

Round Base Buttonhole Handle Bag

by Sally Walter ([SewWonderful](http://SewWonderful.com))

Yarn and Additional Supplies

- Approximately 200 gm of worsted weight wool or other yarn that felts/fuls easily¹
- Size US 10 (6 mm) circular needles (2-24 inch will work well unless you prefer the magic loop method)
- Stitch marker(s), if desired for working in the round
- White vinegar for felting/fuling
- Large pan for soaking
- Washing machine (a top loader unless you have success with a front loader)
- A pair of jeans or a heavy towel (anything heavy and washable that will provide friction)
- A zippered pillow cover (made of white muslin with a zipper, used to protect bed pillows)

Measurements

Before:

- Base: 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter
- Width: 16 inches (flat measurement)
- Height: 15 inches

After:

- Base: 10 inches
- Circumference: 32 inches
- Height: 10 inches

Abbreviations

- K - knit
- P - purl
- Kfb - knit into front of stitch & knit into back of stitch (increasing by 1 stitch)
- Rnd(s) - round



Instructions

Base:

Using *Emily Ocker's Cast On*², make eight stitches and distribute them evenly on the 2 circular needles (or DPN's). Start knitting the round base consisting of 8 sections as follows:

Round 1 & all odd rounds - knit

¹ For the base of the bag, I used scraps of Kool-Aid dyed *Lion Brand Fishermen's Wool* and some *Knit Picks Swish* that I knew would felt despite the label that said machine washable. When I ran out of scraps on the bottom, I continued using part of a 100 gm hank of *Cascade 220* (dark blue heather) and part of 2-85 gm skeins *Stitch Nation Alpaca Love* (ruby), plus additional scraps of *Lion Brand Fishermen's Wool* that was not dyed for the off-white stripes. My finished bag weighs 190 gm.

² Emily Ocker's Cast On: http://www.spellingtuesday.com/circular_co.html

Round 2 - kfb into every stitch (16 stitches)

Round 4 - *k1, kfb* all around (24 stitches)

Round 6 - *k2, kfb* all around (32 stitches)

Round 8 - *k3, kfb* all around (40 stitches)

Round 10 - *k4, kfb* all around (48 stitches)

Continue the increase pattern in the even rounds for a total of 30 rounds, until there are 128 stitches (64 on each needle).

Body:

Purl 3 rounds.

Switch back to knit stitch and continue even until bag is about 14 inches high, then make a buttonhole handle that is about 5 inches/20 stitches wide (see below in "my pattern") and continue knitting $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ inch then do 3 rows of garter stitch (see "my pattern" for details), then bind off purlwise. Weave in ends.

My pattern:

- 15 rnds Blue Heather
- 6 rnds Ruby
- 2 rnds Off-white
- 2 rnds Ruby
- 2 rnds Off-white
- 6 rnds Ruby
- 12 rnds Blue Heather
- 12 rnds Ruby
- 2 rnds Off-white
- 3 rnds Ruby
- 2 rnds Off-white
- 3 rnds Ruby
- 2 rnds Off-white
- 6 rnds Ruby
- in 7th rnd Ruby start buttonhole³: Knit 22 stitches, bind off 20 stitches, knit 22 on each needle
- in 8th rnd Ruby finish buttonhole: Knit 22 stitches, cast on 20 stitches⁴, knit 22 on each needle
- 3 rnds Ruby
- 1 rnd k Blue Heather
- 1 rnd p Blue Heather
- 1 rnd k Blue Heather
- Bind off purlwise in Blue Heather

³ Or use a "one row" method buttonhole

⁴ I prefer to use a cable cast on instead of backwards loop because the cable cast on makes a sturdier edge for the handle.

Felt/Full:

Use your favorite method or try mine.

Soak bag for 40 minutes in a pan with warm water (just enough to cover bag) and 2 cups white vinegar. Hold pillow cover in washing machine tub and dump bag into it. Zip close and put in bottom of washer with a heavy towel or jeans. Fill to lowest level with hot water, add $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon of *Shaklee's Basic H* (or use an appropriate amount of *Eucalan*⁵), and agitate until there is little or no stitch definition. Let hot water drain from washer but do not allow to spin, fill to lowest lever with cold water, agitate, and let water drain. Spin some on gentle to remove a bit of excess water but not until all is removed because permanent creases may form in the knit fabric.

Press out remaining water with a dry towel and shape bag. Place a bowl in bottom and stuff with plastic grocery sacks or unprinted newspaper to retain the bag's shape while drying. Set on a cookie cooling rack and place a fan in front of bag, rotating every so often to speed drying process.

Note: This bag does not stand on its own. If you prefer a sturdier bag, knit with two strands of worsted weight yarn on larger needles.

Feel free to email me with questions or corrections: 1328whitman@gmail.com

More pictures at my blog: <http://sewwonderful.blogspot.com/2012/05/how-did-that-happen.html>

⁵ *Eucalan* is a no rinse wool wash: <http://www.eucalan.com/>