

Add a Fabric Tummy-Bag to a Knit/Crochet

Worry Monster

For Knit-For-Nowt

<http://www.knitfornowt.org>

This guide uses Phyllis's *Crochet a Worry Monster for Knit-for-Nowt* pattern from the Knit-for-Nowt website which takes a 5" closed-end zip. It could easily be adapted to add a fabric tummy to any worry monster that has a zip mouth. It's possible to adapt it for use without a zip but in this design, much of the strength of the mouth area comes from the zip fabric itself.

YOU WILL NEED

- A worry monster body with a zip mouth.
- Strong, lightweight, non-stretch fabric for the tummy – this guide shows polyester “liquid” satin dress lining.
- Measuring tools
- Cutting tools
- Sewing thread matching the zip or tummy fabric – both would be ideal.
- Hand-sewing needles.
- Pins and/or small quilter's clips.
- Optional: Sewing machine
- Optional: Heat-fusible hemming tape/interfacing.

I am using polyester “liquid” satin lining fabric. It comes in dozens of colours and is inexpensive compared to most fabric. Although it's a bit slippery to work with, I think it adds a lovely, tactile detail for the children who will be feeding their worries to the monster. Small quilter's clips are great for taming tricky fabrics – unbranded ones can be had for a fraction of the cost of brand name ones. Any, lightweight, sturdy, non-stretch fabric will work. I haven't had much luck with stretchy fabric for the tummies – they keep getting caught in the zip.

We'll take our measurements from the monster we're working on and cut a single, narrow strip of fabric, folding it double and hemming up the sides. This means there's no seam at the bottom of the tummy.

The finished tummy-bag needs to end up wider than the zip, and tall enough to go from the top edge of the zip to just above the bottom edge of the body. I like to make the tummy area nice and roomy. If you're working with a relatively short body length, or omitting the zip, I recommend using a fabric that isn't slippery to make the tummy from. I think it's important that the child's worry-paper can't fall out once it's been fed to the monster.

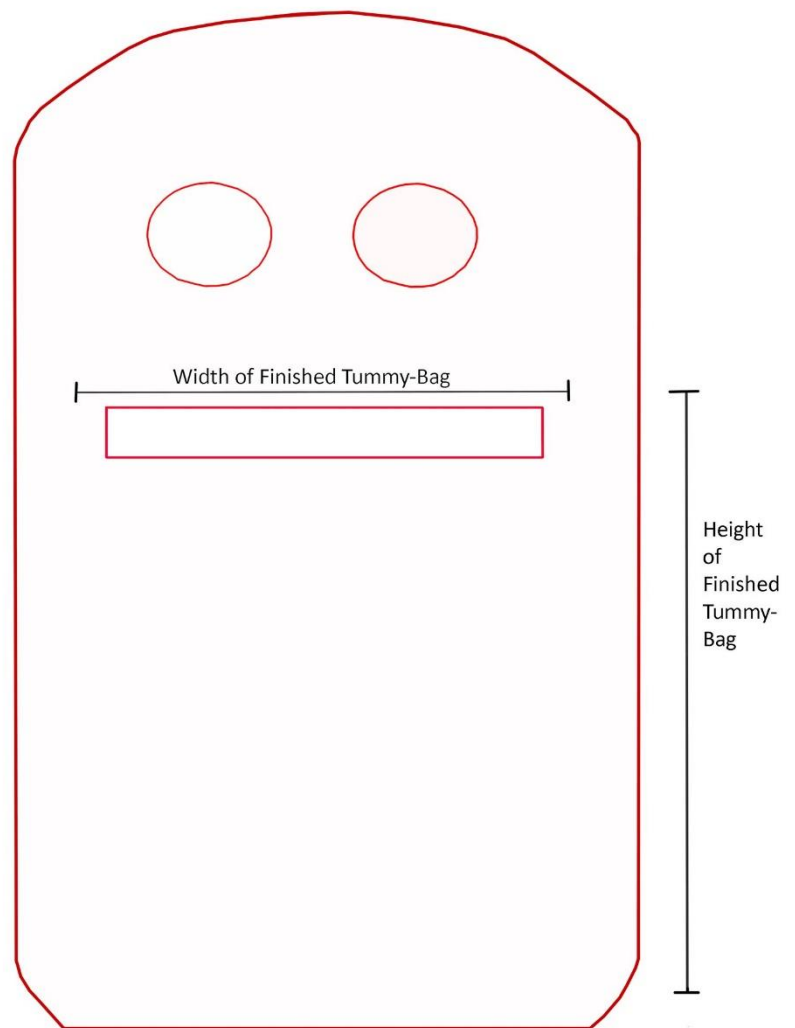
Since it will be hidden inside the body of the monster, between the outer fabric and the stuffing, the tummy-bag doesn't need to look pretty. It just needs to be strong. On a knit/crochet monster, we also need to tame the fraying edges to avoid shedding fibres through the knit – the polyester satin is particularly prone to fraying.

If hand-sewing, it might be easier to French Seam the sides of the bag – allow more width for this. If machine sewing, a tight overlock or zig-zag stitch up the raw sides should be enough to contain the fraying.

We turn a hem at the top edges of the bag. This part could be done with heat-fusible hemming tape or interfacing if you prefer.

CUT THE FABRIC

- Take the width measurement across the monster's body. The finished bag needs to be comfortably wider than the zip but not quite as wide as the body. If you plan to finish with a French Seam, cut more width than if leaving the edges raw.
- Take the height measurement from the top of the zip to half an inch above the bottom edge of the monster's body. Add 2 inches for turning the top hems. (This is a generous seam allowance because I find the polyester satin tricky to work with – shorten it if you prefer.)



PRESS

Press the fabric strip with an iron (cool setting, if using polyester satin!). Fold right-side to right-side, and press the fold. The back of the bag needs to be longer than the front by at least the height of your zip/mouth. Turn a hem at the top and press the folds. Pin or clip the folds.

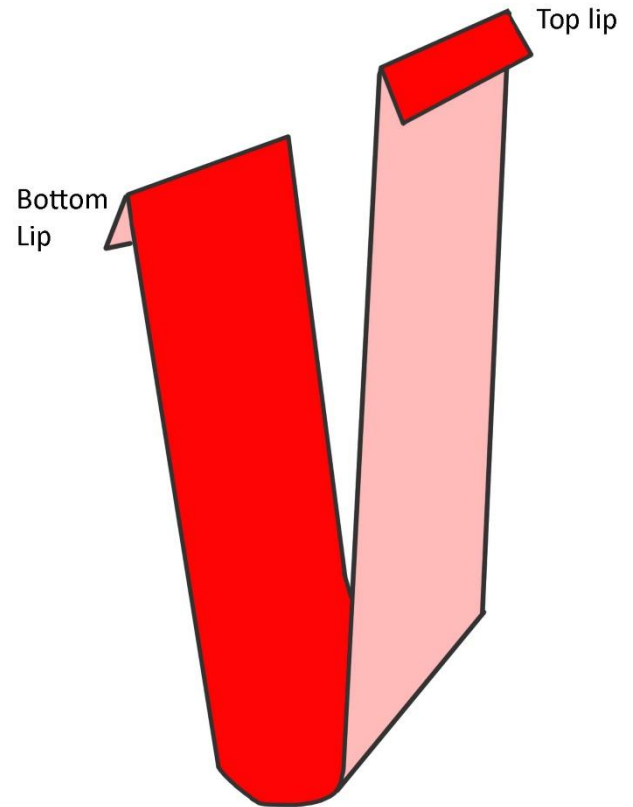
HEM TOP EDGES

Turn a hem at each end of the long strip, trapping the raw edges of the fabric out of harm's way. Sew with matching (or nicely contrasting) thread, or seal the hems with heat-fusible interfacing such as Bondaweb hemming tape.

SEW UP THE SIDES

French Seam if you need to, leaving the right-side of the fabric on the inside of the bag.

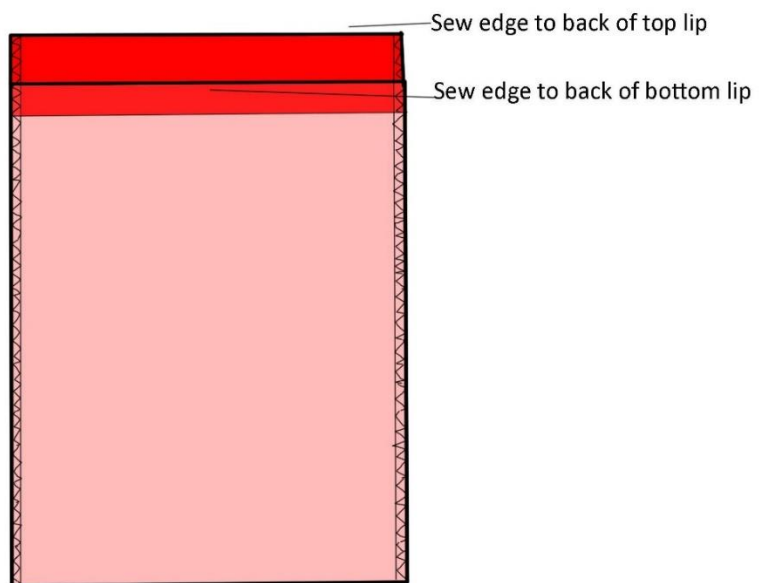
Otherwise, sew a seam up each long edge, then overlock, zig-zag stitch, etc. to tame the fraying of the raw edges.



ATTACH BAG TO BOTTOM HALF OF ZIP

We're going to attach the shorter side to the back of the bottom 'lip'.

- Turn your monster inside-out and smooth it flat with the back of the zip facing you.
- Folding back the longer, back side of the bag, place the bag on top of the monster so that the top hem of the shorter, front of the bag lines up with the zip. If you can line it up with the join between the knit/crochet on the other side, that's ideal. Leave enough space between the fabric edge and the working parts of the zip so nothing catches.



- Pin into place.
- With the zip open and/or one hand inside the monster to prevent sewing through to the other side, sew the bag hem to the back of the zip.

ATTACH BAG TO TOP HALF OF ZIP

- Having sewn the bottom half already, smooth the longer back half of the bag flat over the top of the zip. It's fine if it's taller than the zip – you can either fold it back to create a straight line to work from or leave it long and stitch it into place by feel.
- With the zip closed, pin the top edge of the bag into place behind the zip. Leave enough space between the join and the working parts of the zip so nothing catches. I suggest following the line where the knit/crochet is already sewn to the zip.
- With one hand inside the monster, sew the bag hem to the back of the zip. Leave about a quarter of an inch between the edge of the fabric and the working parts of the zip.
- At each end of the zip, put a line of stitches downwards to meet the stitches of the bottom 'lip'. This seals the bag right the way around the back of the mouth.

BIND THE BAG EDGES TO THE ZIP

If you were able to line up the shorter edge of your bag with the edge of the crochet/knit lip on the other side of the bottom lip, these stitches will be almost invisible if you're using thread the colour of the tummy, or the colour of the zip. If not, you'll have better results if you're able to match your thread to the zip colour. If not, pick a thread that's darker than the zip, and take extra care to keep the stitches tiny on the outside. They'll barely show.

Try to just catch a couple of threads from the back of the zip fabric, and the very edge of the tummy bag, each time you pass your needle through. We're effectively wrapping the top edge of the bag in thread, over and over, leaving most of the stitch underneath the tummy fabric.

If you need some extra help here, look up hemming stitch (couch stitch) on the internet or in a sewing book. It's a tailoring technique that makes hem stitches almost invisible on the right side of the garment.

If you prefer, a neat line of small running or backstitch very close to the edges will serve the same purpose – making sure that the bag doesn't pull away from the zip when the monster is fed a worry-paper.

FINISHING TOUCHES

With the monster right-side out, test that the zip works and that you can reach all the way to the bottom of the tummy bag.

With the zip open, reach into the tummy-bag and smooth things out.

Feel around the join between the fabric and the zip – if you find any gaps, put some stitches in to close them. It's fine to sew the lining to the outer body if you need to.

Take care when sewing beneath the bottom 'lip' – we don't want to sew the bag shut!

Test the zip again. If anything is catching, you may need to smooth out a wrinkle and put some stitches in to keep it out of the way, or you may find a stray thread or stitch blocking the zip action.

Reach into the tummy bag again, making sure that it's still fully open.

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