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Foreword

Wool, a felting needle and a foam rubber punch pad – that is all you need to create these cute and fun little creatures. This book contains the inspiration for many hours of fun. This is a hobby that is suitable for children aged five and upwards (with the help of a grown-up), and believe me, felting using a felting needle is not just for girls – boys can also get involved. The important thing here is patience, interest and fine motor skills rather than age and gender.

This book contains in-depth descriptions of the basic techniques and a range of patterns for ingenious model figures.

You can follow the patterns as closely as you like, or you can adapt the designs by using different colours or making them in different sizes or in different proportions. You can also make different ears, eyes, etc. and the figures can be made smaller or bigger than those in the book. It is quicker to make a small figure than a large one, though you can put more details on a large figure. In short, it is up to your own creativity and imagination. Have fun!

Bodil Nederby



What you will need

To make these models you will need the following:

- A foam pad, e.g. 20 x 20cm (7¾ x 7¾in) and at least 5cm (2in) thick. You should be prepared for the fact that the needle will gradually pull small pieces of foam out of the pad. Once these small pieces of foam start to get picked up and mixed in with the wool, you will have to replace the foam pad.
- A felting needle. These are available in various sizes, and the models in this book are made using the most delicate or finest needles – you will just have to see how you get on.
- You might need a needle holder. Various models made from wood are available, though you can also use a cork: make a hole by pushing a nail through the cork, then carefully push the felting needle into it – but not all the way in. The top, angled part should be left sticking out of the top, making it easier to grip hold of with pliers when the needle has to be replaced.
- Carded wool is hair cut from sheep – in other words, wool. This has been washed, carded (brushed through) and dyed. Carded wool is available in various qualities, and some are easier to work with than others. This depends

on the breed of sheep and whether or not it has been combed, amongst other things.

- If the wool has been combed, this means that the fibres are nicely aligned to form long strands and this wool has a finer structure. If the wool is uncombed (tangled), this means that the fibres are less orderly. This wool has a coarser structure. It is easy to use for needle felting and therefore preferred for this purpose. If you have some carded wool that is too 'smooth', you can 'ruffle' it up before starting work to make it easier to work with. For the sake of simplicity, carded wool is just referred to as 'wool' in the instructions.

The felting needle

In this book, the process of felting is described as 'needling'. This expression is used as it is the most appropriate term in this context and immediately understandable. Since the felting needle is extremely thin, it is very easily bent or snapped. To avoid this happening, you should observe the following rules:

- Always insert the needle straight down and remove it by pulling it straight up, or diagonally in and diagonally out. In other words, in and out in the same direction.

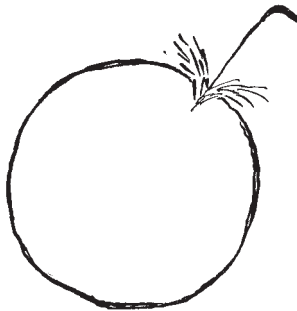


Felting needle, with small barbs on the bottom, thin end.

- Never wiggle the needle while it is in the work piece or in the foam pad.
- When you are not using the needle, it is a good idea to stick it vertically in the foam pad and leave it there until you need it again.

In the photo you can see the small barbs on the felting needle. It is these that catch on the wool fibres and tangle them together when inserting into a clump of wool. Doing this repeatedly makes the fibres become more and more entangled, making the clump of wool smaller, firmer and eventually really hard.

The barbs are critical, as this is where the felting process occurs. In other words, if you are applying an extra layer of wool on to a ball, there is no point inserting the needle all the way to the bottom (if the ball is already as firm as



Once the ball or the figure is firm enough, just needle into the surface to attach more wool.

it needs to be). It is enough just to needle into the surface of the ball for the new layer to be firmly attached.

Different colours of carded wool

It may be a good idea to invest in different colours of carded wool. As well as experimenting with different figures, it is also fun to play with the colours.

Keep the different colours separate by putting them in their own bags. You might also want to keep another bag of mixed colours, where you can put all the small scraps that you are bound to get.

'Clumps' and 'tufts'

In this book we will be using the terms 'clumps' and 'tufts' of wool. There is no clear definition of what a 'clump' or a 'tuft' is, other than that a clump is bigger than a tuft.

The term 'clump' is used for the portion of wool that you start with to make a ball or a 'sausage', for example.

A 'tuft' is smaller and it can vary in size from a small tuft, for example for eyes, to a slightly larger tuft, for example for ears.

A 'tuft' is also used to describe the portion of wool used to create an extra layer.

Flower brooch

What you will need:

- Wool in three different colours
- Brooch pin
- Glue or a needle and thread

Instructions:

1. Choose a base colour and make five small 'pancakes', leaving the wool loose on one side: see 'Ears' on page 12.
2. Arrange the pancakes in a circle so that the loose wool overlaps. Needle into the loose wool to join the pancakes together. Work from both sides.
3. Apply more layers until the flower is of the correct thickness and firmness – it must be firm.
4. Decide which side is to be the front and needle colour no. 2 into the centre of the flower.
5. Next needle the final colour into the centre of colour no. 2.
6. Attach the flower to the brooch pin using glue or a needle and thread.



Butterfly brooch

What you will need:

- Red wool for the base colour
- Dark red wool for the body
- Yellow, black, white and blue wool for the spots
- Glue or a needle and thread
- Brooch pin

Instructions:

1. Make four small 'pancakes' out of red wool. They should be slightly oval and have loose wool at one end: see 'Ears' on page 12. They do not need to be quite so firm just yet.
2. Overlap the pancakes (one at each of the four points of the compass) so that the loose wool overlaps and they form a butterfly. Do not worry if the wings are a bit shapeless at this stage, as they will be corrected as you work. Needle into the loose wool so that the wings become joined together. Work from both sides, and apply more wool to ensure that the butterfly has a uniform thickness. Needle into the edges to form the wings. Once the butterfly has the right thickness, shape and firmness (and it has to be really firm) you can decorate it.
3. Decide which side is to be the 'front' and carry on working on this side. Needle dark red wool on to the butterfly's body to form a stripe down the middle.
4. Needle two yellow spots, one on each of the top wings. Needle a black dot into each of the yellow spots. Needle a white dot into the top of each of the yellow spots.
5. Needle two black spots, one on each of the bottom wings. Needle a blue spot into each of the black spots. Needle two small black dots above each of the black spots.
6. Attach the butterfly to a brooch pin using glue or a needle and thread.





Mouse with spotty trousers

Weight: 4g (0.14oz)

Height (from ears to bottom): 7½cm (3in)

What you will need:

- Black wool for the body
- Red wool for the trousers
- White wool for the eyes and spots
- Pink wool for the snout

Instructions

1. Make a sausage out of black wool, about 5cm (2in) long. Close both ends.

Follow steps 2–10 for ‘Three small mice’.

11. **Trousers:** Apply red wool, a bit at a time, all the way round the bottom half of the body. Next apply white wool spots, except on the bottom.
12. **Legs:** Make two thin sausages, 5–6cm (2–2¼in) long. They should be closed at one end and have loose wool at the other end. The feet should be about 2cm

(¾in) long. ‘Bend’ the leg there and needle into the heel a few times so that it keeps its shape.

13. **Attach the legs:** Place the legs underneath the bottom and needle them into place.
14. **Arms:** Make two thin sausages, 4–5cm (1½–2in) long. They should be closed at one end and have loose wool at the other end.
15. **Attaching the arms:** Place the arms on the body with the loose wool spread out behind the shoulders, and needle them into place.
16. **Tail:** Make a tail, 8–10cm (3¼–4in) long: see ‘Three small mice’.
17. **Attaching the tail:** Place the tail underneath the mouse’s bottom and needle it into place. Apply more red wool to cover up the join where the legs and tail are attached, see page 55. At the same time add wool to the mouse’s bottom if required in order for it to sit up properly, though the bottom should still be flat. Finally, apply some small white dots on to the bottom if required.