

teen take & make

[maker kit]
wilmette public library

Needle-Felted Mushrooms

Do some cozy crafting with our needle-felted woodland mushroom kit. This Take & Make is part of our winter reading program, Wilmette Reads!



Ingredients (Included)

- 2-3 g brown wool roving
- 2-3 g green wool roving
- 3-4 g red wool roving
- 6-7 g white wool roving
- 3 sizes of felting needles
- Foam pad
- Pipe cleaners, acorn caps, wood slices

You Supply:

- Hot glue or tacky glue
- Sandpaper
- Optional: Finger protectors

Needle felting uses a sharp, barbed tool that can draw blood if not careful. Go slow, have band-aids ready, and use finger coverings if possible. It's normal to poke yourself a little but if you're doing it a lot, slow down!

Foam Blocks: I cut these by hand from a large piece of foam, which is why they look so uneven, but they work the same as a purchased square!

Needles: Your needles may have a little grease on them from their original packaging. Wipe them down carefully with a soft cloth to remove this before starting your project.

How does Needle Felting Work?

Needle felting is a craft that involves repeatedly stabbing a needle into a piece of wool in order to stiffen and shape it into the desired form. The needles are barbed, made to agitate the wool fibers, so they end up bonding the fibers together in a firm shape.



Beginner Tips:



Don't cut wool roving with scissors.

You can separate the fibers by pulling and tearing gently to get the amount you need.

Keep your needle straight.

To avoid breaking the needle, don't twist while it's in the foam. Pull the needle out at the same angle you put it in. Do not bend the needle while in the wool.



Work evenly.

Keep moving the wool around as you work so that the fibers are agitated evenly as you poke around at every angle. Be mindful of where your fingers are when moving the wool around! You can use another needle to pin your work in place.

Don't force it.

If after felting an area, you feel resistance inserting the needle, you may need to move to a new area or use a smaller gauge needle.

Felt in layers.

Start with a smaller piece of wool and gradually add more to increase the size of your shape. This helps make sure the inside of the wool is fully felted before you start a new layer. Also, you can always add more wool, but you cannot remove it felting it.

Practice makes perfect.

Your project still may look different than you expect when you're all done. That's okay! Building a new skill takes time. Practice making basic shapes (round balls, cylinders, ovals, squares, etc.) of various sizes before attempting complex projects.

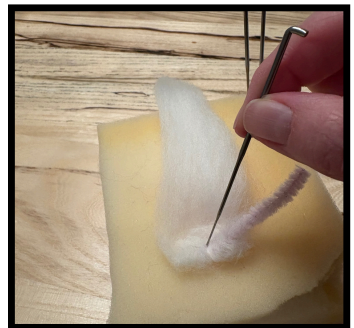
Needle-Felted Mushroom Instructions

Making the Stalk

Step One: We'll use white roving for the stalk. Pull gently to separate about about 4" to 6" long and as thick as your thumb. Put the rest of the white aside.

This size is a guideline. Since you know you'll use the acorn cap or the wood circle, try to scale your stalk to fit one. You can always add more wool if needed.

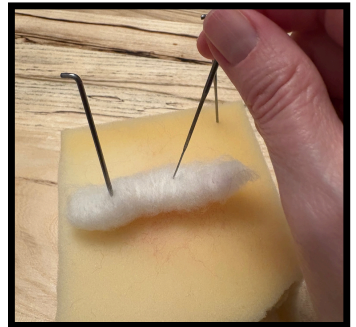
Step Two: Take the pipe cleaner and fold some of the white wool roving over one end. Place it on the foam and use small jabs of the largest needle to anchor that wool on top of the pipe cleaner.



Step Three: Then, roll the wool over the pipe cleaner in your hands so that the whole pipe cleaner is covered, making a cylindrical shape. (You can cut the pipe cleaner if it seems too big. You can also fold over your wool roving and felt the fold together if it is too long.)



Step Four: You can pin the stalk to the foam block with one of your needles to hold it in place (instead of your fingers!) if that helps.



Using the largest needle, poke the roving up and down the stalk so it starts to felt together. Don't poke too far; you want small, short pokes. Then turn the stalk and poke some more on the other side. Continue turning until the stalk feels solid and you have the right shape. You can switch needles as needed to get a finer finish.



Keep the top of the bottom of the stalk loose and frayed.

Making the Mushroom Cap

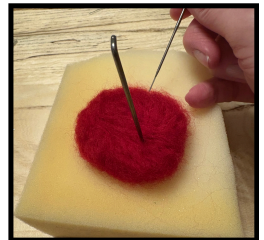
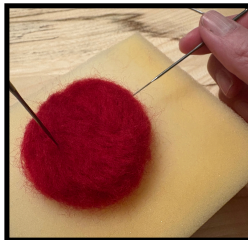
Step One: Using the red roving, separate and pull gently so that you have a piece about 8" long and as thick as two fingers. Put the rest of the red aside.



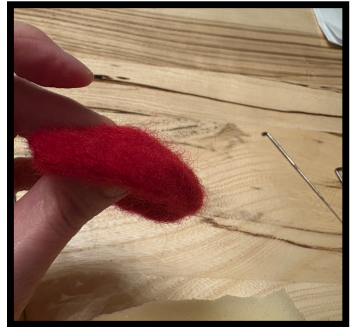
Step Two: Roll the roving into a loose coil and put on the foam. Start on the outside of the coil and stab your needle into the roving all the way around in a circular motion, moving inwards. Make sure to work over the seams where the coils join really well.



Then, pick up the roving and turn it over and repeat on the other side. Keep alternating sides and angles. Eventually this should form a circular shape.

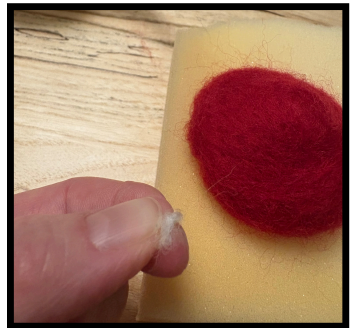


Step Three: Once the roving feels felted, gently pull and bend the circle to create the bowl shape for the mushroom cap. Be gentle so you don't tear it, but if it is coming apart too easily while you do this, you need to felt it more with the needles.



Adding White Spots

Step One: Take a very tiny amount of white and roll it into between your hands so it felts a little. This will make it easier to work with. I cannot stress how little white you need for one spot.



Step Two: Then roll this into a tiny coil and place on top of the mushroom cap. Carefully stab into the white, attaching it to the cap.

Step Three: Repeat this for as many white spots as you want!

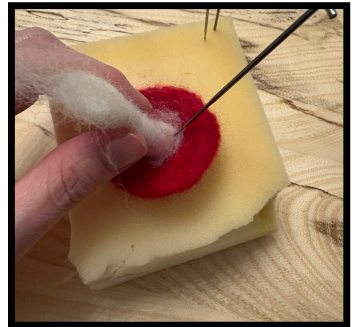


Attaching the Stalk and Top

Step One: Fray one end of the stalk and place it within the mushroom cap. Put the two pieces on the foam and gently stab the frayed ends of the stalk into the cap. This should attach them.



Step Two: Once the frayed ends are attached, stab the middle of the stalk and push it into the mushroom. Keep working at different angles until they are really stuck together.



Step Three: If you stab enthusiastically, you may end up with some white of the stalk showing through the top of the red cap. You can take a small piece of red roving, coil it up, and felt it onto the top of the mushroom cap to cover the white.



If you end up covering your white spots with red accidentally, you can always add them back in. Needle felting is flexible.

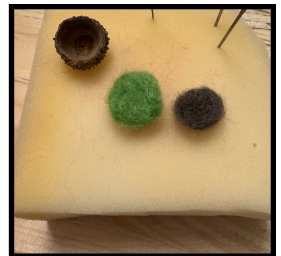
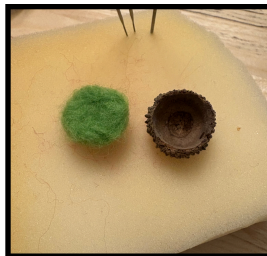
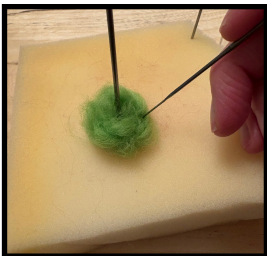
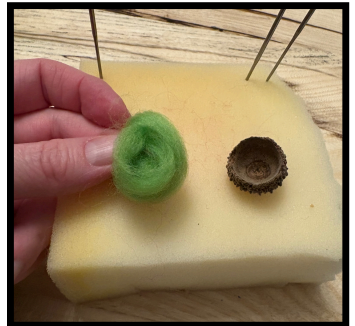
Finishing the Mushroom

You'll use your green and brown roving to make grass and dirt for your mushroom. Look at your base again and size appropriately. I started with about 3" of each color, as thick as your little finger.

Step One: Starting with green, pull the roving apart and lay the pieces on top of each other, then coil to form a small circle.

Step Two: Felt the green roving together on the foam block like you did the mushroom cap.

Repeat with the brown roving.

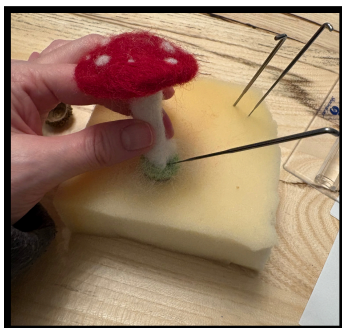
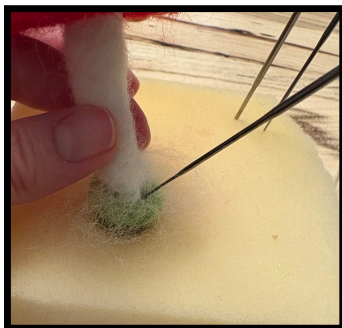


Step Three: Next you will felt the green and brown roving together, green on top. You're shooting for a half dome that you can attach the stalk to. Remember to always be picking up your piece and changing positions to stab it at different angles.



If you're using the acorn cap, this should fit inside the acorn. If you're using the wood circle, this should be flat at this base so it can sit on the circle.

Step Four: Place the frayed end of your white stalk on the green felt and attach by gently stabbing it into the green. Like before, once you attach the frayed ends, start stabbing through the middle of the stalk to push it into the green, until they are really stuck together.



Step Five: Place your finished mushroom piece into the acorn cap or wood slice to see how it looks. You can add a little more green roving, or some tiny white and red flowers to the green (like adding the spots to the mushroom cap).



If you're using the acorn cap, this is where the sandpaper comes in. You will need to sand down the bottom of the acorn cap so that it sits upright on its own. This can be tedious but it's worth it.

Once you're happy with it, hot glue the mushroom into the acorn cap or onto the wood slice.



You should have more than enough wool roving left over to make at least one more mushroom, if not many more, depending on how big you make them. Experiment with the colors and sizes and have fun!



Have questions or comments about our Teen Take & Makes? Email me at khutley@wilmettelibrary.info. Proud of your final product? Post a picture and tag @wilmettelibraryteens on Instagram!