

# Table Runner Norwegian Felting Batts

## Feltmaking

Feltmaking is defined as the formation of cloth by the irreversible tangling of wool fibers using moisture, heat and friction. Wool has microscopic scales along its length that grab irreversibly on to one another when subjected to moisture (warm, soapy water) and friction (rubbing).

## Overview

In this procedure Norwegian Felting Batts are laid out in the shape of a table runner and scrap yarn is used to create surface designs. The runner is felted using a pool cover/rolling technique and is fulled using a rolling technique.

## The Wool Preparation

Norwegian Felting Batts are created from fibers that are layered in sheets and, while the fibers do lay in one general direction, the fibers are somewhat disorganized and vary in length. These batts have a lot of loft and can be easily peeled apart in layers.

## Supplies

Norwegian Felting Batts (5 – 8 ounces)  
Scrap Yarns  
Pool Cover  
Mesh Fabric  
Swim Noodle  
String or Panty Hose Legs for Ties  
Liquid Dish Soap, Castille Soap, etc..  
Towels



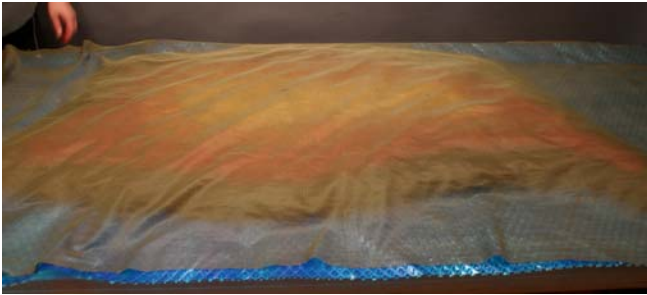
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## Layout

Unroll the batt fiber and pull about a six inch strip of fiber away from the main batt ideally in the direction the fiber lays. Remove a thin sheet of fiber from the batt and lay it as desired onto the pool cover (bubbles facing down). Continue until the first layer of the runner is complete and repeat in alternating layers until you have four layers. Anticipate about 30% shrinkage and plan the layout accordingly.



Cover the wool with the mesh screen and wet down the project with warm, soapy water using a sponge or old grocery bag (make sure ink on bag doesn't bleed). The water should be about body temperature and there should be just enough soap to make the water feel slippery.



Make sure the entire project is thoroughly wet and remove the mesh fabric. Lay out the yarn as desired. You may use any softly spun wool based yarn or fluffy synthetic yarn. Hint: It may be helpful to wet the yarn so that it will stay where you want it in the design. Once the design is in place make sure that all of the fibers and yarn are wet with soapy water and place the mesh fabric back onto the project.

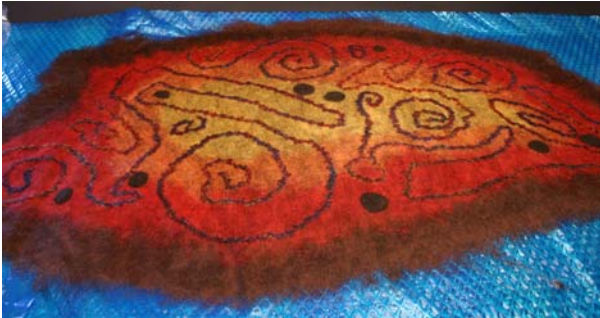


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Roll up the pool cover around the swim noodle. Note: Sometimes the wool wants to wrinkle as the project is rolled up. To prevent this, lift the roll slightly with each turn as you roll it up so as to make room for the wool within the roll. Tie the bundle with string or pantyhose legs. Do not tie in knots! You will need to unroll and check the project often and hard knots will make that difficult. Roll the bundle back and forth on the table with gentle pressure for 5 minutes. Carefully unroll the bundle and re-roll from the opposite end. The inside felts faster than the outside of the bundle so switching ends evens out the felting progress. Keep rolling, checking, switching ends, and re-rolling at 5 – 10 minute intervals for 40 – 50 minutes. Also be sure to check the mesh fabric each time the project is unrolled to ensure that it is not being felted into the project. The time parameters given are an estimate and it will vary for each feltmaker.



Over this time the wool fibers will migrate through the fabric and begin to felt together. The best way to determine how your felting is progressing is to use the tent test. Gently pinch the fibers and pull up. If the fibers slide away from one another gently press them back into place and keep rolling. Felt is formed when the fibers cling to one another and form a tent when pinched and lifted (as seen in the picture below). Blot out the excess water and turn the runner over by rolling it onto the swim noodle and unrolling it back onto the pool cover with the bottom side now facing upward. Roll another 20 minutes or so until the backside also passes the tent test.



Squeeze out the excess water. The fabric is now at the soft felt stage and, while it holds together, it is fairly fragile and will not hold up to daily use until it is fulled. Fulling is the act of tangling the fibers further to the point that there is no shifting of fibers in the cloth. For this project fulling is best achieved by removing the runner from the pool cover and rolling it against itself and the table. Use very warm, soapy water as warm water will speed up the fulling process. Start at one edge of the runner and roll it up towards the center. Then while pressing down and rolling the felt back and forth, slowly unroll the runner. Repeat this process around the entire edge of the runner. Periodically spread the runner out and gently shape it. Then repeat the rolling process.



You will notice the edges of the runner becoming firmer or fulled. However, the entire runner must be fulled and not just the edges. To achieve this, fold the runner in half from various directions and roll as previously described. The folded edges will then receive the most friction and start to firm up. Unfold, stretch, straighten, inspect and refold in another area. Repeat until the runner reaches its desired firmness and size (expect about 30% shrinkage).



Once fulled, rinse thoroughly to remove the soap and lay flat to dry.



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