



These instructions presume you have made felt before and are familiar with techniques for making dreadlocks , laying out wool and have a basic general knowledge of the felting process.

Materials

Small quantity 18 micron merino wool tops ; 30cm (12inch) square of bubble wrap; small scrap of silk paj or silk georgette fabric; small piece of template material cut to whatever shape you would like (I used a 12cm (5inch) square of 2mm flexible foam underlay and rounded the edges to prevent them from protruding through the felt); tulle net 30cm (12 inch) square; soap (I use lux pure soap flakes, 1tsp to a litre of water); 1 shisha mirror, flat stone or a piece of old CD or broken porcelain with smooth sanded edges; silk thread for stitching; old plastic shopping bag; pre-felt strips or silk or yarn or other embellishments.

3D Shisha Mirror Necklace

By Wendy Bailye

Laying Out

1. Place your bubblewrap, bubbles up, on your work surface. Place your template material on the bubblewrap. If, like me you decide to use a square template lay it diagonally. (pic 1)
2. Lay fine pieces of wool top over the template in a fine layer with a 1-2 cm overlap around all edges of the template. (pic 2)
3. Lay another layer perpendicular to the last and then lay one more layer perpendicular. The template now is completely covered on one side with three layers of wool.
4. Place the mirror (face up) or other flat decorative object on top of the wool. Lay three more layers of wool *over the mirror only* so it is completely covered. (pic 3 and 4)
5. Lay a last decorative layer of wool top over the whole top surface, then place a circle of silk paj or silk georgette over the centre. Decorate around the outside of the circle with a line of wool thread or yarn or strips of pre-felt. (pic 5)
6. Place tulle net over and wet down with soapy water using a crumpled plastic bag dunked in the water. Remove net. (pic 6)
7. Flip wool covered template over. Pull the edges of the wool tightly around the template on all four sides easing any bulk around the corners. Lay three fine layers of wool over the remaining uncovered template. The whole template will now be covered in wool. Net and wet down as before. Remove net. (pic 7 and 8)
8. Make a long thin cord of wool tops, one third longer than the necklace length you desire. You could also make two half length cords a little longer and tie them. Leave both ends dry and fluffy and make the rest of the cord hard, by rolling backwards and forwards on the bubblewrap. Stretch it lengthways occasionally to remove crinkles which if left in will be permanent. (pic 10)
9. When the cord is hardened place the two dry fluffy ends at the top of the diamond on the back of the necklace. Add a fine layer of decorative wool tops over this if desired. Place net over and press so that it wets down. Add more water if needed. (pic 11)
10. Add a tiny swipe of soap to the net and rub the net covered necklace using the crumpled plastic bag; first on one side for approximately 5 minutes (give special attention to where the cord joins the necklace; and then the other side). Keep checking the piece doesn't stick to the net by lifting the net occasionally. Be careful to



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rub in to the middle of the template rather than rubbing outwards off the template edges. This avoids a ridge around the edge of your piece. The piece should be starting to felt and shrink onto the template. Remove the net. (pic 12)

11. Roll the necklace and cord up in your bubblewrap and roll gently backwards and forwards for a total of 5 minutes, unrolling after each 20 rolls to flatten out and turn your piece. Roll from all four sides. Stretch back into shape and continue. Do this until the template starts to buckle significantly. (pic 13)

12. Cut a small 2cm slit (under 1inch) in the centre of the *back* of the necklace, to remove the template (carefully). Adjust the necklace into a diamond shape that you are happy with. Make sure the edges of the slit are slightly overlapped so that you can seal them back together. Place the net on top and rub the cut for 5 minutes to seal it back up. Once sealed, remove the net and keep rolling and stretching and shaping until it has shrunk by 50%. (pic 14 and 15)

13. To finish fulling the necklace you can now roll the necklace round and round into a ball in both your hands. Be really rough with it. Keep reshaping it as you go along and stretch it back into the shape you want it to be. (pic 16)

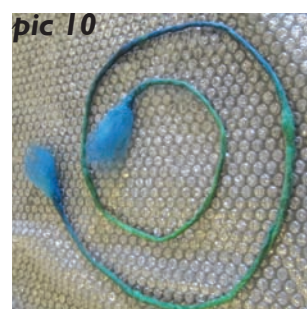
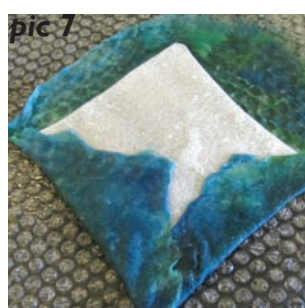
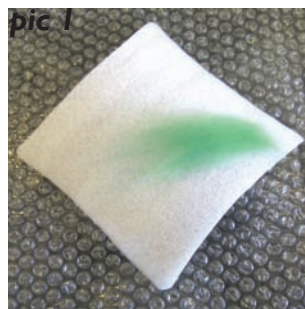
14. When the felt seems quite hard, cut a tiny cross shape over the top of the centre of the mirror. The hole should be no more than 3mm wide. If you cut the hole too big to start with the mirror will fall out so be careful. Place some soap on the cut edges and rub vigorously with your finger round and round. The hole will become bigger and smoother and you will be able to see the mirror nicely. I also cut a small decorative slit at this stage at the top of the necklace, and rubbed to seal. (pic 17, 18, 21)

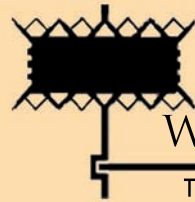
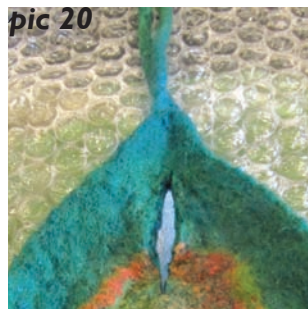
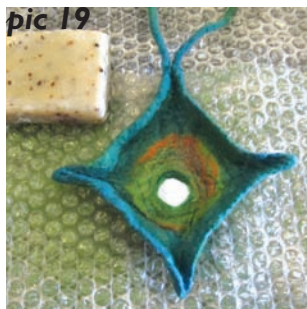
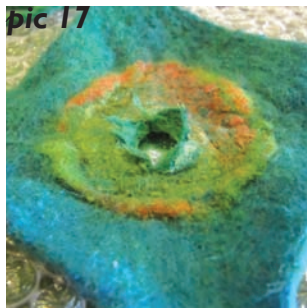
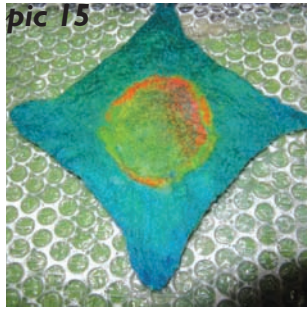
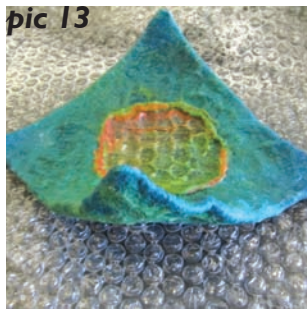
15. Once the edges are hardened around the mirror you can start to shape the edges of the diamond. Some soap helps at this stage. Rubbing will help the wool to keep the shape memory. If it is not hard enough it will not keep a solid shape. Any shape can be made at this point by twisting and rubbing. You can see this necklace had a few different incarnations of shape as I was playing.

16. In the end I decided a few decorative stitches would be good and this influenced the final shape. Beading could also be a nice addition. I also threaded a large holed bead over the cording.

Use this 3d template method to make teardrop shapes, square, leaf shapes, triangle shapes, or circles. Add extra dreadlocks or twists and twirls. Using this technique you can make lovely brooches as well. By using a template you get lovely sturdy felt with good firm edges. It is also a great way to add sturdy, interesting shapes to the end of dreadlocks on hats, bags or clothing. Enjoy playing!

Wendy is a Brisbane based Feltmaker and tutor. She can be contacted through her website www.wendybailye.com





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