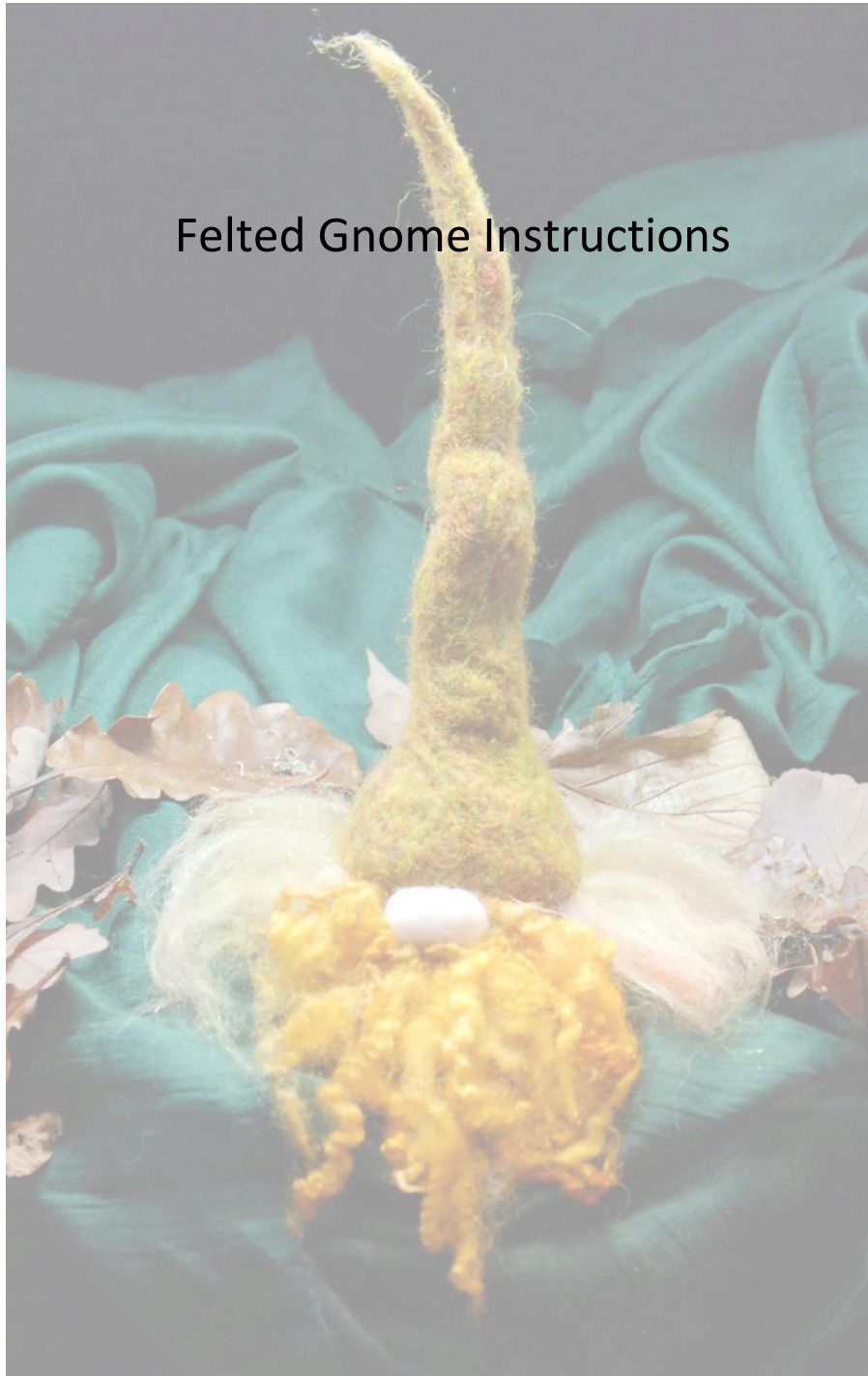


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Felted Gnome Instructions





Felted Tomte Gnome Instructions

Thank you for buying a gnome kit! Before you begin, it's a good idea to read through all the instructions to familiarise yourself with the process and gather any tools you might need and create a draft-free workspace, (wool fibres are very fine and fly-away).

Your Kit - what's in the box?

Foam felting mat:

You need a mat to allow the felting needle to penetrate through the fibres and into the foam, pulling the fibre with it. The foam mat is standard in all available felting kits at the moment and currently the only option, but is not eco-friendly. I'm working on a design of hessian and rice mats which will be available in the new year and supplied with all of my kits in 2021.

Wooden needle handle

The needles are new and will be dirty with machine oil from the manufacturing process. Clean them with a little cooking oil and kitchen paper, then wash and dry them carefully before use.

Your kit also contains, a pair of snips, an awl (hole maker), and a pair of leather fingers protectors (cots) Use these to protect your fingers from the sharp needle barbs while you work.

Needles

Your kit contains five larger, coarse needles and two smaller, fine needles.

Felting needles have tiny barbs down each side of the tip and they come in all shapes and sizes. You can buy triangle, star, and twist shaped needles. The more barbs, the quicker the needle will felt the fibre. Larger needles have more barbs and are used for creating shapes quickly, such as body work. Finer needles for detailed work have fewer barbs. As you fine-tune your skills, you may wish to choose more specialist needles to add to your kit. I have included some useful supplier websites below. Use whichever needle you find works best for you.

Needles are brittle and can snap. Some people snap needles and some don't; it all depends on felting style. The needle needs to be pushed and pulled in and out of your work in the same direction, otherwise the change in angle can cause it to bend and snap. If you do snap a needle, take it slowly and practice to perfect your technique before moving on to more specialist needles. Most people will snap a needle or two, that's why you have spares!

Materials

- body and nose fibre – light or dark natural Jacob batts (sheet of wool)
- hat fibre – combed Merino tops, or Corriedale, carded sliver (a long strip of wool) or Corriedale carded batts (sheet)
- beard and hair fibre - blended Shetland and silk or Merino tops(also known as rovings) – a long combed ‘ribbon’ of wool fibre) or curly locks
- Two triangles of bubble wrap, the large one is a hat template, the small one is a resist for a wet felted hat.

You will have spare fibre left over from your project and you can buy top-up kits containing fibre and instructions for other projects. Once you have completed your gnome you should be able to tackle pretty much any 3d felting project.

Ready to begin?

Creating the body



Using the body fibre pack, roll the carded wool as tightly as you can, turning in the ends as you go, to make a very firm cylinder shape. This is a really important step. If your rolled wool isn't tight enough, you won't be able to felt it densely enough to form a solid base, so if the roll is loose, start again until you have a really firm cylinder of body wool.

Once it's rolled tightly, secure the edges with a few pokes of the needle. Now you can have a rest! 😊



Choose the widest end for the bottom and felt all the way from top to bottom, right around the body, firming it up as you go.

Roll the body between your palms to smooth the surface and tighten up any loose areas.



Work into the centre of the base, firming it up until it is completely flat, as shown below. The top does not need to be felt or shaped much, this will happen when you attach the hat.

If the gnome body, which will be the base, doesn't stand up, press your thumb firmly into the centre to make an indent. Don't spend too long on this part, you are not going to see any of it when your gnome is finished. Just make sure the base is very firm.



Hat:

Your kit contains one of three types of fibre for the hat, depending on which colour you have chosen.

Carded sliver – long strip of wool, not combed smooth (more suited to needle felting)

Carded batts – a sheet of wool, not combed smooth (more suited to needle felting)

Merino tops – long strip and combed smooth (more suited to wet felting)

There are two methods of creating the hat, needle felted or wet felted. Here I have given instructions for both. Try whichever you feel more comfortable with. Next time you can try the other way! If your kit contains carded fibre, which is thicker and spongier, it is easier to needle felt. If it contains tops, which is smooth and combed, wet felting is easier, but it is up to you.



Needle felted hat

Gently pull three strips of hat fibre in a rough triangle shape. The middle strip will stick over the ends of your mat by about 4cm each end. Spread out the strips so they overlap slightly.

Pull off some smaller pieces of fibre and lay them at right-angles across the first strips, keeping the triangle shape. If your kit contains carded batts (sheet) just tear it into a rough triangle shape.





Felt the wool all over, pulling it into shape with the needle.

Gently peel the hat from the mat and move it up to work on the point at the top, and down to work on the rim at the bottom. Turn it over and felt the other side. Check for gaps and felt over those, you can



add more fibre if there are any holes in the hat.



Fold over the bottom edge to form a neat hat rim. Twist the top into a point and felt. Work on the hat until you are happy you have a nice even fabric.





Fold the hat in half and felt all the way up the seam



Work on the seam and continue to felt until you are happy with how it looks, then attach it to the body felting all the way around the rim. You can continue to shape the hat until you feel it is finished.





Rub the top of the hat between your hands to get a nice smooth point.

Next, using the same technique as for the body, roll a tiny, tight nose and attach it to the gnome body, just under the rim of the hat. Push the whole needle right into your work to secure it tightly. Don't worry if this flattens the nose, you can push it back into shape once it's attached. Work all the way around the edges until it is firmly fixed in place.



Wet felted hat: best for combed merino tops



You will need:

Hat fibre pack

a squirty bottle containing diluted hand soap in warm water - just a couple of squirts is enough

a tea towel

The bubble wrap triangles from your kit

Using the larger bubble wrap triangle as a template, with the base of your thumb and fingers, grip the wool strip across the width and pull away fine tufts of wool. Lay these out over the large bubble wrap triangle, all in one direction. The raggy edges should overlap the bubble wrap slightly.



Repeat this process, this time laying the fibres at a right-angle to the first layer. Repeat again so you have three fine layers criss-crossing over each other. If you can see through the wool, add another layer. Soak the layers thoroughly with soap solution. Tap the fibres with your finger tips only at first (so the fibres don't stick to your fingers) to remove the air. When the fibre is completely wet, add soap to your hands and rub them together.



Press the soap into the fibres, moving all over the hat then gently pat and rub the fibre for about 30 seconds - one minute to start the felting process. Don't felt the side edges. Neaten the bottom edge and form a point at the top. The sides need to be left unfelted as you want those edges to bond to each other when you fold them into the centre.



Place the smaller bubble wrap triangle 'resist' in the centre of your work, leaving a gap at the top, but not at the bottom.



Fold one edge into the centre and then the other over the top, covering the resist. Make sure they overlap the full length of the hat. Pat and rub very gently to bond the two edges. It is really important to start off gently as you want the edges to bond before anything else.

After a couple of minutes check the fibres to see if they have bonded. If the seam is fully bonded, turn it over and soap the other side. After a couple more minutes, you can rub more vigorously in all directions. Press out the excess water and mop up with the towel, make sure the felt is nice and soapy. **Remember, start off gently!**

Squeeze and scrunch! Fibres will felt in the direction of agitation, so if you want the hat shorter, rub lengthways, if you want it narrower, rub across the width.



After a few minutes you can remove the resist. If the fibres have bonded at the rim of the hat just pull them apart and rub the edges to smooth them.

Put your hand inside the hat and keep felting, scrunching and shaping.

Scrunch it into a ball and roll it around in your hands.



When you feel the hat is the right size, rinse it thoroughly under hot, then cold water and leave it to dry. You can either pull it into shape and dry it flat, or you can scrunch it up and leave it to dry to achieve a crinkly effect, as shown below.



A little patience is needed to ensure the hat is thoroughly dry as wet felt won't felt!

Since your wet felted hat is hollow, it will probably be floppy. If you would prefer it to stand upright, you can stuff it with tissue or old rags or upcycled cushion filling. Try it on the body to see which look you prefer.

If you find any gaps that haven't felted, mend them with your felting needle.

Attach the hat to the body using a large needle to felt all the way through the hat into the body. Felt all the way around the rim and continue at until you are happy with the shape. At this point I usually look to see which side I prefer as the front before attaching the nose.

Beard and Hair

Wet-felted beard (optional) If your kit contains curly locks, or you prefer to needle felt the beard, skip this section and jump straight to the '**Hair**' instructions.

You will need a bottle of warm soapy water and a tea towel. Important: only touch dry fibre with dry hands! (Or you will have a big mess. If this happens, don't panic, just email me and I'll send you a rescue pack 😊).



Gently pull off tufts of the beard fibre with your fingers and thumb until you have roughly half left. Put the tufts to one side, away from the wet area.

On a waterproof surface such as a tea tray, or draining board, thoroughly soak the fibre with your water bottle, pushing out all the air bubbles with your fingertips.

Tease out as many strands as you can from the top and bottom of the fibre.

Add more soap to your hands, spread out the 'tentacles' in all directions. and rub each one between your hands as if you are making tiny sausages!



If the beard looks as though it's separating in the middle, dry your hands thoroughly and lay a few fibres over the gap. Tap them with two fingers until they are wet too. It should now look like a soggy octopus!

The idea is not to create a perfect beard shape, but to create locks you can make into a beard. You can buy locks, but this is way more fun!

Scrunch the beard in the middle. Pinch it, pat it, and squish it about (technical term).





Use your towel to mop up excess water, then scrunch up the beard and roll it between your palms for about one minute.

Next, take it to the sink and rinse it under hot water first and then cold, then squeeze out the excess water and pat dry.

Lay the beard on your works surface and tease out the locks. They will be tangled, but this just adds to the beard effect. Place it on a radiator to dry.



Hair: Jump straight to this point if you don't want to make a wet felted beard, or if your kit contains locks.



If you've made a wet felted beard, using the fibre you put to one side, pull off a strand about 2cm wide. Place the first strand directly under the gnome's nose, with half above the nose and half below.

If you haven't made a beard, or if you have curly locks in your kit use as much of the fibre as you want to create a bushy beard and hair.

Use your needle to felt directly across the centre of the fibres in a gentle sawing action, tucking them right under the nose as you go. Don't press too hard or the needle may snap. The fibre will be pulled down into the body. Angle the needle slightly to grab as many fibres as you can. Work from each side into the centre. Fold down the upper half over the lower half so that all the fibres are under the nose.



Repeat the process with a tuft each side of the nose, tucking the fibres right up under the hat rim.

Work your way around the rim of the hat until you have a full head of hair and a beard tuft. If you haven't made a wet-felted beard, felt more fibres under the nose. Hold up the gnome and gently pull out any unattached fibres.

If you have wet-felted a beard, all that remains now is to attach it!

Note: Don't be tempted to do this until it is thoroughly dry. Felting wet wool is near impossible and will probably result in a snapped needle!



Place the beard locks directly under the nose on top of the other fibres, (you won't see those, they are just there to add thickness).

Needle felt the same as before, using the whole length of the needle, felting right up under the nose. Take

the beard right up around each side of the nose, up to the hat rim. Tease out the locks and felt them into place where you think it looks good. Aim for a longer point in the centre.

When the beard is attached, you are finished!

You may wish to attach a hanging loop to the top of the gnome's hat. This can be done using a sewing needle and some strong thread or nylon.





Hey, congratulations!

You made yourself a
gnome,

Now all you need to do is,
Give him a name and a
home!

Please share your creations!

I would love to see your gnome! If
you send me a photo I can put it on
my website or Facebook page with
other gnome-makers creations!

Email kt.recreative@gmail.com

I hope you have enjoyed your
felting project. If you have any
difficulties, please contact me so I
can help you.

If you enjoyed this project and
would like to see more KT Did
Felting kits, please visit,

www.ktrecreative.co.uk

or

www.facebook.com/kt.recreative

or email me!

Thank you, Kathryn

Other useful websites for supplies. Heidi feathers is very good for projects and advice, including a needle
guide. www.heidifeathers.com www.worldofwool.co.uk www.themakerss.co.uk