

## VALERIAN MOUSE TOY FOR KITTIES

by Kristin Roach

➔ This past month, I was hit hard with “woman issues” and needed a little extra boost, so I picked up a few ounces of valerian to use in making a healing tincture. As soon as I got home with this herb, my cats started going nuts — pawing at my purse, meowing weirdly. It was like we had catnip on hand. Turns out, valerian contains a chemical called valerinine, which is very similar to the active compound in catnip. For me, valerian helps with falling asleep and balancing out my hormones. For the kitties, it’s pure cat bliss.

I had some of the herb to spare, so I whipped up this cute little sewn fish for my cats to play with. I attached a crochet chain so we can pull it around and toss it for them. They love it!

### Directions

**Step 1:** Print the fish template and cut it out. Fold the fabric in half and pin the template to it. Cut out the shape. You will have 2 pieces that are mirrors of each other.

**Step 2:** Make a crochet chain 3' long. Fasten off the last stitch and weave the loose ends back into the chain. Don't know how to crochet? Follow the easy steps on the following page to make a chain.

**Step 3:** Place the fabric shapes right sides together and sandwich the crochet chain into the nose of the fish as shown. Edge stitch around all sides, leaving a 1" gap. Repeat with a zigzag stitch.

**Step 4:** Turn right sides out and fill with the rice and valerian. (I mixed them in a little bowl first.) Use a hand needle and thread to close up the hole.



**Kristin Roach** graduated with a BFA in painting in 2008 and is currently inspiring others to live life creatively with her websites [craftleftovers.com](http://craftleftovers.com) and [kristinmroach.com](http://kristinmroach.com), and her local art organization Ames Collaborative Art. She's just finished slinging around words for her first book, *Mend it Better*, with Storey Publishing — due out January 2012.



### MATERIALS

- » **1 tbsp valerian root** available at health food stores
- » **2 tbsp uncooked rice** any kind will do
- » **6" square scrap of fabric**
- » **2 yards yarn** Any type will do. Something that won't easily snap works best, like a cotton, linen, or acrylic.
- » **Fish template**



## How To :: Chain



Slip your slip knot onto your crochet hook.



I hold the yarn in my left hand like this.



Then flip your left hand to the left.



And pinch the knot with your thumb and middle finger.



Grab your yarn by going around the bottom to the back and hooking the yarn over the top.



Then pull the yarn through the loop.

