

# Adding Sculpted Toes to a Cloth Doll Foot

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Many cloth doll patterns leave the doll's foot as a simple rounded shape. I have found that adding sculpted toes to these dolls improves their appearance and is an easy and fun project. This article explains how to create a toe pattern for most any size of doll and how to sew that pattern.

## **MATERIALS**

Pattern of your choice for a cloth doll foot and leg; dollmaking fabric and sewing thread; water soluble pencil; fine tip air soluble pen; brown pen, or acrylic paint for optional toenails; stuffing tools; sewing glue stick; 2¼" hand-sewing needle; polyester fiberfill stuffing

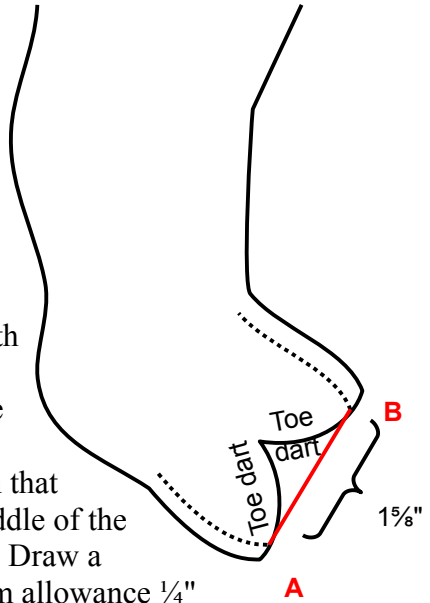
## **GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

Read through these instructions before your next doll project to see how to fit them into your doll construction. Refer to them as you are working on the foot and toes.

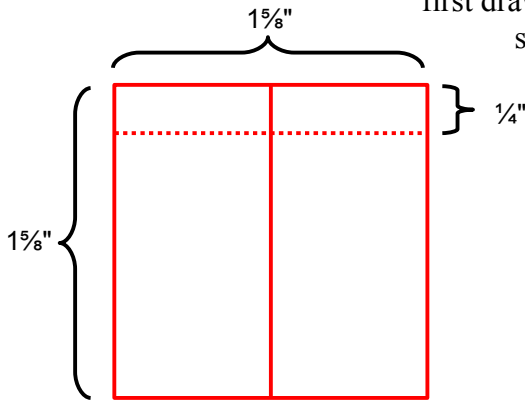
## **DRAFTING TOE TEMPLATES**

For this method of making toes you need a one piece leg and foot pattern with a toe dart. You will replace the toe dart on the original foot with a smoother foot with sculptured toes. The first step is making a pair of templates to help in accurately closing the foot and marking the position of each toe.

1. Make a copy of your foot/leg pattern. You will make a slight change in the pattern and use the altered pattern to construct your toe templates and then to construct the doll's legs and feet. Draw the line marked AB in figure 1 from sew-line to sew-line across the toe opening. The dart should be inside this new line. Measure the line that you have just drawn. In the example this distance is  $1\frac{5}{8}$ ".



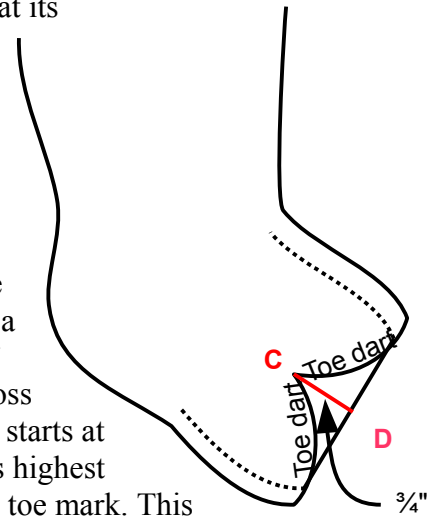
2. Draw a square using your AB measurement. You are going to use this square to make the templates for the top of the foot with the toes spaced across the square. To space the toes properly, first draw a vertical line dividing the square in half. This line



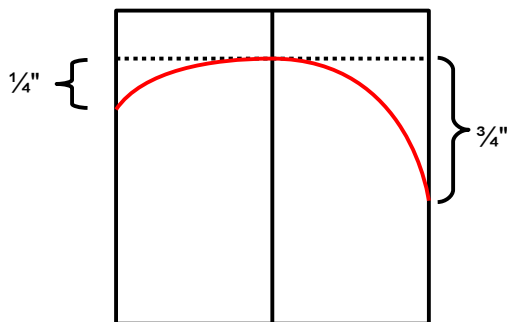
indicates the seam that runs down the middle of the cloth leg and foot. Draw a dotted line for the toe's seam allowance  $\frac{1}{4}$ " below the top of the square.

3. For small dolls soft sculpting is enough to round the foot. The toe template is still needed for small dolls, but there is no need to draw the arc described below. For larger dolls, you will draw an arc below the dotted line on your

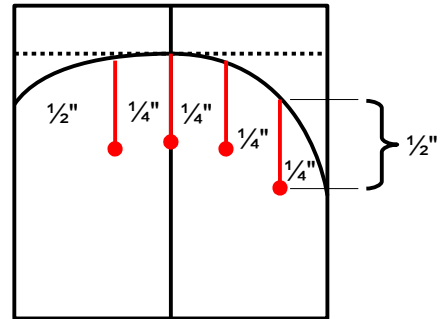
square to outline the toes. The arc will be positioned so that at its peak it just touches the middle of the dotted line and falls off at each end. The big toe falls off about  $\frac{1}{4}$ ". The little toe falls off more than the big toe. To determine how much the little toe falls off, measure the depth of the toe dart on the original leg pattern or template. This is distance CD in the figure to the right. I measured  $\frac{3}{4}$ " on the example pattern.



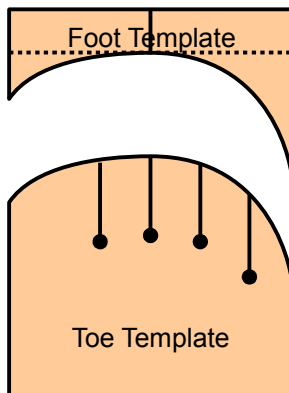
4. On one edge of your square, use your measurement to locate how far to offset the little toe from the dotted line and make a mark. On the other edge of your square mark the position of the big toe, about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " below the dotted line. Draw an arc across the square that looks like the outline of a foot's toes. The arc starts at the little toe mark, touches the dotted line in the middle at its highest point, and ends at the big toe mark. This arc will be the sew line to close the foot and outline the toes.



5. Next mark the toes below the dotted line on the square. Make the big toe about twice as wide as the smaller toes. Make all of the smaller toes about the same width. Make all toes about the same length. For the example foot, the big toe is about  $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide. All the smaller toes are about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " wide. On small dolls, these widths are proportionately smaller. All the toes are about  $\frac{1}{2}$ " long for large dolls. For small dolls the toes are about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " long or even a little less.



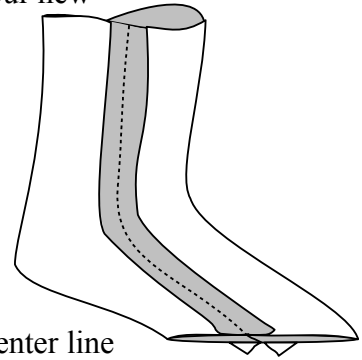
6. You will cut the square into two templates. Split the square by cutting along the sew line arc. The top section forms the foot template that will be used to draw the foot stitch line. The bottom section forms the toe template that will be used to draw the toe sculpting lines.



Once the templates are drafted, it is time to make the legs, feet, and toes.

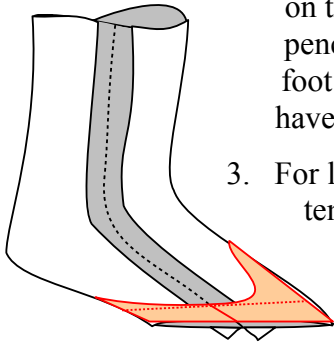
## SEWING AND STUFFING

1. For small dolls, sew straight across the toes. For larger dolls, use your new foot/leg pattern to sew two legs and feet. Do not sew the stuffing opening and the toe area. Finger press the seams of the top and bottom of the foot open. Refold the toe by bringing the top and bottom of each foot together. Match the seams carefully. I like to use a touch of sewing glue stick to keep the matched seams together.



2. Line up the sides of the foot template with the sides of the foot. The edge of the template should align with the end of the toe opening. Line up the two seams in the middle of the foot with the center line

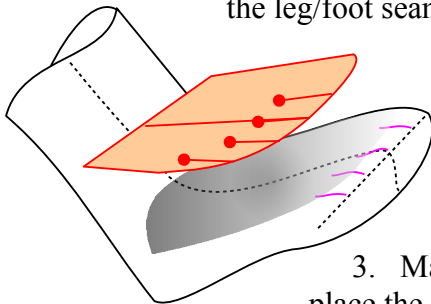
on the template. Trace the foot stitch line on the first foot with a water soluble pencil. Make sure that the line you draw touches the edge on each side of the foot. Flip the template to trace a mirror image on the second foot so that you will have a right and left foot



3. For larger dolls, sew the foot seams on the lines you have drawn from the template. For small dolls, sew straight across the toes. Trim the foot seams to an  $\frac{1}{8}$ " seam. Turn the legs right side out through the stuffing opening. Stuff the feet firmly. Continue stuffing each foot until the stuffing is a little higher than the ankles, then sculpt the toes.

## MARKING THE TOES

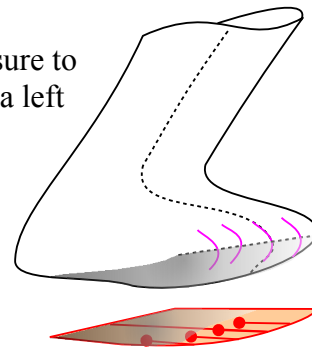
1. Make tiny clips on the toe template between each toe. Push a pin through the template at the dots to make a small hole at each beginning point. Lay the template on the top of the foot. Mark a dot through the hole at the beginning points with a fine tip air soluble pen. Mark a dot at the clips on the template between each toe. The big toe and the second toe should be on one side of the leg/foot seam, the other three toes should be on the other side of the seam. The dots marking the line between the second and third toe should be on this seam. Remove the template. Draw a line with air soluble pen between each toe.



2. Place the template on the sole of the foot. Line up and mark the toes on the sole.

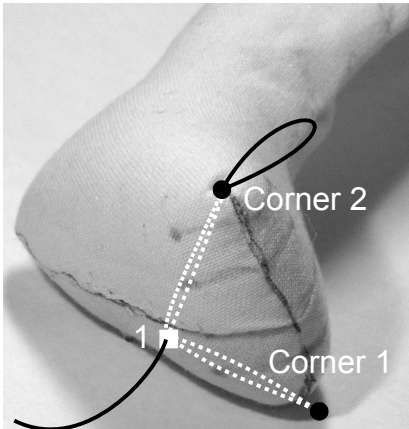
3. Mark the toes on the second foot. Be sure to place the template correctly so that you have a left

and right foot.

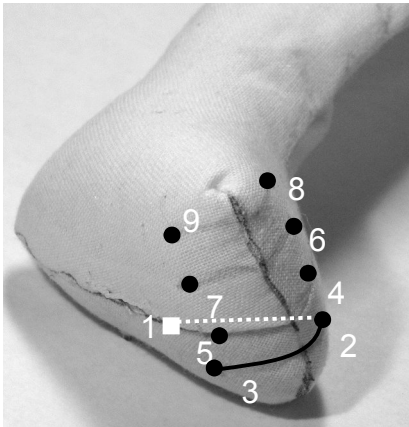


## SCULPTING THE TOES

First you will round the corners on each side of the toe seam and then you will sculpt the toes.



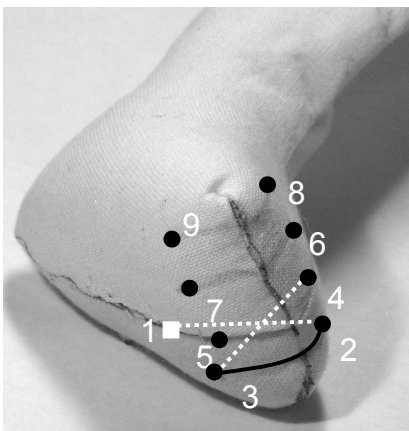
1. Thread a needle and tie a small knot at one end. Push the needle into the foot/leg seam on the sole of the foot. Bring the needle out at one corner of the toe seam. Pull the thread all the way through the foot and gently tug until the knot is inside the foot. Take a small stitch and send the needle back to the sole near your starting point. Pull gently on the thread until the first corner is rounded. Round the second corner of the toe seam in the same manner. Secure the thread with one or two tiny stitches on the sole at the foot/leg seam. Do not cut the thread. Add a little stuffing at the rounded corners to smooth the toe line.



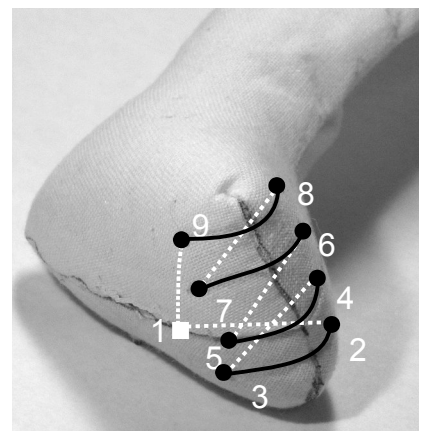
2. Dots in the figure show the points we will use to sculpt the toes. Insert the needle at the midline of the sole show as square 1, bring the needle out at the top of the foot at dot 2 where the big toe starts. Wrap the thread around the edge of the foot to define the big toe by inserting the needle into point 3 on the sole of the foot. Push the needle back to dot 2 at the top of the foot. Gently pull the thread until you are satisfied with the shape of the big toe.

3. Put the needle back into dot 3 and bring it out through dot 4 as shown in the figure on the left. Loop down to dot 5, back to dot 4, and then shape this toe in the same way that you shaped the big toe.

4. Continue down the foot until you have sculpted all the toes.



5. After you have sculpted the little toe, take several tiny stitches in the sole at the beginning point of the little toe line to secure the thread. To hide the thread end send the needle and thread back through the last stitch without catching any fabric on either side of the foot. Bring the needle out through the sole on the seam line at square 1. Pull



the thread tightly before cutting it close to the fabric. When the thread is released, the end of the thread will go back inside the foot and be hidden.

## **ADDING TOENAILS**

Toenails are optional. If you would like to add toenails, I suggest that you use a purple air soluble pen to lightly draw toenails on the toes. If you are not satisfied with the result, the ink will evaporate and you can try again. For unpainted nails go over the purple lines with a waterproof brown pen. For polished nails, fill in the nails with acrylic paint or waterproof pen.

A version of this article appeared in the February/March 2014 issue of *Soft Dolls and Animals!*