

## **FELTED DRAWSTRING PURSE**

Making a felted purse is easy. The following are instructions for hand felting a drawstring purse. These are basic instructions and it will be up to you to embellish the purse anyway you want. Or leave it plain.

### **Materials**

- Carded fleece
- Muslin or cotton material
- Warm water
- Liquid dish soap
- Scissors
- Washboard or other bumpy surface to full the purse
- Measuring cup

### **Instructions**

1. Lay carded fleece on a table or counter top.



2. Place another layer of carded fleece on top of the first layer in the opposite direction.



3. Lay a third layer of carded fleece opposite to the last layer.
4. Cut a template from your material. A 9" x 9" piece of material was used for these instructions. Place the template on top of your fleece.



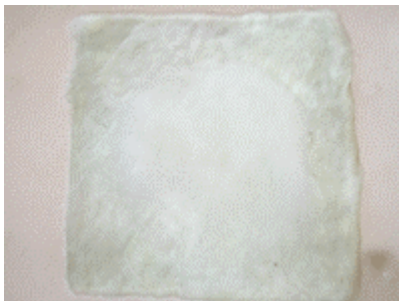
5. Use your measuring cup and fill with warm water and a few drops of liquid dish soap. Slowly pour small amounts of the water and soap on the material only. Make sure the edges past the material stay dry. Begin using pressure with your fingertips to start the felting beneath the material template.



6. Fold the dry edges over the template.



7. Fold all edges over towards the center.



8. Add extra fleece to the center if needed to cover the template completely. Use more soapy water if needed and felt until the fleece holds together.
9. Choose an edge to be the top of the purse. Use your scissors to carefully clip the edge open along the top to expose the material (The edge is folded back in the photo to show you the material underneath).



10. Carefully remove the material template.



11. Get a washboard or other bumpy surface. Place your hand inside the purse and begin rubbing the felted fleece on the washboard surface to full and shrink the purse.



12. Full the purse evenly by rotating it and fulling all sides. Keep an even shape. When the purse has shrunk to someplace around 6 1/2" x 6 1/2" (or approximately 30-35% of its original size), rinse the soap out of the purse with cool water. Squeeze out excess water and use a dry towel to press out remaining water. Allow to air dry.



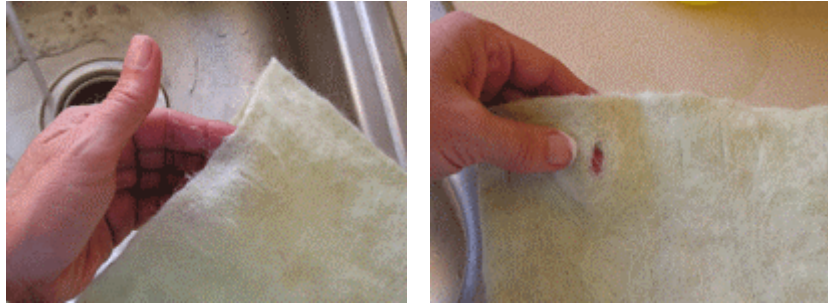
13. Cut the top of the purse so it is even.



14. Fold the top edges over together about an inch and begin clipping slits with the scissors about  $\frac{1}{2}$  -  $\frac{3}{4}$ " in length approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$ " apart. You will have 10 slits in each side of the purse evenly spaced around for a total of 20 slits for this size purse. Be sure and clip through to the back. You may have to re-clip some of the back slits to even them out. Or you can clip the slits individually if you prefer. Do not clip through the top edge.



15. Wet felt the top edges and the slits by using warm soapy water and rubbing the edges between your fingers until they are felted.



16. Continue felting until all the edges are finished. Rinse and dry as before.



17. Take some fleece and fluff it up for the drawstrings. You can use the same color or contrasting colors as used on this purse.

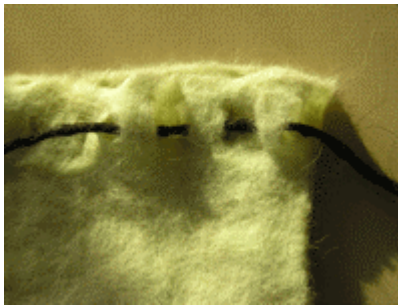


18. Start making a felt rope. Use warm soapy water on your hands. Roll the fluffed fleece between your palms a form a rope.

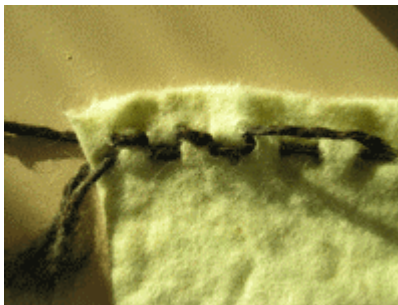


Keep adding fleece and rolling to lengthen the rope. The rope used in this purse is approximately 22" long. Make two ropes of the same length. Rinse out the soapy water with cool water and press between towels to remove excess water.

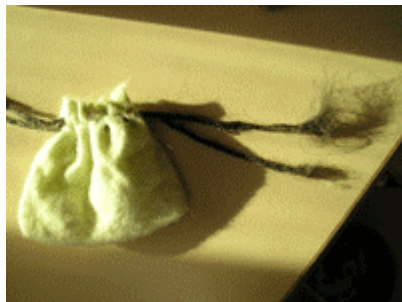
19. Thread the rope through the slits starting from one side and going all around the purse in an over and under manner. Both ends should come out on the same side of the purse.



20. Begin stringing the other rope from the opposite side. Use the over and under threading on the slits. It should be opposite of the other rope. For instance, if the first rope is threaded over a section, the second rope threads under the same section. The ends of the second rope should end up on the opposite side of the other rope ends.



21. Once threaded, you will have open ends on the ropes. Pull the strings tight to give yourself room to work. Use warm soapy water on your hands to felt the ends of one of the ropes together. You may have to add a little fleece to get it to felt. Keep the rope the same thickness so there are no fat spots. Felt the ends of the second rope in the same manner. Each rope should be closed now. Rinse and let dry.



Now you have a finished purse!



You can leave it plain or embellish it however you wish. You can apply designs by needle felting. You can add beads. You can embroider. Let your imagination go wild.

You can enlarge this purse by making a bigger template and lengthening the ropes.

You can get the instructions for felting a rose at [www.owning-alpaca.com](http://www.owning-alpaca.com) and hand sew it to the purse. Add some green felt for leaves.

There's no end to the personal touches you can give your purse. Have fun with it!

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