

EASY THREAD JOINTING

Cotter pin joints are the traditional method of jointing bears but are not suitable for younger children due to the metal pins used.

So, we can use plastic safety joints - these are ideal for younger one's huggables. However it is not always possible to use these as they are quite bulky : (

What to do ? Well, another method to joint is thread jointing. Using a good strong thread, the limbs are quite simply attached by sewing through the body. This is fine for little ones toys too. The bear opposite is a 9 inch bear and completely thread jointed - you wouldn't know, would you :)



THREADS TO USE :

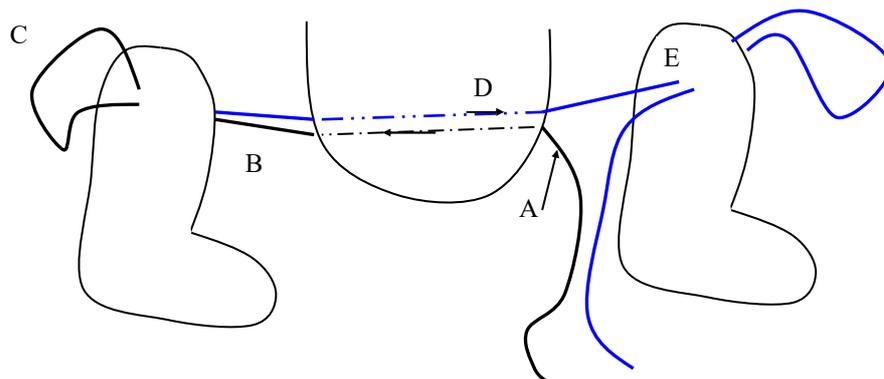
Our thread needs to be very strong. Upholstery thread is perfect and comes in different colours. There are other very strong thread available, including a twine that is suitable for jointing.

Unless your bear is a small chap, you'll also probably need a longer than usual needle to go through the body from side to side. Doll needles are perfect for this but any long needle can be used.

JOINTING ARMS AND LEGS ~

The limbs are the easiest to joint, so we'll start with these :)

- 1 Cut a good long piece of your strong thread and center your needle so that we use this doubled.
- 2 We'll do legs, but arms follow the same method - the diagram below may help too. Take the needle and thread through the bottom of the body from side to side (A) Leave a good length hanging (enough to tie knots in later)
- 3 Pick up a leg and take your thread all the way through the top of the leg (keeping it centered and making sure the foot faces forwards !) (B)
- 4 Take a small stitch in on the outside of the leg (approx 5 or 6mm but may depend upon the size of your bear) and return back through the top of the leg—exit a little away from the thread already there ©
- 5 Return back through the body (D) Again exit a little away from the thread we left hanging there
- 6 Attach the other leg in the same way by taking the thread all the way through the top center and returning. (E)
- 7 We should now have both ends of the threads on the same side of the body. Repeat the thread's journey once more.
- 8 Once we have the threads back together, tie a half knot and pull until both legs fit snugly against the body. Check they are sitting correctly then complete the knot and add two or three more for good measure.
- 9 Do not cut the threads, take all ends back through the body - pull them taut and ship close to the body = they should spring back inside, neatly hidden :)

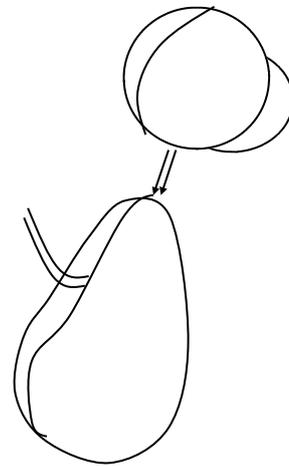
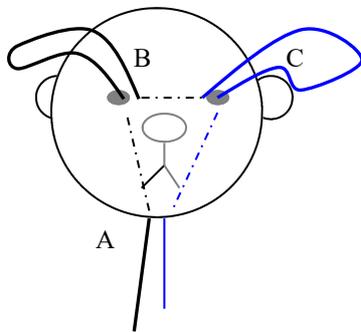


JOINTING THE HEAD

Often the head can take a plastic safety joint but this can be difficult on tiny bears. There are two ways to joint the head, here's the easiest. Follow below, diagrams may help too :)

- 1 Center your needle to use the double (you'll need a long piece of thread). Take the thread up through the bottom of the head and out at the inner corner of one eye (assuming you have safety eyes already in place). (A)
- 2 Take a tiny stitch of 3mm or 4mm through the head to the opposite eye. (B)
- 3 Take another stitch and this time return back down the head, exiting a little way from the other end of the thread sitting there (C)
- 4 Tie a half knot and gently pull. You may find the eyes indent a little into the head - that's fine, but don't go too deep.
- 5 Complete your knot but leave the ends of the threads in place.
- 6 With the threads tightly knotted under the head, take the ends, one set at a time down through the top of the body and exit center back. Bring one set out a little away from the first set See below.
- 7 Tie these into a half knot and pull until the head sits against the top of the body. When you are happy, complete the knot and add two more. Take the ends of the threads back through the body and pull taut, snip them close to.

That little head is jointed !



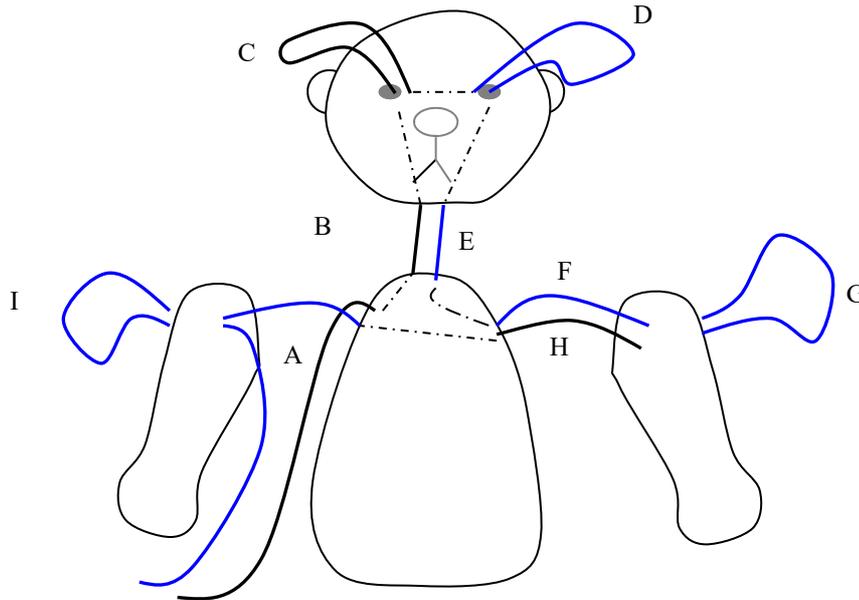
SAFELY KNOTTED

The trick to safely securing your knots is not to cut the ends. Re-thread them onto your needle and take them back through the body or head. It doesn't matter particularly where you exit but I try to use a seam if possible.

Pull the ends taut as you can, then snip them close to the body (you can use your scissors to push against the body as this will help. They should then spring back neatly hidden inside :)

If they do poke out a little, don't panic. Wriggle your needle behind the fur, under the thread and you should be able to entice the end inside !





THREAD JOINTING THE HEAD WITH ARMS

This may seem a little more complicated., but works perfectly and is easy once you are used to it. Jointing the head in this way keeps the jointing much neater and avoids a knot at the back (see the earlier method :)

- 1 Center your needle on your strong thread to use this double. Take the thread into the side of the body (A) Leave a good length hanging from the body, ready for knotting.
- 2 Bring the thread out the top of the body (where you would expect the neck to sit) (B)
- 3 Take the thread up through the head and out at one eye position (best keep to the same side) Take a tiny stitch through the head to the opposite eye (C) *This will work with or without eyes in position. A child-friendly bear will already have the safety eyes in place at this stage, so use the inner corner of each eye for the return stitch.*
- 4 Take a small stitch at the inner corner of this eye (D) and return back down through the bottom of the head (E)
- 5 Take your thread through the body and exit ready to joint the arm (F)
- 6 Take the thread through the top of the arm and return, taking a small 5 or 6mm stitch. (G)
- 7 Bring the thread through the top of the body and exit at the position for the opposite arm (H)
- 8 Take the thread through the top of the other arm and return (I)
- 9 This should bring us back to the other end of our thread (hopefully)
- 10 For a medium/large bear I would repeat the journey once more time. For a small/tiny bear, you may get away with just the once.
- 11 Tie a half knot when you are ready and pull so that the arms - and head, sit snugly against the body.
- 12 If all looks okay, complete the knot and add two more then take all the thread ends back through the body, pull taut and snip them close to.

These are my own methods and should prove quite a strong joint system for most bears. However - if you are part filling with a heavier stuffing (steel shot for example) then I do not recommend thread jointing. Go for plastic or cotter pin joints.

This should not be a problem for child-friendly bears as, of course, steel shot is certainly not safe for little ones to hug !

*Enjoy your softie-making xx
Angela X*