Striped Felted Bag Pattern

This bag is knitted loosely, in a single piece, then felted in your washing machine. During the felting process the bag will shrink considerably and become much sturdier.

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 200g chunky weight pure wool (not machine washable or superwash varieties)
- 50g Wendy Cosmic or other eyelash yarn
- 1 pair 8 mm straight needles
- 8 mm circular needle (or 4 double ended needles, if you prefer)
- 1 pair of 6.5 mm double ended needles
- 4 stitch markers
- 4 safety pins or stitch holders
- Wool needle to graft handles to bag

Approx finished size:

Before felting:	width 36 cm, height 26 cm, depth 12 cm
After felting:	width 26 cm, height 19 cm, depth 10 cm

Instructions:

Body of bag:

Using the 8 mm straight needles and the chunky wool, cast on 36 st. Knit 24 rows (garter stitch) to form the base of the bag. Change to the circular needle and knit 1 row, pick up and knit 16 st from the side edge, 36 st along the cast on edge and 16 st along the second side edge, placing markers at each of the corners. There will be 104 st on your circular needle. Knit 1 round, slipping the stitch markers across to the working needle. Join in the Cosmic yarn and, working both yarns together, knit 2 rounds. Leave out the Cosmic yarn and, using just the chunky wool, knit 5 rounds.

*add Cosmic yarn and, working both yarns together, knit 2 rounds as before. Leaving out the Cosmic yarn and, using just the chunky wool, knit 5 rounds **

Repeat pattern * to ** 3 more times.

Join in the Cosmic yarn and, working both yarns together, knit in the round until the Cosmic yarn is used up.

Upper edge and handles:
Using the chunky wool only, purl 1 round. From the corner of a long edge cast off as follows:
K9 st, cast off 18 st, leaving last worked stitch on needle. K3 and place these 4 st on a safety pin. Cast off the next 26 st leaving last worked stitch on needle. K3 and place these 4 st on a safety pin. Cast off 18 st, leaving last worked stitch on needle. K3 and place these 4 st on a safety pin. Cast off 26 st. Remove the stitch markers as you pass them. There will now be 4 st remaining on your needle.

Transfer these 4 st to a double ended needle and work in I-cord on these for 50 cm (knit, do not turn work and slide stitches to opposite end of needle. Repeat until you reach the desired length). Graft these stitches, using Kitchener stitch, to the remaining 4 st on the same long side of the bag. Repeat for the handle on the other side of the bag.

Finishing:
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 shape and leave somewhere warm to dry out completely. This may take several days!

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