

FIBRE FELTING FUN Activity 3b

CULTURE 365 - GETTING CREATIVE SERIES
Presented in partnership with Dream Brokers

Wet-Felting Beads With Melanie Rose

WHAT WE ARE MAKING TODAY

Wet-felting is the process of wetting, rolling and squeezing wool until the fibres mat together – like a dreadlock. Wet-felting can be used to create different objects such as beads, buttons or bowls. This process is used in different cultures around the world. In Mongolia, the people use it to create their own homes or tents, called “yurts”.

Today, Melanie Rose introduces participants to the art of wet-felting and shows participants how to make their own colourful felted beads, which can be strung together to make necklaces, bracelets or hair accessories.

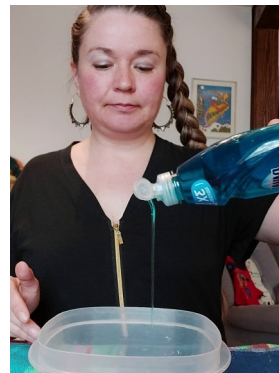


Supplies Needed:

Different colours of wool, plastic bowl with hot water, and dishwashing soap. Participants need to also grab a few towels from home.

STEP 1

Pour hot water into a plastic bowl to the half-way point, with a small amount of soap added to the bottom of the bowl.



STEP 2

Take a small piece of one colour of wool – pull from the end of the wool.

Roll the wool into a small ball the size of a walnut. Wrap stray pieces around to hold it together as tight as you can get it.



IMPORTANT NOTE: By attempting this activity, you accept responsibility for your actions and indemnify SaskCulture, Sask Lotteries, contracted artists and/or its partners, officers, directors, employees, contractors, agents, volunteers against all claims, actions, suits, demands, losses, expenses, costs or damages of every kind.



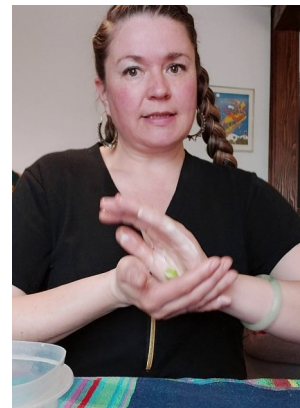
For this and other Getting Creative videos,
visit [SaskCultureInc YouTube Channel](#) or
[SaskCulture.ca](#)



STEP 3

Dip the rolled up ball in the hot water and then roll it gently in between your hands. Dip it instead of dunking it or the bead will lose shape.

Continue to roll in between your hands. Dip again in the water and keep rolling gently. The hot water shocks the wool and helps the fabrics come together and shrink as they dry.



STEP 4

Add some dishwashing soap to the bead – half the size of a dime. Dip and roll the wool some more to form a bead shape – either a circle or an oval. Keep rolling and dipping in hot water.

As you roll, the bead will start to lather. It will be soapy but it should be starting to harden. If you can pull fibres from the bead, it isn't done – keep rolling.



STEP 5

Now that it has structure, you can roll the bead harder between your hands. Use more strength and push harder. Dip it into hot water again. You are trying to get the wool inside the bead wet enough to felt.

Tip on Consistency:

- Soft – wool inside is not felted
- Medium – good
- Hard – very solid inside and out



STEP 6

Your finished bead should be just slightly squishy when squeezed. If it is too hard it will be difficult to get a needle through it.



For this and other Getting Creative videos,
visit [SaskCultureInc YouTube Channel](#) or
[SaskCulture.ca](#)



STEP 7

Rinse the bead in the sink under cold water. As you rinse the soap out, you will feel the bead getting tighter.



STEP 8

Go through the process again and make as many beads as you want in the colours you choose.

Let the beads dry and then take a needle to string them together or add them to your accessories.



NEXT STEPS

Felting is used for more than just creating designs in fabric. The technique can be used to make beads, buttons and bowls. Try **Activity 3c. - Wet-Felting Buttons** next.

Once you have completed your felted crafts, take photos of your completed works and send it to your Dream Broker. The artist would love to see your work, and SaskCulture would love to add it to a showcase of student expression.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Melanie Monique Rose is a visual artist from Regina, Saskatchewan, Treaty 4 Territory, and a long-time contributing member of **Sâkêwêwak Artists' Collective Inc.** She attended Kootenay School of the Arts with a major in the Fibre Arts in Nelson, B.C. and has exhibited her artwork in both group and solo exhibitions nationally. Her greatest honor was to receive the distinction of Excellence in Textiles in Dimension's 2013 touring show. In addition to showing her work, Rose has worked in the province as gallery facilitator, story-keeper, and art instructor for the Mackenzie Art Gallery and in addition teaches various workshops at both public and private institutions. She is currently a full-time mom to Meadow Rose, who was born in 2018, a caregiver, and an artist.



SaskCulture's work and support reaches lands covered by Treaties 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 10, the traditional lands of the Cree, Dakota, Dene, Lakota, Nakota and Saulteaux peoples, as well as the homeland of the Métis.

