

Adelaide Walker LLP

Fibres to inspire artists and makers

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NOTE—The felting needles have special barbs on them that tangle the wool together as you work. These needles are very sharp and should be used with care, when not in use store in the container provided. The needle should leave the wool at the same angle as it entered, don't wiggle it around or it will break.



Legs: Begin by pulling off a piece of grey wool about 6" long (the width of the pad) .



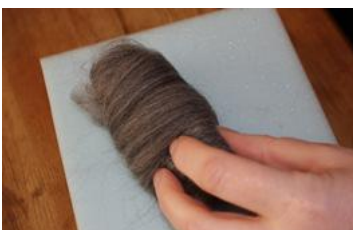
Roll it into a tight cylinder shape folding the loose fibres in from the edges as you go. The more tightly you roll the less needling you'll need to do.



Keep a tight hold and using a stabbing motion, needle the ends of the wool into the cylinder remembering to keep your fingers clear. Keep rotating all the time so that you work right round it and not just in one place. When it's holding the shape well but is still quite soft, set it aside and make a second leg.



Arms: Pull off another slightly shorter piece of wool, about 4"-5", and make a pair of arms in the same way as you made the legs. They should be slightly shorter than the legs when finished. If you think any of the limbs are not fat enough you can add a little more wool around them to even up the sizes.



Body: Pull off 3 pieces of wool about 6" in length and stack them one upon the other. Roll up all 3 layers of wool into a cylinder shape and keeping a tight hold begin to needle the fibres in. You're doing exactly the same as you did for the legs. When finished it should be slightly longer than the legs and about 3 times as fat.



Attaching the legs: Take one of the legs and lay it so its one end is aligned with the back of the body, and the other end (the foot end) sticking out the other side. Needle the leg lightly into place then take the second leg and sit it so that the two legs form a V shape.



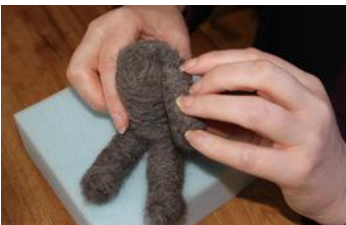
Turn it over and check that the legs emerge from the body in a V shape. If you're happy with the position then continue needling until you have a very firm join. Try shaking the bear by the leg - if it wobbles too much then you need to keep needling. If the position isn't right pull the leg off and reposition before needling. Don't work in one place too long and check your progress regularly.



Turn the bear upside down (you can rest it on the sponge as I have) and flatten the bottom of the legs until the bear can sit properly. Don't overwork the very ends of the legs as you want them left soft.



Now you have the legs on it's time to start a little shaping on the back. Begin by firming up across the bottom of the back and flattening the centre of the back very slightly. Don't work in one place too long and keep turning the bear so you can check on progress. Work down the sides of the body too and only lightly across the stomach, firming and shaping the wool as you go.



Attaching the arms: Position an arm so the top is in line with the top of the body and lightly needle it on. Check that it's in the right place and move if necessary.



You can angle the arms forward to look like it's giving a hug or upwards so that it appeals to be picked up. Play until you have what you want and then holding it in that position needle it on until the join is very strong. Repeat for the second arm.



Head: Pull off some more wool and roll it tightly into a ball for the head—about 4.5cm across. It should be slightly larger than looks right as it will shrink as you needle it. After securing the shape by needling attach to the body by stabbing down through the head into the body.



Turn the bear upside down and needle from the body into the head. When you pick the bear up by the head it should be very secure and not wobble.



Paws: Turn up the bottom 1cm of each leg to form a paw and needle across the bend to keep it in place. Lightly needle it into a paw shape, rounding off the top and bottom. Try not to go right through the paw with the needle as it'll break the fibres.



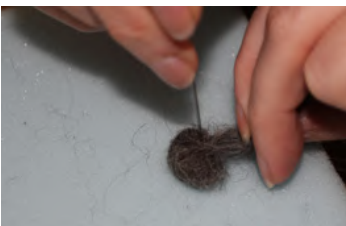
Snout: With finger and thumb pull off a small amount of wool and roll it into a pea-sized ball shape.



Wrap a very small piece of wool round the pea shape leaving the ends loose. Hold the ball against the centre of the face and use the loose fibres to attach it to the head.



Pull off a thin sliver of wool and wrap it around the base of the nose to bulk it up into a snout shape. Needle this in place. The nose may still look a little too long at this stage but don't worry.



Ears: With finger and thumb pull off a small amount of wool and roll it into a pea sized ball shape. Fold a very small piece of wool over the ball leaving the ends loose and flatten the ball shape slightly. Don't stab too hard: you're just trying to flatten the ears.



Use the loose fibres to attach the ear to the head, slightly to the side. Repeat for the second ear. Very slightly, flatten the head between the ears.



End of snout: Take a small amount of dark brown wool, form it into a disc shape with your fingers and needle it onto the end of the snout. This forms the end and reduces the length of the snout a little more.



Eyes: Next, take a tiny amount of dark brown and needle it above and slightly right of the snout. Repeat on the left for the second eye. Needle it lightly at first so that if it's in the wrong place you can take it off and reposition it.



End of paws: Using more of the dark brown form it into a rough disc shape and needle it onto the end of an arm. This will firm up the end and reduce the length of the arm. Repeat for the second arm.

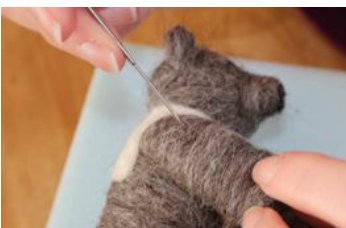


Now repeat for the leg paws, but use slightly more wool. Try and shape it into an oval if you can. Don't push it too hard through the top end of the paw or you'll see the dark brown come out of the other side.

Now is the time to work your way around the bear doing any final shaping and firming. Trust yourself to know what a bear looks like. The key here is never to work too long in one place, keep the bear moving and check your progress from different angles.



Scarf: Pull off a thin length of white, smooth it between your fingers and wrap it around the neck of your bear to check the length. If it doesn't look long enough, pull a new piece and try again. For a straight edge to the scarf fold the fibres over and needle them together.



Wrap the scarf around the bear and needle it securely into place. You may need to needle more around the neck so that you don't lose the definition. We chose to decorate the bear with a scarf but you could experiment with other ideas: give him a hat instead, or a ball to hold.

Don't worry if you have a little fibre left. You haven't done anything wrong, you should have a little more than you need. Finally, don't forget to send us a photo, we'd love to see it finished.