

How to Needle Felt Basic Instructions

Tools you will need:

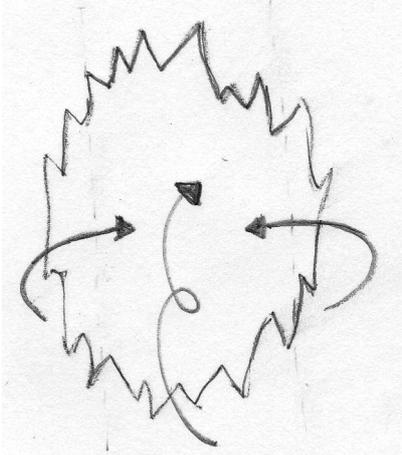
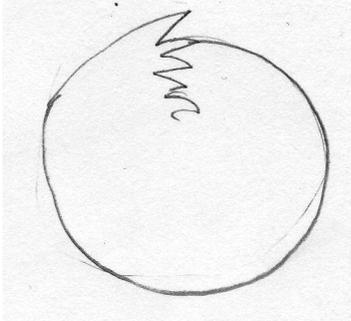
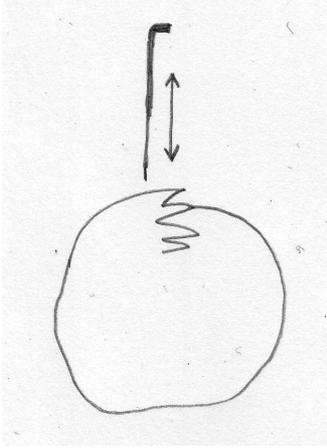
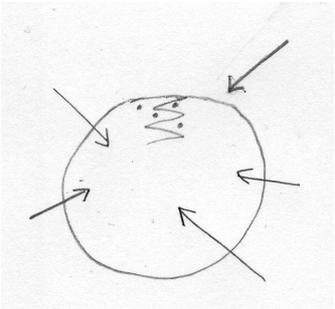
Felting Needles – these are available in coarse (#36), medium (#38), and fine (#40). Coarser needles will shape faster. Finer needles are great for adding surface layers, fine details and for shaping finer wools.

!Warning! Sharp needles, keep your fingers out of the way! Felting Needles are fragile and easy to break if pressure is put on them sideways, so always go straight in and straight out on the same angle when you are felting.

Felting mat: This protects the felting needle from hitting the table top or your lap!

Wool: Batts are best for 3d shaping, roving is good for surface layers or flat felting.

How to Needle Felt a Basic Shape

 <p>Wrap the wool <u>tightly</u>, folding in the edges, into a shape that roughly resembles your desired shape, for example a sausage or ball shape.</p>	 <p>Turn the shape so that the last loose fibres to get wrapped are facing upwards. Hold the wool shape with one hand to prevent it springing open, and rest the wool on the foam mat.</p>	<p>Take the felting needle in your other hand, holding it near the bent end.</p> <p>Being careful of your fingers, push the felting needle straight into the wool where the loose fibres are, and pull it all the way out again on the same angle (without bending / twisting as this can break the needle). Your needle should go deeply into the wool to shape it.</p> <p>Repeat this process a few more times.</p>
	<p>You will feel the felting process happening with a small amount of resistance as the barbs on the needle catch the fibres of the wool, tangling them together.</p> <p>Poke the needle in a few more times around the same area. Your shape should now begin holding itself together as the fibres begin to felt.</p>	 <p>Start to turn your object, so you can work from <u>all different angles</u>. Work until you are happy with the shape and firmness.</p>

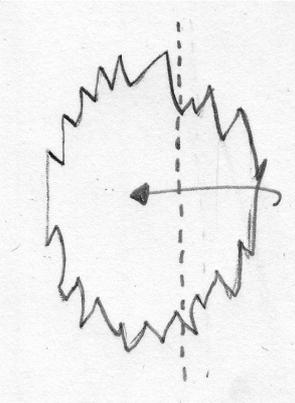
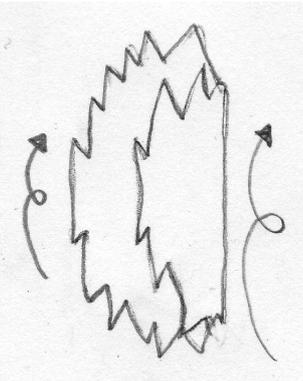
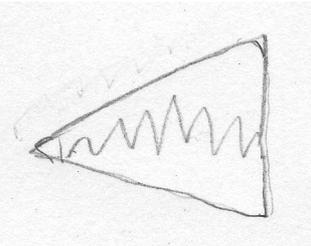
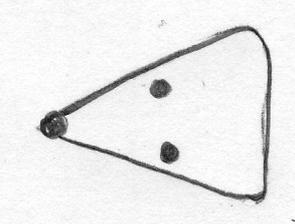
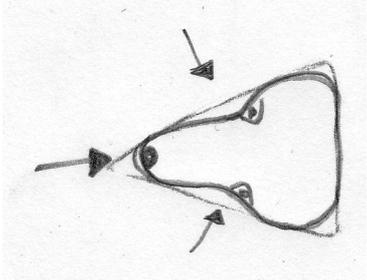
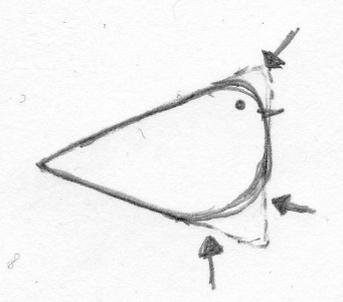
Creating dents into the felt

You will notice the fibres shrink inwards as you push the needle in and the fibres tangle, so you can do this in one area to create a dent.

Adding fibres to make a bump

Lay a wad of wool onto your original shape, keeping the fibres straight. Now begin needling into the wad, going all the way through and into your original shape until it is securely attached. Add more fibres on top if you need to.

Cone, pear, animal head or bird shape

 <p>Take your wool and rearrange it if necessary to make it so it is roughly as wide as it is long.</p>	 <p>Fold the right hand third of it over onto the middle. Now roll the wool up from the bottom upwards.</p>	 <p>As you roll there will be one thicker side so you should end up with a cone shape.</p>
 <p>Felt down the last loose fibres you wrapped up so that it holds its shape. You could make this cone shape into a mouse or hedgehog head, or sculpt it further with your needle.</p>	 <p>For an animal head with a long thin nose, poke the needle in to the areas shown with an arrow to sink in the cheeks.</p>	 <p>For a bird shape, felt more into the areas marked with an arrow to create a chest and head.</p>

Attaching a separate shape (such as a leg) to your original shape

Felt the new shape as before but leave loose, unfelted fibres where the new shape will attach to the old shape. When you are ready to join the new shape, spread out the loose fibres to make a sort of 'nest' and place the original shape into the nest of loose fibres. Felt the loose fibres into the original shape to join. Keep felting from different angles including some strokes from the original shape into the new shape, to create a strong join.

Adding other colours to the surface of the felt to create details

Take a pinch of the new colour and lay it onto the shape, then felt it in with a fine needle. Work from different angles to create a strong attachment. Create more defined shapes by forming or twisting the wool with your fingers and then laying it down and felting it on. You can create sharp edges by poking an outline into loose, laid on colour with your needle, and then folding fibres which are outside the outline inwards and felting them down.