

Loop the Loop Bag Pattern



This bag is knitted loosely, in the round, then felted in your washing machine. During the felting process the bag will shrink considerably and become much sturdier. Don't attach your decoration until after felting! It is important to check that the felting characteristics of the two wools used in this bag design match, ie that both felt equally at the same temperature.

The exact size of your finished bag will depend on wool and felting temperatures used, but an indication is given below.

The photographed example is made using our own blue Donegal wool, available from Sheepfold's online shop: www.sheepfold.co.uk/Coloured_wools.html

You will need:

- Approx 200g aran weight pure wool in main shade (not machine washable or superwash varieties)
- Approx 75-80g aran weight pure wool in contrast shade (again not machine washable or superwash varieties, and this wool must have similar felting characteristics as the main shade)
- 5.5 mm circular needle
- 1 pair of 4.5 mm double ended needles
- 4 stitch markers
- 3 stitch holders (or safety pins)
- Wool needle to graft handles and finish off ends of yarn

Approx finished size:

Before felting: width at upper edge 45 cm, height 41 cm, max depth 15 cm
After felting: width at upper edge 40 cm, height 25 cm, max depth 12 cm

Instructions:

Base of bag:

Using the 5.5 mm circular needle and the contrast aran wool, cast on 36 st. Using the circular needle as if it were two straight needles, knit back and forth (garter stitch) as follows:

Rows 1 and 2: knit

Row 3:	incr 1 st each end of the row (38 st)
Row 4 :	knit
Row 5:	repeat row 3 (40 st)
Rows 6 and 7:	knit
Row 8:	repeat row 3 (42 st)
Rows 9 to 11:	knit
Row 12:	repeat row 3 (44 st)
Rows 13 to 15:	knit
Row 16	repeat row 3 (46 st)
Rows 17 to 22:	knit
Row 23:	decr 1 st each end of the row (44 st)
Rows 24 to 26:	knit
Row 27:	repeat row 23 (42 st)
Rows 28 to 30:	knit
Row 31:	repeat row 23 (40 st)
Rows 32 and 33:	knit
Row 34:	repeat row 23 (38 st)
Row 35:	knit
Row 36:	repeat row 23 (36 st)
Rows 37 and 38:	knit

Body of Bag:

Change to main colour and knit 1 row. Place a stitch marker and, without turning your work, pick up 23 st evenly around the curved end. Place a marker and pick up 36 st along the cast on edge, place a marker and pick up 23 st around the second curved side of the base (118 st). For the body of the bag you will now knit in the round on these stitches, which will give a stocking stitch effect, increasing as follows:

Work 9 rounds, slipping the markers across to the working needle each time they are reached. On the tenth round, k36, incr in next st, k21, incr in next st, k36, incr in next st, k21, incr in next st (122 st). Similarly increase by 4 st on the following 6 tenth rounds, with the increase stitches immediately after and before each straight side of 36 st, such that the straight sides remain constant width but the curved sides grow; so working 70 rows from the base (146 st). Work 10 more rounds, ending at the marker at the start of the round. Changing to the contrast yarn, knit 1 round, *purl 1 round, knit 1 round**. Repeat * to **, again ending at the marker at the start of the round.

Handles:

Knit 5 st. Cast off 26 st. K4 more and place these 5 st on a stitch holder. Cast off 37 st. *K5 more and place these 6 st on a stitch holder**. Cast off 24 st. repeat * to **. Cast off 37 st and knit to end. You should now have 5 st remaining on your circular needle, 5 st on a stitch holder and 2 sets of 6 st on a further two holders. Transfer the 5 st on your circular needle to a 4.5 mm double ended needle and, continuing with contrast yarn, work in I-cord for 30 cm (knit, do not turn work and slide stitches to opposite end of needle. Repeat until you reach the desired length). Graft these stitches to the second

set of 5 st. Place one set of 6 st onto a 4.5 mm double ended needle and, working in the main colour yarn, work in I-cord for 70 cm. Graft these stitches to the second set of 6 st.

Felting:

Finish off all ends of yarn by weaving into the work before felting. Felt your bag in the washing machine by placing the knitted bag in a zippered mesh bag or pillowcase in your machine, with a couple of towels or pairs of jeans to give the necessary agitation. Add a small amount of washing powder, but no fabric conditioner. For the photographed bag I used two washes on a 60° cycle with the time saving option and 500 spin cycle. A low level spin, if an available option on your machine, reduces the risk of crumpling your bag. When felted to the desired level, remove from your washing machine and stretch to give a good rectangular shape and leave somewhere warm to dry out completely.

Decoration:

Use any spare yarn to make an additional 5 st I-cord that can be attached in any design to your bag, such as a heart or bow. Alternatively you can knit or crochet a flower or other shape. We recommend that you felt this at the same time as your bag, but that you don't attach the decoration until after the felting is complete. This will avoid any unnecessary wrinkling of the bag where the decoration is attached. Typically, a 150 to 200 cm length is sufficient for a spiral and a 100 cm length is sufficient for a bow.

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to purchase pure wool to make this bag or wonderful knit and felt kits visit www.sheepfold.co.uk