

maneki neko



coin pouch

A SEWING PATTERN BY



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Maneki Neko is Japanese for “beckoning cat,” often known as a “Lucky Cat” in English. These adorable kitties are used in Asian businesses to bring in customers and good fortune. They’re seen in many colors, from gold to calico to black.

Because they’re so often associated with money, I transformed them into a handy coin pouch. But you could use it to carry other items as well. You could even change it up to look like your favorite kitty!

MAKES:

One pouch, 5” wide and 8” tall

DIFFICULTY:



This project has lots of tiny details that turn a plain cat into a lucky cat. There’s also the zipper, which is a little trickier to install because the shapes are curvy instead of the typical straight lines.

SKILLS USED:

- Fusible web applique
- Ladder stitch
- Sewing curves
- Zippers



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SEWING TUTORIAL

materials & tools:

- ¼ yd. of fabric for main body
- 4" x 6" piece of yellow fabric for coin
- ¼ yd. of lining fabric for inside pouch
- 7" zipper (at least)
- 3" x 3" piece of black applique fabric (felt, cotton, etc.) for eyes, mouth, etc.
- 3" x 6" piece of red applique fabric (felt, cotton, etc.) for ears and collar
- **OPTIONAL:** 4" x 4" piece of orange applique fabric (felt, cotton, etc.) for calico spots
- **OPTIONAL:** 3" x 3" piece of brown applique fabric (felt, cotton, etc.) for calico spots
- 1" x 1" piece of pink applique fabric (felt, cotton, etc.) for heart
- 6" x 6" piece of light or heavy duty fusible web
- sewing thread to match main fabric and applique fabrics
- basic sewing tools (sewing machine, scissors, iron, needles, pins, fabric marker, seam ripper)
- gold bell; ½" wide
- **OPTIONAL:** white fabric paint (for eye shines)



minky



fleece



felt



cotton

SUGGESTED FABRICS:

BODY: Fleece, minky, felt, or terry cloth

Thick, plush fabrics like these give the cat body some, well, body! The resulting pouch will feel less flimsy and more like a floppy stuffed animal. The stretchy fabric options, like fleece and minky, will sew more easily if you fuse a bit of lightweight interfacing to them. But it's not absolutely necessary.

LINING: Quilting cotton

Something thin and easy to sew is best for the inside of the pouch. This will make attaching it to a zipper much less of a headache. Plus, you can find something in a cute print to match your outer pouch fabric.

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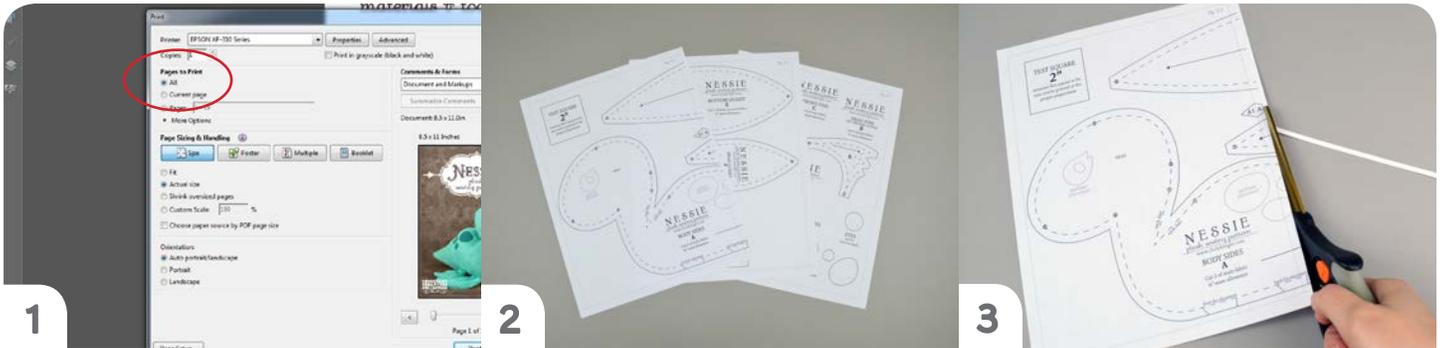
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printing the pattern:

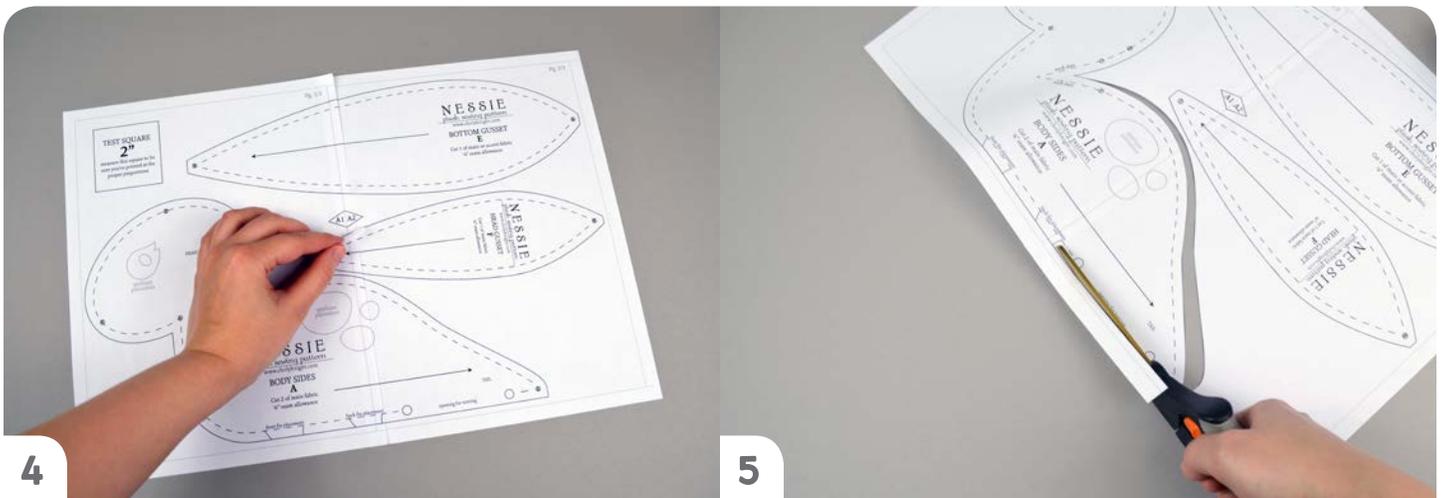
To print the pattern, set your computer to print **PAGES 13-15**. If you're unfamiliar with printing and assembling a .pdf pattern, read the steps below.



1 At the print dialog box, check the box that says print at "Actual Size" or 100%. Any other selection (such as "Fit to page") will distort the pattern so it's slightly larger or smaller and we don't want that.

2 Print the pages needed for the file. You might have one or more. Either way, be sure you have the full collection by noting the page numbers in the corner.

3 It's likely your printer will have a margin that ensures your image doesn't print to the very edge. Assembly will be easier if you trim off this blank margin edge. This will give you pages that overlap slightly during assembly. If you trim across the gray outline boxes, this will give you pages that don't overlap but rather butt against each other.



4 To line up the pattern pages, match up the corresponding diamond shapes. Each diamond will have a letter, so it's simply a matter of matching A1 to A2, B3 to B4 and so on. The faint gray lines indicate the border of every page, you should be able to line those up as well. When the diamond goes together, tape it in place.

If you have many pages, it's easier to tape up the pages into rows first. Then tape the rows together into a full block.

5 You can trace the patterns onto a different paper, or you can also just cut them straight from the printer paper -- be sure that each piece is fully taped together along the joins so they don't fall apart when you cut them.



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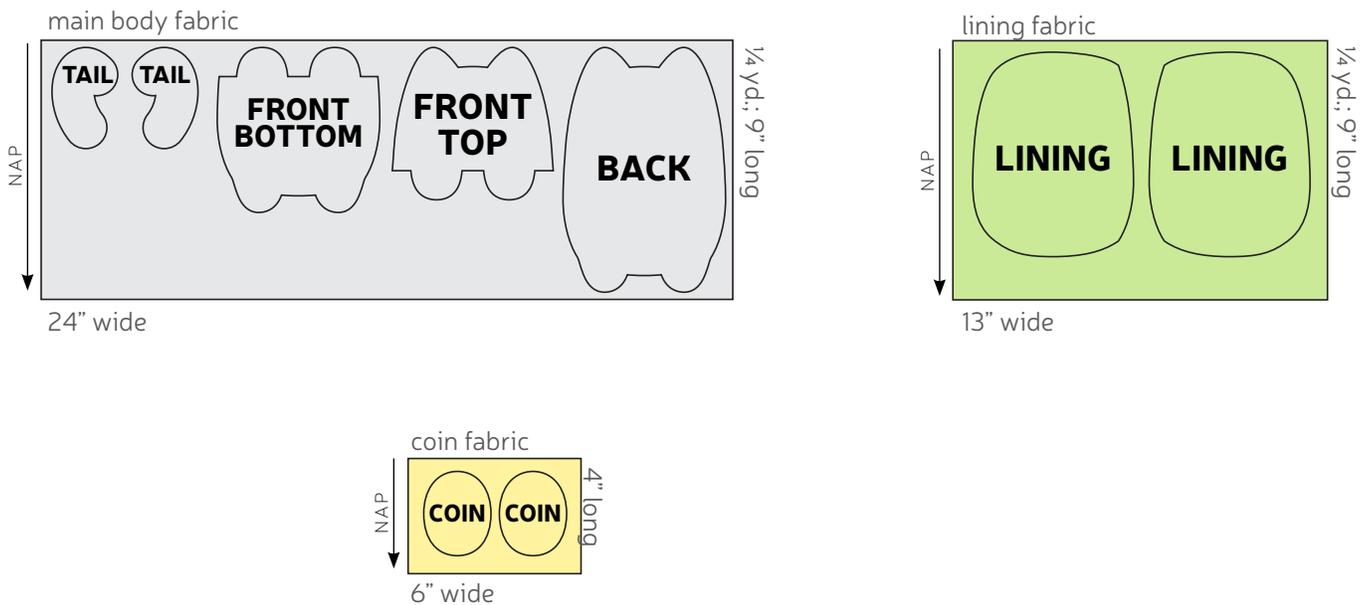
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SEWING TUTORIAL

cutting the fabric:



cutting layout:



BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

- Briefly read the project instructions so you know what to expect.
- If desired, mark the cut fabric pieces with the markings and symbols from the pattern. Or wait until the applicable step before transferring.
- Note that the seam allowance used is 1/4" throughout the project.

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SEWING TUTORIAL



1. PREPARE THE APPLIQUE

- Take your fusible web and trace all of your details and other accents onto the smooth (paper) side. You should have 2 eyes, 1 mouth, 4 whiskers, 2 inner ears, 1 heart, and 2 collars. For a calico cat you should have an additional 6 large spots and 6 small spots.
- Fuse the bumpy (adhesive) side onto the wrong side of your applique fabric. Eyes, mouth, whiskers: black. Collar: red. Heart: pink. Large spots: orange. Small spots: brown.
- Cut out the face pieces and arrange them on the Front Top piece of your main fabric. You can do this by setting your paper pattern on top of the fabric piece (right sides up), align the eye piece on top where the placement markings are, then carefully pull the paper pattern away while holding the applique piece in place.



2. PLACE THE FRONT TOP APPLIQUE

- Fuse the eye pieces in place with your iron (use a press cloth -- such as a scrap piece of cotton -- if you're using a polyester or fur fabric like minky). Repeat with the mouth and whisker pieces, using the photo and paper pattern as a guide.
- Repeat with the inner ear pieces and the collar next.
- If you're doing a calico cat, move onto doing the large (orange) spots with the small (brown) spots on top.



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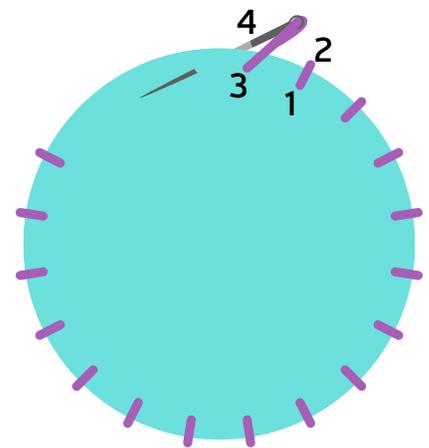


3. PLACE THE REMAINING APPLIQUE

- Grab your Front Bottom piece and add the large and small spots if you're doing a calico. For both versions, fuse the pink heart in place on the right paw.
- Grab your Back piece and add the large and small spots if you're doing a calico. For both versions, fuse the remaining collar piece for the back of the collar.
- If you used heavy duty fusible web, you can keep the pieces fused without sewing, or you can sew them in place a number of ways. I've used a zigzag stitch here.
- Refer to the next step for some other applique options.

trivia:

Calico cats are considered very lucky in Japan, so most Lucky Cats are that color. Black cats are said to lure away evil spirits and are another popular option.



3a. OTHER APPLIQUE OPTIONS

Other good options for applique include a straight stitch, which involves sewing around the edge of the applique pieces with a straight stitch using matching thread -- about 1/8" in from the edge.

You can also applique by hand; I prefer a whipstitch. Thread a hand-sewing needle with some matching thread and knot it. Bring the thread up from the back of the project; about 1/8" in from the edge of the applique shape. Bring it down perpendicular from the curve, just outside of the applique shape. This completes one stitch.

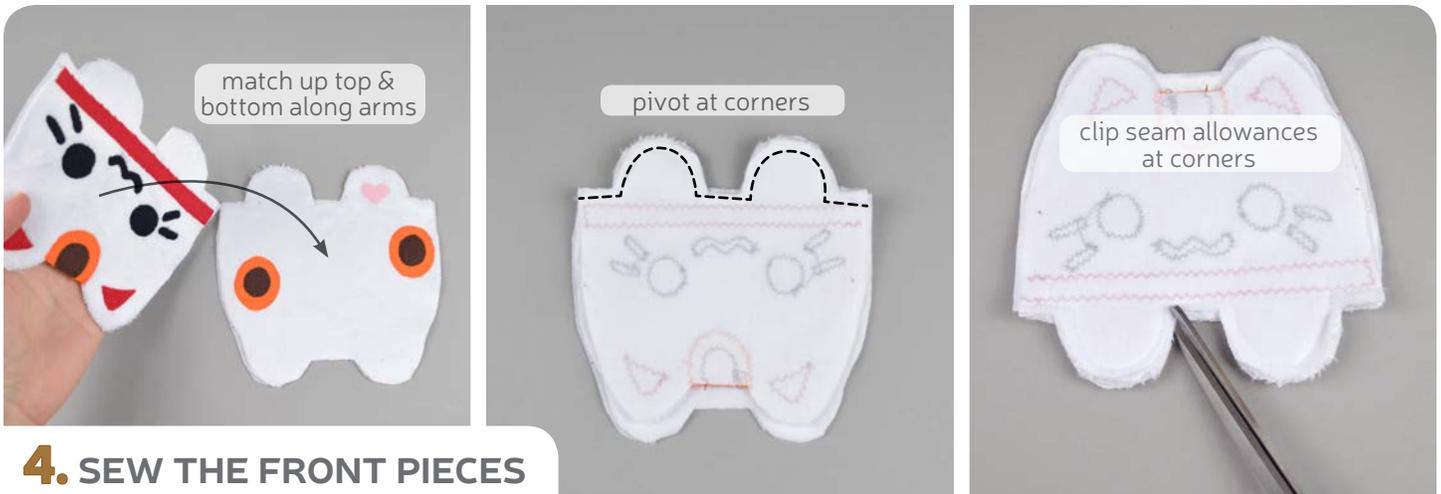
For the next stitch, bring the needle back up about 1/8" away from the previous stitch and 1/8" in from the edge just as in the first stitch. Once again, bring it down just outside the applique shape. Continue this way until you've sewn around the shape.

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4. SEW THE FRONT PIECES

- With all the applique done on both the top and bottom pieces, sew them together by matching them up with right sides facing. Align the edge that has the two semi-circles -- these will later be the arms.
- Sew the pieces together, pivoting at the corners and curving around the arms.
- Once sewn, clip the seam allowances at the corners on each side of the arms. This will increase flexibility when the arms are turned. Turn the front piece right side out so the arms stick out now.



5. PLACE THE ZIPPER

- Trim the metal stops off the zipper and any excess so it comes down to about 6½" long. Stitch the ends together instead to replace the stops.
- If you haven't already, locate the zipper placement markings found on the paper pattern for the Front Top & Bottom pieces. Transfer them over to the right side of the fabric. Line up the zipper over the front piece with right sides facing, placing it within the guidelines. Pin the zipper in place.
- Take one of your lining pieces and layer it over the front piece (with right sides facing). Line the straight-ish edge (the one without the opening for turning markings) up along the edge of the zipper tape. The zipper should be sandwiched inside the front and lining pieces.

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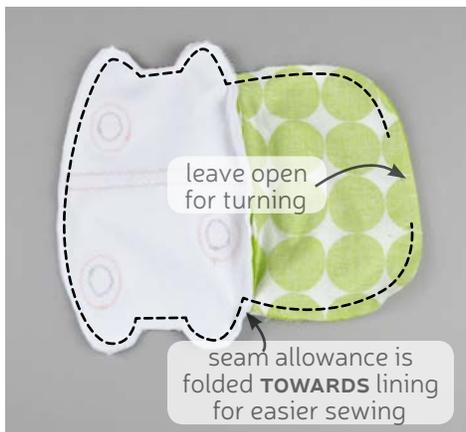
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SEWING TUTORIAL



6. SEW THE ZIPPER

- Sew these three layers in place with the usual $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance, securing the zipper. Press the fabrics away from the zipper.
- Align the front half of the pouch with the back in the same manner. Align the zipper between the zipper markings on the back piece with the right side of the zipper facing the right side of the main fabric.
- Layer the lining fabric on top with right sides facing, sandwiching the zipper once again. Sew along this edge just like the first half of the zipper. Press the fabrics away from the zipper when complete.



7. SEW THE POUCH

- Arrange the fabric pieces so the lining fabrics are matched up and the outer fabrics are matched up. Align the raw edges and pin them in place.
- If you haven't already, locate the opening for turning markings found on the lining paper pattern. Transfer them over to the wrong side of the fabric. Sew around the perimeter of the pouch, both the lining and the cat (but skip over the opening for turning area). Be sure to pivot at the corner where the lining meets the cat, and be careful when sewing over the zipper.
- Once sewn, be sure to clip the seam allowance at the corners and near the ears and feet to increase flexibility when the pouch is turned.
- Turn the pouch right side out through the opening for turning. Tuck in the seam allowances and stitch the opening closed near the edge.



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8. SEW THE COIN

- Grab your Coin pieces and align them both together with right sides facing and the edges matching up.
- Sew around the perimeter of the coin completely.
- To turn the coin, cut about a 1" slit through one layer of the fabric only.



trivia:

Lucky Cats are always shown to be holding a coin -- usually a **KOBAN**, the currency used in Edo period Japan. Just another aspect of Lucky Cats bringing in wealth and fortune.



9. STITCH THE COIN MARKINGS

- If you haven't already, locate the coin stitching lines found on the paper pattern. Transfer these over to the right (uncut) side of the coin.
- Stitch along these lines with a regular straight stitch.
- Place the coin underneath the left paw of your pouch so far with the cut side facing down. Pin it in place. Thread a hand-sewing needle and knot it at the end. Insert the needle from the inside of the coin opening and out of the coin near the outside edge. This will leave the knot inside the coin.

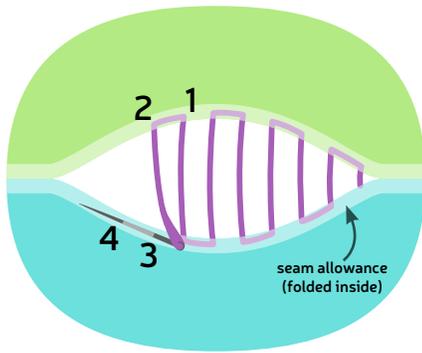


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10. STITCH THE COIN

- Continue from here doing a ladder stitch. Take a 1/8" stitch into the edge of the coin, then go across and take a stitch into the pouch (through the front layer only). Keep going around the coin until you reach the end.
- When you're finished, stitch a knot into the end of the seam. Then insert the needle near the finished knot and out of the pouch about 1-2" away.
- Pull the thread through and hold it taut while snipping the thread. The excess thread should sink back inside the pouch -- all hidden!



11. SEW THE PAW & BELL

- Flip up the right paw (the one with the heart), and stitch it in place around the edge with a ladder stitch just like the coin. Once again, be sure not to stitch through the entire pouch, just the front layer.
- Take your bell and stitch it in the center of the collar.

trivia:

Lucky Cats always have one or both paws raised because in most Eastern cultures, that waving-like gesture is the one used to say "come here" instead of the palm-up version used in the West.

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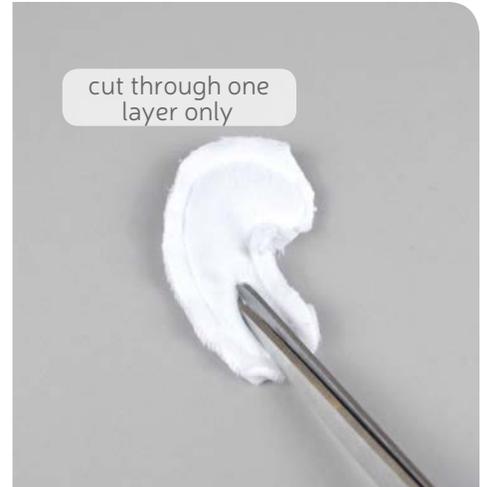
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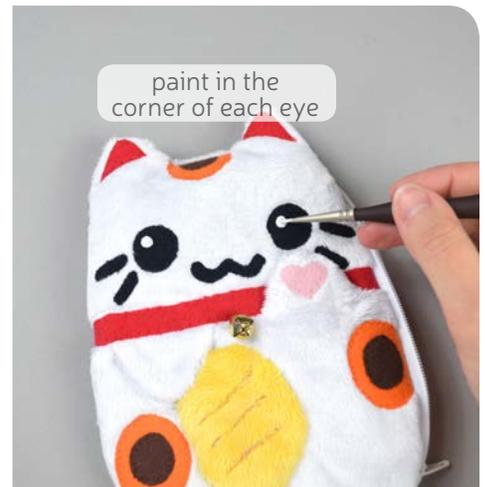
12. SEW THE TAIL



- Grab your tail pieces and align them together with right sides facing and edges matching up.
- Sew the tail pieces together all around the perimeter of the shape. When complete, clip the seam allowance at the inner curve to increase flexibility once the tail is turned.
- To turn the tail, cut a small ~1" slit near the base of the tail (it's also marked on the paper pattern). Be sure to cut through one layer only.



13. ATTACH THE TAIL



- Turn the tail right side out through the opening and using a chopstick to define the points.
- Place the tail on the back side of the pouch so the curved end is pointing up (placement lines can also be found on the paper pattern). Stitch the tail in place by sewing a ladder stitch around the perimeter of the tail just as you did with the coin.
- For that extra something, paint a small dot of white fabric paint on the upper corner of each eye. You could also sew a French knot with some white thread or glue on a rhinestone for an alternative.

congrats!
now try out
your pouch,
because you're
done!

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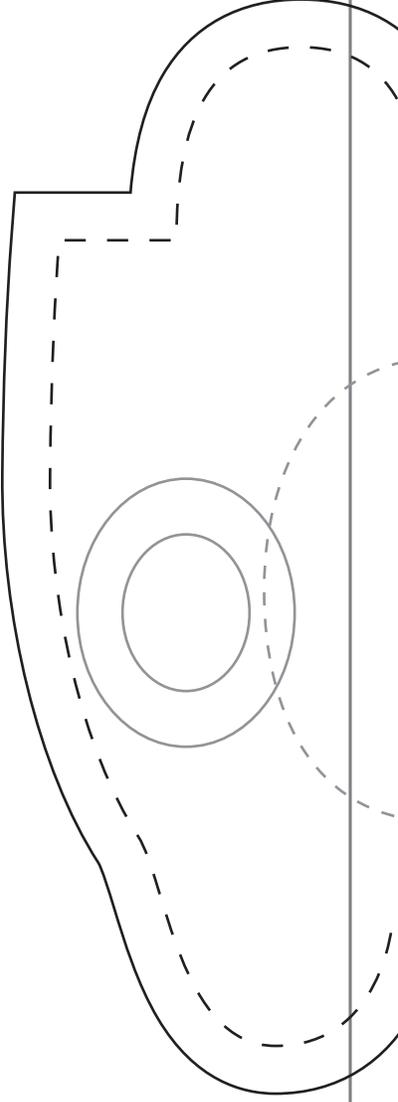
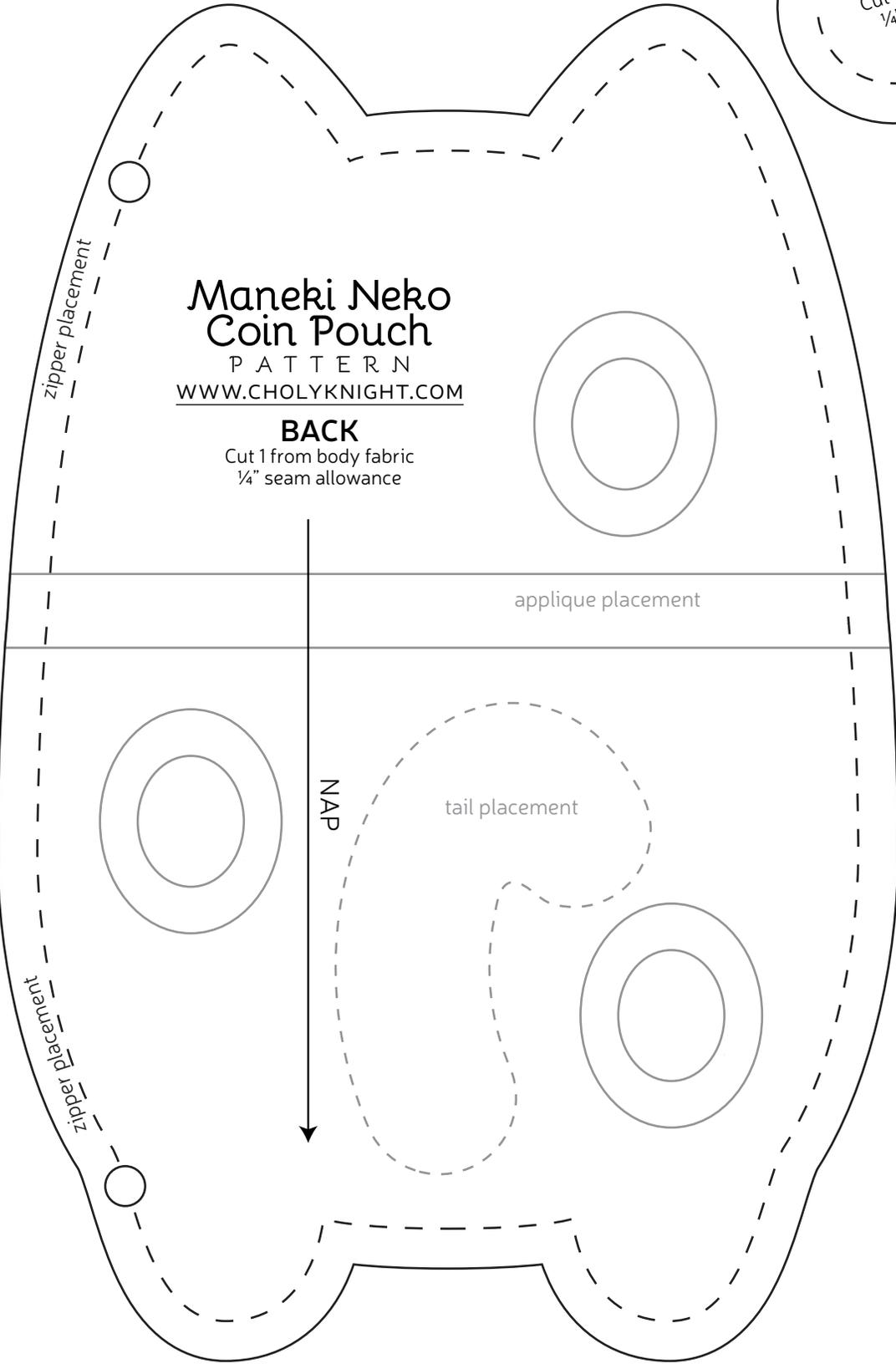
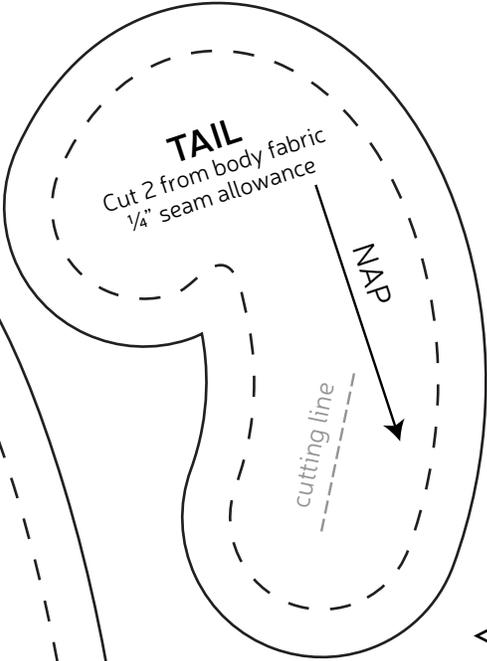
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BACK

Cut 1 from body fabric
1/4" seam allowance



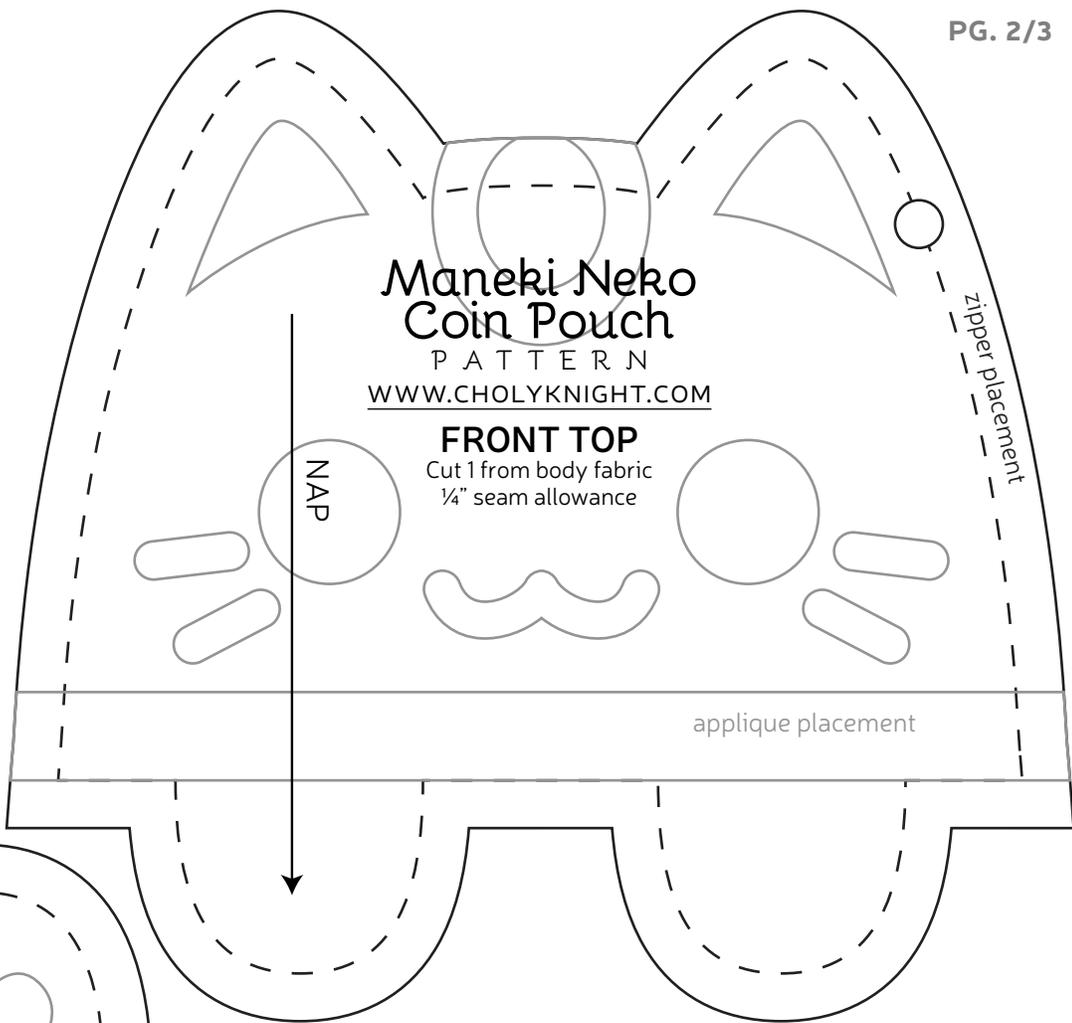
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P A T T E R N

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FRONT TOP

Cut 1 from body fabric
1/4" seam allowance



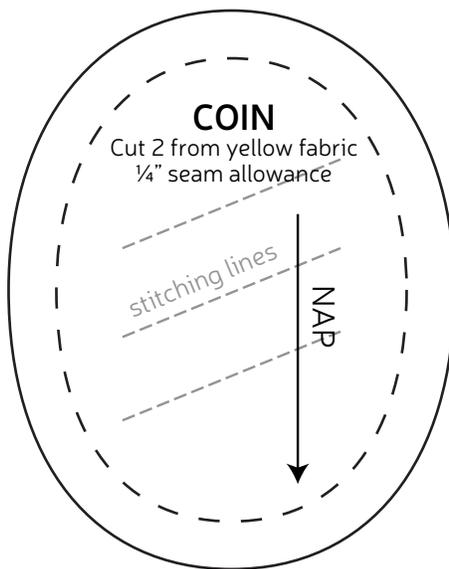
applique placement

A1 A2

applique placement

COIN

Cut 2 from yellow fabric
1/4" seam allowance



stitching lines

NAP

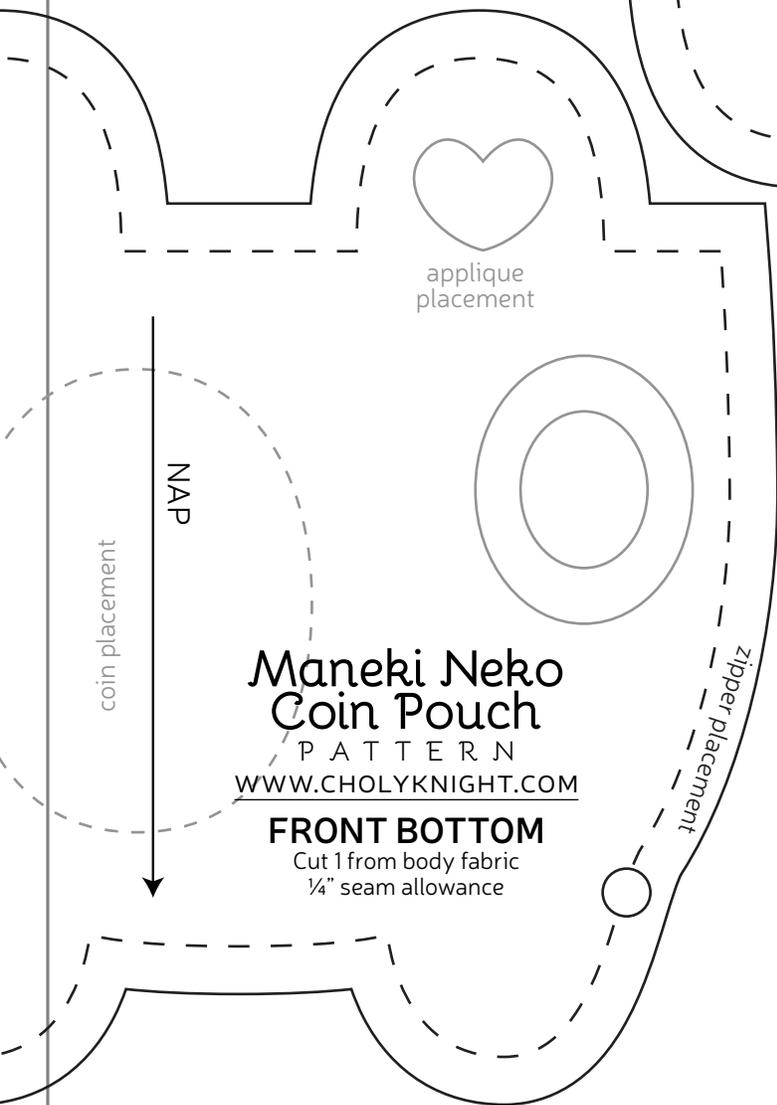
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FRONT BOTTOM

Cut 1 from body fabric
1/4" seam allowance



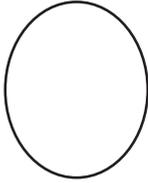
coin placement

NAP

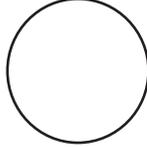
zipper placement



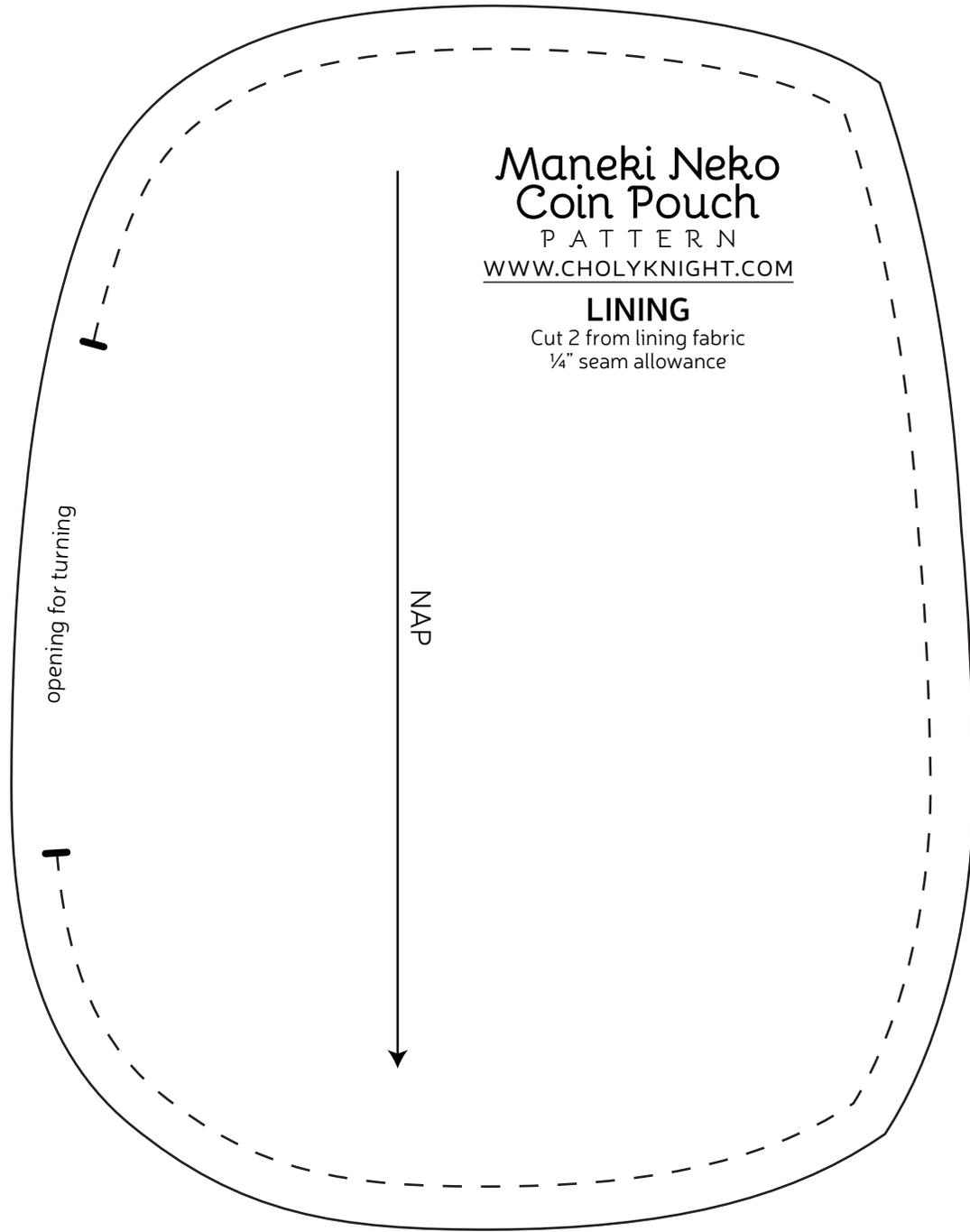
SMALL SPOTS
applique
 trace & cut 6
 from brown



EYES
applique
 trace & cut 2
 from black



HEART
applique
 trace & cut 1 from pink



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LINING
 Cut 2 from lining fabric
 1/4" seam allowance



WHISKERS
applique
 trace & cut 4 from black



COLLAR
applique
 trace & cut 2 from red