

WINTER WOOLIES

Create a trio of fuzzy needle punch pals with
Lesley Hill's Arctic animals tutorial





HOW TO MAKE NEEDLE PUNCHED ANIMALS

MATERIALS

- Oxford Punch Needle, Size 10 regular
- Embroidery hoop, 25cm (10")
- Three 33 x 33cm (13 x 13") pieces of monk's cloth (we got ours from www.amyoxford.com)
- Patons Classic Wool Roving, 100% wool, 109m/120yd per 100g ball, one ball each in Black (Yarn A), Pale Blush (Yarn B), Aran (Yarn C), Gray (Yarn D) and Low Tide (Yarn E)
- Lopi AlafossLopi, 100% wool, 100m/109yd per 100g ball, one ball each in Light Grey Tweed (Yarn F) and Light Indigo (Yarn G)
- Three 20 x 25cm (7 7/8 x 9 7/8") pieces of Kaufman Essex Yarn Dyed Linen, one each in Indigo (Fabric A), Malibu (Fabric B) and Silver (Fabric C)
- Erasable fabric marker
- Six small black beads
- Black embroidery thread
- Matching sewing thread
- Soft toy stuffing

Maximum cuteness, all the texture, and a pleasingly simple process that'll instantly lull you into a state of relaxation? We're sold. This too-cute collection of needle punched minis are a cross between plump cosy cushion and heritage kids' toy, meaning they'll be loved by all the family.

If you've never tried needle punch before, you really are in for a treat. Team *Mollie* are officially obsessed with it as it's easy to learn, works up quickly, and consists of one stitch that can be worked on both sides of the fabric. Like most crafts, it has so many applications, but we love the way designer Lesley's used needle punch to add tactile detail and pattern to these polar pals.

We've worked with pure wool to give this trio the softest finish, but any chunky yarn will do, so feel free to just raid your stash instead.

For the penguin

- 01 Place the monk's cloth fabric centrally into the embroidery hoop. Working around the hoop, pull the cloth up and **towards the middle** while tightening the screw, making sure the cloth is taut.
- 02 Using the penguin template and the erasable fabric marker, **trace the template** onto the front of the fabric. The easiest way to do this is to tape the template onto a light source, such as a window, and hold the hoop up to it.
- 03 Thread the punch needle with Yarn A, going through the metal hole at the tip, up through the needle, and out at the back. Leave the yarn tail hanging out from the back by **roughly 2.5cm (1")**, and unwind some yarn from the ball to keep it loose while you work.
- 04 Start along the outline of the penguin, inserting the punch needle down into the fabric until



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the wooden handle touches it. Hold onto **the yarn tail** with your other hand as you pull the punch needle out, making sure to keep it close to the surface.

05 Glide the punch needle a few holes over and repeat the process, **skimming the needle** over the cloth in between stitches. Continue working around the outline of the penguin, as shown, until you reach the starting point.

06 Push the threaded punch needle down into the cloth, turn the hoop over, and cut the yarn between the tip of the needle and the cloth. Hold onto the yarn tail as you pull out the punch needle, then trim the yarn tail so it's flush with the surrounding loops. Outline the **penguin belly and face** in Yarn A in the same way.

07 Using Yarn B, add the cheeks. Outline the circles with small stitches, then fill in the shape by

spiralling the stitches inwards towards the centre. Add the beak using Yarn F, making four small stitches in a **diamond shape**, then filling it in with a single horizontal stitch.

08 Use Yarn A to outline the beak, then to fill in the head and the body **around the belly**. Use Yarn C to outline both cheeks, then continue to fill in the face.

09 Next, complete the penguin belly with loop stitch in Yarn D. **Loop stitch** is worked in the same way as the previous flat stitches, but from the back of the hoop. Turn the hoop over and outline the belly, stitching as close as possible to the black loop border.

10 Fill in the belly with loop stitch, spiralling inward until you reach the centre. Repeat Step 6 to end the loop stitch for this section, this time pushing the needle to the front and **trimming the yarn** on this side.

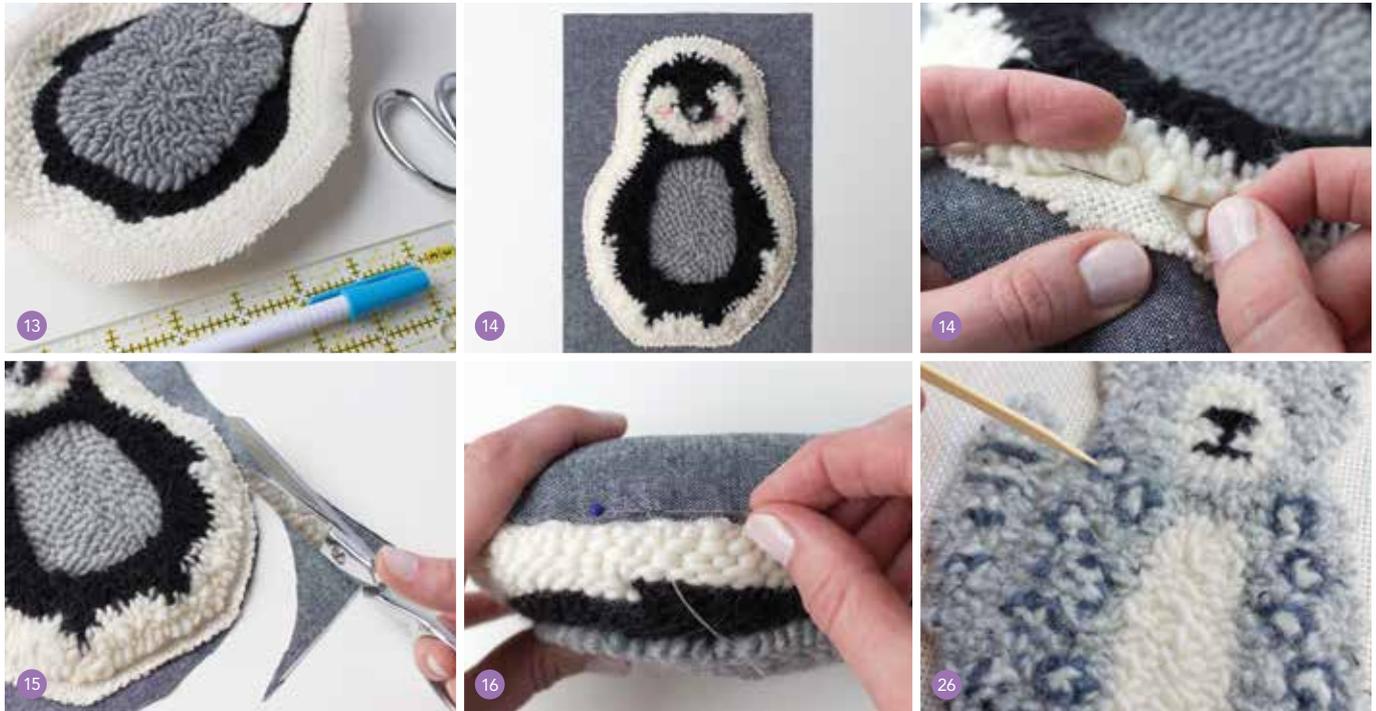
11 Working from the **right side** (RS) of the hoop again, outline the penguin and the outer border in Yarn C, then fill in the border area.

12 Using the template as a guide, sew on the **bead eyes** with black embroidery thread.

13 Remove the completed piece from the frame. Mark 1cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ ") from the edge of the needle punch border and cut along the marked line. **To prevent fraying**, finish the edges of the monk's cloth with zigzag stitch, or by dabbing a small amount of glue around the cut edge and leaving to dry.

14 Pin Fabric A and the penguin RS together, then **backstitch** around the border of the penguin, sewing as closely as possible to the last row of needle punched stitches. Leave a 7.5cm (3") gap along one of the bottom side edges.

15 Trim away the excess backing fabric in line with the monk's »



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cloth, then turn the penguin RS out **through the gap**. Press the backing fabric to the wrong side following the curve of the fabric. **16** Stuff the penguin through the gap, pushing the wadding into all the corners using a knitting needle or similar. **To finish**, sew the gap closed using ladder stitch.

For the seal

17 Repeat Steps 1-6, this time tracing the seal template onto the fabric **using the marker**, and outlining the seal in Yarn G. **18** For the nose, outline the circle with small stitches in Yarn A, then fill it in by **spiralling inwards** to the centre. Complete the nose by making two small stitches down, then a further two small stitches across on either side to create an inverted 'T' shape. **19** Outline the **snout and belly** in Yarn F, then fill them in as before.

Fill in the body of the seal with Yarn G and sew on the eyes as per Step 12. Finish by outlining the body and border in Yarn E, then fill in. **20** Repeat **Steps 13-16**, this time using Fabric B for backing.

For the snow leopard

21 Repeat Steps 1-2, this time tracing the snow leopard template onto the reverse of the fabric – everything but **the outer border** for the snow leopard is worked in loop stitch, so you'll be working on the wrong side of the hoop. Flip the frame over to the RS and retrace only the outline of the outer border onto the front. **22** Working from the back of the hoop, outline the body in Yarn F as per Steps 3-6. Stitch the nose by outlining the triangle in Yarn A, then **filling in the nose** and mouth as per Step 18. Outline the snout and belly in Yarn C, then fill in.

23 To create the snow leopard's spots, stitch the centre dot with Yarn C using three small stitches in a **tight triangle shape**. Outline each dot with a single row of stitches using Yarn G.

24 For the tail stripes, stitch a row of three short stitches in Yarn C and then Yarn G **for each stripe**. For the forehead stripes, stitch a row of three short stitches in Yarn G for each stripe.

25 Outline the **leopard's spots** and stripes in Yarn F then fill in. Sew on the eyes as per Step 12.

26 Turn the hoop to the RS and use a skewer or similar to push the loops to either side around the leopard's spots, stripes and mouth, **creating smoother lines** and giving the shapes more definition. Outline the body and border using Yarn B, then fill in as before.

27 Repeat Steps 13-16 to finish, this time **using Fabric C** for backing.

MEET THE MAKER LESLEY HILL



Lesley is a life-long sewist and a lover of modern design. Originally trained in sewing and pattern drafting, Lesley now works as a part-time public health nurse, part-time crafter, mum of two, and occasional superhero. Find more of her textured makes on Insta @homedaystudio. www.homedaystudio.com