

# How to Felt Wool

*Tips gathered from the Wool Applique facebook group and compiled by Rhonda Roso*

## SELECTING AND PURCHASING WOOL FOR FELTED WOOL APPLIQUE

100% wool works best, while 80-20% wool blends also work well.

Many online shops sell felted wool.

Avoid worsted wool since it doesn't felt well after washing and drying.

Thin wool, such as used in men's slacks, will still be thin after washing.

Sometimes thinner wool fabrics work well for the background fabric.

Purchased wool clothing from thrift stores and discarded wool garments from your closet may be re-purposed for felted wool.

## DO-IT-YOURSELF WOOL FELTING / RE-PURPOSED WOOL GARMENTS and FABRICS

In a nutshell... wash hot, dry hot, disassemble garments, sort components, store clean.

### WASHING - TOP LOADING WASHER WITH AGITATOR

Always wash wool fabrics/garments before adding to your wool stash to prevent introducing moth larvae.

Wool felts best when washed in a machine that has an agitator.

Wash wool garments of similar colors in hot water with only a drop of detergent.

Wash wool twice. Wash it first to clean it, then wash it again.

To provide more friction in order to enhance the felting process, add an old pair of jeans to the wash cycle and/or run the wool through an extra rinse cycle.

### WASHING - BOIL ON STOVE TOP - OPTIONAL

Boiling wool helps to achieve tight, thick fabric that doesn't ravel.

Boil the wool on top of the stove with a little dish soap.

Stir with a wooden spoon.

Then run the boiled wool through the washer and dryer.

### LAUNDROMAT - OPTIONAL

Many go to the laundromat since the process might not be good for newer washers and dryers.

### HIGH EFFICIENCY WASHERS AND DRYERS

New front loading machines don't have an agitator, so consider taking your wool to a friend's house who has a top loading machine with an agitator or go to your local laundromat.

Since top loading HE washers use a reduced amount of water, fill a 5-gallon bucket (or other container) with hot water and pour over the wool garments/fabrics to weigh them down and to cover them completely with water. The extra water will drain out.

### DRYING

Dry wool on the dryer's hottest setting.

Don't use dryer fabric sheets since they may prevent the glue or fusible from sticking.

Set a timer to remind you to check and clean the lint filter every 5-10 minutes.

Vacuum the dryer's lint filter.

The dryer vent tube to the outside may become packed with lint. Check and clean the exterior vent often.

Collect and save the wool lint for stuffing material to use in projects such as pincushions.

### GARMENT DISASSEMBLY

After washing and drying wool garments, remove all buttons, trims, zippers, linings, etc. to use in projects.

Cut the garment along the seams, removing all padding, lining, facings, etc.

If a garment is cut up before washing it shreds and the threads make a mess and get stuck in the washer.

### STORAGE OF FELTED WOOL "STASH"

Felted wool pieces may be folded and kept in gallon zip lock bags, plastic storage totes, furniture drawers, etc.

If a garment has a "100% wool" tag, place the tag with the fabric for future reference.

To repel moths, store felted wool with moth balls or moth bars, cedar chips, or lavender sachets or lavender soap bars.