
Clothespin Dolls with Amy Karol

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

(musical notes) - I'm gonna show you how to make clothespin dolls with a little felt pouch for them to nestle into. And these are great toys to make for yourself or for your kids. And your kids can make them all on their own. They can be messy and lovely and wonderful. You can use yarn for the hair, you can paint the hair, paint the face, use any skin color you want. They make great gifts and they're fun to play with. And you're gonna have a lot of fun making them too. (gentle music)
(musical notes)

Chapter 2 - Materials

Materials

- The materials for this project are really easy to find. You need clothespins. You can find these at your craft store. You want the ones with what looks like a head on them. And then you'll need paint to paint the clothespins. And some yarn for hair if you want to have hair. You don't have to have yarn hair. Then brushes. And these pens are great for drawing on the eyes and the smile. Ribbons, fabric for the clothing on your dolls. You'll need some felt for the pouch and needle and thread to sew that up. Scissors are very helpful, especially if they're sharp, and a rotary cutter. And for glue a glue stick works great, and some white glue to just get that ribbon on there nice and secure.

Chapter 3 - Make Dolls

Painting dolls

- So we're gonna paint the dolls and painting the dolls is pretty easy. We just need a brush and some paint. And because my girls like to usually paint their dolls to look like people, we have a lot of different colors, because people come in a lot of different colors. So it's nice to have a wide variety of clothespin dolls together in terms of skin tone. And what color do you want your doll to be? - [Girl] I want this color. - Okay, so I think that's sort of a mixture of these colors, so why don't you mix that up? And I think you'll want a little bit of pink and brown and a little white, and I can help you with that too. And we're using a mixture of acrylic and tempera. And tempera paint is water-based, which isn't always the best for craft projects, because it means if it gets wet, it can bleed. But if you mix acrylic with it, it will be fine. So I use kind of a hodgepodge of paints, just as long as there's a little acrylic in anything it will be waterproof. The reason why I always paint the dolls first is when you're drawing the face on it, doesn't bleed, but if you try to draw the face on the wood without it being painted, the ink will actually bleed really badly with the wood grain and it's really frustrating. And I've just realized it's much, much easier just to paint the wood first. So you can just go ahead and grab your doll and go ahead and paint it. And I just paint the head and just until the wood splits. I don't usually paint all the way down and mostly that's because it just takes less time to dry. It's important to get into this little neck fold here of the doll. And these, part of why these are so fun to make is when you're making them they turn from clothespin into doll human form, and it's just fun making something that looks human. Although one tip when you're working with really little kids, because it's a doll and it does have sort of a human quality to it, if they mess up the face sometimes that can be really troubling for small children. They kind of are freaked out, because they've made the face look freaky and weird. So that's a good time to maybe have an extra

one on-hand or to have mom or dad help with the eyes, because that can be really upsetting for young kids sometimes. Sometimes they are totally cool with it and it's fine. It's really handy to have a shoe box or something like this to dry them and you can just leave them there. And then when they're dry you can draw the face on with a pen. So why don't you grab whichever one you would like to work on? I think that one's closest to what you were painting. And I have different pens here and my favorite for this kind of project are these Pigmars. I actually haven't used these a ton, but we're going to and see how they do. But this is nice for the mouth and for eyes. So what color do you want your eyes? We have brown, we have black, we have blue. - I think I'm just gonna do black. - Black, okay. So I'm gonna give you this one, because it has a one on it, which means it's a nice, fine point. There you go. And I'm going to grab this one here and do some black eyes. I'm gonna just draw a little circle here and then you can add the mouth. And then for the mouth I'm gonna use this red. For the faces, the simpler the better. You can just rest these here. Let me see what you've done. Look at the that, that's adorable. Okay, so just put it here and then we'll paint the hair.

Adding hair

- These little clothespin dolls need hair. And you can paint the hair, or you can do yarn. Which do you want to do for your doll? - Yarn. - Yarn. Okay. And the best way to use yarn hair, is to use a yarn that is a little bit thicker, and it also looks like the hair color that you want. This is a really nice yarn to use, and this one is too. And you can see what I've done here is I've just put on three strands of yarn and glued it. And then braided it. Which seems really fussy and crazy, but it's really easy, and super cute. This doll has this yarn here, and I glued on four strands, and then just tied a little bit of embroidery floss here and glued it to her head. And then you can also do painted hair. Here's a little boy, and you can see the paintwork's the best when you paint it only on the round top of the clothespin. And here's a little girl with a bob. And there's this little line for you to follow with the paint to make pretty easy to do this. Now, if little kids want to do this on their own, that's great. You'll get some crazy fantastic hair styles. And they can paint it all the way down if they want to. If they want a little help, you can make it a little bit tidier. But really, anything looks cute. And here's a little flapper doll, here with a brown bob, and a little bit of embroidery floss tied and secured with glue here, which is a pretty cute style too. So there's a lot of different ways to do the hair, and it's really fun to sort of imagine this group together up to no good, with different crazy hairstyles and dresses. You can really have fun with these. The wilder the better. So don't feel you have to make them all tidy. I think these are kinda of naughty dolls, to be honest, so have fun with that. What would you like for your doll? What kind of hair? - Yarn hair. - Yarn hair. Okay. So what color do you think you'd like for ... This is what we have right here. Will either of these ... - I think I'm gonna do this one. - Okay. So the best way to do the yarn is ... Here's your doll, right? We're gonna cut some lengths of yarn. So go ahead and just cut ... Do you want it braided? Or do you want it loose? Or do you want it in a ponytail? - [Girl] I want it loose, but about this long. - [Woman] Okay so lets cut about four strands of this yarn and we'll just get a general sense of how long to cut it. So I would cut about four like that. Don't worry, we'll grab that. And I think I'm gonna actually paint on my hair. Do you have four there? - [Girl] Not yet. Now I do. - [Woman] Okay. If you wanna put your doll here, we can use that as a place to glue. And then, go ahead and take this white glue, and take this ... - [Girl] What if they're not all the same size? - [Woman] Yes, because we're gonna trim it afterwards. So go ahead and just do a dot of glue here and just smear it on there. It doesn't have to be too tidy. Yeah, that's good. And you can use the tip of that glue or use your finger and just smear it around a little bit. Put it towards the back of the head too. And then just lay your yarn right over the top of

the head. And you can decide how low you want it. And we're just gonna lay them in a row. Perfect. And it seems like they're moving around a lot, but it really does dry just fine. - [Girl] I think three will work. - [Woman] Okay, we can do three. And you can leave it like this if you want. This kinda looks a little crazy-pants here, but if you want to you can glue it again later and tie it off like this, and then it will be a little more tidy. Now I think for mine I'm gonna paint on the hair. And I'm just gonna use a little bit of darker brown. You don't need much paint. And then I'm gonna use the smallest brush I have handy, and I like to establish sort of the hairline first, and then just fill it in. And you can see I'm just sort of using my back pinky here as support, because this is actually easier to hold when you're painting. And that's done now. I don't even have to touch that. And now I'm just gonna paint around the back of the head here, and just use that ... It's really fun to do bobs with these, because it's the perfect hairline for a bob. So they all look kind of like flappers. Now if you want to do a little boy, I can show you that. And it's always nice to have little boys in with this group. I'm gonna put this over here to dry. That one has no face. There we go. A boy is nice to do just with little bit of hair on top. And again, I just sort of establish the sides, and then I don't go down on the flat part of the clothespin. You really get to know clothespins on this project. You never would have thought there were so many surfaces. But it's amazing what you learn when you're painting them. So he's all done here. We'll fix his hair, so he doesn't look so weird. And then put him here to dry. He's kinda looking to the side, that's kinda cute. Okay.

Making doll clothes

- When the hair is dry, it's time to dress your dolls because right now, they're naked. So you can decide how you want to dress them. And the easiest way to do this, and I think the most fun way, is to go through your fabric stash. And I just cut squares four inches by four inches. You don't really have to cut them that size exactly, I just find that this size is the easiest to cut for me. When I start cutting much smaller, I get a little crazy with the rotary cutter. So I start out with this size and then just get a sense of how much I need to wrap around the doll. And, what I know, because I've made so many of these now, is that you can just cut this in half. And I don't even use the rotary cutter for that, unless it's great for kids too. You just, cut it in that fold. And this, we'll put on with the glue sticks. So Duya, which fabric do you think you want for your doll? - [Duya] Oh, I think I want this one. - [Woman] Perfect. Okay, so you can fold that in half and then cut it. And this piece is gonna be longer than you need, but it's easy to glue it and then trim it off before you glue it down permanently. Alright, so here's a glue stick. And glue stick works great for this. And I find it's easier to glue stick the body as opposed to the fabric first. So go ahead and just glue stick the body, and you can decide how much you want to show here of the doll. I tend to do this the same on all of them. It doesn't matter if the glue gets all the way done or not, because the glue up above will stick it just fine. So you really want to, let me see Duya. So you can see right up there, yeah, perfect. She's using much vigor with her gluing. Okay, poor dollie. So turn your doll away, and look at the back of your doll, and start right there and just press hard. And just twirl your doll into the fabric. And you don't have to pull real tight here, in fact if you pull real tight, your fabric gets a little distorted. And then I just sort of pinch with my fingers and just leave this flap here. It sort of just looks like a flag, and I'm just pinching it on the wood. And what will happen is it overlaps just a little on the back. So go ahead and look at the back of your doll again. Great. And take your glue stick and now we're just gonna glue a little bit more. And before we press it down, perfect Duya, then I'm just gonna cut here. And I'm not worrying about folding in edges because the glue stick will keep any frayed edges down and then you just make sure it overlaps. Great. And Duya, you might want to see if you need a

little bit more glue. Oh yeah, no, you're good. And then what I do, is I take any extra glue that might be coming out from that seam and I just sort of press it down on there. And that keeps it from fraying. And I'll actually even, because this dries clear, sometimes I just run it around the top and the bottom, and it just keeps those little strings right in there and then I just use my fingers. And then hopefully you don't wipe your fingers on your pants, which is what my kids do. So now she has her little dress on. Let's see how yours is looking. Okay, that's super cute. - [Duya] Hi! - [Woman] Nice to meet you! Okay, so do you want to put some ribbon on the dress? - [Duya] Yes. - [Woman] Alright. So this narrow ribbon works really nicely for the dress and you can see I did a little purple here on this one and then pink on this one. And it tends to work better to have the narrow ribbon on the clothespin doll. So, let's go ahead and... What color ribbon would you like around the dress? Green, alright. So just cut, yeah, enough that you think will wrap around it. Great. And then, I think she's gonna have pink. Alright, so I'll just kind of go like this. And this works best if we glue stick directly onto the ribbon. So I'm gonna take my handy phone book which is what I like to use for scrap paper because who uses a phone book for anything anymore other than scrap paper? I don't know, that's what they're good for. So, Duya honey, just take your glue stick and smear a whole mess of glue. - [Duya] On the string? - [Woman] Yep, just do the whole thing. And I just sort of hold it down. - [Duya] Should I wrap it around? - [Woman] Yeah, and I'll show you what I do, is I try to make sure the glue side is down and I turn my little girl around here. Here I'll show you. It's a little tricky. So I turn her around and I start at the back and then again I just sort of press and turn. And, I know it doesn't seem like it sticks, but it will and then I just trim off the excess. It just lifts for a second, but if you hold it, and maybe count to 10 or something, it will stick. Yeah! - [Duya] I should do it twice so I didn't need to. It keeps popping off. - [Woman] Does it pop? Here, I can help. I'm gonna put her here. - [Duya] Wrap around twice. - [Woman] So we can keep gluing it and messing with it, or if you want to, we can tie it in a knot. - [Duya] I want to tie it. - [Woman] Do you want to tie it in a knot? That's a perfectly acceptable solution. That will be more like a belt. Do you want to tie it, or would you like me to? - [Duya] (mumbles) (both laugh) - [Woman] Okay, will you put your little finger there for the knot? Perfect. There we go. So we'll just trim this off and now is a really good time to finish her hair if you want to. You could do... - [Duya] Can I trim this a little tinier? - [Woman] Yeah. There you go. So what are your thoughts on the hair? We could do braids, we could do low ponytail. We could do a side ponytail. - [Duya] Can I do it like this? - [Woman] You can do it like that, that's beautiful. Let's make their pouch.

Chapter 4 - Make Felt Pouch

Cut pouch

- Your dolls need a pouch to live in, and your pouch can hold all six, or 10, or three, or two, but I feel like they need something to sleep in at night, so let's make pouches. How many dolls do you want in your pouch? - Three. - Three, alright. I use felt for this, and wool felt is wonderful to work with. You can use any felt you want. This is actually not wool, which is really unusual for me, I'll tell you now because I'm a wool fanatic, but this has been made out of recycled bottles, so I feel like it's fine, and it's really vibrant and fun to work with. Which color what you like? - This. - Okay, that's an excellent choice. And I'm going to go for. - This. - You know what, I'm going to get crazy. I'm going to make a pouch for one doll, one, a single, like as a good sleeping bag. It's a doll sleeping bag, yeah, so I'm going to do, I'm going to do orange, and what I've already figured out for you is the length, so when you're making your pouch, it's just one piece and you fold one piece up and then fold the other to make the flap, so the only thing you need to figure out is how many dolls wide you want your pouch

to be. And the six doll pouch is roughly five inches. And it looks a little narrower right now, but when you sew it, you're creating some, a pocket in there, some depth. So for three dolls, in Delia's case, why don't you pick out three dolls and lay them down? Excellent. We're going to turn this this way and we're just going to get a sense of how wide to make this, so go ahead and lay your dolls just nestled in their bed, and go ahead and kind of move it over to the edge there. Perfect, and we want enough room so when you hand sew it, we have a little bit of stitching room. So let's go ahead and tuck them in. So it'll be something like this. And just sort of pinch here. That's pretty good. We just want to make sure that there's enough room for them to get in trouble, so just about right there. So Delia, what I want you to do. - [Delia] Also they'll be uncomfortable if they're too tight. - [Woman] Exactly, we don't want them too tight. So for Delia's, I'm going to use the rotary cutter and cut this, and is that okay if I do that for you? Okay, so here's my cutting mat. And I'm actually going to get crazy and I'm going to cut two thicknesses at once here. Just like that. Alright, and then the length, it works best if it's about 10 and a half inches. That seems to be the right length to get the fold up and the flap, and since I've already figured that out I'm going to go ahead and just cut it. And you know, kids and rotary cutters make me pretty nervous. I'm happy to give them sharp scissors, but rotary cutters, are, can, you know, cause all kinds of problems, so thank you for letting me cut that for you. So now what you want to do, right, exactly, fold, perfect, perfect. So go ahead and decide, you might want to tuck some in here and see how much head you want showing out. Yeah, so that covers her face, so you might want your flap to be a little bit lower, so what you want to do is, here, kind of just move the whole business down, right, like that, yeah, and then we can put a little pin in there and that will show us where to hand sew. I really like to round off the corners of my flap, but you don't need to. Do you want them rounded or do you like it the way it is? - [Delia] I do want them rounded. - [Woman] Okay, so I usually just do that by sight. Are you comfortable doing that, just going dink, dink? Yep. - [Delia] Do I cut the whole thing or just? - [Woman] I don't. You know I actually just sort of yeah. I just cut that corner and then kind of, that's exactly what I do. Great.

Sew pouch

- [Instructor] Okay, so I have some thread here. What would you like to do your stitch with? Now on Tillia's I'm gonna have her hand sew, is that cool? - [Girl] Yes. - Okay, the other option is you can machine stitch here and if you're making a bunch of these, that's a nice option to have. But for kids, or if you have any time, doing this whole project by hand is pretty great. So, I strongly suggest hand sewing it, only because it's fun. But you can just whip this out with machine, it's just a stitch here, a stitch here and then you can put ribbon on by machine if you want to at the end. But for hand sewing, we just keep those pins in. I really like using this pearlized cotton as opposed to embroidery floss because the floss comes in 8 strands and then they can split and get a little bit difficult to work with, whereas this is just one thickness. Do you want me to thread this for you sweetie? I'm just kinda going. Threading a needle can be kind of a drag and I find that my girls stick with hand sewing a lot longer, - [Girl] There's a knot on this end. - Well that's actually handy, then we won't even need to tie one. There you go. So I tend to thread a bunch for them just to keep 'em goin, because you know what, you have your whole life to learn how to thread a needle. It's not a big deal to have me do that for them. So here's the knot and I usually do a whipstitch here. Is that you want to do or did you wanna do, - Um, no. - Sort of an in and out? - Yes. - So like a running stitch. Okay, so that's really good, a whipstitch takes longer and you go over both edges, a running stitch is just in and out, so that's a really great stitch for kids to do and that's completely strong enough for this project.

So what we wanna do before we start is bury the knot. So go in between these two pieces and then just pull through. And then that little knot will go in between so you won't see it, perfect! And then just go in and out, in and out. And just try to keep your stitches pretty close together and in a relatively straight line. That's nice about using the pink is that it's decorative but it also helps you really see what you're doing. Great, and while you do that, I'm gonna cut out my pouch for one, the little sleeping bag. So I'm gonna work over here. Oh yeah, okay so that happens. So what you wanna to do is just kinda go backwards from where you were. So we're just gonna take that stitch out. - [Girl] Once I tried to do that and I accidentally tied a knot. - [Instructor] Yes, the accidental knots are a drag. There you go. - [Girl] I just ended up cutting it and then taping it. - [Instructor] Did you seriously just cut it and tape it? - [Girl] That was actually last night, I was making a trading card and I was (mumbles) - [Instructor] That's awesome. - [Girl] It worked though. - [Instructor] You cut it and taped it, that's brilliant. So Liddy, I think started sewing with lacing cards. - [Girl] Okay, I'm done with this side should I just tie it in a knot? - [Instructor] Yeah. Now tell me if you need help with that. - [Girl] I think I'm gonna need help, my knot's always, - [Instructor] Okay, what you wanna do is we're just gonna do a little prick here. And then just kinda go through that hole. And again, with embroidery floss this would be not very much fun, but this pearlized cotton makes it pretty fun. And then you can just trim, yeah, and then we can start on the other side. Yep, there you go. But I think Liddy was sewing with lacing cards when she was four. And then you guys started sewing, I'm trying to remember when you started sewing by hand. You started sewing with needle, well you had your first cross-stitch two years ago, so that means you were six. - Six? - I think. - [Girl] I mean, I started the same one I'm still doing them. - [Instructor] Yes, that is true, you started the thing that you are still doing when you were six. But you are almost done with that, that's really funny. So that's been a longer project. What are you, what's goin on? - [Girl] I accidentally pinned the table, but now I'm good. - So here's your knot for your other side. Do you remember how to bury the knot? - [Girl] Yes. - [Instructor] Okay, so you can start on that. And I'm gonna just continue with the solitary confinement of this poor girl. You're gonna have to make friends with her, cause she's by herself in her pouch. - [Girl] Maybe pouch for six. You might be able to squeeze one more in there so she can talk with the others. - [Instructor] Occasionally she can jump in the other pouch, that's a good idea. Interloper. Alright, I'm gonna start her and I think for her pouch I'm going to do a, I am gonna do a whipstitch, cause I just enjoy that stitch. Which is being difficult, but I won. I won the thread fight. - [Girl] Oh yeah, trying to get the ticket out (mumbles) never used it and now it's really really tangled. (laughs) - [Instructor] Okay, mystery solved. - [Girl] That's also why I didn't pick that color, so I couldn't get it out. - [Instructor] You knew that it was tangled because you actually had tangled it. - [Girl] Yes, can you tie the knot? - [Instructor] Yeah. Okay, oh you're done! That's excellent, okay - [Girl] That was really fast. - [Instructor] That was very fast. Okay, so now we need to pick a button, is that your button? Alright, cause we have many button options. But the button you've chosen is very nice too. Excellent. So what we wanna do is while they're tucked in there, we fold this over. So your button's gonna be like that? - [Girl] Yeah. Well actually maybe it get a little higher because the heads are actually touching the tops. So maybe there? - [Instructor] Sure. So we're center it here and I'm gonna put a pin here and here. - [Girl] I don't know how to stitch up the button. - [Instructor] You know what's so cool about the felt? Is we don't have to stitch, we just cut. Oh, and you were saying you don't know how to put the button on? - [Girl] Yeah. - [Instructor] We can get that on, don't you worry. So, that's sort of a general mark for the button. And we're just gonna go like this. The magic of hands, doink. We want your button to go right here, okay. So let's mark this roughly with more pins, just so we can move it. And thread some thread here. Okay, so

now we can move this. So go ahead and take your dolls out. And I have some pink all ready to go for you. - [Girl] Aw she can't see. - [Instructor] No, we'll, she's... Yeah, she's in sorry shape right now, but we'll fix her up. So I'm gonna go ahead and just kind of, - [Girl] Sorry you can't see. - [Instructor] Go right through here. There we are, and we're just gonna sew that button on. So do you just wanna put the button on the needle there? Good, and just sorta. Yeah, and then just go through that other hole. But try not to, you know, hold your hand in there so you don't go through all the layers. Yeah. And just maybe do that two more times, just in and out of each hole. So your thread always goes in the same way it came out. So you've been going through the back so we go in through the back and then we go up through the top. So go ahead and pull that out. - [Girl] I stabbed my hand. - [Instructor] And then go back through that hole again. And I'm just whipping this one together. - [Girl] Ta-da. - [Instructor] Yeah? Does that feel like that button's on there? - [Girl] Yes. - [Instructor] Okay. Alright, so now we'll just tie a little knot here on the inside. And I just do that by picking up a little bit of the fabric, just the way we did on the back, and just sort of tie the knot. So again I'm picking up that fabric, pulling it, there's a loop, tying a knot. And then go ahead and trim that off. Great and you can take those pins out. These ones right here. - [Girl] It's a little loose. - [Instructor] Yeah, I think - [Girl] This one's a little loose too - [Instructor] Yeah, they're a little loose, I think it's okay. - [Girl] That one's pretty good. - [Instructor] That one's on. So now we cut the hole. And we do that by, this is not very scientific but it works. Is I just sort of fold both pins together and I just do little snip and I always do it a little bit less than I think it needs to be. Snip, snip, oh these scissors. - [Girl] Once I did it really really big and the button just fell right off. - [Instructor] So, I would try this and if we need to make it bigger, we can, but usually you can fit it in. Does that feel good? - [Girl] Yes. - [Instructor] Alright, so I would load in your little dollies. That's it! There. Okay. Do they all fit? How's it look? - [Girl] Good. - [Instructor] It looks really good. They're all in there and they're saying "Let us out!" This is just done a little bit crazy here cause I'm keeping it really irregular. We call this folk art, here, this is folksy. But if you really want to be careful, you can do it in perfect intervals and perfect widths, but it's just going around this edge. And it's a really strong stitch and I really like to make it look kind of irregular and fun. And then I'm just gonna tie this knot. And this is a great stitch for if you're making stuffed animals or anything else out of felt, where there's gonna be a lot of tension. And I'm gonna just, so this is one side and you would just repeat this for the other side. Bury the thread here, just where you kind of go into a secret spot and you cut it when it's on the inside so then you don't see the tail. So we just repeat that on the other side and add a button the same way. And then she would nestle in there for her little sleeping bag. There we go, she's kinda tucked into the side. They're all together. All the friends. You can always add a ribbon after you're done with this like I did on this one. The ribbon on the front of this or you can leave it plain and then you're all done. And you have a fun set of dolls and a pouch. And you can take 'em with you and play with them and take them out. - [Girl] Hello, can I (mumbles) - [Instructor] Yeah, that one's sad. But we'll finish her soon. They're nice friends. Bye! (giggles)