



SKELLY THE LITTLE SKULL PLUSH

Free Knitting Pattern

Softly rounded skull character with knitted appliques, stitched smile, tiny arms and plump feet



Skill level: Confident Beginner / Intermediate

Worked flat on straight needles and seamed

1. Pattern Overview

This pattern makes a softly rounded skull plush with a tall domed head, compact lower jaw, black oval eye patches, a small knitted nose, a stitched toothy smile, tiny side arms and rounded feet. All knitted pieces are worked flat. The main body is shaped as one piece, seamed at centre back, stuffed, and finished with a narrow knitted cord around the head-to-jaw transition.

Construction at a glance: Knit the main body first, add the face while the fabric is flat, seam and stuff the body, then add the ridge cord, feet and arms. The eye patches and nose remain unstuffed; arms, feet and body are stuffed.

2. Finished Size

Measurement	Approximate finished size
Overall height	approx. 24-26 cm / 9.5-10.25 in
Body width at widest point	approx. 17-18 cm / 6.75-7 in
Body depth	approx. 13-14 cm / 5-5.5 in
Overall width including arms	approx. 22-24 cm / 8.75-9.5 in
Head section, ridge to crown	approx. 15-16 cm / 6-6.25 in
Lower jaw/body, base to ridge	approx. 8-9 cm / 3.25-3.5 in
Each eye patch	approx. 3.5-4 cm wide x 5 cm high / 1.4-1.6 x 2 in
Each arm	approx. 3.5-4 cm / 1.4-1.6 in long
Each foot	approx. 6 x 4.5 cm / 2.25 x 1.75 in

Finished size may vary depending on yarn, needle size, tension, stuffing and individual technique.



3. Materials and Tools

- DK / light worsted yarn, smooth texture, approximately 220-250 m per 100 g.
- Cream or warm ivory: approximately 130-150 g / 285-375 m for body, arms, feet and ridge cord.
- Black: approximately 8-12 g / 18-30 m for eye patches, nose and mouth embroidery.
- 3.5 mm / US 4 straight knitting needles, or size needed to obtain a dense toy fabric.
- Polyester stuffing.
- Tapestry needle for mattress stitch, applique and embroidery.
- Locking stitch markers or small pieces of contrasting yarn for marking centre front and placement points.
- Pins, scissors and measuring tape.

4. Gauge and Tension

22 sts x 30 rows = 10 x 10 cm / 4 x 4 in in stockinette stitch, measured unstretched on 3.5 mm / US 4 needles.

Use firm, even tension. The fabric should be dense enough that stuffing does not show between stitches. If your fabric is loose, move down a needle size. If it is very stiff and difficult to sew, move up slightly while keeping the fabric closed enough to contain stuffing.

5. Abbreviations

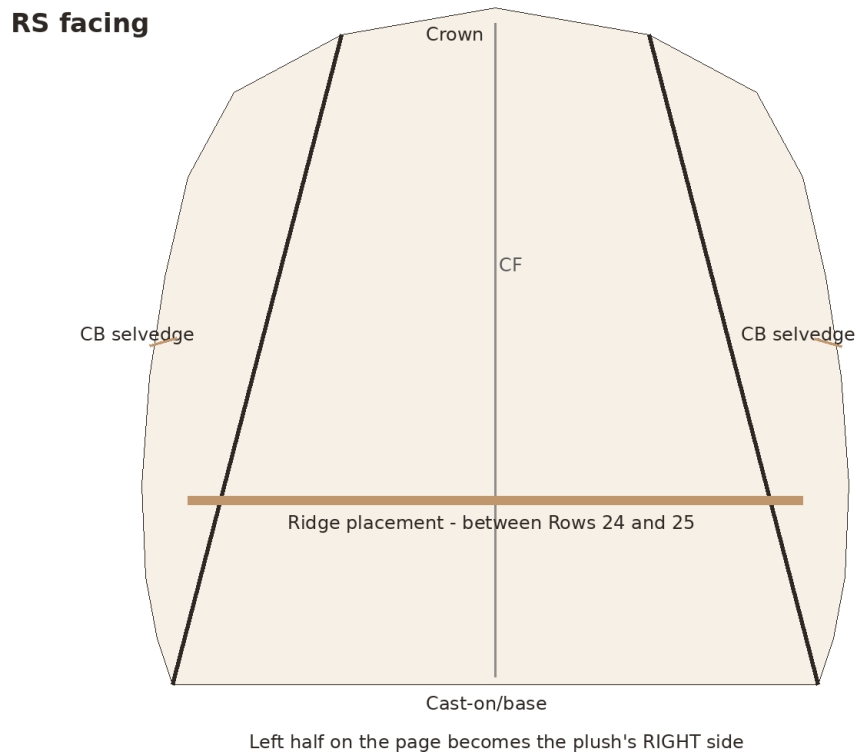
Abbreviation	Meaning
CO	cast on
BO	bind off
k	knit
p	purl
st / sts	stitch / stitches
RS	right side
WS	wrong side
kfb	knit into the front and back of the same stitch; 1 stitch increased
M1L	lift the bar between stitches from front to back and knit through the back loop; 1 stitch increased
M1R	lift the bar between stitches from back to front and knit through the front loop; 1 stitch increased
k2tog	knit 2 stitches together; 1 stitch decreased
ssk	slip 2 stitches knitwise one at a time, return the left needle through their fronts, then knit them together through the back loops; 1 stitch decreased
p2tog	purl 2 stitches together; 1 stitch decreased

6. Method and Orientation

All pieces are knitted flat. Stockinette stitch means knit on RS rows and purl on WS rows. The main body has one vertical centre-back seam. Its two long selvages become centre back when joined.

Right and left are described from the finished plush's point of view. With the main body lying flat, RS facing and cast-on edge at the bottom, the half on your left becomes the plush's right side, and the half on your right becomes the plush's left side.

Centre front is the midpoint of each row. On 104-st rows, centre front falls between sts 52 and 53. On 112-st rows, it falls between sts 56 and 57. The two selvage edges are centre back.



7. Construction Overview

Piece	Qty	Stuffing	Opening / finishing
Main body	1	Stuffed	CO edge is gathered at base; crown is gathered after stuffing; long selvages form CB seam.
Eye patches	2	Unstuffed	Sewn flat to the head before the body is seamed.
Nose	1	Unstuffed	Sewn flat between the eyes before the body is seamed.
Arms	2	Lightly stuffed	Tip is gathered; shoulder edge remains open and is flattened for a two-layer attachment.
Feet	2	Moderately stuffed	Toe is gathered; heel edge remains open and is flattened for attachment.
Ridge cord	1	Unstuffed	Knitted as a narrow cord and sewn around the body between Rows 24 and 25.

8. Main Body

With cream yarn, CO 32 sts. The cast-on edge becomes the base. Work the following shaping in stockinette stitch. Keep both selvedge stitches neat because they will be joined with mattress stitch at centre back.

Important: Do not pull the crown closed yet. After Row 75, the remaining 8 stitches are threaded onto the working yarn and held until the body has been seamed and stuffed.

Row	Instruction	Count
Row 1	[K3, M1R, k4, M1L, k1] 4 times.	40
Row 2	Purl all 40 sts.	40
Row 3	[K4, M1R, k5, M1L, k1] 4 times.	48
Row 4	Purl all 48 sts.	48
Row 5	[K5, M1R, k6, M1L, k1] 4 times.	56
Row 6	Purl all 56 sts.	56
Row 7	[K6, M1R, k7, M1L, k1] 4 times.	64
Row 8	Purl all 64 sts.	64
Row 9	[K7, M1R, k8, M1L, k1] 4 times.	72
Row 10	Purl all 72 sts.	72
Row 11	[K8, M1R, k9, M1L, k1] 4 times.	80
Row 12	Purl all 80 sts.	80
Row 13	[K9, M1R, k10, M1L, k1] 4 times.	88
Row 14	Purl all 88 sts.	88
Row 15	[K10, M1R, k11, M1L, k1] 4 times.	96
Row 16	Purl all 96 sts.	96
Row 17	[K11, M1R, k12, M1L, k1] 4 times.	104
Row 18	Purl all 104 sts.	104
Row 19	Knit all 104 sts.	104
Row 20	Purl all 104 sts.	104

8. Main Body

Continue the main body with Rows 21-40. Keep the RS facing knit and the WS facing purl exactly as listed.

Row	Instruction	Count
Row 21	Knit all 104 sts.	104
Row 22	Purl all 104 sts.	104
Row 23	Knit all 104 sts.	104
Row 24	Purl all 104 sts.	104
Row 25	[K12, M1R, k13, M1L, k1] 4 times.	112
Row 26	Purl all 112 sts.	112
Row 27	Knit all 112 sts.	112
Row 28	Purl all 112 sts.	112
Row 29	Knit all 112 sts.	112
Row 30	Purl all 112 sts.	112
Row 31	Knit all 112 sts.	112
Row 32	Purl all 112 sts.	112
Row 33	Knit all 112 sts.	112
Row 34	Purl all 112 sts.	112
Row 35	Knit all 112 sts.	112
Row 36	Purl all 112 sts.	112
Row 37	Knit all 112 sts.	112
Row 38	Purl all 112 sts.	112
Row 39	Knit all 112 sts.	112
Row 40	Purl all 112 sts.	112

8. Main Body

Continue the main body with Rows 41-60. Keep the RS facing knit and the WS facing purl exactly as listed.

Row	Instruction	Count
Row 41	Knit all 112 sts.	112
Row 42	Purl all 112 sts.	112
Row 43	Knit all 112 sts.	112
Row 44	Purl all 112 sts.	112
Row 45	Knit all 112 sts.	112
Row 46	Purl all 112 sts.	112
Row 47	Knit all 112 sts.	112
Row 48	Purl all 112 sts.	112
Row 49	Knit all 112 sts.	112
Row 50	Purl all 112 sts.	112
Row 51	[K12, k2tog, k12, ssk] 4 times.	104
Row 52	Purl all 104 sts.	104
Row 53	[K11, k2tog, k11, ssk] 4 times.	96
Row 54	Purl all 96 sts.	96
Row 55	[K10, k2tog, k10, ssk] 4 times.	88
Row 56	Purl all 88 sts.	88
Row 57	[K9, k2tog, k9, ssk] 4 times.	80
Row 58	Purl all 80 sts.	80
Row 59	[K8, k2tog, k8, ssk] 4 times.	72
Row 60	Purl all 72 sts.	72

8. Main Body

Continue the main body with Rows 61-75. Keep the RS facing knit and the WS facing purl exactly as listed.

Row	Instruction	Count
Row 61	[K7, k2tog, k7, ssk] 4 times.	64
Row 62	Purl all 64 sts.	64
Row 63	[K6, k2tog, k6, ssk] 4 times.	56
Row 64	Purl all 56 sts.	56
Row 65	[K5, k2tog, k5, ssk] 4 times.	48
Row 66	Purl all 48 sts.	48
Row 67	[K4, k2tog, k4, ssk] 4 times.	40
Row 68	Purl all 40 sts.	40
Row 69	[K3, k2tog, k3, ssk] 4 times.	32
Row 70	Purl all 32 sts.	32
Row 71	[K2, k2tog, k2, ssk] 4 times.	24
Row 72	Purl all 24 sts.	24
Row 73	[K1, k2tog, k1, ssk] 4 times.	16
Row 74	Purl all 16 sts.	16
Row 75	[K2tog, ssk] 4 times.	8

After Row 75: cut yarn leaving a 30 cm / 12 in tail. Thread the tail through the remaining 8 sts and remove them from the needle. Leave the loop loose for now; the crown is pulled closed after stuffing.

Do not gather the cast-on edge yet if you are still working the face flat. The base is gathered during body assembly.

9. Eye Patches - Make 2

With black yarn, work in stockinette stitch. CO 4 sts.

Row	Instruction	Count
Row 1 (RS)	Kfb, k2, kfb.	6
Row 2 (WS)	Purl all sts.	6
Row 3	Kfb, k4, kfb.	8
Row 4	Purl all sts.	8
Row 5	Knit all sts.	8
Row 6	Purl all sts.	8
Row 7	Knit all sts.	8
Row 8	Purl all sts.	8
Row 9	Knit all sts.	8
Row 10	Purl all sts.	8
Row 11	Knit all sts.	8
Row 12	Purl all sts.	8
Row 13	Ssk, k4, k2tog.	6
Row 14	Purl all sts.	6
Row 15	Ssk, k2, k2tog.	4
Row 16	Purl all sts.	4

BO all 4 sts knitwise. Leave a 40 cm / 16 in sewing tail. Gently shape each patch into a soft oval with your fingers; do not stretch the edges.

10. Nose

With black yarn, work in stockinette stitch. CO 6 sts.

Row	Instruction	Count
Row 1 (RS)	Knit all sts.	6
Row 2 (WS)	Purl all sts.	6
Row 3	Ssk, k2, k2tog.	4
Row 4	Purl all sts.	4
Row 5	Knit all sts.	4
Row 6	Purl all sts.	4
Row 7	Ssk, k2tog.	2
Row 8	Purl all sts.	2
Row 9	Knit all sts.	2
Row 10	P2tog.	1

Cut yarn and pull it through the final stitch. Leave a sewing tail. When pinning, place the 6-st cast-on edge at the top and the single-stitch point downward. After sewing, take one tiny anchoring stitch at the midpoint between the two centre cast-on stitches and pull the top edge down about one row to create a shallow heart-like notch.

11. Mouth Embroidery

Use black yarn in the tapestry needle. Work the mouth before seaming the body so the back of the embroidery is easy to reach.

- For the mouth, follow the physical CF line across the shaping change. On Rows 15-16 (96 sts), CF falls between sts 48 and 49. On Rows 17-18 (104 sts), CF falls between sts 52 and 53.
- Backstitch a shallow smile with the ends near Row 18, about 10 sts to either side of CF. Let the centre dip to about Row 15 on the marked physical CF line.
- Add 7 short vertical tooth stitches across the smile. Place one at centre front, then three on each side at roughly even spacing. Make the centre tooth about 4 rows tall and the others about 3-4 rows tall.
- Secure ends on the WS without pulling tightly enough to pucker the stockinette.

12. Arms - Make 2

With cream yarn, CO 6 sts. Work in stockinette stitch. The cast-on edge forms the rounded tip; the bound-off edge forms the shoulder opening.

Row	Instruction	Count
Row 1	Kfb, k4, kfb.	8
Row 2	Purl all sts.	8
Row 3	Kfb, k6, kfb.	10
Row 4	Purl all sts.	10
Row 5	Kfb, k8, kfb.	12
Row 6	Purl all sts.	12
Row 7	Kfb, k10, kfb.	14
Row 8	Purl all sts.	14
Row 9	Kfb, k12, kfb.	16
Row 10	Purl all sts.	16
Row 11	Knit all sts.	16
Row 12	Purl all sts.	16

BO 16 sts knitwise, leaving a long sewing tail. Mattress-stitch the side edges from tip to shoulder, gather and secure the 6-st cast-on tip, turn RS out, and stuff lightly. Leave the 16-st shoulder edge open; flatten it into an 8-st two-layer seam.

13. Feet - Make 2

With cream yarn, CO 8 sts. Work in stockinette stitch. The cast-on edge forms the toe; the bound-off edge forms the heel opening.

Row	Instruction	Count
Row 1	Kfb, k6, kfb.	10
Row 2	Purl all sts.	10
Row 3	Kfb, k8, kfb.	12
Row 4	Purl all sts.	12
Row 5	Kfb, k10, kfb.	14
Row 6	Purl all sts.	14
Row 7	Kfb, k12, kfb.	16
Row 8	Purl all sts.	16
Row 9	Kfb, k14, kfb.	18
Row 10	Purl all sts.	18
Row 11	Kfb, k16, kfb.	20
Row 12	Purl all sts.	20
Row 13	Kfb, k18, kfb.	22
Row 14	Purl all sts.	22
Row 15	Kfb, k20, kfb.	24
Row 16	Purl all sts.	24
Row 17	Knit all sts.	24
Row 18	Purl all sts.	24
Row 19	Knit all sts.	24
Row 20	Purl all sts.	24

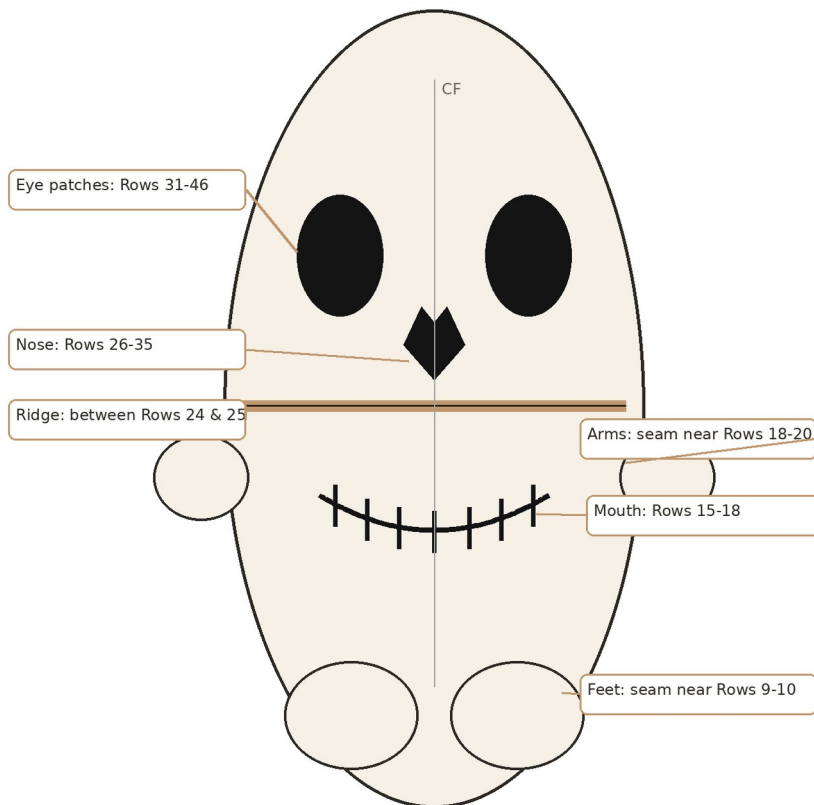
BO 24 sts knitwise, leaving a long sewing tail. Mattress-stitch the side edges, gather and secure the 8-st toe, turn RS out, and stuff moderately. Leave the 24-st heel edge open; flatten it into a 12-st two-layer seam.

14. Skull Ridge Cord

With cream yarn, CO 3 sts. This narrow knitted cord can be made on straight needles without turning the work.

- K3.
- Without turning, slip all 3 sts purlwise back to the left needle. Bring the working yarn firmly across the back of the stitches.
- K3 again. Continue the same slide-back-and-knit motion until the cord measures approximately 50-52 cm / 19.75-20.5 in, or until it circles the stuffed body comfortably at the line between Rows 24 and 25 without stretching.
- BO 3 sts. Leave a 25 cm / 10 in sewing tail.

15. Placement Map



Front placement map - pin all pieces before sewing

Feature	Position	Guidance
Eye patches	Head Rows 31-46	Centre each patch about 10 sts to either side of CF on the 112-st section. Keep both lower edges level and approximately 6 rows above the ridge.
Nose	Head Rows 26-35	Centre on CF with the wide edge at the top and point downward. Leave a small gap between the nose and each eye patch.
Mouth	Lower Rows 15-18	Centre on CF; ends near Row 18, centre dipping toward Row 15.
Ridge cord	Between Rows 24 and 25	Wrap level around the entire body; join the cord ends at CB.
Arms	Near Rows 18-20	Place at the side quarter points, about 26 sts to either side of CF on the 104-st section. Attach each flattened shoulder edge horizontally.
Feet	Near Rows 9-10	Centre each heel seam about 10 sts to either side of CF. Angle toes outward approximately 10-15 degrees.

16. Assembly Instructions

1. Lay the main body flat with RS facing and the cast-on edge at the bottom. Mark CF on the 104-st lower section between sts 52 and 53 and on the 112-st head section between sts 56 and 57.
2. Pin both eye patches to Rows 31-46, centred about 10 sts to either side of CF. Check that the tops are level and the spacing is mirrored. Whip-stitch each patch around its outer edge using black yarn.
3. Pin the nose at CF with its 6-st broad edge near Row 35 and the point toward Row 26. Whip-stitch the edge in place. Pull the midpoint of the top edge down by about one row with a small anchoring stitch to create the shallow notch.
4. Embroider the curved mouth and 7 tooth stitches on the lower section as described in Section 11. Check the face from directly in front before securing the yarn ends.
5. With cream yarn, mattress-stitch the two long main-body selvages together at CB. Sew from the base upward to about Row 36, and from the crown downward to about Row 60, leaving Rows 37-59 open for stuffing.
6. Gather the 32-st cast-on edge at the base. Run yarn through the cast-on loops, pull firmly, take a second pass through several loops, knot securely on the inside and bury the tail.
7. Stuff the body through the CB opening. Fill the lower body moderately firmly, keep the base slightly flatter, and add firmer stuffing through the head so the eye area and dome stay smooth. Do not stretch the stitches.
8. Close the remaining CB opening with mattress stitch. Add or redistribute stuffing before the final few centimetres if needed. Secure and bury the yarn tail.
9. Pull the crown tail to gather the final 8 stitches. Pass the tail through the gathered ring twice, tighten, secure and bury the tail inside the head. Massage the dome into an even curve.
10. Wrap the knitted ridge cord around the body exactly between Rows 24 and 25. Bring the ends together at CB, sew them together securely, then couch the cord to the body every 1-1.5 cm / 3/8-5/8 in with small cream stitches.
11. Pin both feet near Rows 9-10 with their flattened heel seams horizontal and their toe tips angled slightly outward. During attachment, pass each sewing stitch through both layers of the flattened heel edge before entering the body. Sew the full seam length and reinforce each end.
12. Pin both arms near Rows 18-20 at the side quarter points. Keep the shoulder seams approximately horizontal so the arms project sideways rather than rotating forward or backward. Capture both layers of each flattened shoulder edge in every attachment stitch.
13. Set the plush upright. Check the face from the front, limb symmetry from the top, and body shape from both sides and the back. Redistribute stuffing by hand if one side looks fuller.
14. Remove all temporary markers and pins. Secure and bury every yarn tail inside the nearest stuffed section.

17. Sewing Methods

Mattress stitch for the centre-back seam

Work from the RS. Insert the tapestry needle under the horizontal bar between the first and second stitches on one edge, then under the matching bar between the penultimate and last stitches on the other edge. Alternate sides and tighten every few centimetres so the stockinette columns meet without puckering.

Whip stitch for eye patches and nose

Catch the outermost edge of the applique, then take a shallow bite of one body stitch directly beneath it. Keep stitches small and evenly spaced. Pull only enough to hold the edge flat.

Flattened two-layer limb attachment

For each arm or foot, flatten the open edge so front and back layers lie together. Each sewing stitch must pass through one stitch from the front layer and the corresponding stitch from the back layer before entering the body. Return through the next body point and the next pair of limb stitches. This prevents an open tube from remaining at the join.

Couching the ridge cord

Use cream yarn and take tiny anchoring stitches over or through the underside of the cord at regular intervals. Keep the cord level and avoid pulling so tightly that the body is indented.

18. Stuffing and Shaping

- Main body: firm enough to hold the tall skull shape, but not so firm that stockinette gaps open.
- Head dome: use small tufts and distribute them upward and outward to prevent a flat crown or hard lumps.
- Lower body: keep the base slightly flatter so the plush can sit with the feet helping support it.
- Arms: lightly stuffed so they stay soft and do not become stiff cylinders.
- Feet: moderately stuffed and rounded, with the heel area slightly softer for a neat attachment seam.
- After assembly, roll the plush gently between your palms and press the sides to even out stuffing without stretching the fabric.

19. Finishing

Check that the ridge is level all the way around and that its join sits at CB. Smooth the eye patches with your fingers, reshape the nose point if needed, and straighten the tooth stitches so they cross the mouth line cleanly. Trim no yarn tail until it has been secured and buried inside the plush.

20. Final Visual Checklist

- [] Face is centred on CF and not rotated toward either side.
- [] Eye patches are level, equal in height and evenly spaced.
- [] Nose is centred, points downward and has a small top notch.
- [] Mouth is centred and forms a shallow, even curve.
- [] All 7 tooth stitches are secure and visually balanced.
- [] Ridge cord is level and its join is hidden at CB.
- [] Centre-back seam runs straight from base to crown.
- [] Arms are mirrored and their attachment seams are approximately horizontal.
- [] Feet are mirrored, sit low on the front and point slightly outward.
- [] Body stands or sits without leaning strongly to one side.
- [] No stuffing is visible through the stockinette.
- [] No openings, loose seams, trapped markers or unsecured tails remain.

21. Troubleshooting

Problem	Practical correction
Stuffing shows between stitches	Use a smaller needle or slightly firmer knitting tension. If the body is already assembled, remove a little stuffing from the affected area and redistribute it.
Body is too large or too small	Check the stockinette gauge. Fewer than 22 sts per 10 cm / 4 in will make the body wider; more than 22 sts will make it narrower. Fewer than 30 rows per 10 cm / 4 in will make the body taller; more than 30 rows will make it shorter. Adjust needle size before remaking structural pieces.
Dome looks pointed	Redistribute stuffing away from the very top and into the upper side walls. The crown gather should close the opening, not create a hard peak.
Dome looks flat	Add small tufts of stuffing beneath the crown and smooth them outward. Keep the final 8-st gather tight.
Centre-back seam twists	Mattress stitch may have joined mismatched row bars. Reopen the twisted section and match rows directly across from one another.
Eye patches look uneven	Remove the less secure patch, repin both at the same row height and measure the centre-to-CF distance before resewing.
Ridge cord slopes	Unpick a few couching stitches, level the cord along the Row 24/25 boundary, repin, then re sew with evenly spaced anchors.
Arms rotate forward or backward	Check that the flattened shoulder seam is attached horizontally. Reposition the seam rather than twisting the stuffed arm.
Feet do not balance the plush	Shift the heel attachment slightly outward or downward, and keep the toe tips angled about 10-15 degrees outward.
Mouth puckers	The embroidery is too tight. Ease the backstitches and tooth stitches until the stockinette lies flat.
Applique edges lift	Add a few extra whip stitches through the outer edges, especially at the eye-patch curves and nose corners.

Finished shape: The skull should read as one softly rounded cream form with a slightly wider head above the narrow ridge, a compact lower jaw, large black oval eyes, a small centred nose, a shallow stitched smile, tiny side arms and two plump front feet.