

# Woolly Brew Teacup Decoration

These tiny teacups are designed to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Woolly Brew yarn shop in Pittenweem, Fife, Scotland, whose symbol is a teacup of wool. The teacups are knitted and then wet felted to make sturdy decorations- instructions are given on how to felt.

There are three versions of this little pattern, depending on how you like to knit.

The simplest is knit flat as a simple rectangle, seamed up the side and gathered at the base to create the teacup shape (method 1).

Next up, if you like knitting in the round (or dislike sewing up!) is to knit a simple cylinder-shape in the round and gather the base to make the teacup shape (method 2).

Lastly (my favourite as it avoids seaming and gathering) is knitting in the round, using increases to create the teacup shape. Making the initial increases is a little fiddly but when you cast off the teacup, it's shaping needs no further finishing.



For all versions, the teacup handle is knitted on as i-cord; instructions on how to do this are given.

You need to use a feltable yarn- 100% wool and not superwash treated (the yarn care instructions should say handwash only). The teacup is sad and floppy until felted. These teacups are knitted in Jamieson's Spindrift Shetland wool.

## Method 1: Knitting a flat rectangle and shaping the teacup using gathering.

### You will need:

about 18m (20 yards) of feltable 4-ply/fingering weight teacup-coloured yarn (4.3g of Jamieson's Spindrift)

about 15m (16 yards) of yarn to make the little ball of wool with (3.5g of Jamieson's Spindrift)

A metre of yarn to sew decorations onto the teacup.

3mm (UK 11, US 2.5) needles

3mm (UK 11, US 2.5) double pointed needles (for making the i-cord)

Tiny amount of stuffing (I used about 1.5g of carded lambswool)

2 cocktail sticks

2 beads (the ones shown here are 4mm diameter wooden beads with 1mm holes)

Using the teacup-coloured yarn, cast on 42 stitches.

Rows 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21 & 23: knit 42

Rows 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20 & 22: purl 42

Don't cast off! So that you can gather the base of the teacup, thread a wool needle with a length of the same yarn you knit the teacup with and sew through the stitches, slipping them off the knitting needle. Don't pull the gathering yarn tight yet (it makes sewing up the side more awkward). Stitch the side of the cup together. To gather the base of the cup, very carefully pull on the two ends of the length of yarn to close up the base. if you're using a lambswool like Jamieson's it can snap quite easily, so try not to put too much tension on. Double knot the two ends of the gathering yarn together and, if you still have a little hole at the base of the cup, stitch back and forth a few times over the hole to close it up. Don't worry that the bottom of the cup looks puckered at this point- the hard felting will smooth this out. Sew all the yarn ends inside of the cup. You don't need to be really neat here as the ends won't be visible when the teacup is finished.

## Method 2: Knitting in the round and shaping the teacup using gathering

### You will need:

about 18m (20 yards) of feltable 4-ply/fingering weight teacup-coloured yarn (4.3g of Jamieson's Spindrift)

about 15m (16 yards) of yarn to make the little ball of wool with (3.5g of Jamieson's Spindrift)

A metre of yarn to sew decorations onto the teacup.

3mm (UK 11, US 2.5) double pointed needles

Tiny amount of stuffing (I used about 1.5g of carded lambswool)

2 cocktail sticks

2 beads (the ones shown here are 4mm diameter wooden beads with 1mm holes)

Cast on 40 stitches using 3mm double pointed needles and distribute the stitches more or less evenly between three double pointed needles. Knit 23 rounds.

Don't cast off! So that you can gather the base of the teacup, thread a wool needle with a length of the same yarn you knit the teacup with and sew through the stitches, slipping them off the knitting needles. To gather the base of the cup, very carefully pull on the two ends of the length of yarn to close up the base. if you're using a lambswool like Jamieson's it can snap quite easily, so try not to put too much tension on. Double knot the two ends of the gathering yarn together and, if you still have a little hole at the base of the cup, stitch back and forth a few times over the hole to close it up. Don't worry that the bottom of the cup looks puckered at this point- the hard felting will smooth this out. Sew all the yarn ends inside of the cup. You don't need to be really neat here as the ends won't be visible when the teacup is finished.

## Method 3: Knitting in the round and shaping the teacup using increases.

### You will need:

about 15 m (16 yards) of feltable 4-ply/fingering weight teacup-coloured yarn (3.4g of Jamieson's Spindrift)

about 15m (16 yards) of yarn to make the little ball of wool with (3.5g of Jamieson's Spindrift)

A metre of yarn to sew decorations onto the teacup.





3mm (UK 11, US 2.5) double pointed needles  
Tiny amount of stuffing (I used about 1.5g of carded lambswool)  
2 cocktail sticks  
2 beads (the ones shown here are 4mm diameter wooden beads with 1mm holes)

How to **kf&b**: Knit into the front of the stitch (without slipping the old stitch off the needle), then knit into the back of the same old stitch.

Using the teacup-coloured yarn, cast on 8 stitches. Divide between three double pointed needles and join in the round.

Round 1: kf&b all round, (16 stitches)

Round 2: knit all round, (16 stitches)

Round 3: (kf&b, knit 1) all round, (24 stitches)

Rounds 4 & 5: knit all round, (24 stitches)

Round 6: (kf&b, knit 2) all round, (32 stitches)

Rounds 7 & 8: knit all round, (32 stitches)

Round 9: (kf&b, knit 3) all round, (40 stitches)

Rounds 10-23: knit all round, (40 stitches)

Cast off. Sew all the yarn ends inside of the cup. You don't need to be really neat here as the ends won't be visible when the teacup is finished.



#### All versions: make the teacup handle:

Using 3mm double pointed needles, cast on 4 stitches and knit 24 rows of i-cord (please see the instructions just below for making i-cord if you're new to this). Fasten off by sewing the yarn end through the 4 stitches and then sew this i-cord end on near the rim of the teacup. Use the i-cord cast on yarn tail to sew the other end of the i-cord on further down the teacup to make a good handle shape.

If you're happy knitting i-cord you could streamline the handle-making process a little by starting the i-cord by picking up the i-cord stitches from the teacup instead of casting them on. Try to pick up the stitches in a very rough square shape as this makes a neat start to the tube-shaped i-cord.

#### Making i-cord for the first time?

It's very easy and there are lots of Youtubes out there showing you how to knit it but here are some quick instructions: Have all your stitches on one double pointed needle. Push all the stitches to the 'wrong' end of the needle (the end furthest from where the working yarn is attached to your stitches). Turn your needle around and knit the row, pulling the working yarn from the far end of the stitches to the first stitch of this new row a little tighter than usual; this will pull the sides of the knitting together to start to form a little tube. When you've knit all the stitches in the row, push them all to the 'wrong' end of the needle again and knit them all as above. Repeat.

#### Felting & making the ball of wool

Wet felt the teacup into a nice dense, mouldable fabric. Wet felting is easy- just roughly hand wash them in the hottest water you can bear, with a little laundry detergent or liquid hand soap, alternating with cold water- keep going until the fabric is very dense- it takes about 6 minutes of pummelling and hot and cold shocking. As rough guide, teacups felted from about 5.4 cm high, 5cm diameter down to 3.1cm high and 4.5cm diameter. Squidge out the water and shape the teacup. Make the little ball of yarn about the internal diameter of your felted teacup. To save on yarn, I start winding the ball around a little ball of stuffing but you can make the ball entirely of yarn. Put a little stuffing into the base of the cup and push the little ball of wool in on top (you can add to and remove from the scrap of stuffing to make the ball of wool sit at the right height in the teacup)- stuffing the damp teacup like this helps it to dry in the right shape. Put it somewhere warm to dry (over a radiator, boiler/hot water tank cupboard, etc.)

#### Decorating the teacup

To hold the cup and ball of wool together and embellish the teacup at the same time, embroider some asterisks, flowers, stars, etc on the outside of the teacup, sewing across the teacup through the ball of wool between embroidered motifs, to firmly secure the whole thing together. Asterisks in the same yarn that you made the mini ball with are quick- just make three long stitches that cross over in their middles. You can get much more imaginative than this, using beads, sequins, etc.

#### Adding the knitting needles

Poke a cocktail stick through the ball of wool. The sharp end of the cocktail stick really helps to penetrate a dense wool ball but, to avoid it spiking people later, push it out through the bottom of the teacup and snip off the spikey tip with strong scissors, then retract it a little back into the teacup. Use the strong scissors to cut the cocktail stick poking out of the top of the ball of wool to a good length for a knitting needle. Put a drop of glue on the stick where it goes into the ball of wool to secure it. Glue a little bead on the end to make the knob of the knitting needle. Repeat for the second of the pair of needles.

#### Add a hanging loop

Sew embroidery thread/baker's twine/yarn or similar though from the top of the yarn ball through out through the bottom of the cup and back up again. Knot.



This isn't a suitable toy for a small child or baby. Even unembellished, the teacup would not meet EN71 European & new UK toy safety standards (it presents a choke risk as it couldn't pass the small parts or torque & tension tests and, unless your yarn is EN71-3 certified, there is a possibility of toxic chemical ingestion when sucked).

