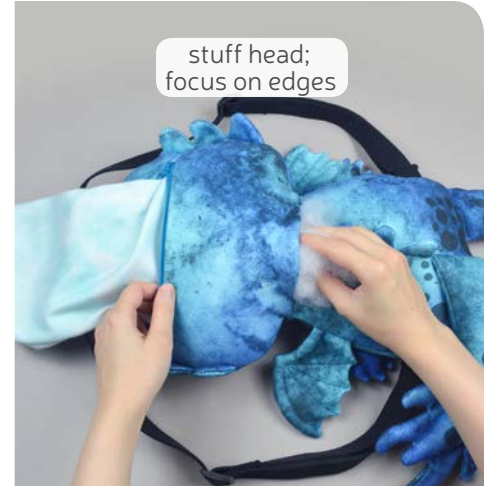
### 33. SEW THE FRONT TO THE BACK

- Grab your body front and body back so far. Next we'll be sewing this front and back together, but first make sure all the extra bits are tucked inside -- the **ARMS, LEGS, WINGS, SPIKES, STRAPS, and TAIL**. Line up the front to the back, matching the seams at the neck.
- Sew the body front to the back all the way around.
- Before turning, make small clips into the seam allowance at the corners of the neck.

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### 34. TURN THE BODY

- Turn the body right side out through the opening in the back of the neck. Pull out one limb at a time for the easiest time. The body is complete! Now onto stuffing!
- For best results, pull the lining out so it's not inside the body. Then stuff the bottom half of the dragon lightly with stuffing. Keep most of the stuffing near the edges so the finished plush can develop its shape. Keep the stuffing light in the middle since that's where your belongings will go.
- Flip the plush over and stuff the head next. Once again, focus most of the stuffing on the outer edges of the plush so the head gets defined.

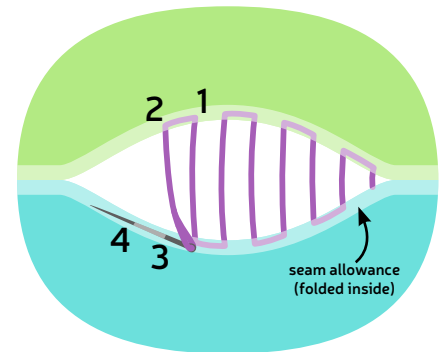
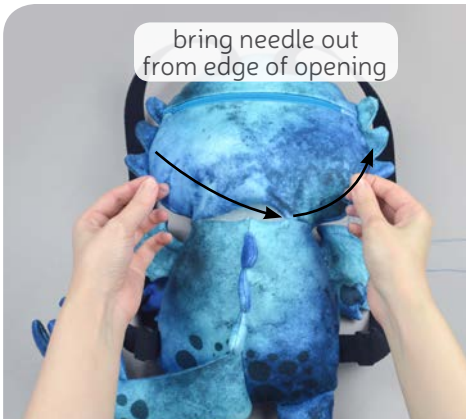


### 35. FINISH STUFFING

- Also push a lot of stuffing into the nose area so there are no wrinkles in the fabric.
- Once the stuffing is to your satisfaction, shove the lining back inside the body and smooth it out with your hands.
- Double check any areas that need more stuffing before closing up the plush. The back of the body and the head can sometimes look a little hollow. The 'cheek' area just above the neck typically needs a lot to look full too.

sew desu ne?

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### 36. LADDER STITCH CLOSED

- a. Make sure the seam allowances in the opening are tucked inside and prepare to ladder stitch it closed. Thread a hand-sewing needle and knot it at the end. Insert the needle from the inside of the opening and out of the plush near one edge of the opening. This will leave the knot inside the plush.
- b. Continue from here doing a ladder stitch. Take a 1/8" stitch into the fold of one side of the opening, then go across and take another. (See illustration at the right). Keep going down the opening until you reach the end.

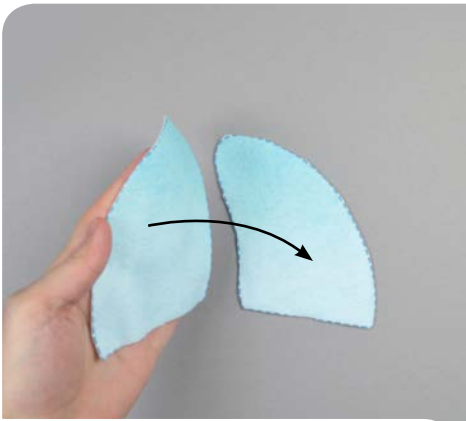


- a. When you're finished, stitch a knot into the end of the seam. Then insert the needle near the finished knot and out of the plush about 1-2" away.
- b. Pull the thread through and hold it taut while snipping the thread. The excess thread should sink back inside the plush -- all hidden!

### 37. CLIP THE THREADS

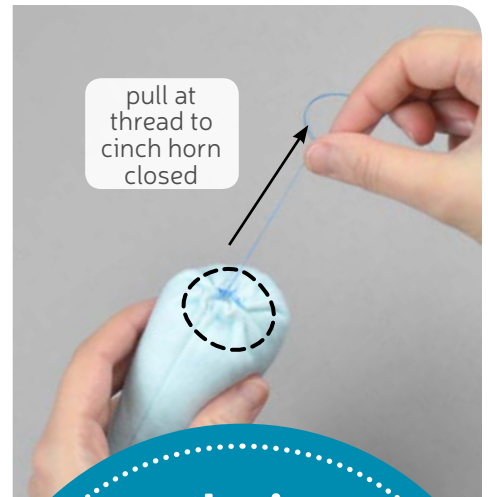
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### 38. SEW THE HORNS

- Cut out your **HORN** pieces. Take two of them and align them with right sides facing and raw edges matching up.
- Sew them together along the long curved edge. Leave the short straight edge free for turning the horn later.
- Turn the horn right side out and repeat with the remaining two horn pieces for two completed horns total.



### 39. CLOSE UP THE HORNS

- Stuff the horns lightly with stuffing when complete.
- Hand sew a gathering stitch around the opening of the **HORN**.
- Pull at the thread of the gathering stitch to cinch the horn completely closed. Sew a few knots into the opening to hold it shut. If you have thread leftover, keep it attached for joining the horn to the head next.

#### gathering:

The process of shortening the length of a piece of fabric by sewing long stitches through it. When the thread is pulled, it forms small folds that ruffle the fabric.

#### gathering stitch:

A long version of the running stitch, which is a stitch done by weaving the needle in and out of a length of fabric going along a line. The long stitches (about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " -  $\frac{1}{2}$ " long) gather the fabric when pulled later.

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## 40. ATTACH THE HORNS



- Place the cinched end of the **HORN** on the top of the head. The cinched end should be pointing down and it should be about 2" away from the center seam. Note that the horns curve slightly toward the center for this sample version.
- Hold the horn in place by sticking pins down into the base of the horn and through the head. Stitch the horn to the head with a ladder stitch around the base. Repeat with the remaining horn for both horns on the dragon head.



## 41. SECURE THE TAIL



- Since the back of the dragon will be flat against your back when worn, it's helpful to secure the **TAIL** so it doesn't move. Flip the tail so it lies flush against one side of the body or the other as you prefer.
- Ladder stitch the inside of the tail to the body. Go back and forth once or twice to secure it strongly for all the wear it will endure.



**congrats!**  
this completes  
your backpack!  
Now go try it  
on!