

Explore Corn: Needle Felting Corn Lab



Purpose: To study and understand the components, structure, and shape of an ear of corn.

Materials:

- White wool roving
- Green wool
- Yellow wool

- Brown Wool
- Foam pad
- Felting needle

Before you start:

- When separating wool, your hands must be some distance apart. If your hands are too close together, the fibers will lock and cannot be separated. **DO NOT CUT WOOL!** The cut fibers will be damaged and will not felt properly.



INCORRECT



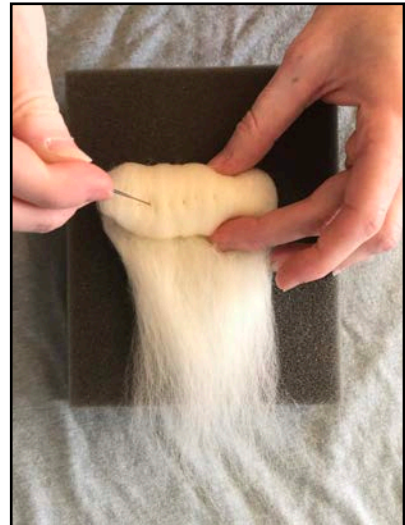
CORRECT

- Start small! You can always add more wool to make your object larger; however, once felted, you **CANNOT** remove wool to make your object smaller.
- Be gentle! Felting needles are fragile and can break if you push too hard or bend them. **DO NOT** felt on hard surfaces! **ONLY** felt on the foam pad to protect your project and your needle. It is not necessary to push the needle into the pad and it may cause your project to stick to the pad.
- Rotate! When creating 3D objects, it is important to rotate your object while you work to create a smooth, even shape and prevent dimples.

- Be careful! Needles are sharp and you must be aware of where your fingers are and how far you are pushing your needle into your object.

Instructions:

1. Pull off a section of white roving that is approximately 8-10 inches long. Start to roll one end of the wool up to form a cylinder. This will be the corn cob. Keep the roll tight to minimize the amount of felting you need to do. Tuck in the ends as you roll up. Gently felt the roll as you go to help it keep its shape.



2. When you have formed your corn cob, you can soften and round the ends by felting at an angle. It's important to not wiggle or bend your needle. Continue to felt the corn cob to make it firmer. You want it to still be slightly squishy when you are finished. Don't forget to rotate as you felt!



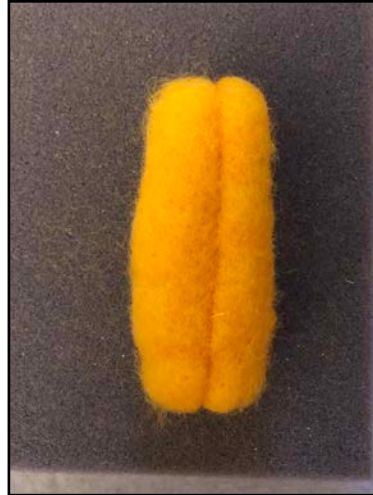
3. Separate a section of yellow wool, approximately 6 inches, and place it on the foam pad. Wrap it around your cob and gently felt it into place. Remember, you can always add more to cover thin areas. Felt small patches of yellow wool on the ends of the cob.



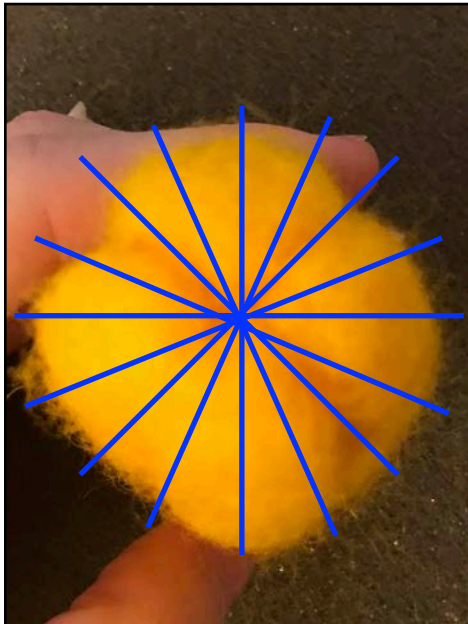
TIP: To create a smooth finish, you can hold the cob between your hands and rub them together. The heat and friction from your hands will help felt the wool fibers tighter and erase needle marks.

Next you will form the kernels. This is the most time consuming part of the project. You may be tempted to rush it but take your time to form this important detail!

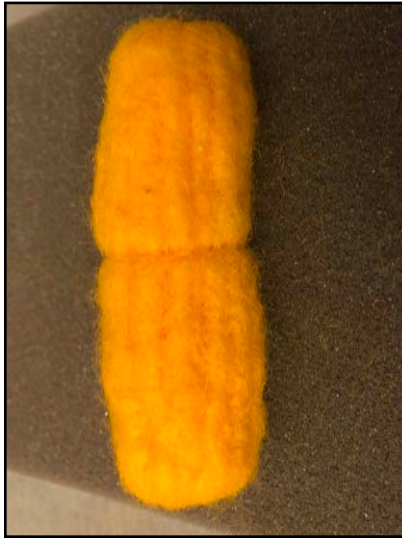
4. To create indentations, simply felt the same spot several times. Start at the top of your cob and push the needle into same spot 2-3 times and slowly work your way down the cob to form a line. This line will go all the way around your cob and it will look "split" in half. Turn the cob 90 degrees and repeat the above steps to felt your cob into quarters.



5. Continue this step until you have made 16 lines. Below shows a diagram to follow and the finished result.



6. Next you will felt lines across the lines you just made to form squares, or kernels. Start by felting around the middle of the cob and work your way toward one end. Then turn cob 180 degrees and work from the center towards the other end.



7. Now it's time to make the husk. Take a section of green wool, approximately 5 inches long, and place it on the foam pad. Lay your corn cob on top of the green wool and gently knit the outline of the husk, making sure it is wider than the cob. Keep in mind that the husk will wrap around the cob.



8. Fold the edges of wool on top of the pattern you created and felt it into itself. Be sure to soften and round the edges by felting at an angle. Leave the base of the husk loose for later. Repeat these steps to create the other half of the husk.



9. Set the husk pieces aside and place the corn cob on the foam pad. Pull small, thin pieces of brown wool apart. This will be the corn silk. Lay the brown fiber along the corn cob and very gently felt them onto the cob, just enough to keep them in place.



Question:

What does it mean when corn silk is brown? What other color could it be? At what stage does it change color?

10. It's finally time to assemble your ear of corn! Grab your husk pieces and arrange them one at a time around the cob. When you have it in the position you like, felt the husk into the cob starting at the base and felting about halfway up. Add your second husk piece to the other side. Arrange it so the back of the cob is covered (see fourth picture below) and felt into place. If needed, you can pinch and stretch the wool slightly to cover exposed areas and felt it into the cob.

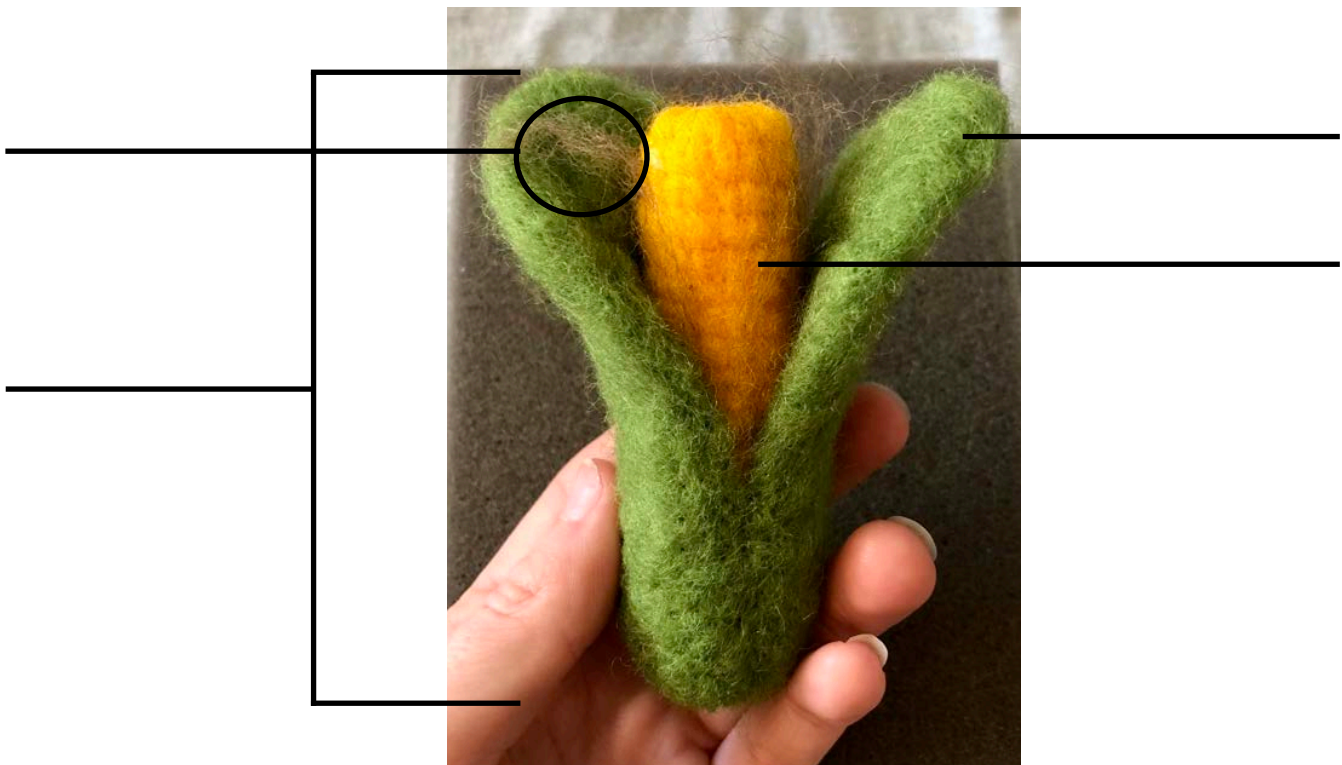


Don't forget you can gently roll the ear of corn in your hands to "erase" needle marks!

11. Flip your ear of corn over so the front is facing towards you. Gently pull the green wool on the bottom up to cover the bottom of the cob and felt. Round the bottom of the ear by felting at an angle.



Ta-da! You have now made your own ear of corn! Label the parts below!



WORD BANK

EAR

KERNEL

HUSK

SILK

BONUS!

Add details to the husk, like lines, to give your ear more texture!

