

PRIMITIVE CAT AND DOG
by
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YOU WILL NEED:

- Two prints for animal bodies plus other prints for neck ties.
- Glass eyes for both.
- Two needles - one is a long thin one (Piecemakers Doll Sculpting Needle) used to sew on eyes. The other is a large-eyed fatter needle (#18 Chenille needle) to be used in the stuffing process and for opening holes for the eyes. Both needles are in the GW Favorite Needles* sold in the Supplies section of the website.
- GW Paint overdyer* and #400 grit sandpaper to age the fabric.
- Non-slippery poly stuffing* (Mountain Mist) or wool roving* for both animals.
- Stuffing fork *(large size) or you can make your own from a long thin screwdriver with sharp corners filed off and a V groove filed into center of tip.
- Hemostats also for stuffing.
- Two inexpensive misters - one for water and the other for paint overdyer mix.
- Quilting or strong thread for hand sewing - recommended tan colored YLI cotton quilting thread*.
- Very helpful is the kind of disposable gloves that are sticky feeling on the outside. Wearing one of these while stuffing something hard like the doll body, will give your holding hand some "traction" so you can push against it with less struggle. Cut off finger tips to keep your hand cooler.
- 1/2" flat paint brush and measuring cup plus old towel for overdyer.

NOTE: You can make your own paint overdyer with water base paints like liquid acrylics. I like a color that could be called a khaki or mud puddle or coffee (with cream) color. Use as directed in instructions.

*All supplies and tools may be ordered through GW at 603-835-6551 or www.gailwilsondesigns.com

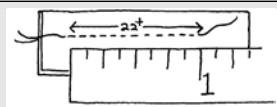


BASIC WORK NOTES:



MACHINE STITCHING AND NEEDLES: It is always good to change your sewing machine needle regularly. Sometimes bad stitching is only a matter of a new needle. Make sure you know how many stitches per inch your sewing machine is doing. These primitive animals should be sewn by machine for seam strength, in fact, you will need to double stitch most areas. It is usually better for things like doll and animal bodies that are to be stuffed, due to stress on the stitches, to sew by machine using a very small stitch. Smaller stitches also make nicer curves around places like thumbs and heads and allow for a smaller seam allowance. Do NOT clip SA on outside curves (this promotes a pointy curve) and only inside ones that are extreme - you will be told when to clip. Begin with a test to see how many stitches your machine is doing.

STITCH TEST FOR BODY SEWING - Put your machine stitch length adjustment at a very small setting and on a piece of scrap fabric, sew a couple of inches. Then mark with a ruler one inch. Count the stitches between and adjust your machine to get at least 22 per inch. You may need to count your trial stitches using a magnifying glass.



SEWING BY HAND: You may wish to sew by hand because you prefer it or wish to do so for authenticity, but never hand sew because you think it's easier - it's actually difficult to hand sew well. Of course, even if you machine sew everything possible, there is still lots of handwork in dollmaking to satisfy this urge. On all hand sewing, use small stitches in scale with the work. Hems and such can use the usual stitches, but if you are hand stitching for body or clothing construction, use only a very small backstitch, not a running stitch. Only a backstitch can simulate a machine stitch in tininess and strength. To do this, use only a single strand of thread not more than 18 inches long to prevent tangles and knots. I really recommend running your thread through beeswax to keep thread smoothly sewing - it really works. Cotton thread is best - poly can melt under a hot iron. Stitch length is 1/16" or less, averaging 19-20 per inch. Check backstitching frequently on backside to be sure you don't have skipped places. Using a small quilting needle is helpful.

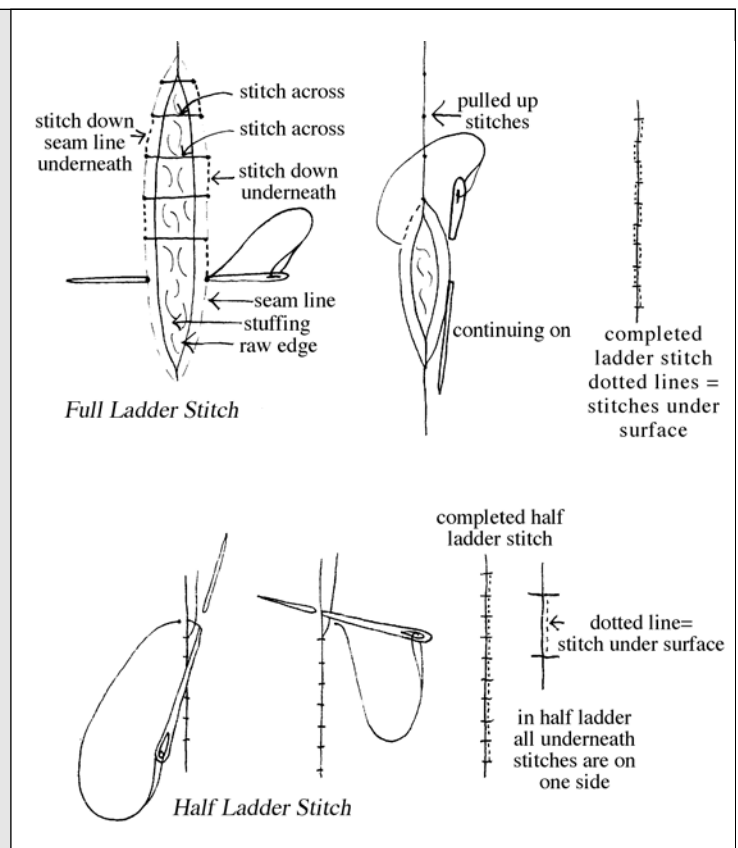
CLOSING HAND STITCHES: All stuffed animals share the need for a large opening to stuff effectively from. You need to be cautious that you do not stress the two sewn ends (these are back-tacked) of the hole in your efforts to do a good job stuffing. Then there is the matter of closing this hole neatly. I suggest using one of two stitches. The ladder stitch or the half-ladder.

LAMINATING PATTERNS: I recommend using Avery brand Laminating Sheets (available in office supplies like Staples). Laminate **both** sides of each sheet of instructions before you cut out the patterns and you will have patterns that are permanent with good strong edges for drawing around. To laminate without horrible crinkles, peel off the backing, hold the sheet sticky side down in a U and touch the bottom of the U to the middle of the pattern page, then roll down the two sides gradually. Presto, no wrinkles. I know this goes against everything your mother taught you, but you need to use your good 4" scissors (hopefully Ginghers - I do think they are the best) to snip out patterns accurately- cutting on the printed line so no or almost no line shows. Snip is the operative word here. I die when I see students in class cutting patterns with great big dressmaking size scissors. It would be like applying mascara with a broom.

WHEN IT'S TIME TO CUT: When the patterns are to be cut from, I always recommend drawing around the pattern for all dollmaking then cutting from the drawn lines as opposed to pinning on patterns then cutting around because you can cut more accurately on a line than next to a pattern. Also, you should always use a sharp pencil tilted **toward** the pattern as you draw. The width of a dull pencil line can make a difference - this is why I recommend a mechanical pencil. Although sometimes a ball point pen is good on darker fabrics (red seems to show up better than black), if any of your pieces will be over-dyed pen cannot be used (even ones labeled "permanent") or it will bleed. So use of a white colored pencil is recommended for darker fabrics-keep it very sharp. Use regular pencil on the lighter colors. For patterns that are labeled as "sewing lines" like ears or tails etc., be sure to allow at least $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ " between each drawn piece or edges as you will cut a seam allowance **after** sewing on the drawn lines.

NOT FOR CHILDREN: Although these may be attractive to children, the construction (including animal's eyes) was not intended that the animal be used as a plaything. These are for the collectors in all of us who are interested in the appeal of antique primitives.

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT THE REPRESENTATION OF MY PRIMITIVE ANIMALS (this is part of a series of 9 animals) - Although you may choose to use the patterns however it suits your style - for instance, you could decide to look for a mohair coating fabric with a nice hair length so the animal was more of the more "plush" look, my desire in creating these patterns was to make animals that although recognizable are just enough folksy to be similar to ones made long ago in homes from no pattern except what could be drawn out by the individual maker and then executed in the materials at hand. I found it was much more difficult to make primitive shapes than to give in to the artist in me that kept making them look too realistic, although I still feel they are a bit more on the realistic side than I first had planned. However, I feel it would really be missing the boat to not carry through with the antiquing which is a great deal of their charm and not only that, but the actual process helps in the shaping of some of the animals in the series. If you find yourself making any errors, keep in mind the primitive look we are striving for and it may be that the "error" is no longer an issue.



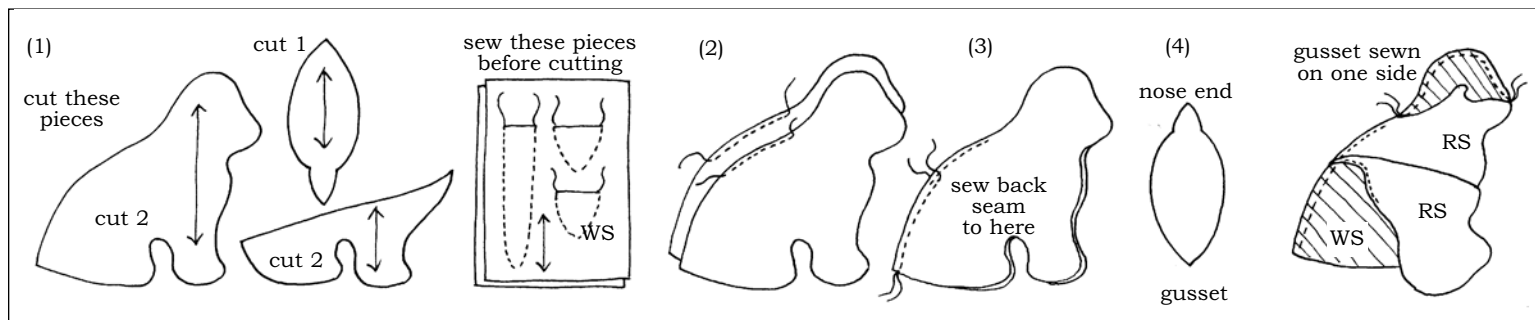
IMPORTANT NOTE ON STITCHING/CONSTRUCTION:

It is important that you follow through with the double stitching always using the small stitch recommended above where specified. In this context, double stitching = sewing a second line of stitches right next to (touching but not on top of) previous stitching. This is the best measure to prevent tear-out of seams.

ABBREVIATIONS:

SA = seam allowance
RS = right side
WS = wrong side
BT = back tack

PRIMITIVE CAT

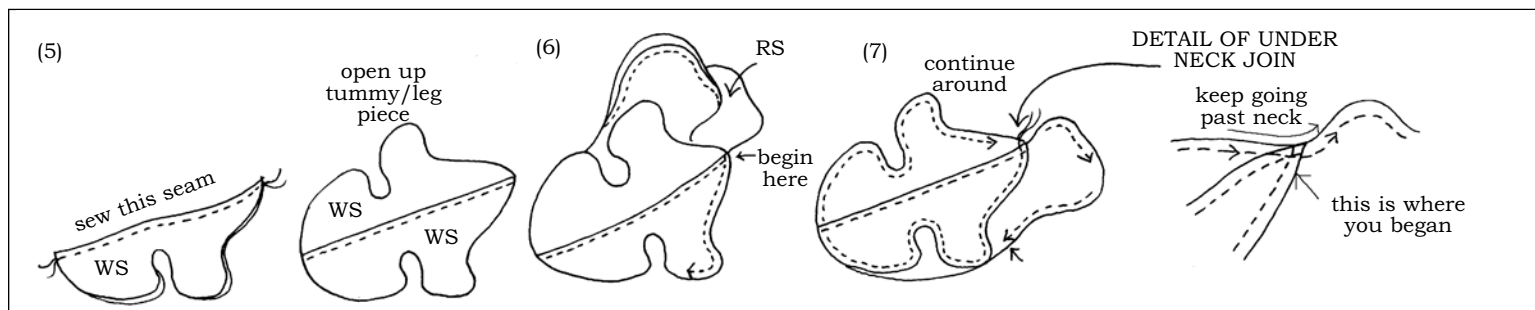


(1) Note: Instructions for cutting are written with the intention that you may be using different fabrics, some with no obvious RS/WS and some with. You will need to cut mirror images of some pieces (marked on the pattern pieces). If cutting from fabrics with a RS/WS such as prints, fold fabrics WS out so that you will cut mirror images. Note that some pieces are cut out (they have "cutting lines") and others are to be drawn around, then sewn, and finally cut. Also important is the grain of the fabric so that you will get the right stretch. The arrows should go in the direction that is either parallel to the selvage or parallel to the direction of least or no stretch when fabric is pulled in your hands. You will need two layers of all pieces above except the gusset which only needs one piece. Also make sure to mark the nose location, back gusset stopping point, the under neck location and the seam opening location on each cut body piece. You will need these clearly marked for later. As shown above, the tail and ears are drawn on the WS of double fabric, then sewn on the drawn lines leaving a seam allowance outside the stitching. Once sewn they can be cut with their specified seam allowance in step 8(b).

(2) Slightly beyond the marks (about $\frac{1}{2}$ ") on each body piece for the openings, sew a line of stitches (very small stitches still) close to the raw edges but still firmly on the fabric.

(3) With RS's together, sew the lower back seam with the recommended SA of $\frac{1}{8}$ ". Now, stitch again exactly next to the first stitching (double stitching).

(4) Sew the single piece of gusset to one side of head - it doesn't matter which one. Place gusset to head with RS's together. Line up the nose point of the gusset with the mark on the body for the nose and beginning there, fit the gusset to the curve of the head. It looks (due to its shape) that it will be tricky, but if you just keep the raw edges lined up, it will follow along. The indent is part of what will give the cats head its shape. Make sure that raw edges are always lined up so that you get a $\frac{1}{8}$ " SA on both sides.

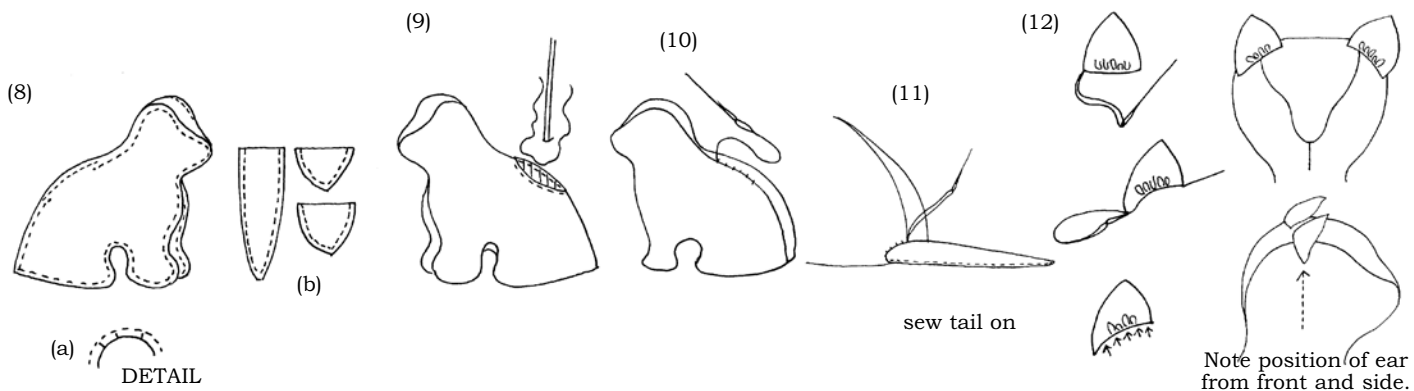


(5) Sew the tummy seam with RS's together and using the same SA keeping raw edges carefully lined up. Double stitch. Open up the tummy/leg section.

(6) Place opened tummy/leg section so its RS is on the RS of one of the body necks and lined up to the mark. Start lining up carefully the raw edges matching all the legs and curves. Pin carefully, possibly baste it to hold it so nothing moves as you sew. Line up the center back and the center back end of tummy seam when you get there and continue around until you get back to where you started. Here, you need to look at the DETAIL drawing with (7) above to see how to sew past all the converging SA's and then on up around nose. When you get to the nose gusset join, you will sew past it and continue until you reach the other end of the opening for stuffing on the back. This all sounds harder to do than it is and like riding a bicycle, you need to just have it in your hands and follow the logic of it as you go. Maintain a solid $\frac{1}{8}$ " SA on **both** sides. Double-stitching is recommended to prevent tear-out when stuffing.

(8) Now you should have completed the loop around the animal's body and only have open the space where you will stuff. As in the DETAIL (a), clip SA's in sharp inner leg curves. (b) Cut out tail and ears leaving a $\frac{1}{8}$ " SA and cutting on the drawn line where these were left opening for turning.

(9) Time to stuff. It is important to know two things. One is the reason the non-slippery poly stuffing is called for is that it is important to use a stuffing that will stay put and be able to be packed very densely into the animal until it is very firm. Slippery stuffings will make stuffing very frustrating and your job extremely difficult. Besides, we are going for the look and feel of an animal made in simpler times - these were mostly stuffed with cut up rags, cotton or sawdust - all of which gave a certain heft to the animal. The other thing you need to know



is how to feed stuffing into the animal. For this, pull out long pieces of the stuffing trying to keep a continuous fluffy rope going into the cavity. You will use almost a half bag of stuffing for each body. Long after you think you have it stuffed, you will make room in the middle for more. It is good to have the disposable rubber glove on your holding hand not the hand with the stuffing fork and make sure the exterior feels "sticky" not slick or powdery - you are using it for traction. Cut off the finger and thumb tips to help make it bearable to wear.

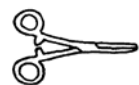
STUFFING TIPS

You will need to be using a stuffing fork as mentioned in the beginning of the kit. Of course you can use whatever tool is most comfortable for you, but a lot of elbow grease will go into this and it will help your hand if you have a tool that can properly manipulate the stuffing to the area that needs it. Begin at the farthest out point, which is the nose and top head. Make sure these areas are properly full and rounded out before continuing on, although the stuffing will migrate into the empty cavity until there is something to hold it there, so you will find yourself going back to areas you have been to to refill using stuffing from nearby. You will also pre-fill the feet (toes first) before going too far. The general idea you are striving for is to evenly fill the whole animal with unlumpy semi-firm stuffing then go inside like a thoracic surgeon and make room for much more in insides of the animal. Watch carefully that you do not put undue stress on the two sewn ends of the opening as it can start to shred the fabric and you may have trouble later on when closing the opening. Even when you are in the process of closing the opening, you may find yourself slipping in "just a bit more" that will turn into a lot more. Things to watch for and are determined by pushing in enough stuffing are a nicely rounded and shaped nose and top of head, fully filled feet and legs and of course a densely packed body without lumps. Here are some tips to help on these issues.

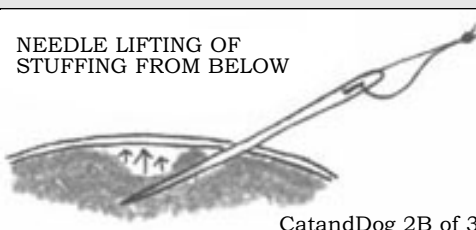
(a) Have a **mister handy with water** to keep the animal damp (not dripping but definitely wet). This is good on all things that need to be firmly stuffed and rounded (doll heads, feet, hands, and these animals, etc). Let the mist spread in the fibers before over-spraying - dampening areas that get rounded helps the fabric to stretch and the dampness helps to grip the stuffing on the inside. Re-dampen as necessary as it will dry quickly.



(b) Use large size **stuffing fork** or make your own as suggested in the beginning of kit from a cheap screwdriver. It is hard work pushing all the stuffing it will take into the cavity and you will need the wider handle to relieve some of the pressure on your hand and its tip to push stuffing around to where you need it once it is in there. **Hemostats** are also helpful for turning things right side out by going inside say an ear or a leg, grabbing a good amount of the wrong side of the fabric, closing the grippers and then pulling (gently) to the right side. They can also be used with the tips closed to push out pointy places like toes and ears without a big risk of going through the fabric. And they are perfect for grabbing a fluff of stuffing that needs to be slid into a hard to get to place.



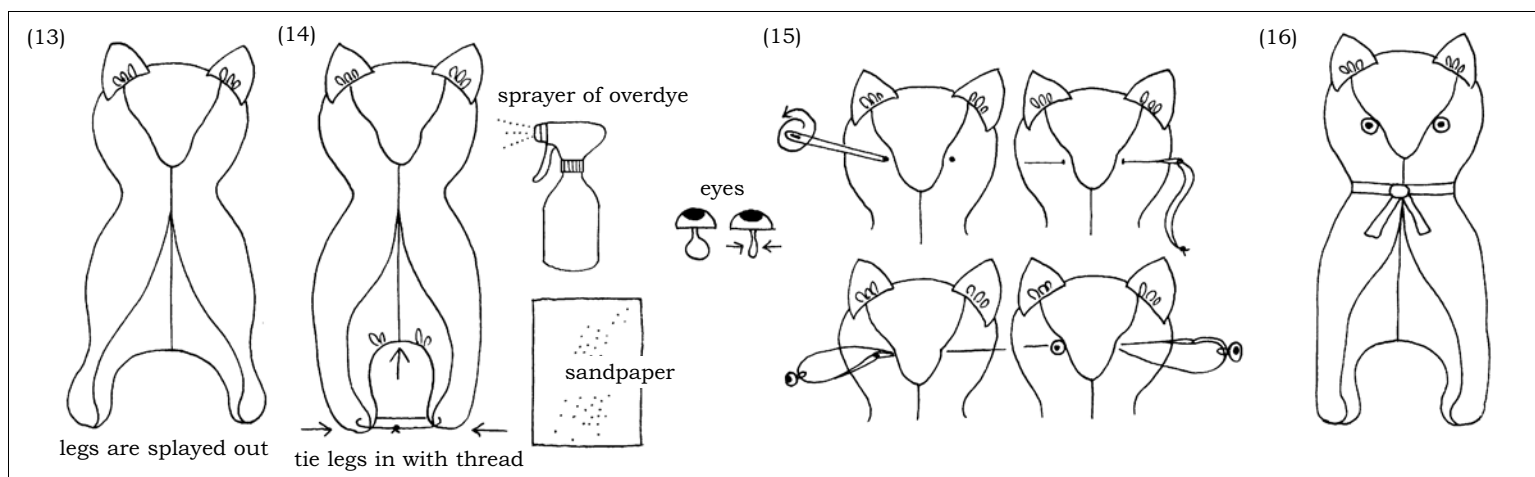
(b) **Needle lifting** - one good thing to do when you realize that you have a few shallow hollows (which you can feel or see from the surface), is to take a large needle with a sharp point (a just-right one is a #18 Chenille needle) so as to go in between the threads of the weave (it will do this naturally) and use it like a miniature pry bar to lift up some stuffing from below into the hollow. It may take several layers of "lift" (going deeper with the needle each time) to bring up enough stuffing to do the job. This is particularly important on these animals where it is too late to fix certain places (like legs or noses) and you want a good smooth surface. It is important for the antiquing process to have this smooth surface when you are sanding. It will seem like you are making holes in the fabric as you do this, but you can go back and with your fingernail and scrape the weave back into position where needle holes are left. Hint - run a piece of bright colored ribbon or yarn through the eye and tie off a small loop so it is easily located on your work surface or in your pincushion. This may get to be a valuable tool for you in future stuffing.



(10) To **close opening** - See above for the section on the **ladderstitch** or **half ladderstitch** to close the stuffing opening. This is a good stitch that will be all but invisible if done neatly. I recommend practicing both on scrap first and then choosing whichever you like best. If you cannot manage the ladderstitch, use any neat, small stitch that you can manage. It helps take the strain off the opening if you refrain from pulling up the first few stitches tightly and if you pinch in the body to help when you do pull up the stitches. Having pre-stitched closest to the raw edge will help keep the edges from fraying out due to the stress there. Once the opening is closed and after the paint overdyer, it will last, it is just that one stitch at a time puts a lot of strain on one area.

(11) Stuff the tail fully but on the light side so it is not too rigid. Fold in about 1/4" of the raw edge of the opening. Sew the tail on by sewing around the folded edge using single stitch and having the tail located centered on the back seam with the bottom of the tail even with the bottom seam. It should rest evenly on whatever surface the cat is sitting upon.

(12) Ears - fold in about 1/4" of raw edges and sew closed, cinching up a bit by pulling on closing stitches as you sew. With needle still attached, position ears as shown in illustration. The position of the ears will make the whole look, so pin and look critically before you commit to sewing them on. Then, take one stitch on the side your needle and thread are into the head, run needle out to opposite corner and anchor that with one stitch. Fill in between with a few more secure anchoring stitches. The cinching and the fact that the ears drape over the edge of the cat's head, should make them prick forward a bit and make it look cat-like.



(13) Just before antiquing the animal, mold it into a good shape. Press up into the chest area which will force legs inward (they will be splayed out), and sew the feet together with one large stitch and strong thread. Once sprayed and dried, the legs will then stay as you want them.

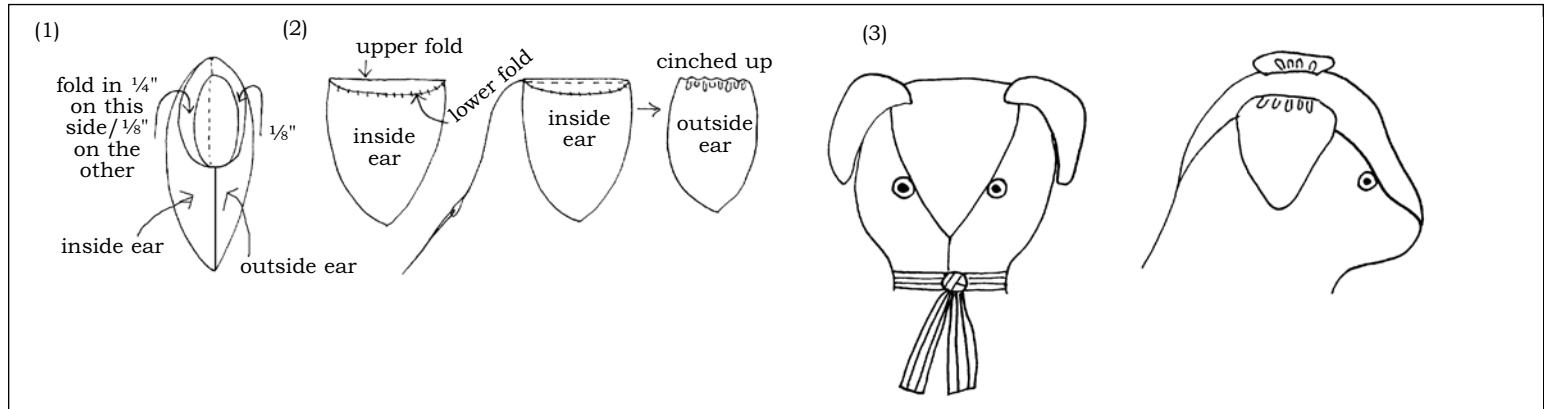
(14) Antiquing and final touches. Combine 2 tablespoons of the paint overdyer into a 1-cup measuring cup, then fill with water and stir well *using the paint brush* to mix thoroughly. Dip in the two pieces of striped fabric strips that will be for the neck ties of both cat and dog (before you cut them to size) and squish into the fabrics completely with your fingers. Wring out each piece over the measuring cup so all the excess goes into the cup. Smooth each piece flat and let dry completely on an old towel. Mix again with the paint brush to get any that has settled in the bottom and pour into in a cheap sprayer/mister. With the spray nozzle adjusted to a fine mist, thoroughly spray the piece until evenly coated. With an old rag, wipe down lightly. Let air dry only as speeding up drying with heat does bad things. I hang mine from a safety pin on a makeshift clothesline (towel beneath in case of drips). During the drying, I check them and pull on ears to "mold" them to the shapes I like. I also am checking for too much spray puddling in whatever part of the animal is lowest, and perhaps using the towel to lightly wipe some off. When dry the surface will be stiff and crusty feeling. Tearing off a small piece of the #400 grit sandpaper so it will conform to your thumb and be able to with pressure and a firm short stroke, sand the surface evenly until it feels soft and looks worn. I do extra sanding on the ear tips for more obvious wear. Avoid sanding the ladderstitching on the opening as you may break the stitches with the sandpaper. Adding more layers of paint overdyer to your liking is possible by respraying at any point and re-sanding (if you had already sanded).

(15) Eyes are put on after all antiquing is done. You will use the large doll needle to ream two eye holes. These need to be little tunnels that will hold the loops of the eyes. Very gently squeeze the loops slightly tighter using needle nose pliers or your hemostats. Not too much and care should be taken so you do not yank them right off the glass in which they are embedded. Make sure to set aside obvious pairs for each animal as they may not all be the same size exactly. Thread the strong thread recommended through the long thin needle in the kit doubled with a big knot at the end. Run the needle and thread in through one eye hole and out the other, letting the knot catch in the stuffing between. Once out the second eye hole, run through eye loop and back through the eye hole and exiting where you began, tugging the first eye into its hole snugly. Then sew through second eye's loop and back through coming out behind the first eye you set. Pull second eye up snug. Secure thread by going back through a time or two and tacking behind one of the eyes.

(16) Last, cut out necktie to the size shown on the pattern - try to follow the weave as much as possible on your cutting lines. The edges will be left unfinished, and you will try to ravel off just enough to make it look worn and old (tattered) while retaining some semblance of neatness. Lightly sand to make it look a bit old and raggedy too.

Then fold raw edges in a bit, wrap around neck and tie in front, trimming ends to your liking and fraying a bit as well by pulling out a few threads across the ends.

PRIMITIVE DOG



The cat and dog each have their own shapes/sizes which look like subtle differences on the pattern pieces, but will result in different shapes when done. This means that you can follow the directions for the cat, simply noting these few changes below:

- The cat has a tail and this dog does not, although you could put a tail on your dog.
- The dog's ears are finished off differently than the cat's. For this see steps below and the illustrations above.
- The head gusset for the dog does not have the indents at the nose end, but is otherwise sewn in in just the same way.

DOG'S EARS

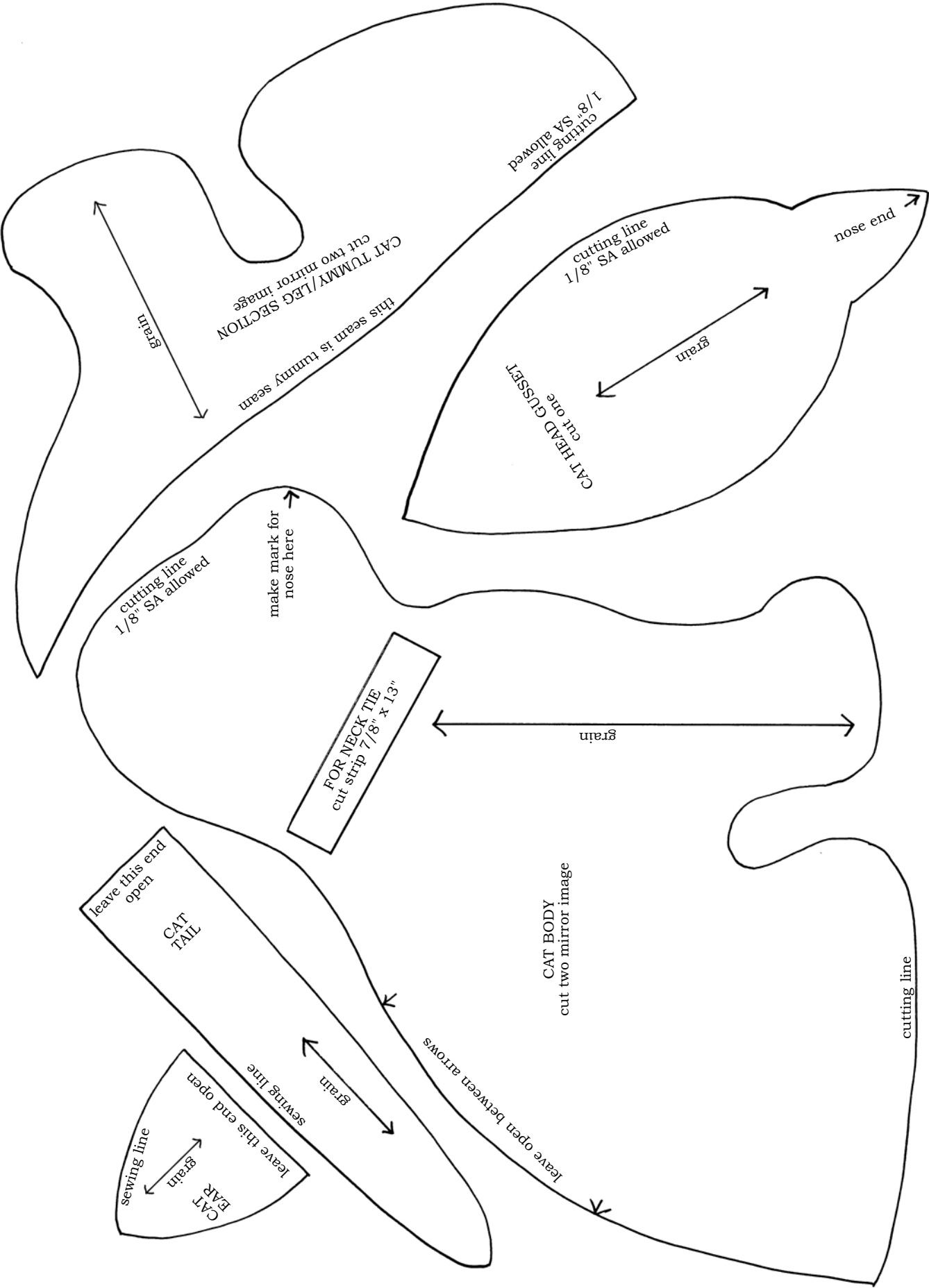
(1) Sew the same way as the cat's - see Step (1) and 8(b) for the cat. To finish, fold in 1/4" on one raw edge and 1/8" on the other. This is so that all the thicknesses won't be in one place right at the top of the ear and allow the ears to lay flatter on the head.

(2) Hand stitch the opening closed, keeping the bottom fold about an 1/8" below the top one. When you have finished closing the opening, anchor thread then head back across the top fold in small running stitches that you will pull up to cinch in the ear so it is barely 3/4" across. Still leave needle and thread attached to sew the ears on.

(3) Attach the ears so the cinched side is about 1/4" inside the head gusset seam and the ears are centered on the highest curve of the dog's head.

OTHER DOG DETAILS - such as the antiquing, the eyes and the neck tie are same as for cat.

CAT PATTERNS - 5 pieces



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DOG PATTERNS - 4 pieces

