

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO MAKING A

Needle-Felted Mushroom



A Beginner

BACKGROUND:

*W*elt is non-woven cloth or material that's produced by matting, condensing, and pressing woolen fibres.

It is a wonderful material that is used for many different purposes: in air fresheners, for children's bulletin boards, and stamp pads. Musical instruments also commonly use felt for such things as wrapping bass drum and timpani mallets, and on the mallets of a piano. Felt is especially useful because of its density and springy-ness.

When you hear that something has been "felted", it can mean:

- It's been **Wet Felted**: This type of felt is made with natural wool fibre that's been stimulated by friction and lubricated with moisture (usually soapy water). When agitated, the fibres move at a 90° angle towards the friction source and away again, in effect making little "tacking" stitches. This "wet" process generates a flat piece of felt because woolen fibres have directional scales on them. The fibres also have kinks in them, and this combination of scales (like the structure of a pine cone) is what reacts to the stimulation of friction and causes felting. (Most felted hats, and craft

felt is made this way).

- If it's been **Needle Felted**: Special barbed felting needles are used to sculpt woolen fiber. The barbs catch the scales on the fiber and push them through the layers of wool, tangling and binding them together. Needle felting works great for creating small, sculptural items.
- If it's been **Fulled**: This means that a knitted garment was shrunk in a hot machine wash. Fulling is an example of how fibers bond together with hot water, agitation, and soap. Felting differs from fulling in the sense that fulling is done to the *fabric*, whereas felting is done to the fibers that are not in the fabric form. (this is what happens when you shrink your sweater). Slippers and garment bags are commonly made with this method

How does “Superwash” Work?

If you have purchased wool that's known as “Superwash”, it's been treated so that your garment will not shrink in the washing machine. Superwash wool is made by using an acid bath that removes the scales from the fiber, with a polymer that basically keeps the scales from being able to join (or felt), and cause shrinkage.

YOU WILL NEED:



DIRECTIONS:

1

Start by shaping the stem of the mushroom. To start, choose a side to start felting with your needle, and notice how when you pierce the fiber, the area that you have been puncturing, starts to become matted.



2

Continue turning and shaping the fiber until it forms a tube. Keep puncturing it until it gets fairly sturdy, so that it can support the top of the mushroom.

Keep ends loose, so that you can attach it to the other parts.



(Feel free to cut stump to the desired length, but be sure to keep ends frayed).

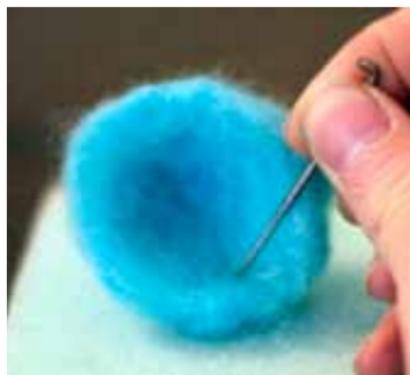
3

Next, grab your blue felt, and roll your fiber in to a ball with your hands.



4

Keep shaping the top button on all sides with your felting needle.





5

Attach the mushroom cap to the stem by stabbing through both the unworked end of the stem, on to the mushroom cap. Continue working all sides so that it is more dense and sturdy. (You'll have noticed by now that the more that you puncture the fibre, the stronger, more dense, and smaller it becomes. Keep stabbing around the stem so that it's securely attached.



6

Now it's time to attach the red polka dots. To attach these, you will first need to shape them in to a ball between your fingers, and then attach them to the mushroom with your needle.





7

Now shape the base by moulding the desired shape, and puncturing the shape with your needle, from all sides until it's the desired stiffness.

8

Lastly, attach the unworked bottom of the stem to the green base. Stab quite vigorously to be sure it's fused on. Keep shaping the mushroom with your needle until it is sturdy.





9

Admire your new creation in all of its glory!

blue mollusc

www.bluemollusc.com