

Wool Dryer Ball Tutorial

Written by Jodi

See the original post at www.reverycloud.com/DIYWoolDryerBalls

Materials Needed:

- Skein of 100% Wool Yarn
 - approximately 450 yards is best to make 4 dryer balls with extra for ties
 - fishermen's wool or wool roving yarn work best to felt and stay away from anything saying 'wool-ease' or it will not felt properly
- Scissors
- Nylon sock for washing
 - at least 1' in length needed, can be recycled
- Small Crochet Hook

Instructions

				
<p>1 Gather materials in a kid and pet-free work area.</p>	<p>2 (I like to use my dominant right hand to wrap and my left to wrap onto and hold yarn.) Hold the beginning of the yarn with your thumb on the inside of your four fingers and repeatedly wrap the yarn evenly around until the loops are just about to slip off your pointer finger. Approximately 20 times.</p>	<p>3 Gather the loops that are on your pointer finger and carefully slide them off. Hold the end of the loops with your left hand and wrap the yarn around the middle of the section 3 times.</p>	<p>4 With your pointer finger, touch the yarn where you just wrapped 3 times and fold the ends around your finger like a backwards 'C'.</p>	<p>5 Gently pull your pointer finger out, still holding around the middle and wrap around the middle 3 times with yarn.</p>
				
<p>6 Repeat the fold technique. With your pointer finger, touch the yarn where you just wrapped 3 times and fold the ends around your finger like a backwards 'C'.</p>	<p>7 Wrap around the middle 3 times firmly.</p>	<p>8 Now you'll begin continuous wrapping, keeping the yarn next to each previous wrap as you slowly turn it with your left hand like a globe on it's axis.</p>	<p>9 Stop when you've wrapped at least one rotation and it should look similar to a mentos.</p>	<p>10 Hold it on it's side and gently squish the form into a uniform sphere. You're ready to begin wrapping to a desired size.</p>



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It's hard to explain a hold style for wrapping, so please mimic and reference the picture above for this description. When I'm beginning a rotation, I hold the sphere between my middle finger and thumb with the previous grain of the yarn running horizontally. I pin the free yarn section with my pointer finger and keep it draping over to the right. This hold helps keep the loose end secure and ensures a tight wrap, which is so important for the structural integrity and longevity of the final product.



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Begin wrapping the yarn like lines of longitude on a globe, but keep each wrap right next to each other. Wrap as you slowly turn with your left hand. Each time I complete a full rotation, I turn it on its axis and repeat the hold technique so the previous wrapped lines are horizontal. As it begins to get larger, the loops may begin to slip off to the side. To remedy this, I wrap them with a wider distance between them and fill in the gaps by completing two or three more rotations before turning on its axis. If it starts to get lopsided or misshapen, take a break and gently squish into a sphere before continuing. Fill in valleys by wrapping in that spot until evenly filled.



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I stop wrapping when they are approximately the size of a tennis ball. Use the first ball to compare and keep sizes even.



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For the final layer, I wrap slowly and keep each wrap very tightly and neatly next to each other. Cut the final section of yarn the length of the ball. Using the crochet hook, you will tuck the yarn under each of the 3 points pictured to ensure it doesn't come loose when felting



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Holding the final section of yarn firmly at point 1, use the crochet hook to pull it through several sections of yarn.



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Use the crochet hook to pull the middle section of the final piece through several layers of yarn at point 2.



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Use the crochet hook to pull the final little piece through several layers of yarn at point 3 and tuck it down into it with the tip of the hook before removing.



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Hold each of the spheres like a baseball in your hand as you slide them into the nylon. Your hand will keep the nylon from tugging at the yarn. Tie a double knotted bow between each of the spheres to make sure they do not move. The knot will felt, keeping it from getting loose in the washer and is easy to cut off. Wash with a load of laundry that requires hot water and dry on a higher setting as well.



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This is what mine looked like after one wash and dry. I would recommend washing and drying with two or three loads of laundry to ensure proper felting before removing from the nylon.



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Place in an easy access container above your dryer when not in use. I use a pretty cotton rope basket to store mine. If desired, add 2 drops of your favorite essential oil to one prior to throwing in the dryer and use all of them for each load. These can make for a wonderful handcrafted housewarming gift when added to a pretty basket alongside homemade laundry powder, a scoop and essential oil.