Maxim Duffle Bag
by Sue Parker of Sheepfold

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

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

The photographed example is made using Sheepfold's heather range aran weight wools in 3 different shades, available from Sheepfold's online shop:
http://www.sheepfold.co.uk/online-shop/coloured-wools/index.html

You will need:

- Approx 300g aran weight pure wool (not machine washable or superwash varieties). The photographed example was made using 100g of each of 3 different shades, c1 in pumice, c2 in forget-me-not and c3 in indigo
- 5.5 mm crochet hook
- Wool needle

Abbreviations used:

ch	chain stitch
ss	slip stitch
tr	treble crochet
dc	double crochet

Approx finished size:

Before felting: base diameter 29-30 cm, height 35 cm
After felting: base diameter 25-26 cm, height 28-29 cm

Instructions:

Circular base:

With crochet hook and c1 make 4ch. Join with 1ss to form a circle.
1st row: Work 3ch, 15tr into circle, then 1ss into 3rd of 3ch to join round (16sts).
2nd row: Work 3ch. Work 1tr into base of 3ch. Work 2tr into each st for rest of round. With c2 work 1ss into 3rd of 3ch to join round (32sts).
Break of c1 and work in ends as next round is worked.
3rd row: In c2 work 3ch. Work 2tr into next st. Work *1tr into next st, 2tr into next st**. Repeat * to ** to end of round. 1ss into 3rd off 3ch to join round (48sts).
4th row: Work 3ch, then 1tr into each st in next round, ie without further increasing. With c3 work 1ss into 3rd of 3ch to join round. Break off c2.
5th row: Working in ends as before, with c3 make 3ch. Work 1tr into next st then 2tr into following st. Work *1tr into each of next 2 sts, 2tr into next st**. Repeat * to ** to end of round. 1ss into 3rd off 3ch to join round (64sts).
6th row: Work 3ch, then 1tr into each st in next round. Break off c3. In c1 1ss into 3rd of 3ch to join round.
7th row: Working in ends as before, with c1 make 3ch. Work 1tr into each of next 2 sts then 2tr into following st. Work *1tr into each of next 3 sts, 2tr into next st**. Repeat * to ** to end of round. 1ss into 3rd off 3ch to join round (80sts).
8th row: Work 3ch, then 1tr into each st in next round. Break off c1. In c2 1ss into 3rd of 3ch to join round.
9th row: Working in ends as before, with c2 make 3ch. Work 1tr into each of next 3 sts then 2tr into following st. Work *1tr into each of next 4 sts, 2tr into next st**. Repeat * to ** to end of round. 1ss into 3rd off 3ch to join round (96sts).
10th row: Work 3ch, then 1tr into each st in next round. Work 1ss into 3rd of 3ch to join round.

Sides:

Four blocks of pattern are now worked with the colours being changed such that the triangles join to form slanting diamonds.
In the first block A=c2 and B=c3.
In the second block A=c3 and B=c1.
In the third block A=c1 and B=c2.
In the fourth block A=c2 and B=c3

As you change colours, work the unused yarn in at the base of the trebles so the yarn is carried over without forming loose loops.

1st row: Working in A work 3ch. Work 1tr in each of next 4sts. Join in B and work 1tr. *In A, work 1tr in each of next 5sts, then in B work 1tr in next st**. Repeat * to ** to end of round. In A, 1ss into 3rd of 3ch to join round.
2nd row: In A work 3ch. Work 1tr in each of next 3 sts and in B work 1tr in each of next 2sts. *In A, work 1tr in each of next 4sts, then in B work 1tr in each of next 2sts**. Repeat * to ** to end of round. In A, 1ss into 3rd of 3ch to join round.
3rd row: In A work 3ch. Work 1tr in each of next 2 sts and in B work 1tr in each of next 3sts. *In A, work 1tr in each of next 3sts, then in B work 1tr in each of next 3sts**. Repeat * to ** to end of round. In A, 1ss into 3rd of 3ch to join round.
4th row: In A work 3ch. Work 1tr in next st and in B work 1tr in each of next 4 sts. *In A, work 1tr in each of next 2sts, then in B work 1tr in each of next 4sts**. Repeat * to ** to end of round. In A, 1ss into 3rd of 3ch to join round.
5th row: In A work 3ch. In B work 1tr in each of next 5 sts. *In A, work 1tr in next st, then in B work 1tr in each of next 5sts**. Repeat * to ** to end of round. In A, 1ss into 3rd of 3ch to join round.

This sets the pattern.

Work a total of four blocks of the 5-row pattern, changing colour as stated above and breaking off yarn and working in ends as needed.

Next row: In c1, work 3ch, then 1tr into each st in round, 1ss into 3rd of 3ch to join round. Break off c1.
Next row: In c2, work 3ch, then 1tr into each st in round, 1ss into 3rd of 3ch to join round. Break off c2.
Eyelet row: In c3, work 3ch. *1tr in each of next 2 sts, 2ch, miss next 2 sts in round, 1tr in each of next 2 sts**. Repeat * to ** until 5 st remain. 1tr in each of next 2 sts, 2ch, miss next 2 sts in round, 1tr, 1ss into 3rd of 3ch to join round. Break off c3. You should have created 16 eyelet holes.

Next row: In c1, work 3ch, then 1tr into each st in round, 1ss into 3rd of 3ch to join round. Break off c1.
Next row: In c3, work 2ch, then 1dc into each st in round, 1ss into 2nd of 2ch to join round. Break off c3 and work in end.

Base Loops (optional):
Using all 3 colours together crochet 2 lengths of chain, each 10 sts long, fasten off and sew in a loop to the edge of the base 6 triangle blocks apart.

Handle:
Using all 3 colours together loosely crochet 2 lengths of chain, each 150 cm long. Starting above one of the base loops (if used), thread one length of chain in and out of the eyelets around the top of the bag, then thread through one base loop if added to the bag. Knot the two ends of the chain securely together. Starting above the second base loop, thread the second chain in and out of the eyelets and knot as before. Work in all ends.

Finishing:

If necessary, close up any hole in the centre of the base of your bag. Make sure all ends of yarn are woven into your work before felting.

Felting:

Felt your bag in the washing machine by placing the knitted bag in a zippered mesh bag 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 shape and leave somewhere warm to dry out completely.

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