



NEEDLE FELTED PUMPKIN INSTRUCTIONS



Materials List – Enough for an orange sized pumpkin

3g Carded wool batts or wool tops in your preferred colours; pastels also work really well

5g Core wool

Felting needle – size 38 or a 36 plus a spare

Soft surface for resting your work on

Optional:

Wool for pumpkin leaf (green/yellow) or any embellishments you may want to add

See full video tutorials (using wool batts and wool tops/roving) on the Lincolnshire Fenn Crafts YouTube channel

TERMINOLOGY – You will come across the following terms throughout your instructions

Felting/to felt: Means to stab/poke your wool with the barbed felting needles provided to produce a fibre that will not pull apart.

Wool top (sometime referred to as roving): Long lengths of wool with all the fibres going in the same direction. This makes the wool smooth

Carded slivers: Long lengths of wool with fibres laid in different directions. This creates shorter, more springy fibres than wool tops. Perfect for creating shapes around sticks and wire armatures.

Carded batts: Prepared the same way as carded slivers but it comes in springy sheets instead of long lengths

Core Wool: Short, fluffy wool used for the centre of the pumpkin.

Fun Felt Facts

- It is widely acknowledged that felt may be the oldest known fabric. It is referred to in many ancient writings and was produced as far back as 6300 BC
- The processing of felt remains largely unchanged: One exception is that until the late nineteenth century mercury was used in the processing of felt for hat making. Mercury was discovered to have debilitating effects on the nervous system causing the hat maker to suffer from poisoning that led to tremors, hallucinations, and other psychotic symptoms. This is where the term “mad as a hatter” originates.
- Felt is not woven but is made from matted and compressed fibres that are pressed together using moisture, heat and friction. In needle felting it is made using barbed needles that tangle the fibres together allowing it to be three dimensional.
- One story of how felt was invented says that St Clement and St Christopher, while fleeing persecution, packed their sandals with wool to prevent blisters. At the end of their journey, the movement and moisture had turned the wool into felt socks.
- Earliest felt remains date back to 700 BC where they were found in frozen tombs in Siberian Mountains.
- Felt is not woven and so doesn't fray
- Felt was once ground up and used as an aerosol spray to conceal bald spots.
- Roman Empire soldiers used felt pads as armour, felt tunics, boots and socks.
- By the first century AD felt making was a common form of clothing and fabric.
- Felt is widely used in many industries including the home construction industries for insulation and sound proofing.
- Many musical instruments use felt, including pianos. The density and springiness of the felt is a major part of what creates a piano's tone.

HOW TO FELT BASICS

Caution: This activity is for adults and older children (use your own discretion) and then only with strict adult guidance and supervision due to the long and very sharp needles. Do not allow young children to attempt this project alone!

What is Needle Felting? Felt is made using barbed needles (actually notches but usually referred to as barbed) and repeatedly and carefully stabbing into the wool fleece, you will tangle the fibres together until the wool becomes firm, and, following the instructions, create your own needle felted sculpture.

Before you Start:

Before you start your sculpture it is important to know a few basics about needle felting but equally important is that this is YOUR creation. No two sculptures will ever be the same because you are creating with your hands, you are not a machine. You may decide to make changes. BRILLIANT! Make it your own.

Most importantly, be patient and enjoy the process of creating. Take your time and remember “the devil is in the detail” so tempting though it is, don’t rush when you are getting near the end of your project. Sit back and decide on your finishing touches. Make it simple, quirky or as detailed as you like...

DISCLAIMER: Needle felting is highly addictive and can lead to compulsive creativity. I cannot be held responsible for unwashed dishes, rejected friends and family, hungry pets.....

Good luck and happy felting! Sandy *Lincolnshire Fenn Crafts*

IMPORTANT: IF YOU ARE PRONE TO SKIPPING OVER WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS PLEASE DO NOT IGNORE THIS SECTION

8 REALLY IMPORTANT HINTS AND TIPS TO REMEMBER BEFORE YOU START!

- 1 **Firm** is key to successful 3D needle felting. Firm (not hard) but still springs back when squashed.
- 2 **Roll parts quite tightly** before beginning to felt – trust me, this will greatly reduce your felting time.
- 3 Needle felting is a short stabbing motion into your wool which tangles and locks the fibres; **your needle should only pierce the top of felting surface**, and not at all when turning and felting larger body parts.
- 4 **Turn as you felt** any piece. This will give your structure its shape and prevent ‘dents’ in your finished shape.
- 5 Start with less than you think you will need; You can add wool to make your shape bigger but **you can’t take it away**.
- 6 When fully felted your piece **will be approximately 30% smaller** than the shape you started with.
- 7 Only move your needle straight up and down: **not at an angle as this will most certainly break the needle!**
- 8 **Keep your fingers out of the way of the needle**; it hurts when you stab them!

For more felting tips, please visit: www.lincolnshirefenncraftsblog.com

Any questions please message me via the website: www.lincolnshirefenncrafts.com

Three-Dimensional (3D) Needle Felting:

The technique for making 3D felted objects is much the same as for flat needle felting. You need to take extra precautions to watch your fingers because, as you hold and turn your project, there is a greater chance of poking through the wool right into your finger! Use the foam pad wherever possible.

Remember to always poke your needle in a straight line, up and down, no matter the angle, so as not to break your needle.

Details can be added by using different colour wools.

The finished project will be unique to you so feel free to use your imagination. Be patient as these lovely creations deserve the time they take to make and you will quickly get used to the needle felting process. Once you have finished this project there will be no stopping you!

Upon completion sit back, admire, and tell your friends and family “I did that!”

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THESE PROJECTS ARE COLLECTABLES, NOT TOYS!

KEEP THEM AWAY FROM PETS AND SMALL CHILDREN!

USING YOUR FELTING NEEDLE

Felting needles are very sharp, keep your fingers a safe distance away from them. Always push into the wool in a straight line to avoid snapping the tip. Use a short, stabbing motion to penetrate the wool, starting slowly and speeding up as your confidence grows.

LET’S GET STARTED!

CREATING YOUR PUMPKIN Also available as a *full video tutorial* on the Lincolnshire Fenn Crafts YouTube channel. Pop over and make your pumpkin alongside me, workshop style.

TOP TIP! Always start with less wool than you think you need. You can always add more wool but you can't take it away!

DON'T FORGET TO KEEP THE NEEDLE STRAIGHT AND DON'T BEND IT!



1 Lay a handful of core wool on your felting mat and create a rough bread roll shape with your hands. With your free hand start to felt with your needle.



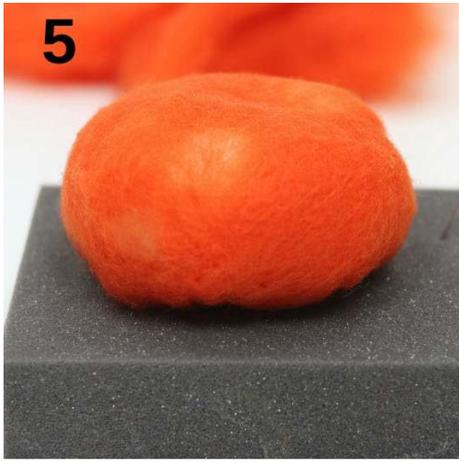
2 Continue the process until your wool retains its size and shape. **TIP: It needs to be secure but very soft.**



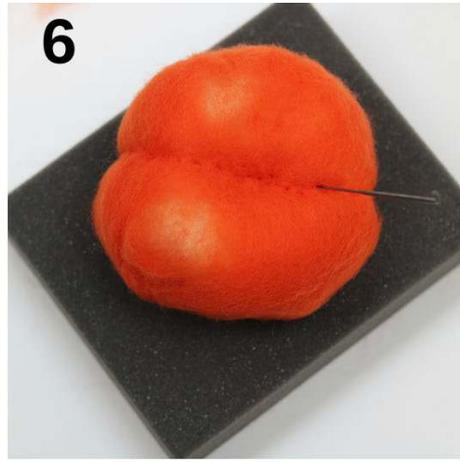
3 Sit your shape on top of your piece of wool batting and start to wrap the batting sheet around it, pulling towards the centre of, what will be, the bottom of your pumpkin.



4 Felt the batting into the centre of the wool until it holds. Continue the process until all the core wool is covered and pull away any excess. **Tip: White patches are fine as they add contrast**



5



6

5 Pumpkin ready for shaping, smooth side up.

6 Using your felting needle 'draw' a clearly defined line around the entire pumpkin, starting from middle centre and finishing where your line started.



7

7 Repeat until your pumpkin is divided into eight sections.



8

8 Take a long, thin piece of contrasting wool top and felt securely into the lines you have just created. Again, work from centre top and finish where you started, leaving any loose strands. **TIP: Any loose strands can be trimmed for neatness, but also look good as decoration.**



9



PUMPKIN LEAF

Tip: When flat felting, the tip of your needle should only penetrate the surface of the felting mat, making it easier to turn your piece over.

9 Place a thin layer of wool top (approx. 4" by 2") on your felting mat.

10



10 With your needle 'draw' a very rough teardrop shape, ensuring your line is clearly defined.

11



11 Fold the edges of your wool up to and over the line you have 'drawn'. Felt a few times to secure and continue to felt all over neatening the edges as you go. Peel gently away from your felting mat, turn over and repeat the process. Stop felting when it is firm enough to hold its shape. **Tip: Cover thin areas with a little more wool and felt again.**

12



12 Carefully use your felting needle to create a more defined 'leafy' shape. Twizzle the pointy end between your fingers to define the shape. Fold in half lengthways and felt at the wider end until it holds, creating a nice cupped leaf shape.

PUMPKIN STALK

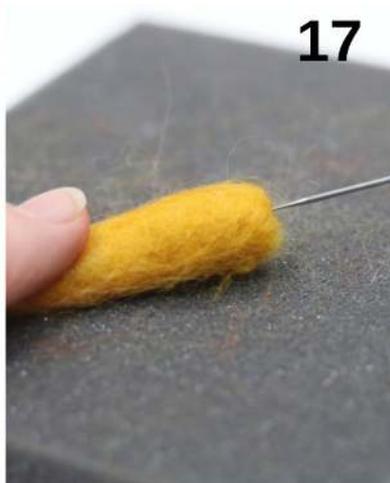


13 Lay a thin piece of wool top on your felting mat, fold in half and felt all over creating a rough square or rectangle.

14 Keep turning and felting until it starts to firm up. Tidy the edges with your needle.



15 Make one end thicker by folding over (approx. 1cm) and felt along the fold until it holds.



16 Roll firmly into a small cylinder shape and felt along the join to secure.

17 Felt and firm the wider end leaving the narrow end slightly loose; this end will attach to your pumpkin.



18 If necessary, firm up even more by rolling vigorously between your hands.



19 Felt the leaf (folded end) and stalk (thin end) firmly to the centre of the pumpkin.

Time to sit back and admire your own handmade pumpkin.

Next time try different colours, pastels work really well, add curly locks, silk fibres or any scraps of fabric, wool, lace etc. you have lying around.



PERFECT PUMPKINS!

