

Making miniature animals, sock machine mascots, and shaping techniques

First, it's definitely not necessary to duplicate exactly what I did. In fact, I'd prefer you didn't, as a mascot should be a "one of a kind" thing. Whatever you chose to do, here are some ideas on shaping.

Head and any "round" object (such as spider body): decide on the width appropriate for your item and yarn type. Use an appropriate section of the cylinder to give the width you need. Create short rows as if to heel until you create the amount of fullness needed. Graft with kitchener stitch after stuffing.

For an open mouth: shape head as above, but on last section, knit a point by short rowing down to 1-3 stitches and back to the original number; repeat for other half of mouth.

Arms and legs: use number of stitches appropriate for type of yarn you are using and knit a piece of sufficient length for arm or leg. Gather up end stitches. If leaving them flexible, they will remain curled inward to appear like I cord. If you want to enclose pipe cleaners to give stability or enable desired shaping, make the cord wide enough so you can sew the edges together. That's what I did on the spider legs. The spider socks are flat pieces with the edges sewn together and the end gathered.

For bottle covers, knit shaped sections according to color and theme of your piece.

Feet help stabilize the base on things like the Santa cover. Knit a long rectangle that is the right length for the diameter of the bottle plus enough for the toes to fold over. Fold the end and sew it at the base of the front of the cover. Let the sides roll inward to bring the toes in for a narrower shape. Flatten the piece and sew it to the furthestmost side, down the outer edge, then down the center. This will form a closed bottom.

Your design will need to be created to the dimensions of your bottle, so just knit a swatch and get the right gauge for the yarn you are using. Then multiply the rows per inch times the number of inches you want for any section such as a skirt or Santa suit. You can stretch almost any knitted outfit to fit any bottle if you knit a bit loosely.

For bottles with a "waistline" like dish detergent, it will pull in easily if you do a section of ribbing through the middle. The apron is prettiest if knitted with a picot edge on the hem. Knit a rectangle of sufficient width, knitting the final end onto scrap yarn. It should go to the waistline measuring up from the bottom. The row before you do ribbing, remove stitches from the front of the cylinder, hang the apron, then hang the original stitches back in place on top of the apron ones. Knit one round. Put in ribber needles and knit drawn-in section. Take ribbers out and knit top or blouse (may be a contrasting color). For a bib-front apron, later rehang the front stitches and knit a square; crochet across the top edge to bind off. Do I cord on each top corner and at each side to tie around the waist of the bottle. Crochet around neckline or thread elastic or yarn through the final row; tighten appropriately. If it sounds too difficult to rehang the apron at the waist, it can also be done after the dress and top are finished. Knit picot hem; Hang stitches from the waist area and knit across; continue knitting to form apron top.

Knit arms and tuck under apron as if hands are in pockets. Arms can be knitted separately and sewn into place or knitted by hanging stitches directly from the finished blouse allowing them to curl inward (like I cord).

Hats may be located at craft shops (for soap bottle) or you can knit a sunbonnet to slip over the top. There's also no reason why you couldn't simply leave the top uncovered.