



CRAFT A YEAR - FELTING

WELCOME

Welcome to the Craft a Year Project! For 2008, the Craft is **FELTING**. Please read through this guide carefully, as it contains information and suggestions that are important for your project. **4-H leaders can obtain a Leader Project Guide and other resources from the PEI 4-H Office.** Hopefully you, as a member, will "Learn to do by Doing" through hands-on activities that will encourage learning and enjoyment. If you have any questions, contact your District 4-H Officer or your 4-H project leader.

4-H YEAR COMPLETION

You complete a project by:

- completing the project Achievement Day requirements
- completing a communication project
- completing a community project
- completing an agriculture awareness project
- taking part in Achievement Day

You must complete all of the listed aspects in order to show at Fairs and Exhibitions.



ACHIEVEMENT DAY REQUIREMENTS

1.	2 felted Coasters or Ornaments	10
2.	A 3-D felted item - some ideas include a ball ornament, a small felted and decorated dish or container, a felted bracelet	15
3.	Felted wall hanging or picture Minimum size 5" x 7" (12.5 x 17.5 cm) Maximum size 8" x 10" (20 x 25 cm)	30
4.	Felted item - Suggestions include slippers, a purse, mittens, scarf, pillow or other such item. Fabric or knitted item could be made and then felted, or the item could be made from fabric or a knitted item which you felt first and then make the item	30
5.	Free Choice Item	<u>15</u>
		100

EXHIBITION REQUIREMENT

Junior Members (9 - 14)- Felted Picture or Wall Hanging
Senior Members (15 - 21) - Free Choice Item

**Project Requirement
6 - 8 meetings
to complete this project**

BE A GOOD SPORT!

In the spirit of learn to do by doing, all those involved in 4-H are encouraged to practice good sportsmanship, use common sense at all 4-H activities, and the work in any 4-H project should be the member's own work.

HELPFUL RESOURCES!

www.livingfelt.com/freefeltingpatterns/
www.woolcrafting.com
www.cutoutandkeep.net/projects/reduce_reuse_recycle_a_thrift_store_sweater
<http://knitting.about.com>
www.knittingonthenet.com/

Ages for 4-H members as of January 1st of the 4-H year:

Junior: 9-11 years
 Intermediate: 12-14 years
 Senior: 15-21 years

Check out the PEI 4-H Web Site

www.pei4h.pe.ca

FELTING BASICS

Loose wool can be formed into almost any shape by introducing the right combination of heat, agitation and moisture. In fact, when working with wool, it is hard to keep the fibers from felting! Felting is possible because wool has microscopic scales which cause the fibers to get caught when passing by each other. All types of hairs have scales, but only some kinds have enough scales to felt easily. Some types of camel, llama, goat, dog and rabbit hairs can also be felted easily. There are numerous felting techniques, but most fall within one of three categories.

WET FELTING



Wet felting is the oldest form of felting. Crisscrossing layers of wool are dampened with warm soapy water and agitated by rubbing, rolling, vibrating or a combination of the three. Mongolians have been rolling wool into large flat pieces of felt to cover their *gers*, round tentlike dwellings, for centuries. Smaller shaped items such as hats, bags and footwear can be made with the rubbing method by felting around a form. Laminated felting is another wet felting technique in which wool is felted to another fabric. These techniques can create amazing textures.

FELTED KNITS AND OTHER FULLING

Felted knits are currently very popular. Many felters assert that this technique is more properly called fulling, which is also the term used for the final stage of any wet felted project. Items are knit large and loose then are shrunk using wet felting techniques. Fulling can also be used with weaving and crocheting. This technique takes less skill to control the item's shape than with traditional wet felting, but more time since the item must be both knit and felted. It can also be used to recycle items like recycling a knitted wool sweater to create a felted purse or pillow.



NEEDLE FELTING

Needle felting uses triangular shaped barbed needles to poke wool repeatedly, which draws the fibers through the wool causing them to permanently intertwine. While this technique can be used to make any shape of felted object, it is most useful for making felt sculptures with fine details, such as dolls. Needle felting can be combined with wet felting to achieve the benefits of both techniques. It is an ideal way to add embellishments to a variety of sewing or knitted projects. The process of needle felting bonds fabrics and textiles together. This means that a variety of unique textures and surface decoration can be achieved which is ideal for creative embroidery or other needlecraft projects.



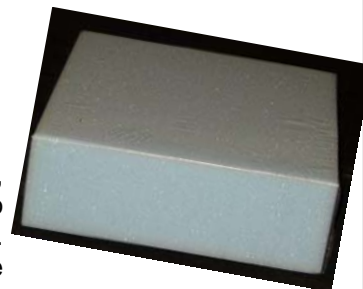
HOW TO NEEDLE FELT BY HAND

Design fantastic wool creations using raw carded wool and a special barbed needle. It's simple, inexpensive, and you can fashion just about anything you can imagine.

Things You'll Need.

1. Felting Needle
2. Felting Pad
3. Carded Wool

Felting Needles: The first thing to note about a felting needle is that it is long, barbed and extremely sharp. Therefore, care needs to be taken when working to avoid injury. The felting needle punches through the fabric from top to bottom. Whether working with a single needle or a needle felt tool, the principle is the same and that is to push or punch the needle through layers of fiber or fabric. This means that it is important to do this on a felting pad which the needle can sink into.



Felting Pad: Special needle felting pads can be purchased; however, many needle felters use polystyrene blocks, upholstery foam or compressed foam.

Tip: When working on unfamiliar surfaces, keep pulling the work up to check that the work is not getting felted to the work base by mistake.

Instructions:

The process of adding embellishments using the needle felting technique is quite simple.

Lay Out the Fabric: Needle felting will mesh different surfaces together, so before starting the project these need to be laid out. It is best to start with small projects such as adding a felt embellishment to some fabric. Most small items can just be laid on top of the base fabric.

Start Punching: Holding the felting needle or tool in the hand, punch the needle through the layers of fabric and fibers. Work on a small area at a time, until the layers start to mesh and then move onto the next area. Repeatedly work over the whole area until the layers are completely entangled and meshed together.

Continue Felting: Turn the felt over occasionally so that it doesn't become attached to the foam pad. Continue felting the wool with the needle until it holds together and becomes firm.



TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL NEEDLE FELTING

Although the technique of needle felting is very simple, there are a few tips that will help produce perfect results every time.

Use the right size needle for the project. Very coarse needles can split or tear fine fabrics.

The layers of fabrics and fibers become permanently bonded, so be certain of your design before starting.

Make neat edges by deciding which side of your felt is the "right side" and turning the edges under, then felting along the edges.

A cookie cutter is a great tool for getting the outline of a simple design. Place pinches of wool inside the cookie cutter and felt it.

You could also trace or draw your own design lightly onto the felt. Simple designs are best for new felters.



SAFETY TIPS

- Keep fingers out of the way. The needles are very sharp AND barbed.
- When felting a flat sheet, be sure to turn the wool over every so often so that it does not become attached to the felting pad.
- When you are ready to add embellishments (a felted flower for instance) to the "right side" of your felt, do not poke the needles through from the back or the base-color felt will appear on the front side of your flower.
- Always use a foam pad beneath your work so you don't break the needle or injure yourself.
- Always poke straight into the wool, not at an angle or the needle could break.

WET FELTING - HOW TO

With wet felting, you can create a soft, dense cloth using wool. The process uses heat, agitation and moisture to shrink and bond the fibers of the wool together. Try wet felting.

Actually, this step is quite simple. If the yarn package is not labeled as 'feltable' look for yarns that are 100% wool or other animal fibers.

If you are following a specific pattern, use that as a guide as to what brand/kind of yarn to buy. Different brands and types will felt differently. Also, when making a project, use only one brand of yarn even if you are using different colors. Supposedly dark colors felt more quickly than light colors.



Next, decide what to make ... If you find a pattern you like that was not created especially for felting, you can try to adjust it to work for felting. During the felting process you can expect to lose around 25% of the size of the finished pattern. There is also usually a difference between how much height and width you will lose.

Another alternative, rather than creating your own item using yarn and then felting it, is to use an old wool sweater. It can be sewn into a hat, purse, or other item.

You need to have hot water and agitation for your item to felt properly. Of course, you can try felting by hand, but the process is easier, quicker, and even safer if you use a washing machine. Set the washing machine on the smallest setting and on hot water. You also want it set on whatever wash setting will provide the most agitation.

You may want to consider putting your item in a pillow case or even a tightly-meshed bag to contain any shedding that may happen. This is an especially good idea for smaller items. Also, make sure any loose yarn ends are woven in or tied off.



Get your washing machine filling with hot water and add a few drops of detergent. Add the item you want to felt.

Set your washing machine to agitate for 10 minutes, then check it to see it's progress. If you want it to felt more, place it back in the hot water and reset the wash cycle so it continues to agitate. Continue to check it about every 5 - 10 minutes until it is the desired size. It could take several checks before your item is done.

Once you determine it is done, simply let the washing machine finish running it through the rinse and spin cycles. If you prefer, you can remove your piece and hand rinse it in cold water and gently ring it out and pat it with a towel.

To dry your felting project, lay a clean, dry towel down on a hard surface. Lay your project down flat on top of the towel. Make sure it is away from bright sunlight and any direct heat, and definitely DO NOT put it in the dryer.

While your piece is wet, you will want to take some time to stretch and manipulate it into shape. Make sure you check your piece often to make sure it is drying okay.

Technically, once your felting project is dry, it is done, but you might want to add some finishing touches. You might also need to clean it up a little bit by trimming off any pilling or longer fibers that were caused by the felting process. Simply use a sharp scissors to trim off any blemishes.



Community and Agriculture Awareness Projects

COMMUNITY PROJECT

Each year you are encouraged to provide a service to your community as a 4-H member. This introduces you to the responsibilities of citizenship. You must participate in your club's plan for a community project and you should have a role to play. Describe your involvement with your club's community project this year.



Our Community Project was _____

I helped by _____

It was beneficial because _____

I learned _____

AGRICULTURE AWARENESS PROJECT

Agriculture is one of PEI's main industries. You are expected to participate with your club to complete a project (or provide a service) which helps your club or others become aware of the importance of agriculture in our lives. As in the community project, you should actively participate.



Our Agricultural Awareness Project was _____

I helped by _____

It was beneficial because _____

I learned _____