Fuzzy Bag Pattern

This bag is knitted loosely, in the round, then felted in your washing machine. During the felting process the bag will shrink considerably and become much sturdier. Any embellishments must be added after this felting stage.

If using an eyelash yarn other than that suggested below then please test it first as some eyelash yarns disintegrate in a hot wash!

The exact size of your finished bag will depend on wool and felting temperatures used, but an indication is given below.

You will need:

- Approx 100g aran weight pure wool (not machine washable or superwash varieties)
- 50g Wendy Cosmic or other eyelash yarn
- 6 mm circular needle (or 4 double ended needles, if you prefer)
- 1 pair of 4.5 mm double ended needles
- Wool needle to sew band in place and attach handles to bag

Approx finished size:

Before felting:	width 23 cm, height 19 cm, depth 12 cm
After felting:	width 15 cm, height 12 cm, depth 9 cm

Instructions:

Body of bag:

Using the 6 mm circular needle and the aran wool, cast on 30 st. Knit 28 rows (garter stitch) to form the base of the bag, using the circular needle as if it were two standard needles. Turn, knit 1 row, pick up and knit 14 st on the short side of the base, 30 st along the long edge and 14 st along the second short side. There will now be 88 st on your circular needle. Join in the Cosmic yarn and, working both yarns together and knitting in the round, decrease on the first round as follows:

k1, (k2tog, k2) 21 times, k2tog, k1 (66 st)

This decrease is to allow for the lesser level of shrinkage when the pure wool is knitted together with the fancy yarn.

Knit in the round until the Cosmic yarn is used up, leaving approx 10-20 cm of the yarn for finishing off. This will typically be 23-24 rounds, and the bag height will be approx 14-15 cm.

Border:

Continuing with the aran wool only: (k 10, incr in the next st) 6 times (72 st).

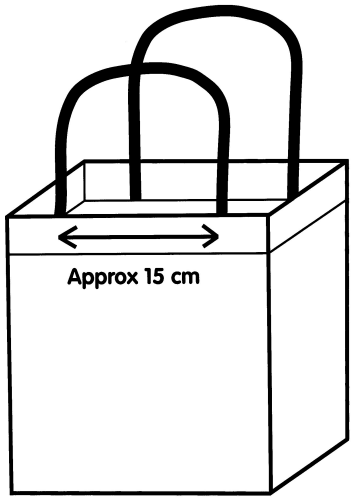
Knit 15 rounds (approx 8 cm). Cast off all stitches.

Handle:

Using 4.5 mm double ended needles and the pure wool, cast on 5 st. Work in I-cord on these for 32 cm (knit, do not turn work and slide stitches to opposite end of needle. Repeat until you reach the desired length). Cast off. Work a second identical handle.

Finishing:

Fold the knitted border in half and slipstitch in place on the inside of the bag where the Cosmic yarn section ends. Sew the handles to the inside of the bag, approx 15 cm apart from the centre front and centre back. The base of the handles should be at the base of the knitted band, approx
4 cm down from the top edge of the bag.



Finish off all ends of yarn by weaving into the work, along the cords where possible, before felting.

Felting:

Felt your bag in the washing machine by placing the knitted bag in a zippered mesh bag or pillowcase in your machine, with a couple of towels or pairs of jeans to give the necessary agitation. Add a small amount of washing powder, but no fabric conditioner. For the photographed bag, I used 2 washes on a 60° cycle with the time saving option and 500 spin cycle. A low level spin, if an available option on your machine, reduces the risk of crumpling your bag. When felted to the desired level, remove from your washing machine and place a plastic bag inside your felt bag. Stuff the plastic bag with crumpled newspaper to give a good rectangular shape and leave somewhere warm to dry out completely.

© Sheepfold/Au (2005)

to purchase pure wool to make this bag or wonderful knit and felt kits visit www.sheepfold.co.uk