

# Fluffy Stuffies!

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Do you know how many different kinds of stuffed animals there are? There are a lot of different kinds of them. They did not all look like the ones we have today. It took many years to make those stuffed animals. The first stuffed animals were homemade. This report will tell you more about it. I hope you enjoy it!

There were stuffed animals on the earth hundreds of years before you were born. People believe that the first stuffed animals were made when the Egyptians were alive. No remains of these stuffed animals have been found, but there are paintings of them on tomb walls.

Early stuffed animals, made around the 1830s, were homemade. They were made of cloth and straw. In the 1880s, the stuffed animals that we have today, the ones made in factories, were introduced. They were made in Germany. Germany's first stuffed animal was the elephant.

In November, 1902, Teddy Roosevelt was hunting and could not find a bear. So, some people found a bear and tethered it for the President to shoot. Teddy Roosevelt refused to shoot the bear. Clifford Berryman drew a cartoon of this happening. It was published in the Washington Post. This cartoon was very popular. Since it was so popular Morris and Rose Michtum made a stuffed bear. They displayed it in a window with a copy of the cartoon. That is when America started to like the idea of stuffed "Teddy" bears.

Stuffed animals are made of all different types of materials. In the early 1800's, stuffed animals were made of cloth and stuffed with

straw. Now stuffed animals are stuffed with cotton. Sometimes they are even stuffed with beans or beads.

Stuffed animals can be stuffed with pellets. These make the stuffed animals feel like a bean bag. With pellets, you can pose your stuffed animal to make it look how you want. Although it sounds pretty cool, pellets should not be used for children's toys. You should not use these because if the stuffed animal rips, they will spill all over. Since they are small, a little kid could choke on them.

Another type of material to stuff children's toys is polyester. This material can be used in children's toys because it is very light weight. This will work very well for baby's stuffed animals because you want the baby's stuffed animal to be light so he/she can carry it.

Cotton is another way to fill a stuffed animal. It is soft and fluffy. One difference between polyester and cotton is that polyester is man-made and cotton is natural.

Wool is also a natural material that is soft and fluffy. Wool can also be made into children's toys. It has elastic in it that makes it stretchy. But be careful not to throw it in the wash, or your stuffed animal may shrink down to miniature size!

If you have bamboo or corn stuffing, you are helping the earth. These materials are biodegradable. This means that they will break down easier. If you throw bamboo or corn stuffing into a landfill, they will disintegrate much faster than polyester.

All of these materials can be made into a homemade stuffed animal. This is how you make one. First, draw a basic shape of an animal. Then fold your design in half and stick another folded paper over it. Then,

trace the bottom half onto the piece of paper and cut it out. After that, pin the piece of paper onto a piece of fabric and cut it out. If you want ears, do the same thing as the legs but fold the fabric in half and then cut it out because you need four ears to sew together. To do the body, fold the fabric in half and cut. You need two bodies. Sew two ears together to make one ear to sew onto the stuffed animal. Place all of your pieces out. Lay the two bodies next to each other facing opposite ways. Sew the ears to the animals head but not too far up on the head because you need room to sew on the top of the head. You can start to sew but make sure to leave a little space to put the stuffing in. Finally, start stuffing. When you are done stuffing, sew the hole together. That is how you make a homemade stuffed animal.

Although you could make stuffed animals at home, there are stuffed animal factories all over the world. Most stuffed animals are made in China. Animals made in China are high quality. They are a lot cheaper, too. The Ganz factories are in Canada. Ganz makes Webkinz and other stuffed animals. TY beanie babies are made in Illinois. Stuffington toys are made in the U.S.A. They have all different kinds, including elephants, penguins and horses.

There are many different popular brands of stuffed animals. One of the most popular is Folkmanis. They make animal puppets. The goober bear made by Gund is also very popular, too. Ugly dolls and Lanky Cats are some of the favorite stuffed animals. Max and Ruby dolls are very popular.

Did you know that a company could sell this much? Employees at the Build-a-Bear factory in St. Louis are celebrating its 15<sup>th</sup> birthday.

They have already made 100 million friends. We did the division and that means they sold over 6.6 million friends a year.

As you can see, there are many different kinds of stuffed animals. They did not all poof up overnight! They were developed over the years and became the stuffed animals we have today. I hope that you learned something about stuffed animals!

## Resources

1. <http://www.stuffed-teddy-bears.net/the-history-of-stuffed-animals>
2. <http://www.theteddybearmuseum.com/history.htm>
3. <http://www.funkyfriendsfactory.com/2011/05/04/toy-stuffing/>
4. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KoND\\_woMtxc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KoND_woMtxc)
5. [http://www.stuffedanimals.com/help\\_answer.asp?ID=24](http://www.stuffedanimals.com/help_answer.asp?ID=24)
6. [www.Ganz.com](http://www.Ganz.com)
7. <http://www.stuffingtonbear.com/>
8. [www.Aboutbeanies.com](http://www.Aboutbeanies.com)
9. [www.toydirectory.com/monthly/article.asp?is=4594](http://www.toydirectory.com/monthly/article.asp?is=4594)
10. [http://www.pwrnewmedia.com/2012/build-a-bear-workshop/friends\\_count/](http://www.pwrnewmedia.com/2012/build-a-bear-workshop/friends_count/)
11. *Toys and Games* by Philip Steele

