

Little Felted Purse

Needles: Size 11 or 13 straight or circular. Size 11 needles will result in a slightly smaller purse.

Notions: 2 Decorative Buttons, 1 Magnetic Snap Clasp (small), yarn needle, & spool knitter (optional). *Dichroic glass buttons used on sample can be purchased through glass designer Gail Lacy at <http://www.lacyglass.com>*

Approximate size after felting:
8 ½" wide x 8" tall.

Main Color Yarn (MC): 250 yards worsted weight 100% Wool (no superwash wools).

Accent Yarn (AC): 175 yards any type of novelty yarn. The bumpier the material, the bumpier your project will be. Some novelty yarns, if they are too thin or thread like, will become buried in the wool in the felting process and may not show up. If they are thin, hold two strands of your accent yarn together with the wool.



Sample purse was knit with one strand of Cascade 220 worsted weight 100% wool for the top and one strand of Muench Yarns Fabu and one strand of Cascade 220 held together for the body.

Top Band: With one strand of MC, cast on 30 stitches.

Row 1: Knit (right side)

Row 2: Purl (wrong side)

Repeat Rows 1 & 2 continuing in a stockinet stitch (knitting right side rows, and purling wrong side rows) for 25 rows.

Body: With right side facing you, tie on AC yarn. Holding one strand of MC and one strand of AC together, continue your project in a stockinet stitch until **body section** (excluding band) measures approximately 19 - 20 inches. If you want a deeper purse, add more rows.

Top Band (other side): With right side row facing you, tie off and cut your AC yarn, weaving in the tail. With your MC only continue your purse in a stockinet stitch until you have completed the same number of rows as you did for the first side of the top band. Bind off your work on a knit row, leaving a long tail.

Knit in the Round Version (knit from bottom up):

Size 11 or 13 circular needles, whichever you feel comfortable using. With one strand of MC & one strand of AC held together, cast on 60 stitches. Join your work in the round and place a marker at beginning of row. Knit in the round until your piece measures 19 - 20 inches being careful in the beginning not to twist your work. When your piece reaches 19 - 20 inches, or the desired length, tie off your AC yarn, weave in your end, and continue knitting in the round with your MC yarn only for 25 rows, bind off, turn inside out and sew up bottom of purse with yarn needle and a long piece of the yarns used for the body of the purse. Continue on with I-cord handle and snap/button instructions.

Purse Handle: Using a spool knitter and holding 2 strands of the MC together, follow directions on spool knitter and knit a cord handle to the desired length taking into consideration that the piece will shrink approx. ¼ of it's original length when felting. Weave in tail ends. DO NOT attach to the purse prior to felting.

Alternate Purse Handle (5 stitch I-cord): using 10 ½ double pointed knitting needles and 1 strand of MC cast on 5 stitches. Knit all the stitches. *Without turning your work*, switch the needles so the needle with the stitches is in your left hand. Slide the stitches to the front of the needle. Pull the yarn to tighten it across the back of the stitches and knit the row again. Continue in this manner; bind off when the cord is the desired length. Pull on the cord a bit to make the yarn that carries across the back disappear.

Sewing up your purse: With right sides (knit sides) facing each other fold purse in half matching up the top corners and sides of the purse, pin if needed to hold in place. Using the MC, thread your yarn needle and with a straight running stitch, stitch down each side, knot and cut off yarn, leaving a 3 inch tail – weave the tail into your work. Turn purse right side out.

Felting: Set your washing machine to small load, hot wash, regular cycle. Place purse and strap in large pillow case closed tightly with a rubber band or a zippered mesh garment bag. Toss into washer with 3 tablespoons of non-chlorine liquid clothes detergent or non-rinse wool wash such as Eucalan, and a couple of tennis balls, if you have them, to enhance agitation. Run through one complete wash cycle; do not let machine spin, rinse in cold water. Remove and shape purse. If you can still see the stitches in your work, continue running your piece through wash cycles (or partial wash cycles) until you can no longer see your stitches. Place purse between two absorbent terry cloth towels and step on it to remove any excess water (repeat with more dry towels if necessary). Shape and lay flat to dry. If you have a lot of unwanted “fuzz” or “fur” from the felting process, carefully trim your bag with scissors, a beard trimmer or garment shaver, paying close attention not to cut off any AC yarn nubs or slubs. The shape and size of your purse may vary depending upon the types of yarns used, how tight or loose you knit and how far you take the felting process. A damp purse can be stretched a little if felted too far for your taste. Ask someone to help you, if necessary, to stretch the purse into the desired shape.

Attaching the Magnetic Snap: when purse is dry, center one half of the magnetic snap on the inside top band of your purse, push snap prongs through the felting to the outside of the purse, this make take a little muscle, especially if your piece is tightly felted. Or you can make tiny slits with the tips of your scissors and push prongs through (do not make slits larger than the prongs). Place the prong plate over the prongs and bend inward one at a time, flattening the prongs as much as possible against the plate. Repeat for other half of the snap closure on opposite side of purse. Remove shanks from buttons and glue onto outside snap plate with E6000 glue and let glue cure for 24 hours. **Note: glue on one button at a time, letting the first button cure for approx. 2 - 3 hours before gluing 2nd button to other side. You will still need to be careful not to dislodge the first button, while gluing on the second, as the glue will not be fully cured for 24 hours.**



Attaching Felted Purse Handle: after your purse and handle are completely dry, make a small slit or cut with sharp scissors through the ends of each side of the top band. Feed one end of your felted handle through the hole from the inside out – tie a tight knot in the end of the felted handle to secure – repeat for the other side.



Remember each felted piece is **unique** and will develop a character and shape of it's own in the felting process – so go with the flow and have fun experimenting with different wools and novelty yarns.