

# Mini 4-H Sewing

## All Divisions



Draft developed by:  
**Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service**  
**Area VII 4-H Youth Development Educators**

(Blackford, Delaware, Fayette, Franklin, Henry, Jay, Madison, Randolph, Rush, Union, & Wayne Counties)

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### **Resources and References**

Delaware County Mini Arts and Crafts Manual  
Franklin County Mini Crafts Manual  
Kids 'Squish Book by Loris Theovin Bree and Marlin Bree

**February 1998**



# Mini 4-H Parent's Page



Welcome to the Mini 4-H Program! Mini 4-H is designed for youth to explore a variety of project areas.

Your child received this project manual when enrolling in Mini 4-H. This manual will provide fun, age-appropriate learning activities throughout their year(s) in Mini 4-H and their interest in this project.

As a Mini 4-H parent, your job will be to guide and encourage your child through the activity. It is highly suggested that you do not complete the activities for them. Instead, help them, guide them, work with them, and let them do all that they possibly can. The 4-H Program encourages "learn by doing ...and is the best educational tool that we can provide for youth.

Additionally, the Mini 4-H program is set up to allow your child to exhibit a project at the 4-H Fair. This project is based upon information within this manual.

The 4-H Fair is an exciting time for 4-H members and families. It is a week that allows community youth to showcase their talents, interests and enthusiasm for learning.

Mini 4-H is fun! Your child will certainly enjoy it. You can have fun too, by guiding and helping as your child participates in the program. Encourage and praise your child as he/she has fun learning and sharing with you.

If you have any questions regarding Mini 4-H or other 4-H programs, please feel free to contact your local Extension Office.



# Mini 4-Her's Page



Welcome to Mini 4-H! You are now a member of the 4-H family. You are a special person.

Mini 4-Her's have lots of fun! There are lots of activities for you to explore. You can try new things. You can share it with your friends and family.

Mom, Dad or another adult can help you with your project. Bring your project to the 4-H Fair and lots of people will be able to see what you have done. You also get a ribbon made just for Mini 4-Her's.



Here are some things to know about 4-H

The 4-H Symbol: A four-leaf clover with an "H" in each leaf

4-H Colors: Green and White

The 4-H Motto: To make the best, better.

The 4-H Pledge: I pledge my *Head* to clearer thinking,  
my *Heart* to greater loyalty,  
my *Hands* to larger service, and  
my *Health* to better living,  
for my club, my community,  
my country, and my world.

# Why Sew?

Sewing is an important life skill. Someday you may need to know how to sew a button on your shirt, repair a hem, or stitch a hole in your pocket. In this project you will learn the basic skills needed for sewing. You will also begin assembling the equipment necessary for doing basic home sewing and repair work.

It is not necessary to have a sewing machine to do this project. There are several projects listed that do not require a sewing machine. There are also several you can do with a machine. It is up to you to choose!

## Rules of the Game!

Good sewing habits begin as you start learning how to sew. Remember these simple rules:

1. Wash your hands thoroughly before you start sewing or working with fabric.
2. Good posture always helps.
3. It's always easier to sit at a table than to work from your lap.
4. Work in an area that has enough light.
5. Always put your work away when finished for the day.
6. Good pressing helps keep work neat.

## Let's Learn Some Sewing Definitions

**Knit:** This is a certain type of fabric that stretches easily when pulled. A knit fabric has a lot of give to it.

**Fold:** Simply refers to the edge of the fabric that is folded, when a piece of material is folded in half.

**Pattern:** A guide (like the ones found in this manual) which is pinned to fabric and cut around.

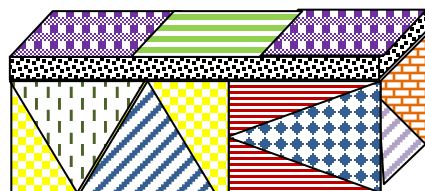
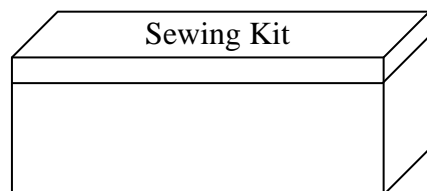
# Activity 1 – Sewing Kit

With this project you will make a sewing kit. You will put things in the sewing kit that will help you sew. The objective of this project is to give the 4-H'er experience cutting and handling fabric.

1. Find a sturdy shoe box to use for your sewing kit
2. Find some scraps of fabric and trim to use to decorate your sewing kit.
3. Visit a fabric store. Look at all the things it has that will help you sew. You may want to buy some of the things for your sewing kit. Take this book along so you will know what you need.

## Making Your Sewing Kit

Use a sturdy box with a lid for the kit. Cover the box and lid with fabric. You can use scraps of material such as denim, cotton or knit. Use fabric glue or spray glue to attach the fabric to the box.



After covering the box with fabric, you may want to decorate it with lace, rick-rack, fringe, braid, or other trim. Attach with glue.

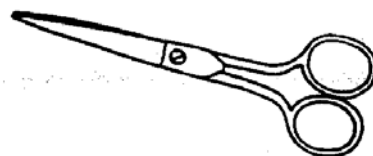
## Suggested Tools for Your Sewing Box

- Scissors
- Pins
- A small ruler
- Needles (size 7 or 8)
- Tape measure
- Thread
- Tailor's chalk
- Pin cushion (you can make your own in Activity 2)

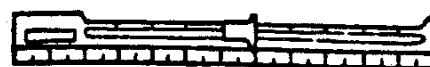
## **Know Your Basic Sewing Tools**

Here are some basic sewing tools you should include in your sewing box. It is important to know what your tools are, to be able to use them, and to be able to call them by name. You may already be familiar with some of these tools!

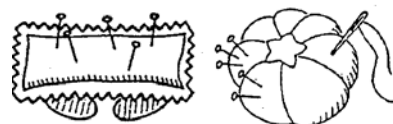
**Scissors:** Used for clipping and trimming; scissors are small and have straight handles.



**Ruler:** A 6-inch ruler or seam gauge is useful for measuring hems or seams.



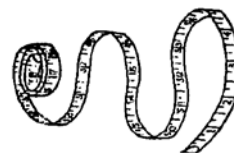
**Pin Cushion:** Used to hold pins. You may choose to make your own (see Activity 2 in this book).



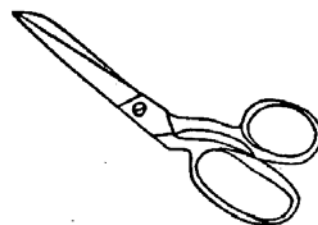
**Needles:** Straight, sharp needles come in different sizes. The ones with long eyes are easier to thread.



**Measuring Tape:** A 60-inch coated measuring tape is best because it won't stretch.



**Shears:** Used for cutting the fabric; shears are 7 or more inches long and should be sharp. Shears with bent handles make it easier to cut on a flat surface.



**Pins:** Used to hold pieces of fabric together for sewing. Dressmaker, silk, and ballpoint pins are available. Do not use bent or rusty pins.



**Thread:** It should match your fabric. You may want to ask an adult for help in selecting the best type and color.



## Activity 2 – Pin Cushion

A pin cushion is a very important sewing tool. It will help you to handle and store your pins and needles while you are sewing. The objective of this project is to teach the 4-H'er how to use a pattern and basic hand sewing.

### You will need:

- One 3" foam ball
- Medium weight knit fabric (12"X12")
- Embroidery floss or yarn
- Large-eye needle or #14 arts & crafts needle
- Scissors
- Straight pins
- Tailor's chalk

### Here is what you do (*Read all the instructions before you begin*):

1. Fold your fabric in half.
2. Cut out the half circle (included in the back of this manual) and place the pattern on the fold of your fabric.
3. With straight pins, pin the pattern in place on the fabric.
4. Very carefully cut around the pattern, keeping the fabric flat on the cutting surface. Open up your fabric and you will have a circle.
5. With chalk, mark the broken lines on your fabric circle, in the same places they are found on your pattern, about 1½" from the edge.
6. Thread your needle. If you are using yarn, use a #14 arts & craft needle. If you are sewing with embroidery floss, use a double thread and a crewel or large-eye needle. You may need an adult to help you get the yarn or floss through the eye of the needle.
7. Following the broken lines on the fabric, very carefully make your basting stitches. Try to keep them all about the same size and be sure you stitch all the way around the circle.
8. With help from an adult, take a knife and cut approximately ¼" off the bottom of the foam ball. Make the edge even so the ball will not roll.
9. Put the foam ball in the center of your fabric circle and slowly draw the strings up tightly. When the fabric is drawn snugly around the ball, make a tight bow.
10. To make sure your ties don't unravel, put a knot in each end.

**You have just completed your very own pin cushion! Great Job!**



# Activity 3 – Kool Cat and Honey Bear

Sewing is fun and Kool Cat and Honey Bear will show you how much fun it is. In this project, the objective will be to learn a few basic stitches and how to sew on buttons.

We will be using a tapestry or crewel embroidery needle. These needles have large eyes, making them easier to thread. Also the points on these needles are not as sharp as regular sewing needles.

Before you make Kool Cat and Honey Bear, we must learn how to tie a knot, sew on buttons, and sew a straight and overcast stitch. Use the practice sheet (included in this manual) to learn the stitches you will be using. For this sewing project, you are required to make one of the animals and to complete the practice sheet.

## Let's Learn Some Sewing Definitions

**Double Thread:** A double thread is made by threading a needle and tying the two ends together.

**Basting Stitches:** Large, loose stitches that weave in and out of fabric. Stitches are approximately the same size.

**Straight Stitch:** Done by sewing in and out of the material. Put the needle and thread through the fabric, bring the needle back through the fabric.

Repeat. Stitches are all approximately the same size. The straight stitch will be used for Kool Cat's whiskers and nose.

**Overcast stitch:** the overcast stitch is used on the edge of your material to keep it from fraying or to hold two pieces of material together.

## Tips for Knotting a Thread

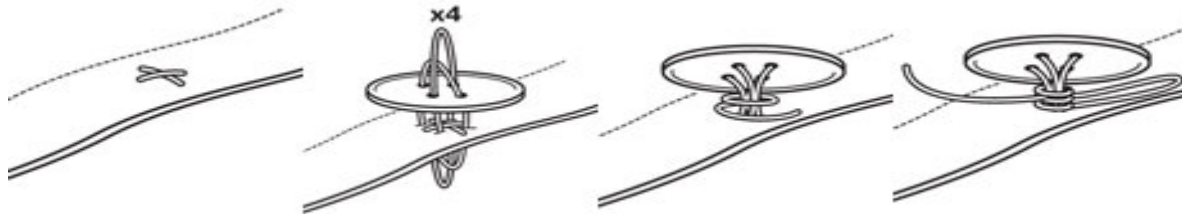
Twist the end of thread around the first finger of your hand 2 times and with your thumb, roll it off your finger. Pull the thread with your finger and thumb and you will have knotted the thread. Do this several times with a piece of thread until you can easily tie a knot.

Now thread the needle with your favorite color of thread and knot the thread. If you use a double thread, your thread will not come out of the needle while you are sewing. A double thread means you knot both ends of your thread together.

### Tips for Sewing on Buttons

Using double thread, take 1 or 2 small stitches at the point where the button will be attached. Hold a pin or toothpick across the top of the bottom and take stitch over it.

Take several stitches over the pin (toothpick) and through the fabric. Remove the pin (toothpick) and bring the needle and thread through the fabric.



### How to Cut Out Kool Cat and Honey Bear

1. Cut out the patterns carefully and pin onto the felt. Trace around the pattern with a pencil or chalk. Carefully, cut around the pattern.
2. Draw in the lines for the ears, nose and whiskers and the dots for the eyes and mouth.
3. Repeat step 1 to make the back of the head.

### Kool Cat

Thread your needle with black embroidery floss and knot. Using straight stitches, sew the whiskers, nose and ears. Sew on buttons for the eyes and mouth.

### Honey Bear

Thread your needle with black embroidery floss and knot. Using straight stitches, sew the ears. Sew on buttons for the eyes, nose and mouth.

**To Finish:** Place the face on top of the head back, pin together and use yarn to overcast stitch the two pieces together. Begin sewing at neck edge and continue stitching around the head to within 2" of the neck. Stuff with poly foam and continue stitching to close.

# Activity 4 – Meet Your Machine

## A Basic Sewing Machine

**Presser Foot (1):** It holds the fabric in place as you sew.

**Presser Bar Lever (2):** It raises and lowers the presser foot

**Feed Dog (3):** These are small teeth, under the presser foot, that move the fabric to the needle as you sew.

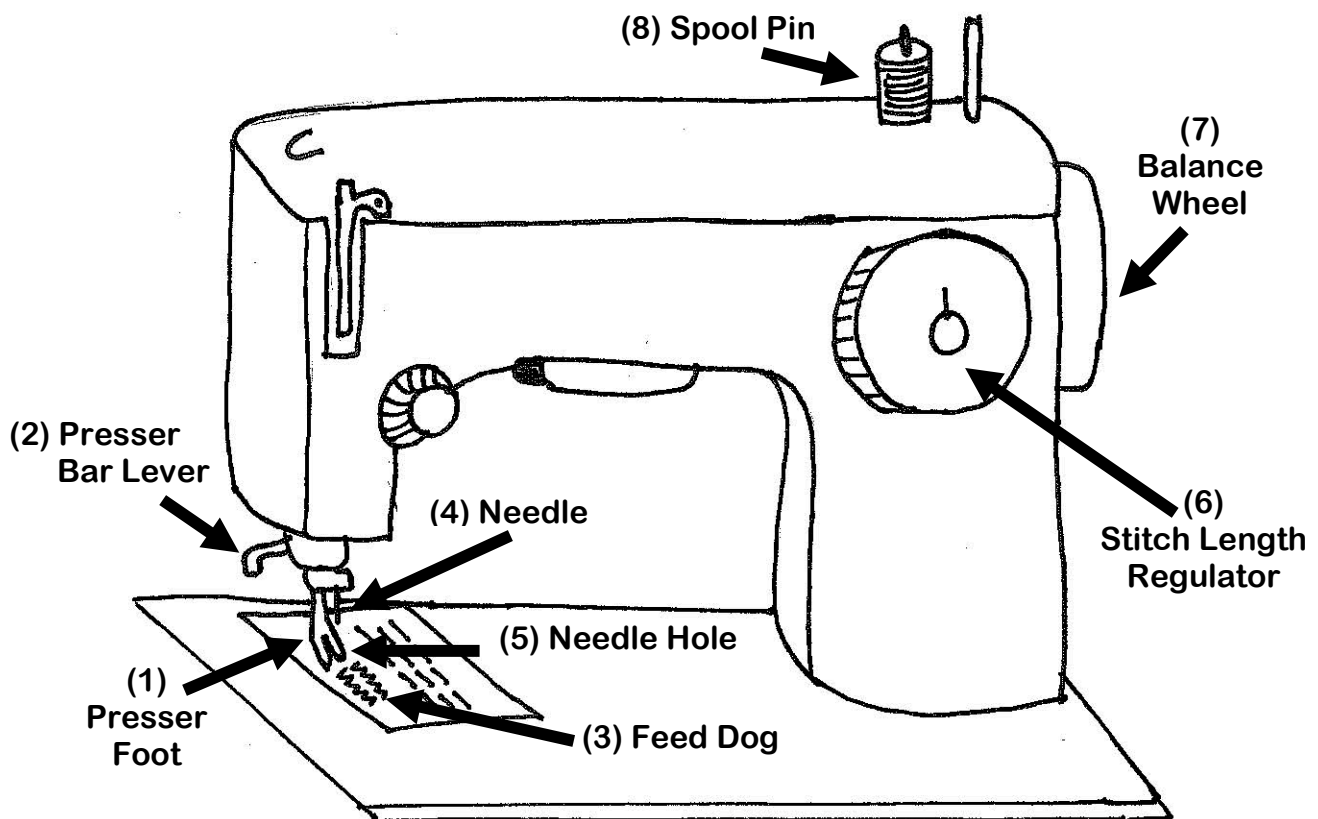
**Needle (4):** It carries the top thread to make stitches.

**Needle Hole (5):** This is the opening the needle goes through as it goes up and down.

**Stitch Length Regulator (6):** This makes stitches longer or shorter.

**Balance Wheel (7):** This helps the needle run up and down smoothly.

**Spool Pin (8):** The spool pin holds the thread in place.



### Not Shown:

**Bobbin:** This holds the thread for the underside of the seam.

**Knee Lever or Foot Control:** It makes the machine go faster or slower.

# Learning to use your machine

Practice helps you learn to use a sewing machine. Follow these steps:

Begin by running the machine with the presser foot up. Try different speeds. Learn to start and stop slowly and smoothly. Do your first stitching without thread. Use the practice stitching guide in this manual to practice stitching straight lines. Start by putting the needle through one of the lines. Next, put the presser foot down and begin to stitch. Guide the paper gently with your left hand. Don't push or pull. Be careful that your fingers don't get too close to the needle.

Now try turning a corner. To turn a corner, leave the needle in the paper, raise the presser foot and turn the paper. Then lower the presser foot and start stitching again.

Practice stitching corners and curves. Use the practice stitching guide in this manual.

Once you can stitch straight lines, curved lines, and turn corners, you are ready to sew with thread, using scraps of material. Ask your parent for help in threading the sewing machine and winding the bobbin and placing it in the machine. Practice until you can do this yourself.

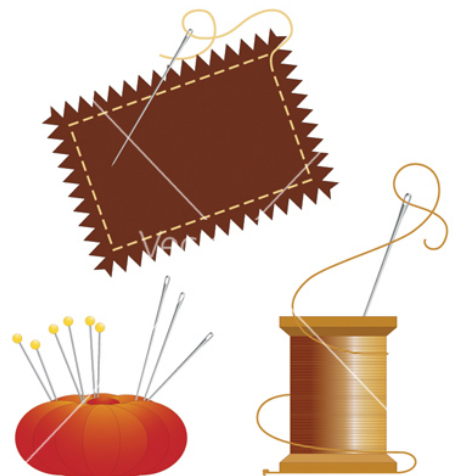
## Stitching Length

Most machines can sew from 6 to 20 stitches in an inch. Some will make more. A regular stitch length is 10 to 12 stitches in an inch. This is the size to use for permanent stitching on whatever you sew.

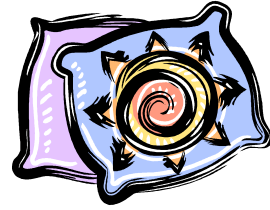
You can do basting on a sewing machine too.

These are long stitches that you will take out later. Use 6 stitches to an inch for basting.

Practice sewing on fabric, using different stitch lengths.

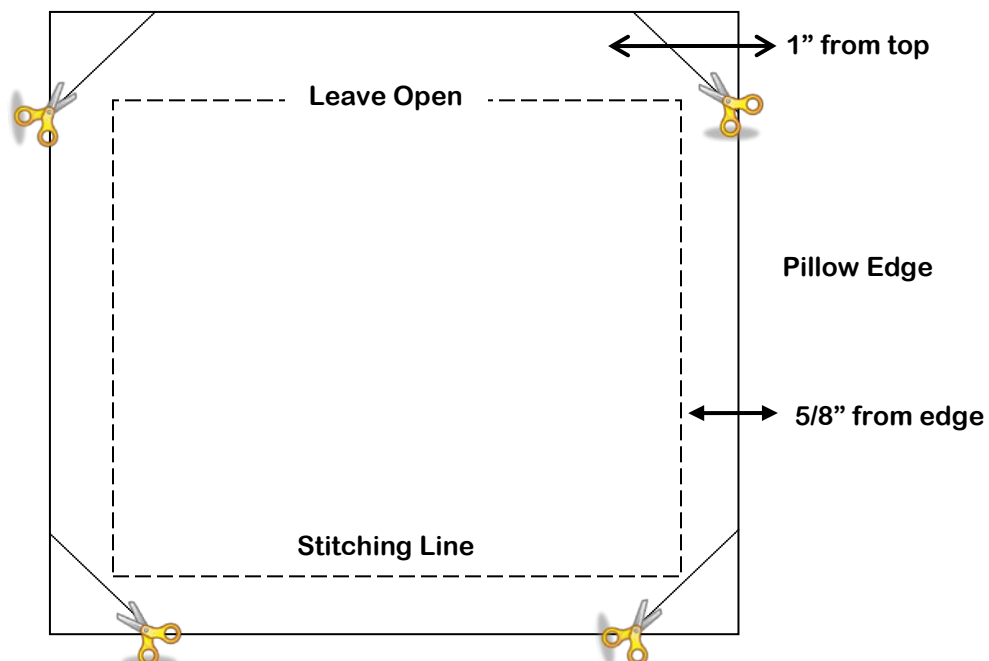


# Activity 5 – Throw Pillow



## Preparing Your Throw Pillow

1. Make a pattern using a ruler and heavy paper, such as a brown grocery bag. Draw a square  $13\frac{1}{2}$  long and  $13\frac{1}{2}$  wide. Cut this square on the line you have drawn.
2. Fold the fabric you are using in half and lay the pattern on the fabric. Pin it securely so it won't move while you are cutting around it.
3. With your scissors, cut along the edge of the pattern. Now you have two pieces of fabric.
4. Place right sides of the fabric together.
5. Using the sewing machine, stitch  $\frac{5}{8}$ " from the edge of the fabric, making a seam. Do this on three sides. On the opening side, stitch 1" from the pillow edge. Don't forget to leave an area unstitched for turning! Clip four corners of the pillow as shown in the diagram.
6. Press all seams open with a warm iron.
7. Turn your pillow inside out, making the right side of the fabric on the outside.
8. Stuff your pillow with a pillow filling of your choice.
9. Now you are ready to hand stitch the open end of your pillow to close. Make sure the raw edged are tucked inside the pillow.





# What to Exhibit



Here is a list of projects that can be shown at the 4-H Fair. Pick *one* of the projects you would like to exhibit at the fair this year. You do not need to make the projects in any special order. If you have any questions about your projects, please call your leader or the County Extension Office.

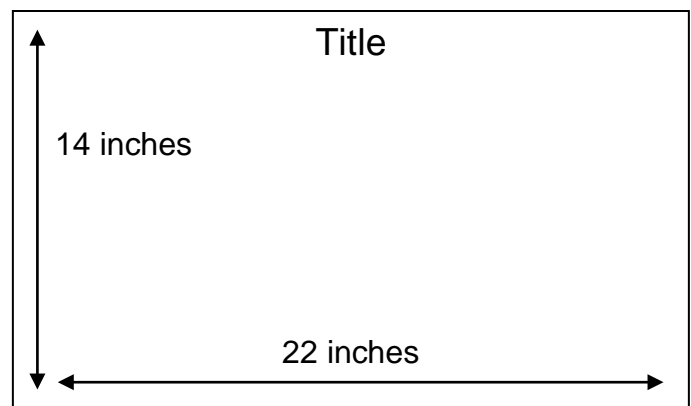
- Activity 1 - Sewing Kit. You may want to include a few items in your sewing kit that you will be using with your future sewing project.
- Activity 2 - Pin Cushion
- Activity 3 - Kool Cat or Honey Bear
- Activity 4 - Machine Practice pages. Attach your practice pages to a poster according to your county poster requirements.
- Activity 5 - Throw Pillow. Exhibit one pillow that you have made.

## Good Luck and Have Fun!

### Mini 4-H Poster Requirements

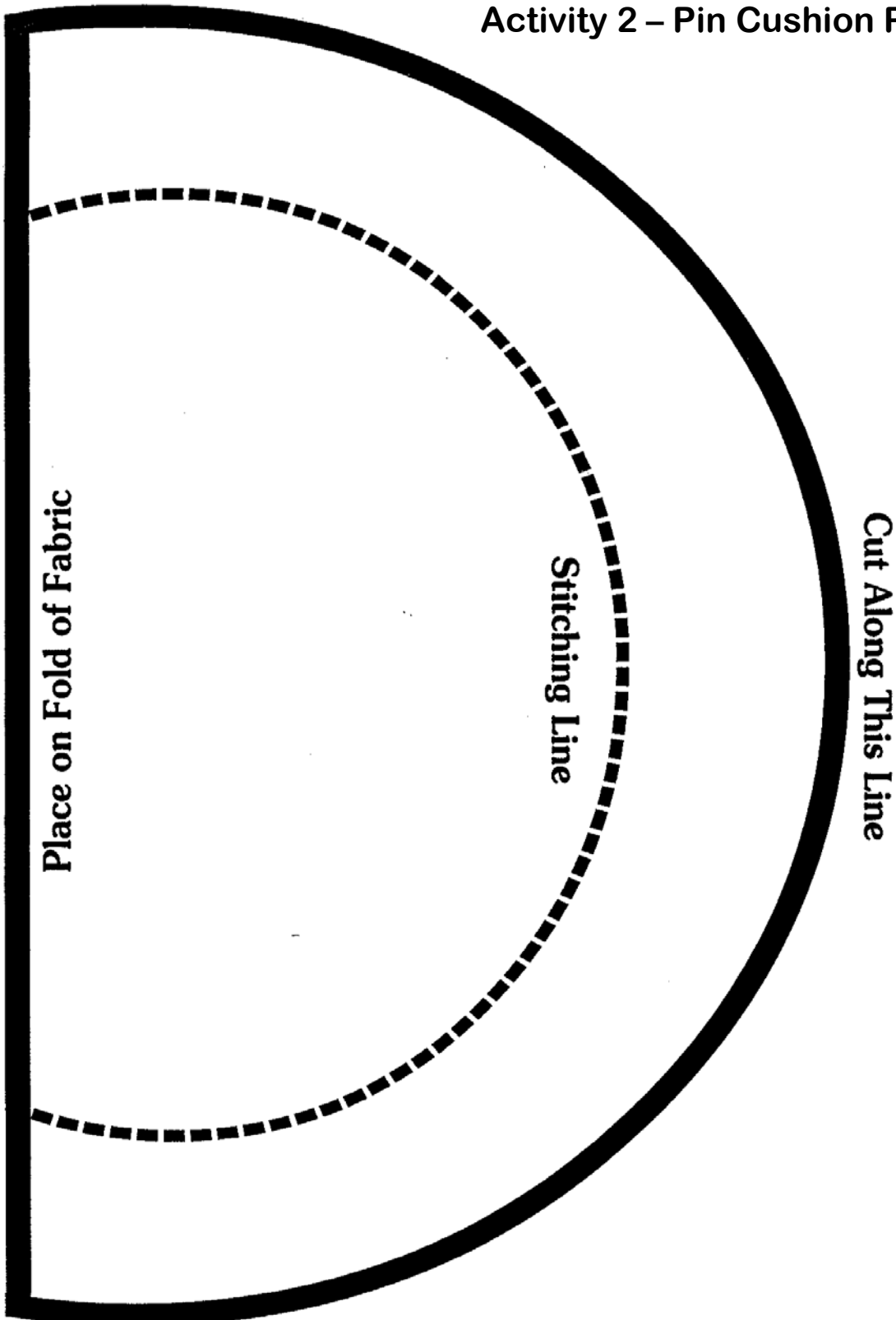
Poster requirements for ALL Mini 4-H projects that require posters:

1. Poster board (14"x22") should be displayed horizontally
2. Poster should have stiff backing and covered with clear plastic
3. A title should be at the top of the poster
4. Include your name, grade and club on a card in the lower right hand corner.

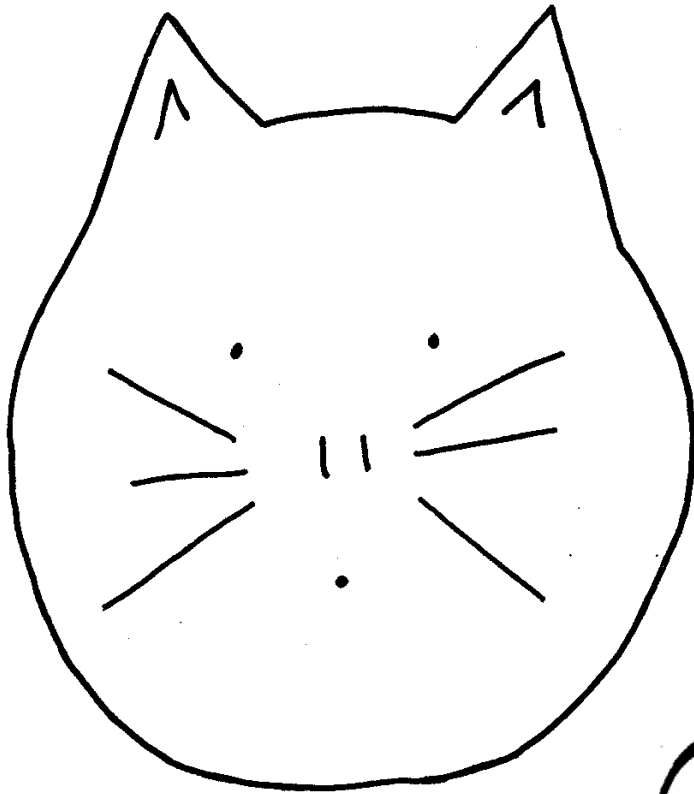


*Sample poster*

Activity 2 – Pin Cushion Pattern



### Activity 3 – Kool Cat and Honey Bear Patterns



#### Materials Needed:

##### Kool Cat

Felt (4 ½" X 9")

Buttons (2 large & 1 small)

Thread, yarn or embroidery floss to match felt and buttons

Black thread

#### Materials Needed:

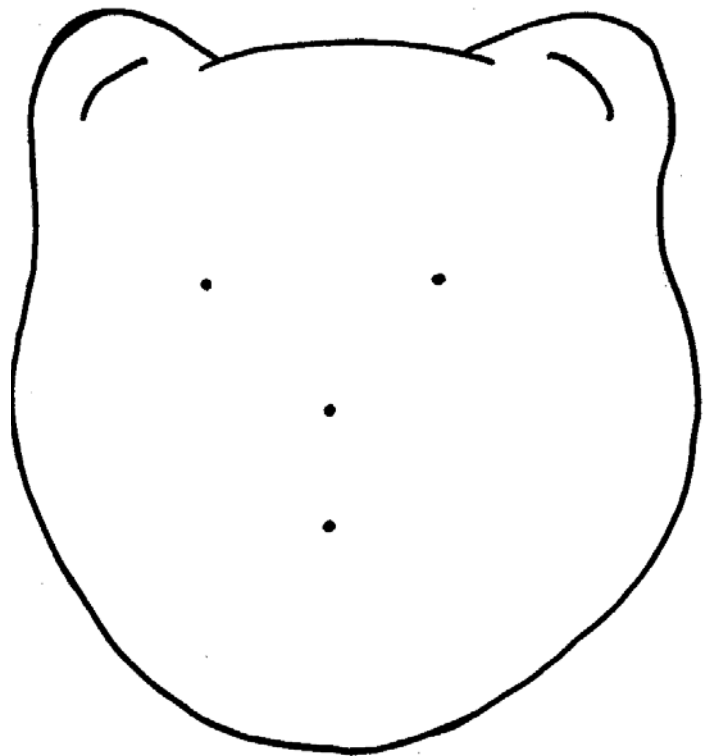
##### Honey Bear

Felt (4 ½" X 9")

Buttons (2 large & 2 small)

Thread, yarn or embroidery floss to match felt and buttons

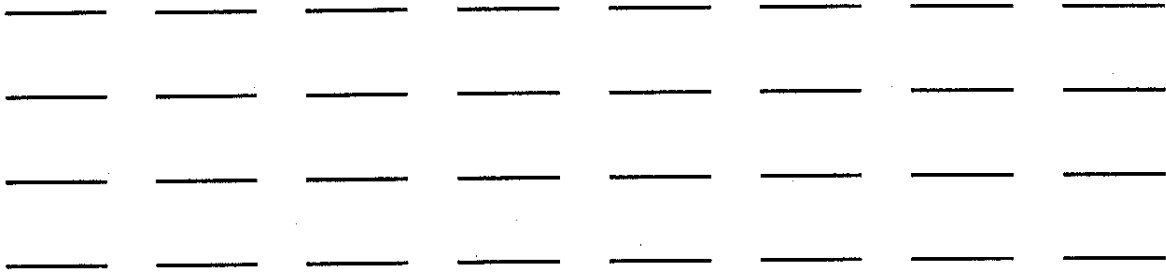
Black thread



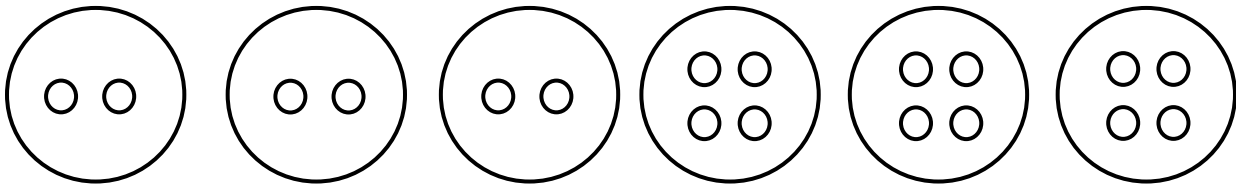


# Practice Sheet 1

## Straight Stitch

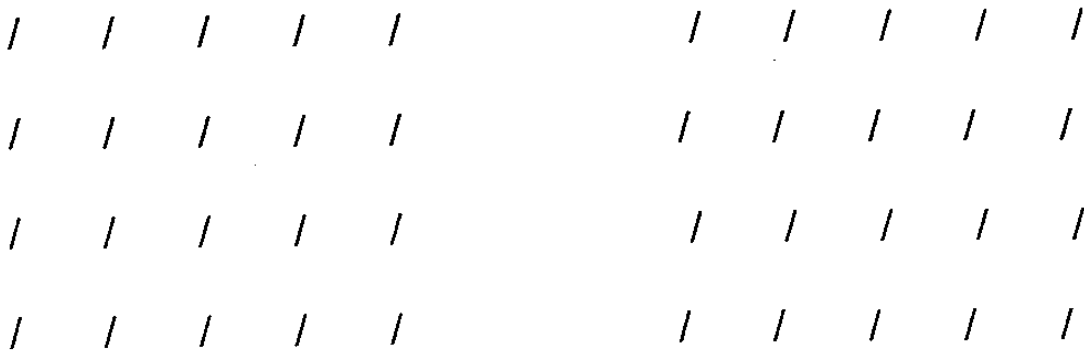


## Sewing on Buttons

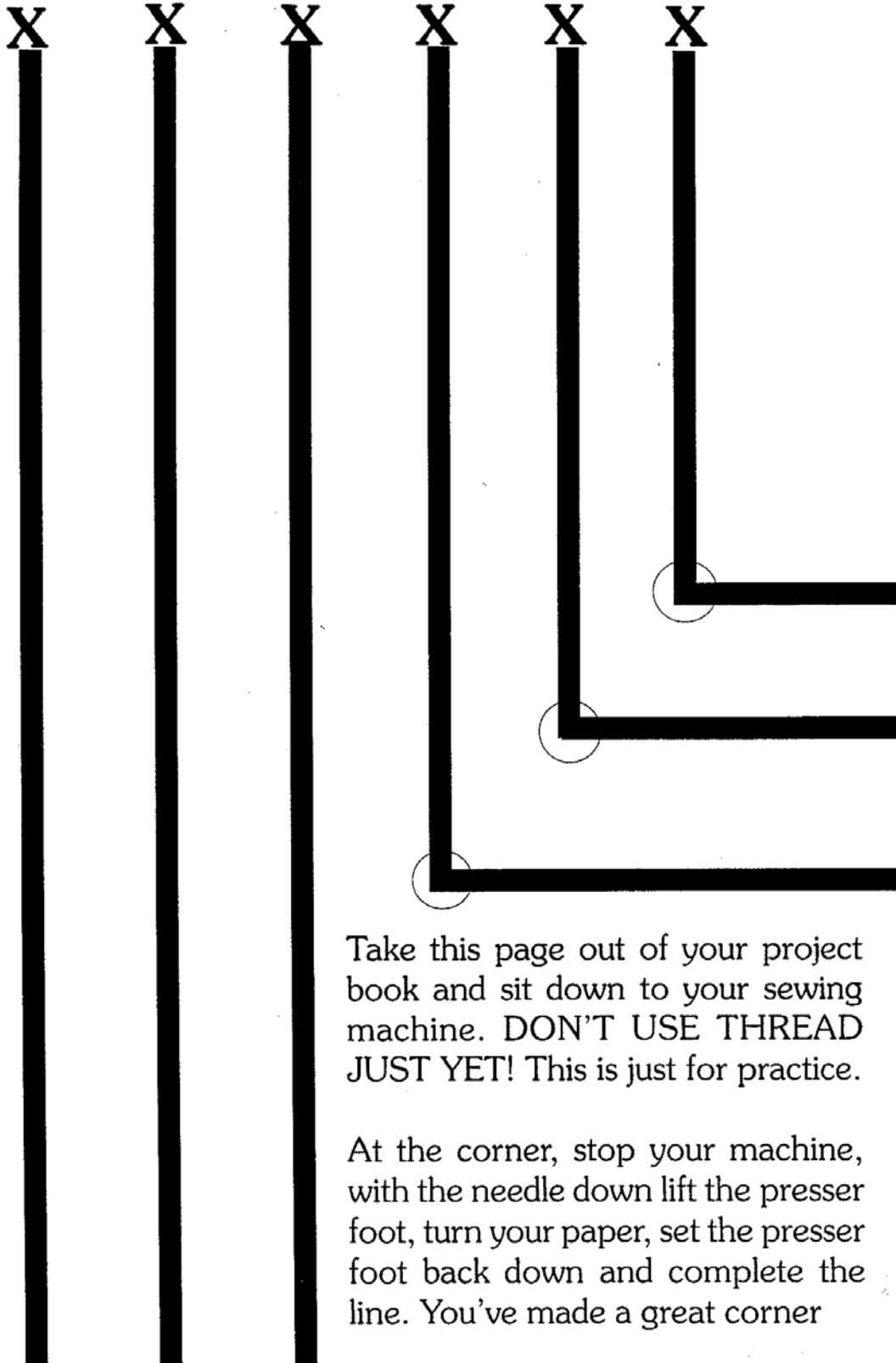


## Overcast Stitch

Stitch from left to right. Bring the needle up at the top of the stitch mark. Bring the needle down at the bottom of the stitch mark.



## Practice Sheet 2



Take this page out of your project book and sit down to your sewing machine. **DON'T USE THREAD JUST YET!** This is just for practice.

At the corner, stop your machine, with the needle down lift the presser foot, turn your paper, set the presser foot back down and complete the line. You've made a great corner

# Practice Sheet 3

