#### Make Your Own Felt

#### Under the right conditions, tufts of wool can be made into a strong, useful fabric: felt. Mongolian pastoral nomads use wool to make layers of felt to insulate their *gers* in the winter.You can make your own felt, too. Here’s What you will need:

#### Wool roving (available at most craft stores)

#### Sushi mat

#### Two medium-sized rubber bands

#### Cereal Bowl

#### Hot water

#### Dish soap

#### Cookie sheet with a lip

#### What To Do:

#### Open the sushi mat and lay it out flat in the cookie sheet.

#### Pull out 2” to 3” tufts of wool roving and place them vertically in columns on the mat.

#### Pull out 2” to 3” tufts of wool roving and place them horizontally in rows covering the first layer of wool.

#### Squeeze approximately one teaspoon of dish soap into the bowl (it doesn't matter if you use a little more or a little less).

#### Fill the bowl with VERY warm water.

#### Pour small amounts of soapy water over the layers on felt, soaking them evenly while keeping the wool more or less in place.

#### Pour out any excess water pooling in the pan.

#### Tightly roll the mat and secure it with the rubber band.

#### Squeeze out excess water.

#### Press down on the rolled mat, and roll it like a rolling pin. Do this for several minutes.

#### Drain off any excess water.

#### Carefully unroll the mat and check to see if the wool is beginning to fuse together. If it is not, roll it back up and knead it a little longer.

#### If the felt is beginning to form, carefully lift it from the mat and turn it sideways.

#### Roll the mat again, secure it with the rubber bands, and knead for five more minutes.

#### Unroll the mat. Rinse the felt slightly, to remove excess soap.

#### Let the felt dry overnight. If you want to speed the process, you can roll the felt in a towel and squeeze out the excess water.

#### How It Works

#### The reason wool can be made into felt can be seen under a microscope. Seen up close, wool fibers are covered in tiny scales. When the wool is wet with hot water and a little soap, the tiny scales lift. When the fibers are pressed and rolled together, the scales become tangled and the wool is matted into one piece of fabric.

