

Felted Bowl Tips and Tricks by Sara Smelt of Felt Evolution

**1. A Hollow Object:** To create a hollow object such as this felted bowl, use a craft foam template (resist) that is 30-35% larger than the desired final size. Wool shrinks as it felts and the craft foam is able to bend and buckle, while stopping the two opposite walls of your bowl (or hat, or bag, or lantern) felting together.

**2. Fibers:** There are many types of wool and animal fibers that can be used for felting (eg sheep, alpaca, llama, camel, yak, cat, dog...the human version of felted fiber is dreadlocks!). Sheep wool is used most commonly and merino wool (21.5uM) is an easy felting wool. This is available at [www.FeltEvolution.com](http://www.FeltEvolution.com) or [www.FeltEvolution.Etsy.com](http://www.FeltEvolution.Etsy.com).

**3. Water:** The hotter the water the faster the wool will felt but it will still felt in cool water...it will just take longer!

**4. Soap:** You don't need special soap to felt. Dish soap is fine. Some people prefer to use grated olive oil soap. Go ahead and do this if you like but don't use a spray bottle - it will clog!!

**5. If in doubt, roll some more:** When the wool has felted, it should pass 'the pinch test'. Pinch a small area of the felt. If the wool picks up as a single piece, it has felted well. If lots of individual wool fibers come up, your wool isn't well felted. Roll some more. Usually, when you see your 'resist' (template) buckling, your wool will be nicely felted.

**6. Choose Your Opening:** Cut a simple circular opening, 2 intersecting lines (a cross) to create a bursting pod, or 4 intersecting lines to create a corona shape. Any cuts will stretch slightly so cut them ~1/4" smaller than the desired final size:

**7. 'Heal' your edges:** Wherever you cut, spend some time pinching the cut edges together and massaging them with a tiny circular motion using some dish soap. This neatens the edges and makes for a more professional finish. The longer you spend on this the better your finished bowl will look.

**8. 'Shock' Your Fibers:** Squeeze your bowl in hot and cold water and feel how the textile changes. It will shrink more and become thicker and firmer. Throwing it against a surface will also toughen the felt.

**9. 'Block' Your Bowl:** Felt holds the shape in which it dries. Stuff your finished bowl tightly with trash bags if you want no creases, or more loosely if you want a more organic look.

### **Your Next Felted Bowls:**

Try adding some mohair locks, some silk, some prefelt, some yarn to your pod as you are creating it. They should felt right into the bowl. When dry, decorate your pod with beads, embroidery or needle felting! There are so many possibilities!

Above all, have fun!!! Felting is fabulous and magical - try combining some crazy colors and see how wonderful they look!

To learn more about felting and to take some workshops at the beach, check out 1450 Ocean [classes](http://www.FeltEvolution.com) or [www.FeltEvolution.com](http://www.FeltEvolution.com)