

How to make a felted seascape picture by Rose Lafferty (Rose Felt Inspired)

Tutorial 1: Constructing the Picture

Link:

https://youtu.be/Qj_HYeIBp6k

Materials list (covers all 3 tutorials):

Note: I obtained a lot of my materials from World of Wool, so I have referred to these in underlined italics where applicable.

Wools/Fibres:

Base layers:

- Natural coloured Wool tops for base
(I used white Perendale top in this case, but any wool tops that are suitable for felting should be OK to use)

Sky:

- Sky coloured Merino wool tops, such as either 23MIC 64's "Merino Sky" or "Merino Dream"

Clouds:

- Natural Wensleydale top

Alternatively, to obtain a more conventional cloud shape, you can use some of the scoured 21mic Merino Fleecewool or Lambswool that you will need for the waves.

- Bright trilobal nylon top
- Natural Silk cap (optional)

Headland:

- Dark green Merino wool tops such as 23MIC 64's "Merino Conifer"

Sea:

- I used a ready made blend of various aqua green Merino wools and white silk, but you can create your own blend using a variety of fine but uneven rows of greens/blues/whites to get a similar effect. Alternatively you could try World of Wool blend "Aquarius" in the "Constellation" range.

- Optional wave detail: I used aqua dyed Blue Faced Leicester Wool Locks, but you could try World of Wool's equivalent "Wool Locks Mediterranean".

Waves:

- scoured 21mic Merino Fleecewool/Lambswool
- Bright trilobal nylon top
- Glitter White/Violet Merino Wool/Stellina Fibrewool (I used the term "Iridescent Merino" in the video). This is great for adding a subtle sparkle effect.

Optional extra details:

- Plastic fibres
- Crimped Nylon Fibre
- White Silk throwsters waste
- Silk cap

Beach:

- 23MIC 64's "Merino Sandstone"
- Natural Wool Nepps

Seaweed:

- Fine soft green silk throwsters waste

Pebbles:

- a small amount of Merino Wool Tops in pebble colours such as brown or grey and white or cream.

I suggest you make the pebbles at least a day before you want to make your picture, as you will need to experiment a bit to get them looking right. Start with a 3-4cm length of each colour. Lay them together, and then bring one end over the other to form an overlapped circle. Make sure there is no gap in the middle. Then hold between your finger and thumb and dip into warm heavily soaped water (see "other tools/materials" section below). Lay on a Kitchen towel to dry overnight.

Alternatively you can roll a ball of mixed pebble colours into a ball and then flatten and dip into the soapy water.

make more than you need so that you can choose the best.

Alternative colour scheme

You can also use different colours for the Headland and Sea to get an alternative effect. For example try using a dark blue headland with a blue blend sea (such as "Phoenix"), or a dark purple Headland with a blue/purple blend (such as "Taurus").

Other tools/Materials

- Old Towel (optional)
- 2 x Sushi Mats or 2 x pieces of Bubble Wrap - each bigger than the picture size
- Warm Soapy water. I used an Olive Oil Soap bar, but any soap is probably OK. Soap flakes may be easier. Add hot water and leave until the water is very soapy.
- water dispenser (can be a plastic drink bottle with holes drilled in the lid)
- Rolling Pin
- Soft netting bigger than picture size
- Cake cooling rack - or equivalent for drying picture

Needle Felting:

- Felting Needle(s)
- Firm Sponge
- Frame Mount

Step 1: Construct the base for the picture

Use one of the sushi mats (or bubble wrap) to build your picture on.

Pull out hand fulls of the natural coloured wool tops and make a horizontal layer and then a vertical layer, as shown in the video. The size should be slightly bigger than the size of your picture mount. Make sure that the layer is fairly even and there are no gaps. Pay particular attention to the corners.

Step 2: Construct the picture

Sky:

Add a horizontal layer of the sky blue merino to the top part of the picture. This needs to completely cover just over a third of the picture space. Try to keep any edges soft so that there are no obvious joins, and make sure that there are no gaps in colour.

Clouds:

Note: This part is in a different order than in the video, where the clouds are added at the end.

Pull off a small handful of Wensleydale and drape across the opposite corner of the sky to where you are going to place your headland. Alternatively arrange some Scoured Merino wool fleece into cloud shapes and place in the sky area.

Then drape a layer of Bright trilobal nylon top over the cloud shapes.

Then optionally add a strand of fibres from the Silk Cap to the cloud area.

Headland:

Pull off a handful of the Dark Green Merino wool top and shape it in your hands to form a headland. Lay this on top of the sky but with the bottom a bit lower (so that the top of the sea will cover it).

Variations: rather than a headland, you could alternatively make a mountain or an island.

Sea:

Construct the sea by using small uneven rows of the sea coloured blend. Spend some time ensuring that it actually looks like sea.

Make sure that the top is completely horizontal and meets the sky. The bottom of the headland can be under the sea layer.

The bottom of the sea should not go beyond the middle third of the picture.

Optional: Add a few of the wool locks to add additional faraway wave effect.

Beach:

Lay out the wool nepps in an even layer to cover the bottom third of the picture just leave a small gap between the sea and the beach for the waves.

Add a very fine layer of the sandstone Merino over the top. This just

helps keep the wool nepps in place, but you still need to be able to see them.

Waves:

Form the waves by adding pieces of the natural scoured merino into a row covering the area between the sea and the beach. The row should look naturally undulating like waves are, and not be too regular. It should also partially cover the sea and beach.

Then add a very thin layer of the Bright trilobal nylon top and a very few strands of the Glitter White/Violet merino.

The optional extras can be added as follows:

- **Plastic fibre:** can be used instead of, or as well as the wave base (scoured Merino)
- Crimped Nylon Fibre - add a few of the crimped fibres to the top of the wave
- White Silk throwsters waste - add a few of the coiled fibres to the top of the wave
- Silk cap - add a thin layer/part layer to the top of the wave

Final Details:

When you have completed construction of the waves, you can select your best pebbles and add them to the beach. Take time to check where they look best.

Then drape a small piece of the green throwsters waste to look like seaweed either in the middle of the beach or near the pebbles, whichever looks most effective.

Note: Avoid placing the pebbles/seaweed too close to the edge of the picture as otherwise they could be outside of the picture mount when the picture is felted.

Tutorial 2: Wet Felt the Picture

Tutorial Link:

<https://youtu.be/DhvGTJcbi2w>

First spread a towel on your worktop. Then place the sushi mat (or bubble wrap) containing your picture on top. Cover the picture with the soft netting, as this will help to keep the picture in place whilst you wet felt it.

Put the warm soapy water into a dispenser. Add some cooler water if it is too hot to handle. Then dispense the soapy water over the picture until completely saturated. Check with your hands that there are no spongy areas, as this indicates that they may not be wet enough.

Note: If you have used plastic fibres in the waves then this area will not felt and will remain spongy.

When fully wet cover with the second sushi mat (or bubble wrap). Then wrap these layers around a rolling pin and roll back and forward a few

times. Then unwrap and turn your picture (with netting still on top) by 90 degrees (i.e. from Portrait to landscape) and repeat the process. If you want you can tidy the edges of the picture by turning them into the back of the felt. As it is going into a frame though, it is unnecessary and may well be trimmed off anyway.

You need to repeat these 2 processes for a few minutes and then test to see whether the fibres on top have become integrated with the base layer. When they have then the picture is ready for rinsing.

Note: The Wool Nepps, pebbles, waves and clouds may not be as well felted as the rest of the picture due to the fibres used and their construction. I therefore suggest that you keep the netting on the picture whilst rinsing just to make sure the picture stays in place.

Rinse the picture thoroughly in warm water. Carefully squeeze out the water and place face down on a surface. Then you can either pat the picture flat, or rinse and dry your rolling pin and use that to roll the picture flat. Then turnover and do the same. Now remove the netting and put the picture on the Cake cooling rack to dry. It could take a few days for the beach to dry thoroughly.

Tutorial 3: Needle Felt the detail:

Tutorial Link:

<https://youtu.be/6JOOSRikyXI>

When your picture is completely dry, place the mount for your frame over the picture and decide which part of the picture you are going to use. Then check if there are any areas that need to be improved with some needle felting.

To needle felt, you first need to place the picture on top of a firm sponge. It is very easy to break felting needles when you are first starting out, so go slowly and carefully until you are confident.

Examples of the areas that may need to be improved are shown in the video, but the main things to look out for are:

a) Are there any gaps of colour?

If so you can add additional wool. Place the appropriate wool over the gap and stab the needle through the new wool and felt base and into the sponge. The new wool will then be pulled through into the underlying picture.

b) Is the headland shape still correct? If not you can reshape using the felting needle - or add additional wool (as above)

c) Is the sea horizon fully straight and horizontal? If not reshape or add a new thin line of Sea coloured wool as a new horizon.

d) Do the pebbles still look ok and fit within the mount? If not you can rework them - but be very careful not to break your needle on the underlying wool nepps as they are firmer than the other wool.

When you are happy with the picture, you can iron it on the back using the wool setting, if necessary. Then trim off any excess picture that won't fit in your frame, and then frame the picture.

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