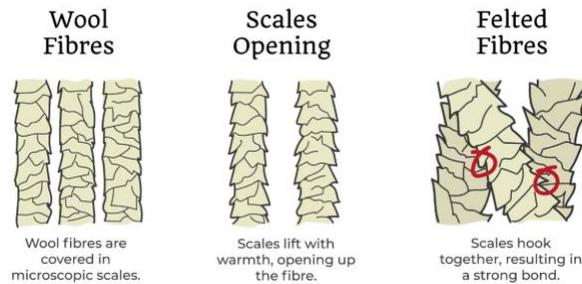


Wet Felting – Basic Steps

Wet felting is the process of using a combination of agitation, soap, and water to make felt out of wool fibers. Wool is slightly acidic. Soap and water change the pH of the wool and allow scales on the fibers to open and grab hold of each other, to silk, or to other embellishments). The soap allows your hand to move around the fibers easily so you can gently work the loose fibers.



(<https://www.thewoolroom.com/us/?ripc=no>)

WORK AREA (1-4)

Set up large table. (make sure it's in an area that is protected from water spillage, esp. on floor).
Cover table with large thin plastic sheeting (for table protection)
Cover sheeting with pool cover (helps with fiber agitation)
Cover pool cover with a smaller plastic sheet (approximate size of project)
Cover sheet with bubble wrap – enough for size of project

THE DRY PART (5-7)

(1st layer) Pull off small thin pieces of roving and lay on bubble wrap in one direction for the entire length of your project.

(2nd layer) add second layer of small thin pieces of roving at right angles to the 1st layer

(3rd layer) add a third layer at right angles to the 2nd layer

At this stage you can add color, embellishments (I mainly use silk) add fine wispy roving over the embellishment (acts like a glue), esp. decoration that is not silk.



Note: I often use silk as my first layer – on top of the bubble wrap and then I add the wool layers. If using silk as your base – spray lightly with water to keep material flat before you put on wool layers.

THE WET PART (8-14)

Once design is completed

Spray with soapy water (keeps fibers in place)

Lay a mesh (or nylon shower curtain) on top. Add a bit more soapy water over the mesh

Press down gently with a Loofah bath sponge (gentle enough not to disturb the fibers)
Rub olive oil soap over the mesh.
Use a palm washboard to apply gentle pressure over the mesh.
Make sure water and soap goes through the material.
Carefully remove the mesh (starting at one edge and carefully roll up and remove) – put aside.

THE AGITATION PART (15-17)

I use a hand sander with a rubber pad and I wear sound silencer headphones.
Gently press down with the sander, start motor, agitation begins. Work your way down slowly through the entire project. (I generally count to ten for each section and then repeat. Test to see if felting has begun.

Put bubble wrap on top of the project.
Put thin plastic sheeting over the bubble wrap (this makes flipping easier)
Your project should now be encased in a felting sandwich: (plastic sheet, bubble wrap, project, bubble wrap, plastic sheet)
Hold onto the edges of your project.
Then flip.

START agitation process on the flipped side.
Make sure the water and soap has seeped through. If not add more water and soap. Gentle hand agitation. Then sander process.

FINISHING THE FELTING PROCESS

Remove the top layer of plastic and set aside.
Put the noodle on the small end of the project.
Carefully roll (the bottom plastic does not get rolled with the bubble wrap and project) --pull it out set aside.
Put a large towel over the roll. Continue rolling to drain some of the water.

It is almost completely felted.
Unroll.
Remove the project from the bubble wrap – set aside.
Put project in basin. Carry to sink.
Wash product in mild water in the sink to get the water out.
After soap removed add product to a vinegar bowl. Let sit for about 5 minutes. Then wash vinegar out, also in mild water.
Gently roll product, squeeze but don't wring. Throw it at the sides of the sink. Yes, you heard me – slam the project against the sides – this is more of the agitation stage.

THE DRYER, MORE AGITATION, and finishing

I complete the felting process in the dryer – only on Tumble Dry cycle – **no heat**. And watch it carefully. I STOP the agitation once it's at the desired level of felting for me. Hang to dry.