

Studio Tintangel

Creating and coloring heads



studio
Tintangel

Internet: www.tintangel.com

Creating heads for Tintangel designs

Having to create heads can be a daunting obstacle standing in the way of getting started making felt dolls. It might seem more difficult than it really is. Instructions on creating a head are included in all Tintangel kits where applicable. I will provide an explanation of the process here in greater detail, complete with illustrations.

This kit is intended to help the starting doll-maker and provide him or her with the right materials, without the need to buy a huge box of aquarelle pencils. We hope this helps you get started. Good luck!

Take a piece of under-jersey with measurements corresponding to the size described in the kit or use the piece cut to size which is supplied with the kit. Fold it double lengthwise. Attach a thread to a top corner and gather the top. Do this through both layers of fabric. Tighten the thread and secure it tightly. Next, scallop the long side two-thirds of the length. See figure 1.

Turn the husk and stuff it with picked wool until it is a nice round ball with the circumference specified in the instructions. Tie off the fabric at the bottom of the ball. This will be the neck. If the head has a circumference of more than 3 inches it is advisable to leave a bit of wool in the neck. This will prevent the head from wobbling.

See figure 2.

Now make an eye-line. Attach the thread at ear level to one side of the head (Seam is now in the center of the back.) The ear level is exactly the center of the ball. Wrap the thread around the head $1\frac{1}{2}$ times and tighten the thread so that the eye-line sinks slightly in the ball. The head will now be somewhat oblong. Attach the thread at the other "ear." Sew the bead for the nose onto the jersey just under the eye-line exactly in the center. Sometimes, we don't make a separate nose for smaller heads. See figure 3

Now take the skin-color jersey supplied with the kit or the piece cut to size. Remember to work in the lengthwise direction here (stretch is the width). Lay the under-jersey piece on the head so that the long sides at the back touch each other and fall on the center back seam. Stitch the fabric with an overhand stitch. See figure 4. Sew the center back seam

to the front and center with a small stitch. Fold the triangles flat on the head fixing them with some small stitches, see figure 5. Push the head made of under-jersey securely into the husk of skin-color jersey and tie off the neck. Make sure the fabric falls smoothly at the neck. Tie off the neck and quilt two eyes on the eye-line. Determine and mark the right spot for the eyes using two hat pins. These are always located on the eye-line. Always practise first and look carefully. Eyes that are too close together give the doll an angry expression, too far apart gives the doll a somewhat dumb expression. View it from a distance and move the pins around before you decide on the final location for the eyes. It is often "microscopic" work, but a nice head really does a lot for the doll. When you've decided on the spot, attach a thread to the back of the head and use the needle to put it straight through the head precisely in the direction of the pin. Take the pin out and put the needle back in two thread lengths to the side and put the needle through the head to the back. Pull the thread tightly so that the eye lies deeper and fasten off. Use the same method to create the other eye. See figure 6.

Coloring the mouth, eyes and cheeks. Choose an eye-color that matches the doll or its clothes. I often give summer and winter dolls blue eyes. Fall dolls often get brown or green eyes, depending on the color of their outfit. The same goes for spring dolls. Indians, Eskimos and the like often get black eyes.

Make sure the pencil is sharpened and moisten the end a bit. I always do this by licking my finger and moistening the pencil with it. Push the end of the pencil into the depth of the eye and twist the point slightly. Be careful - you can always add color, but removing it is almost impossible. Make sure both eyes get the same amount of color.

For the mouth I often just indicate this with a small dot. First I do this with a dry pencil and if the place is right, follow this by marking it with a moist pencil. The mouth will be located exactly between the neck and the nose. I often don't dare to depict laughing mouths or arcs. It is difficult to draw a neat arc onto rough-textured material such as jersey and a dot often says enough. This lends a fairly neutral expression to the doll.

You can give the cheeks color with the piece of red wax. Take the piece of flannel and fold it around one of your fingers. Rub the finger wrapped in flannel firmly over the piece of wax so that the flannel becomes red.

Carefully rub the red piece of cloth over the cheeks. Follow the imaginary line of the cheekbones. You can also give some color to the brow and nose. Don't use too much. A faint shimmer is often enough. You can always add color later.

Again good luck with creating the head. And remember: practise makes perfect!

fig. 1

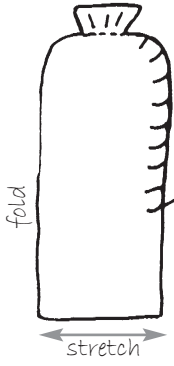


fig. 2



fig. 3



stretch

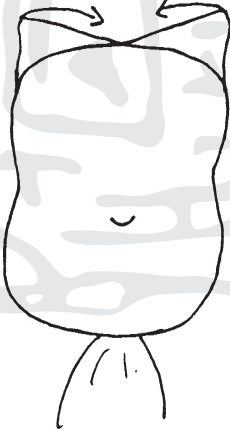
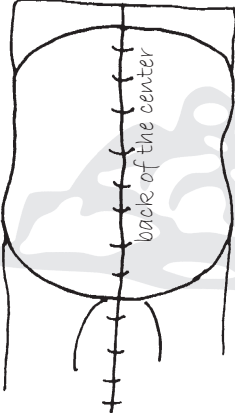


fig. 4

fig. 5



fig. 6