

Skywhale Mama

Knitting pattern

Measurements

Skywhale Mama is approximately 30cm from her nose to her tail.

Materials

Skywhale Mama is made using the following:

- 1 pair of 3mm/US3 knitting needles
- 1 pair of 3.75mm/US5 needles (optional – only required if doing cable. See Belly section)
- 2 cable needles (optional – only required if doing cable. See Belly section)
- 1 x 100 gram ball of 8 ply dark blue yarn
- 1 x 100 gram ball of 8 ply flesh-coloured yarn
- A small amount of 8 ply medium brown yarn (5 grams)
- A small amount of 8 ply light brown yarn (5 grams)
- 6 beads (optional – only required if completing tail fin options 2 or 3)
- A tiny amount of a bright yarn in a contrasting to be used as marker
- Stuffing
- A doll-making needle
- A sewing needle
- Some dress-making pins to hold things in place while you sew
- 2 x 15mm safety eyes in gold or brown



Happy knitting!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Katy".

Some useful information about this pattern

The boring legal bits

This pattern is provided for free to knitters globally via the National Gallery of Australia's website. While you're welcome to knit and sell skywhales to your heart's contentment, please do not repost this pattern anywhere to sell for your own profit. If you do sell finished skywhales, it would be greatly appreciated if you referenced this pattern.

Knit your own adventure



This pattern includes multiple options to make some pieces. When you reach the crossed arrow symbol pictured on the right, it indicates that the upcoming section has different options. Pick the option that best suits your skill level or aesthetic to create something truly your own.

Needle sizes

If you looked at the needle size and thought "wow, 3mm seem small for 8 ply yarn", don't fret! I prefer to knit on smaller needles for toys to make sure the stitches remain tight once stuffing is added. For Skywhale Mama this is important because her body's darker in colour. Smaller needles make for tighter knitting, and will stop the stuffing from poking out between stitches later.

Questions

For additional questions and pattern clarity don't hesitate to contact me on skywhale.knits@gmail.com

Knitting techniques, stitches and abbreviations

2tog or 3tog This pattern uses decreases marked by marked with K or P (depending on the row) and includes a number referring to the number of stitches you'll be knitting together. This technique decreases work by knitting the specified number of stitches from the left needle together as if they were one, thus reducing the stitch count by one.

Break and thread through (B&T): Cut your working yarn from the main ball, leaving a long tail. Using a doll-making needle, thread the tail through stitches left on needle, then pull up to gather tightly and fasten off.

Castoff: For this pattern I cast-off P-wise, as I find this gives a nicer finish. However, this is not a hard and fast rule: you're welcome to use the cast-off method you're most comfortable with.

Cast on: All casting on in this pattern uses the traditional two-needle method.

Increases (inc1): This pattern uses increases marked by "Inc1" (sometimes referred to as KFB in online tutorials). This technique creates an increase by working into the front and back of the stitch, resulting in two stitches and limiting holes. **Inc1 is different to M1.** It's important you do Inc1, as using M1 will throw out your stitch count. If in doubt, there's plenty of good tutorials on YouTube.

Loose B&T: Similar to the B&T technique above, however once you've threaded the yarn back through the loops to close off, don't pull it tight just yet.

Short rows and turns: A Short Row is a row that you don't knit across all stitches. Instead, you work part of the way across the row and do a "turn"; literally flipping your work over in the middle of the row, and then work back the other way. I highly recommend looking at YouTube videos for practical demonstrations of this technique.

Stocking stitch (st-st): Stocking stitch is a basic knitting stitch where you alternate a knit row with a purl row.

Cable

Skywhale Mama has a beautiful cable pattern on her belly. You'll need either two double-pointed needles or two cable needles. The cable is marked in the pattern as [cable], and is knitted as follows:

- Slip 4 to spare needle A, and hold in front of your work
- Slip 2 to spare needle B, and hold behind your work
- K4 from the left needle of your main work
- P2 from needle B
- K4 from needle A

New to cables? Don't be afraid! This cable is relatively simple and a good introduction for first timers. If you are new to cables, I'd recommend knitting a sample of the cable first, so you can get a feel for how it happens in the pattern – trust me when I tell you that trying it by itself first will save a lot of tears and frustration-based hair pulling.

Don't want to do cables? That's okay too! This pattern contains instructions to make her belly in st-st instead.

Body (make 1)

Using 3mm needles, cast on 36 stitches in blue yarn for the neck edge

St-st 2 rows *starting with purl row*

P30, turn

K24, turn

P to end of row

(K3, Inc1, K2) *repeat the bracketed stitches to the end of the row* (42 stitches)

P row

K13, Inc1, K14, Inc1, K13 (44 stitches)

P row

K14, inc1, K14, Inc1, K14 (46 stitches)

P row

K15, inc1, K14, Inc1, K15 (48 stitches)

P row

K16, inc1, K14, Inc1, K16 (50 stitches)

P40, turn

K30, turn

P27, turn

K24, turn

P22, turn

K20, turn

P to end of row

K9, inc1, K15, Inc1, K14, Inc1 K9 (53 stitches)

St-st 3 rows

K9, inc1, K16, inc1, K16, inc1, K9 (56 stitches)

St-st 3 rows

K9, inc1, K36, inc1, K9 (58 stitches)

St-st 5 rows

K9, K2tog, K36, K2tog, K9 (56 stitches)

St-st 3 rows

K9, K2tog, K16, K2tog, K16, K2tog, K9 (53 stitches)

St-st 3 rows

K9, K2tog, K15, K2tog, K14, K2tog, K9 (50 stitches)

P40, turn

K30, turn

P27, turn

K24, turn

P22, turn

K20, turn

P to end of row

K8, K2tog, K30, K2tog, turn (48 stitches)

P row

K7, K2tog, K30, K2tog, K7 (46 stitches)

P row

K6, K2tog, K30, K2tog, K6 (44 stitches)

P row

K6, (K2tog, K1) *eleven times*, K5 (33 stitches)

P row

K5, (K2tog, K1) *eight times*, K4 (25 stitches)

P row

(K2, K2tog, K1) *five times*, K4 (20 stitches)

P row

(K2tog) *repeat the bracketed stitches to the end of the row* (10 stitches)

B&T

Back strap (make 1)

Using 3mm needles, cast on 8 stitches in blue yarn for the neck edge *When casting on, make sure you leave a long tail of yarn. This will be used to attach it to the body later*

St-st 2 rows *starting with a knit row*

Inc1, K6, Inc1 (10 stitches)

P row

Inc1, K8, Inc1 (12 stitches)

St-st 3 rows

Inc1, K10, inc1 (14 stitches)

St-st 7 rows

Inc1, K12, inc1 (16 stitches)

St-st 7 rows

K2tog, K12, K2tog (14 stitches)

St-st 7 rows

K2tog, K10, K2tog (12 stitches)

St-st 3 rows

K2tog, K8, K2tog (10 stitches)

P row

K2tog, K6, K2tog (8 stitches)

P row

K2tog, K4, K2tog (6 stitches)

P row

K2tog, K2, K2tog (4 stitches)

P row

Cast off *Leave a long length yarn after you have fastened off. This will be used to sew the piece up later.*

Head (make 1)

Using 3mm needles, cast on 40 stitches in blue yarn for the neck edge *When casting on, make sure you leave a long tail of yarn. This will be used to attach it to the body later*

St-st 2 rows *starting with a knit row*

K13, (inc1, K1) *seven times*, K13 (47 stitches)

St-st 3 rows

Increase for eye mounts

K8, (inc1) *seven times*, K17, (inc1) *seven times*, K8 (61 stitches)

St-st 5 rows

Decrease for eye mounts

K8, (K2tog) *seven times*, K17, (K2tog) *seven times*, K8 (47 stitches)

St-st 3 rows

K9, (K2tog) *three times*, K8, K2tog, K7, (K2tog) *three times*, K9 (40 stitches)

St-st 3 rows

Narrowing for snout

K10, K2tog, K16, K2tog, K10 (38 stitches)

St-st 3 rows

K2, (K2tog, K2) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (29 stitches)

St-st 3 rows

K2, (K2tog, K1) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (20 stitches)

St-st 3 row

(K2tog) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (10 stitches)

P row

B&T

Breastplate (make 1)

Using 3mm needles, cast on 32 stitches in blue yarn for the neck edge *When casting on, make sure you leave a long tail of yarn. This will be used to attach it to the body later*

St-st 2 rows *starting with a knit row*

K row

P2tog, P28, P2tog (30 stitches)

K2tog, K26, K2tog (28 stitches)

P2tog, P24, P2tog (26 stitches)

K2tog, K22, K2tog (24 stitches)

St-st 3 rows

Inc1, K22, Inc1 (26 stitches)

Inc1, P24, Inc1 (28 stitches)

Inc1, K26, Inc1 (30 stitches)

Inc1, P28, Inc1 (32 stitches)

Repeat the 12 rows in the shaded area above another two times

K2, (K2tog) twice, K20, (K2tog) twice K2 (28 stitches)

P row

K2, (K2tog) twice, K16, (K2tog) twice, K2 (24 stitches)

P row

K2, (K2tog) twice, K12, (K2tog) twice, K2 (20 stitches)

P row

K2, (K2tog) twice, K8, (K2tog) twice, K2 (16 stitches)

P row

K2, (K2tog) twice, K4, (K2tog) twice, K2 (12 stitches)

P row

(K2tog) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (6 stitches)

P row

(K2tog) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (3 stitches)

P row

K3tog (1 stitch)

B&T

Small breast (make 4)

Using 3mm needles, cast on 4 stitches in flesh-coloured yarn for the top edge *When casting on, make sure you leave a long tail of yarn. This will be used to attach it to the body later*

St-st 2 rows *starting with a knit row*

Inc1, K2, Inc1 (6 stitches)

P row

Inc1, K4, inc1 (8 stitches)

P row

Inc1, K6, inc1 (10 stitches)

St-st 3 rows

(Inc1) twice, K6, (inc1) twice (14 stitches)

P row

Cast on 2 stitches *and knit across all stitches in the row* (16 stitches)

Cast on 2 stitches *and purl across all stitches in the row* (18 stitches)

St-st 10 rows

Change to light brown yarn. *Leave a long length of flesh-coloured yarn, as this will be used to sew the breast up later*

(K2tog, K1) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (12 stitches)

K row *on the 'wrong' side*

(K2tog) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (6 stitches)

P row

(K2tog, K1) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (4 stitches)

B&T

Large breast (make 6)

Using 3mm needles, cast on 4 stitches in flesh-coloured yarn for the top edge *When casting on, make sure you leave a long tail of yarn. This will be used to attach it to the body later*

St-st 2 rows *starting with a knit row*

Inc1 into all stitches (8 stitches)

P row

Inc1, K6, inc1 (10 stitches)

P row

Inc1, K8, inc1 (12 stitches)

St-st 3 rows

(Inc1) *twice*, K8, (inc1) *twice* (16 stitches)

P row

Cast on 3 stitches *and knit across all stitches in the row* (19 stitches)

Cast on 3 stitches *and purl across all stitches in the row* (22 stitches)

St-st 12 rows

K2tog (K1, K2tog, K1) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (16 stitches)

P row

Change to light brown yarn. Leave a long length of flesh-coloured yarn, as this will be used to sew the breast up later

K1, (K2tog, K1) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (11 stitches)

K row on the 'wrong' side

K1, (K2tog) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (6 stitches)

P row

(K2tog, K1) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (4 stitches)

B&T

Small tail fin (make 2)



Knit your own adventure decision point

There are three options for knitting Skywhale Mama's tail fins:

- **Option 1:** Knitting her fins and claws as one piece
- **Option 2:** Knitting just the fin with a flat top. This is intended in case you have triangular beads to attach on top or you want to make polymer clay or sculpted claws. Note this pattern doesn't provide instructions for how to make sculpted claws.
- **Option 3:** Knitted fins with oval claws oval-shaped beads

You only need **one style** of fins, so make a selection that best suits you. All three styles are shown in the images below.



Option 1



Option 2



Option 3

No matter which option you select, all tail fins begin the same way

Using 3mm needles, cast on 5 stitches in blue yarn for the top edge *When casting on, make sure you leave a long tail of yarn. This will be used to attach it to the body later*

St-st 2 rows *starting with a knit row*

Inc1, K3, Inc1 (7 stitches)

P row

Cast on 3 stitches *and knit across all stitches in the row* (10 stitches)

Cast on 3 stitches *and purl across all stitches in the row* (13 stitches)

St-st 5 rows *starting with a knit row*

For the finishing instructions, skip to the instructions that relate to your preferred option

Option 1 finishing

K row *on the 'wrong' side*

Change to brown yarn

K1 (K2tog) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (7 stitches)

P1 (P2tog) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (4 stitches)

(K2tog) *twice* (2 stitches)

B&T

Option 2 finishing

P row

K1 (K2tog) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (7 stitches)

P1 (P2tog) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (4 stitches)

B&T

Option 3 finishing

P row

K1 (K2tog) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (7 stitches)

P row

(K1, K2tog) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (4 stitches)

Loose B&T *refer to the techniques section for how this differs from a regular B&T finish*

Large tail fin (make 4)

When knitting the tail fins, use the same option as the small tail fins

No matter which option you select, all tail fins begin the same way

Using 3mm needles, cast on 5 stitches in blue yarn for the top edge *When casting on, make sure you leave a long tail of yarn. This will be used to attach it to the body later*

St-st 2 rows *starting with a knit row*

K1, (Inc1, K1) *twice* (7 stitches)

P row

(inc1) *twice*, K3 (inc1) *twice* (11 stitches)

P row

Cast on 3 stitches *and knit across all stitches in the row* (14 stitches)

Cast on 3 stitches *and purl across all stitches in the row* (17 stitches)

St-st 11 rows *starting with a knit row*

For the finishing instructions, skip to the instructions that relate to your preferred option

Option 1 finishing

K row on the 'wrong' side

Change to brown yarn

K1 (K2tog) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (9 stitches)

P1 (P2tog) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (5 stitches)

K1 (K2tog) *twice* (2 stitches)

B&T

Option 2 finishing

P row

K1 (K2tog) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (9 stitches)

P1 (P2tog) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (5 stitches)

B&T

Option 3 finishing

P row

K1 (K2tog) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (9 stitches)

P row

(K1, K2tog) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (5 stitches)

Loose B&T refer to the techniques section for how this differs from a regular B&T finish



Knit your own adventure decision point

There are three options for knitting Skywhale Mama's belly:

Option 1: Includes cables

Option 2: No cables, but ribs

Option 3: Pure stocking stitches

You only need **one belly** for your finished product, so pick the option that you're most comfortable.

Option 1 belly (Cables)

What the R? For the cabled belly, the rows have been numbered to make it easier to keep track of. The row numbers are identified as a bold letter R followed by a number.

Using **3.75mm** needles, cast on 3 stitches in flesh-coloured yarn for snout edge

R1: P row

R2: Inc1 into all stitches (6 stitches)

R3: P row

R4: Inc1 into all stitches (12 stitches)

R5: P row

R6: (Inc1, K1) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (18 stitches)

R7: P row

R8: (inc1, K1) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (27 stitches)

R9: P row

R10: K1, (Inc) *twice*, K1, (inc1, K1) *nine times*, K2, (Inc1) *twice*, K1 (40 stitches)

Increasing for eye mounts

R11: Cast on 3 stitches *and purl across all stitches in the row* (43 stitches)

R12: Cast on 3 stitches *and knit across all stitches in the row* (46 stitches)

R13: P row

R14: Inc1 at beginning and end of row (48 stitches)

R15: P row

R16: K2tog, K4, K2tog, K32, K2tog, K4, K2tog (44 stitches)

R17: P2tog, P40, P2tog (42 stitches)

Narrowing for the neck

R18: (K2, K2tog, K3) *six times* (36 stitches)

R19: K2, P32, K2 *the mixed stitches in this row and upcoming rows are intentional*

R20: K1, P2, K30, P2, K1

R21: P2, K2, P28, K2, P2

R22: K3, P2, K26, P2, K3

R23: P4, K2, P24, K2, P4

R24: (inc1) *twice*, K3, P2, K22, P2, K3 (inc1) *twice* (40 stitches)

R25: P8, K2, P20, K2, P8

R26: (inc1) *twice*, K7, P2, K18, P2, K7, (inc1) *twice* (44 stitches)

R27: P12, K2, P16, K2, P12

R28: Inc1, K12, P2, K14, P2, K12, inc1 (46 stitches)

R29: P15, K16, P15

Setting up for the cable

To mark where the cable will occur, the following stitches include markings in square brackets. The cable is marked in the pattern as **[cable]**, and is knitted as follows:

- Slip 4 to spare needle A, and hold in front of your work
- Slip 2 to spare needle B, and hold behind your work

- K4 from the left needle of your main work
- P2 from needle B
- K4 from needle A

R30: K15, P3 [K4, P2, K4] P3, K15

R31: P15, K3 [P4, K2, P4] K3, P15

Repeat Rows 30 and 31 three more times

R38: K15, P3 **[cable]** P3, K15

R39: P15, K3 [P4, K2, P4] K3, P15

Repeat Rows 30 and 31 five more times

R50: K15, P3 **[cable]** P3, K15

R51: P15, K3 [P4, K2, P4] K3, P15

Repeat Rows 30 and 31 five more times

R62: K15, P3 **[cable]** P3, K15

R63: P15, K3 [P4, K2, P4] K3, P15

Repeat Rows 30 and 31 five more times

R74: K2tog, K13, P3 **[cable]** P3, K13, K2tog (44 stitches)

R75: P14, K3 [P4, K2, P4] K3, P14

R76: K14, P3 [K4, P3, K4] P3, K14

R77: P14, K3 [P4, K2, P4] K3, P14

R78: K14, P3 [K4, P3, K4] P3, K14

R79: P14, K3 [P4, K2, P4] K3, P14

R80: K2, (K2tog, K1) *four times*, P3 [K4, P3, K4] P3, (K1, K2tog) *four times*, K2 (36 stitches)

R81: P10, K3 [P4, K2, P4] K3, P10

R82: K1, (K2tog, K1) *three times*, P3 [K4, P3, K4] P3, (K1, K2tog) *three times*, K1 (30 stitches)

R83: P7, K3 [P4, K2, P4] K3, P7

R84: K1, (K2tog) *three times*, P3 [K4, P3, K4] P3, (K2tog) *three times*, K1 (24 stitches)

R85: P4, K3 [P4, K2, P4] K3, P4

R86: (K2tog) [twice](#), P3 **[cable]** P3, (K2tog) [twice](#) (20 stitches)

R87: P2tog, K3 [P4, K2, P4] K3, P2tog (18 stitches)

R88: (P2tog) [twice](#), (K2tog) [twice](#), P2, (K2tog) [twice](#), (P2tog) [twice](#) (10 stitches)

Cast off

Option 2 belly (with ribs)

Using **3.75mm** needles, cast on 3 stitches in flesh-coloured yarn for snout edge

P row

Inc1 into all stitches (6 stitches)

P row

Inc1 into all stitches (12 stitches)

P row

(Inc1, K1) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (18 stitches)

P row

(inc1, K1) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (27 stitches)

P row

K1, (Inc) [twice](#), K1, (inc1, K1) [nine times](#), K2, (Inc1) [twice](#), K1 (40 stitches)

Increasing for eye mounts

Cast on 3 stitches *and purl across all stitches in the row* (43 stitches)

Cast on 3 stitches *and knit across all stitches in the row* (46 stitches)

P row

Inc1 at beginning and end of row (48 stitches)

P row

K2tog, K4, K2tog, K32, K2tog, K4, K2tog (44 stitches)

P2tog, P40, P2tog (42 stitches)

Narrowing for the neck

(K2, K2tog, K3) [three times](#) (K2, K2tog, K3) [three times](#) (36 stitches)

K2, P32, K2 *the mixed stitches in this row and upcoming rows are intentional*

K1, P2, K30, P2, K1

P2, K2, P28, K2, P2

K3, P2, K26, P2, K3

P4, K2, P24, K2, P4

(inc1) [twice](#), K3, P2, K22, P2, K3 (inc1) [twice](#) (40 stitches)

P8, K2, P20, K2, P8

(inc1) [twice](#), K7, P2, K18, P2, K7, (inc1) [twice](#) (44 stitches)

P12, K2, P16, K2, P12

Inc1, K12, P2, K14, P2, K12, inc1 (46 stitches)

P15, K16, P15

Repeat

K15, P3, K4, P2, K4, P3, K15

P15, K3, P4, K2, P4, K3, P15

Repeat the rows shown in the shaded box above a total of 25 times

P10, K3, P4, K2, P4, K3, P10

K1, (K2tog, K1) [three times](#), P3, K4, P3, K4, P3, (K1, K2tog) [three times](#), K1 (30 stitches)

P7, K3 [P4, K2, P4] K3, P7

K1, (K2tog) [three times](#), P3, K4, P3, K4, P3, (K2tog) [three times](#), K1 (24 stitches)

P4, K3, P4, K2, P4, K3, P4

(K2tog) [twice](#), P3, K4, P3, K4, P3, (K2tog) [twice](#) (20 stitches)

P2tog, K3, P4, K2, P4, K3, P2tog (18 stitches)

(P2tog) *twice*, (K2tog) *twice*, P2, (K2tog) *twice*, (P2tog) *twice* (10 stitches)

Cast off

Option 3 belly (st-st)

Using **3.75mm** needles, cast on 3 stitches in flesh-coloured yarn for snout edge

P row

Inc1 into all stitches (6 stitches)

P row

Inc1 into all stitches (12 stitches)

P row

(Inc1, K1) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (18 stitches)

P row

(inc1, K1) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (27 stitches)

P row

K1, (Inc *twice*, K1, (inc1, K1) *nine times*, K2, (Inc1) *twice*, K1 (40 stitches)

Increasing for eye mounts

Cast on 3 stitches *and purl across all stitches in the row* (43 stitches)

Cast on 3 stitches *and knit across all stitches in the row* (46 stitches)

P row

Inc1 at beginning and end of row (48 stitches)

P row

K2tog, K4, K2tog, K32, K2tog, K4, K2tog (44 stitches)

P2tog, P40, P2tog (42 stitches)

Narrowing for the neck

(K2, K2tog, K3) *repeat the bracketed stitch to the end of the row* (36 stitches)

K2, P32, K2 *the mixed stitches in this row and upcoming rows are intentional*

K1, P2, K30, P2, K1

P2, K2, P28, K2, P2

K3, P2, K26, P2, K3

P4, K2, P24, K2, P4

(inc1) *twice*, K3, P2, K22, P2, K3 (inc1) *twice* (40 stitches)

P8, K2, P20, K2, P8

(inc1) *twice*, K7, P2, K18, P2, K7, (inc1) *twice* (44 stitches)

P12, K2, P16, K2, P12

Inc1, K12, P2, K14, P2, K12, inc1 (46 stitches)

P15, K16, P15

R29-57: St-st 29 rows

Decrease at beginning and end of row (30 stitches)

St-st 9 rows

(K2tog) *three times*, K18, (K2tog) *three times* (24 stitches)

P row

(K2tog) *twice*, K16, (K2tog) *twice* (20 stitches)

P row

(K2tog) *twice*, K12, (K2tog) *twice* (16 stitches)

P row

(K2tog) *twice*, K8, (K2tog) *twice* (12 stitches)

P row

(K2tog) *twice*, K4, (K2tog) *twice* (8 stitches)

P row

K2tog, K4, K2tog (6 stitches)

Cast off

Putting Skywhale Mama together

You've got all the pieces and are ready to bring them all together. It's highly recommended you put Skywhale Mama together in the same order as shown below, as some sections are designed to build on one another.



You can find video tutorials of these steps on my YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTWVBDEFs-gkP1cFXLyectCUet0eXFuX>

When stuffing your Skywhale Mama, stuff her so she's firm. I know it's very tempting to stuff toys so they're cuddly, but hear me out: A stuffed toy hugged often will cause the stuffing to compact over time, and can lead to saggy bits. No one wants saggy bits!

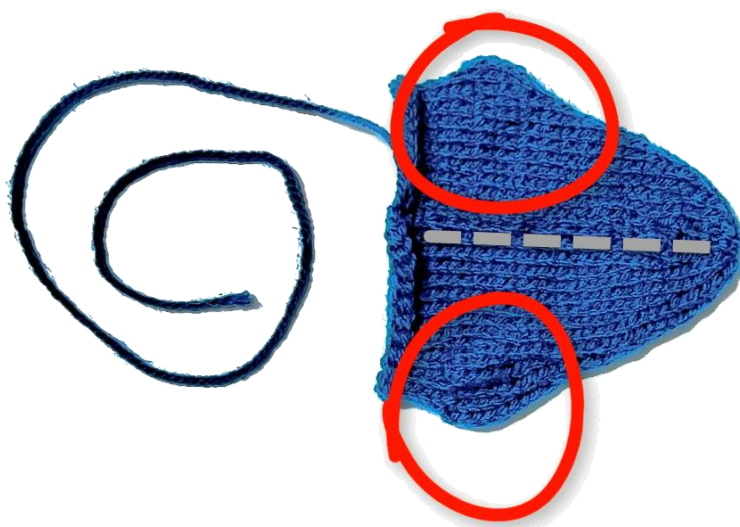
Seaming her head



Video available: A video of these steps is available on the Skywhale playlist of my YouTube channel, <https://youtu.be/C3pj-H8MX3w>

Begin by laying the head down with the 'wrong' side facing you. Starting at the snout, sew the row edges together until you get to the cast on edge.

The placement of this seam (shown as a dotted line below) is important when attaching the head to the body later. The head contains mounts where the eyes will be attached later (circled in red below),



Attaching the backstrap to the body



Video available: A video of these steps is available on the Skywhale playlist of my YouTube channel, <https://youtu.be/6VYKf3khYuU>

What you'll need:

- ✓ Body piece
- ✓ Backstrap piece
- ✓ Doll-making needle
- ✓ Some dark blue yarn to sew pieces together

Skywhale Mama's dark colour makes it difficult to show how the body and backstrap work together. For the purposes of these instructions, I've knitted the backstrap in a lighter colour so you can get a sense of how it fits together with the body.

Start by laying the body and the backstrap with the 'wrong' sides facing you. Sew the row edges of these pieces together from the cast on edge to the cast-off edge, and back up the other side.

You're aiming to have a 'tube' shape of sorts that will be closed at one end



Let's address the whale in the room

The images in this pattern were done on the same model, including the same bright blue backstrap. The backstrap isn't visible once the breastplate is attached.

I frequently get asked why on earth I'd include a piece that's not visible in the final toy. The backstrap is a structural element. In the first test knits of Skywhale Mama, didn't include a backstrap. The problem was when stuffing was added, she took on more of a ball-shaped, which looked kinda silly once the breasts and fins were attached. To keep her more of an oval shape, the backstrap has been added for tighter controls on the shape of her body.

Attaching the head and stuffing the body



Video available: A video of these steps is available on the Skywhale playlist of my YouTube channel, https://youtu.be/c_hkePhJ9wE

What you'll need:

- ✓ Body and backstrap joined as a single piece
- ✓ The head, seamed up
- ✓ Doll-making needle
- ✓ Some dark blue yarn to sew pieces together
- ✓ Some yarn in a contrasting colour.

The contrasting yarn will be used as a reference marker for aligning the head and body. When adding these markers, a simple straight stitch will do. The reference markers are intended to be removed later, so don't use a backstitch or any form of looped stitch, otherwise it will not be easily removed later.

Using the tapestry needle and a piece of contrasting yarn, mark for the centre of the head's cast on edge on both side, and mark each side near where the eye mounts are. The intent is to have four evenly spaced reference points around the cast on edge of the head. Stuff the head.

Note: When stuffing the head, really push the stuffing into the eye mounts so they take shape.



Pick up the body, and use the same technique to mark four evenly spaced points around the neck. As per the image below, the first of these is in the centre of the backstrap. Once the markers are in place, stuff the body.

Take the knitting needle and insert it through the B&T of the tail end, pushing out through the neck. Take the head, and slide it on to the knitting needle so it pokes out through her snout.



Use the marker stitches to line up the head and the body by matching marker to marker.

Note: It's important that the seam of her head is not on the same side as the backstrap. It needs to be on the underside of her body so it will be hidden by the belly later.

Once you've matched the two pieces up, sew the neck edge seams to one another to create a single piece.

A few notes on this seam: Be careful how far you push your doll making needle through the stuffing. Stuffing has a nasty habit of sticking to yarn, and you end up with stuffing caught in the seam. While sewing the head one, add additional bits of stuffing between the head and body to full out her neck.

Your finished piece should look like the image below. Again, don't be too concerned if you've used a different colour for the backstrap.



Adding her breastplate



Video available: A video of these steps is available on the Skywhale playlist of my YouTube channel, <https://youtu.be/4m0DWYIsnA4>

What you'll need:

- ✓ Completed body with including head attached
- ✓ Breastplate piece
- ✓ Doll-making needle
- ✓ Some yarn of a contrasting colour
- ✓ Pins to hold things in place
- ✓ Some dark blue yarn to sew the breastplate in place
- ✓ 4 knitting needles. While size of the needles isn't important (as you won't be knitting with them), I'd recommend no more than 4mm/US6. Chopsticks and skewers will also do in a pinch
- ✓ Stuffing

Marking the centre

To make sure you get the breastplate centred, take a bit of contrasting yarn and your doll-making needle and run some large basic stitches from the tip of the snout to the tail edge. Your stitches should be about 2cm in length each.

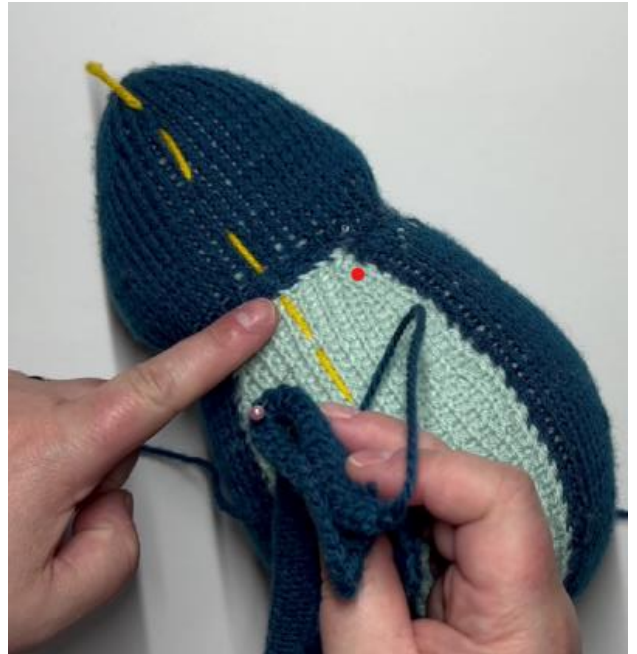
The contrasting yarn will be used as a reference marker for aligning the head and body. When adding these markers, a simple straight stitch will do. The reference markers are intended to be removed later, so don't use a backstitch or any form of looped stitch, otherwise it will not be easily removed later.



Adding the breastplate

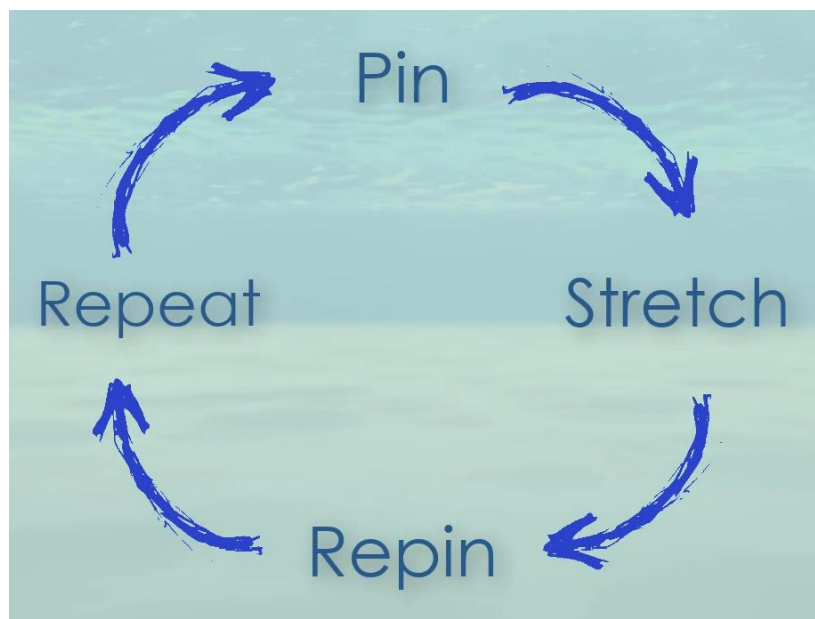
Fold the breastplate in half length-ways with the wrong side facing outwards. On the neck edge, align the folded breastplate with the centre marker and pin in place. Stretch the breastplate down, securing the apex of the breastplate to the B&T of the tail end.

Once you have both ends secured, unfold the breastplate over the centre marker, covering the backstrap entirely.



We need to talk about pinning

You've probably heard the old adage *measure twice, cut once*? It applies to pinning. Yarn has a tendency to stretch in sometimes unpredictable ways. Consequently when you're pinning things in this pattern, take your time and embrace that you may have to re-adjust a few times to get the best result. My mantra: pin, stretch, repin, repeat.



Pinning and balancing the breastplate apexes



Unfold the breastplate over the centre marker to cover the backstrap fully. Starting on one side, pull the apex points down and pin them into place. Repeat this on the other side.

Once they're pinned, we need to make sure they're symmetrical. Grab your spare knitting needles/chopsticks/skewers and insert them through the body, so they come out just below each point. The knitting needles shouldn't be through the breastplate piece at all; just the body. Look at your Skywhale from one end and judge if the points on each side line up with each other. Reposition and re-pin the points on the breastplate if required. Once they're in the right spot, you can remove the needles.

With the breastplate sitting in place, start sewing around the edges. Once you've got the points sewn in place on one side, start stuffing that side. The stuffing needs to be pushed down into the points. I highly recommend using the non-pointy-end of the knitting needle to manipulate the stuffing into the points. Continue to add stuffing as you sew the breastplate to the body.

Sewing the breastplate into place can be a little bit tricky and you may notice a hole of two once you've added stuffing. You can spot-fix these by using some yarn to sew the gap closed, and sew the row ends in.

Once the breastplate is sewn into place, remove the yarn marking the centre.

Attaching her belly



Video available: A video of these steps is available on the Skywhale playlist of my YouTube channel, https://youtu.be/puTS9Ly_cjY

What you'll need:

- ✓ Completed body with the head and breastplate sewn in place
- ✓ Belly piece
- ✓ Doll-making needle
- ✓ A knitting needle. While size of the needles isn't important (as you won't be knitting with them), I'd recommend no more than 4mm/US6. Chopsticks and skewers will also do in a pinch
- ✓ Pins to hold things in place
- ✓ Some flesh-coloured yarn to sew the piece in place
- ✓ 2x15mm safety eyes

Marking the centre

Poke the knitting needle through the B&T edge of the belly. Poke the knitting needle through Skywhale Mama's snout all the way down her body so it pokes out the B&T of the tail end. Stretch the belly cross the body, looping the cast-off edge of the knitting needle.



Stretch the edges of the rows out. You're aiming to get the edges as close to the apexes of the breastplate as you can, without overstretching the belly. Bear in mind her breasts will overlap this piece, so it's okay if it doesn't meet the apexes or if your sewing isn't perfectly straight.



If you've made the belly with the cables, keep an eye on the cables as you adjust the sides. You may need to adjust the cable a few times to get it sitting evenly without putting too much stress on the stitches.



Grab a knitting needle/chopstick/skewer and push it through the head, making sure both it passes through the eye mounts on both sides. Adjust the mounts until they're symmetrical. Pin them in place, and remove the needle.

Wiggle the needle around so it makes a noticeable 'hole' between the stitches. You'll use this hole later to position the safety eyes.

Take one safety eye and push the protruding into the 'hole' you made when aligning on the previous page. Lock the eye in place, and press it into the body as much as you can. Repeat this for the second eye so both are secured in place.



Fun fact: One of the first draft knits I made for Patricia during our collaboration, she remarked that she loved the way the leadup to the eye mounts made Skywhale Mama look like she's smiling.

Starting at the snout end, sew the belly to the body. As you start sewing the belly to the body, you can use a few well-placed stitches to round out the edge of the eye mounts if they're looking a bit too square.



Stop about stitchin the body as you near the tail. When you get towards her tail end, stop stitching in line with the last point on, indicated in the image to the left by the blue line. Her belly will overlap parts of her tail fins, and her belly will be sewn into place once the tail fins are in place.



When you get towards her tail end, stop stitching in line with the last point on, indicated in the image to the left by the blue line. Her belly will overlap parts of her tail fins, and her belly will be sewn into place once the tail fins are in place.

Adding her breasts



Video available: A video of these steps is available on the Skywhale playlist of my YouTube channel, <https://youtu.be/Sfqvs74bkws>

What you'll need:

- ✓ Completed body, including head, breastplate and belly sewn in place – noting there's part of her belly yet to be sewn in place.
- ✓ All 10 breasts (4 small size, 6 large size)
- ✓ Doll-making needle
- ✓ Pins to hold things in place
- ✓ Some flesh-coloured yarn to sew the pieces into place

Fold each breast in half lengthways, and starting at her nipple, sew along the row edges indicated by the blue line on the image below.



Leave the top edge open. See the image below, which shows a slightly different angle of how the seamed piece should look. The blue line in the picture below reflects the seam once sewn together.

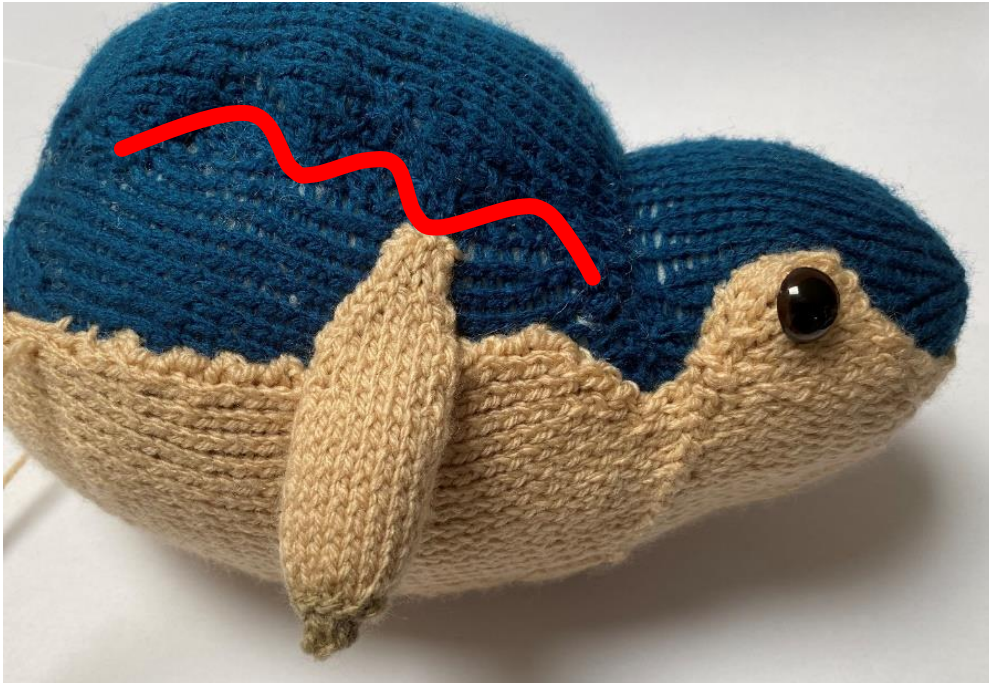


Small breasts

Take one of the small breasts and add a very small bit of stuffing. The larger breasts will sit over the top of the smaller ones, so it's important the smaller breasts aren't over-stuffed.

It's very important with the smaller breasts that you stuff them very loosely. If they're too firm, the larger breasts will stick out at odd angles once they're placed on top.

Line the tip of the breast up with one of the points on the breastplate. The red line on the image below is to emphasise the shape of the breastplate and help you align the breast properly. Sew into place by sewing the open edges of the breast to her body.



Add the second small breast, aligning the top edge with the next breast point. See the image below for reference. The red line in the image is to help identify where the points on the breastplate are. Repeat this process on the other side.



Large breasts

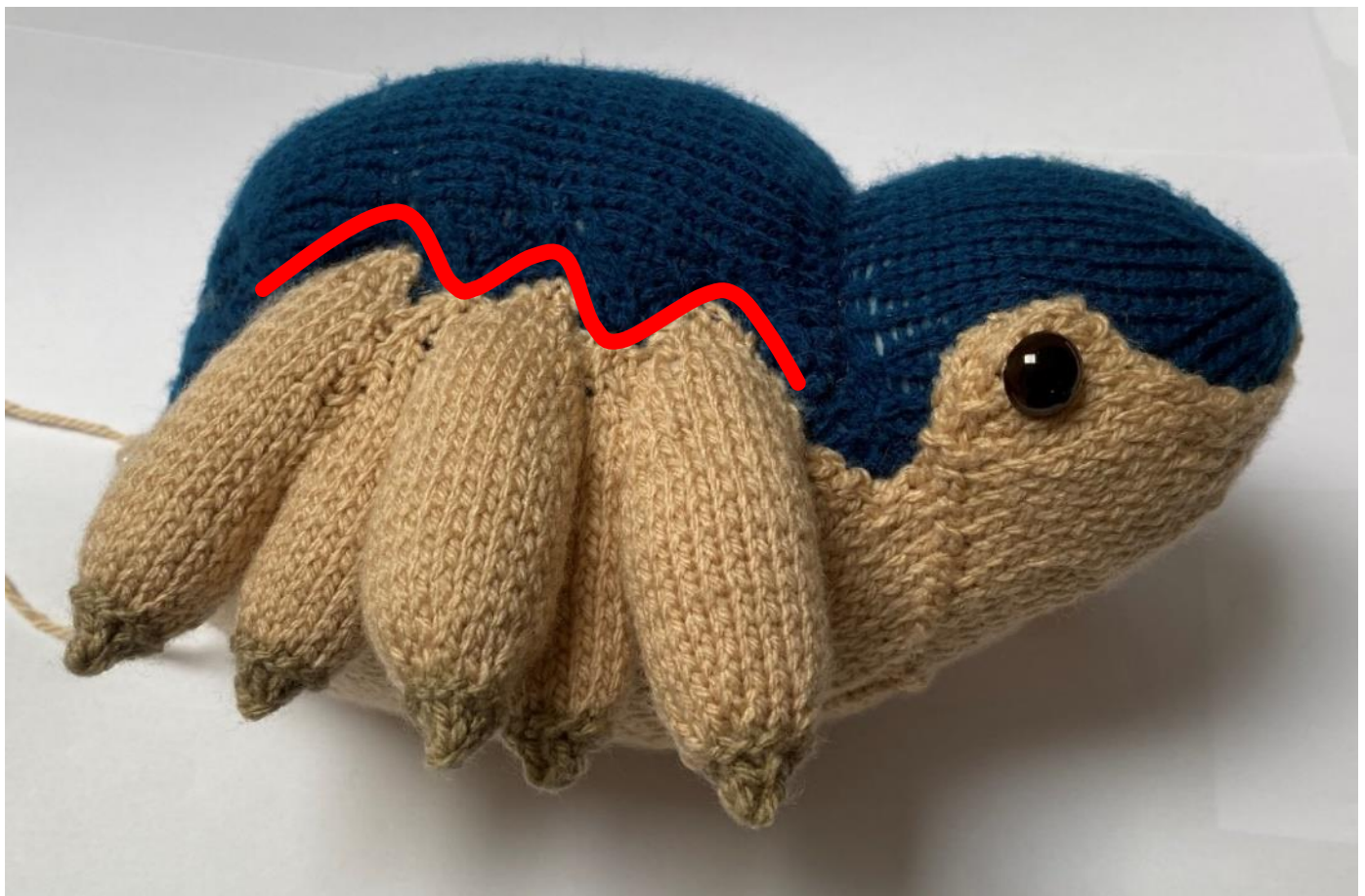
With the small breasts in place, the top breasts can be layered over the top. The larger breasts can be stuffed more amply than the smaller ones.



Align the top of the large breast with the curves (as opposed to the points) on the breastplate. It's perfectly okay to sew her larger breasts into the stitches of the smaller breasts below. I highly recommend once you've got about 80% of the breast sewn into place, take the opportunity to add more stuffing, especially near the top edge.

Repeat the process to add the remaining breasts.

When adding her other breasts, if you're finding they're sticking out too far, you can add an extra stitch or two near the nipple end to anchor them closer to her body.



Adding her tail fins



Video available: A video of these was not completed at the time of publication. Please revisit the Skywhale playlist of my YouTube channel and it will be available shortly, <https://youtu.be/4m0DWYlnA4>



The instructions for the tail fins will depend on what option you chose to knit earlier. Skip over the instructions that aren't relevant to your choice.

What you'll need regardless of your fin choice.

- ✓ Her body, belly, breastplate and all 10 breasts sewn into place
- ✓ Six tail fins (2 small, four large)
- ✓ Doll-making needle
- ✓ Pins to hold things in place
- ✓ Some dark blue yarn to finish the tail fin and sew it to her body

Note that **Option 1** will not require any additional bits outside those detailed above.



Option B: You will only need the following extras if you are using the oval-shaped beads as detailed in as her claws:

- ✓ 6 beads
- ✓ Dark coloured sewing thread
- ✓ Sewing needle



Option C: You will only need the following if you are using the triangular-shaped beads as her claws:

- ✓ 6 beads
- ✓ Dark coloured sewing thread
- ✓ Sewing needle

Option 1: Finishing her tail fins with knitted claws



Fold the fin in half lengthwise, and sew from the B&T to the open edge indicated by the orange line in the image to the left. Use brown yarn for sewing her claws, then switch to blue to complete the remainder of her fin.

Note: Once the fins are attached to the body, there's an extra step to finishing off the claws, so make sure you take a look.

Option 2: Finishing her tail fins with a flat end

Fold the fin in half lengthwise, and sew from the B&T to the open edge indicated by the orange line in the image to the right.



Option 3: Finishing her tail fins using oval-shaped beads



When knitting the piece, the end should be in a loose B&T. If using oval-shaped beads, place one end about 3 rows down into the B&T end of the fin. Use sewing thread to sew the bead in place, and fasten it off, sewing the extra thread in.

Past the leftover yarn from the B&T over the bead, and pull tightly so the yarn encloses around the bead. Sew down the row ends, leaving an opening at the end.



Attaching her tail fins

Start with one of the large tailfins and stuff it firmly. With the longer lip facing downwards, pin her tail fin in place. The right-edge should be butting up against the B&T of her body. Angle this fin so it leans to the left. Once you're happy with the position and angle, sew into place with dark blue yarn.





Grab another large tail fin, and sit it snugly next to the first tailfin.

Nestle one of the small tailfins between her large fin and the edge of her breast, and sew into place. The image on the left below is a top-down view. The image on the right is looking from her belly upwards so you can see how the small tailfin tucks snugly into place.



Repeat the process on the other side, ensuring her fins lean out to the right.



Once all her tailfins are in place, flip her over so you can see her belly. Pull the base edge of her belly up so it overlaps where the tailfins join the body, and sew them into place.



You're done!

You've got a finished Skywhale Mama, ready to be cuddled and proudly displayed. Patricia and I would love to see your finished products, so please tag them with #skywhales on your favourite social media platform.



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