

DIY Felt Basket Tote





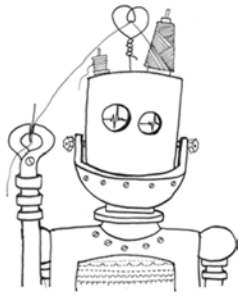
For us organizational basket cases, a simple and fun project using 3 mm wool felt. 3 mm wool handbag wool from Swafing is especially good for making these totes.

I like storage totes made from felt better than baskets made from, say, reed or wood, because the felt won't scratch wood surfaces.



You will need:

- 3 mm wool felt
- A box with sides no longer than approx. 10" (25 cm)
- No. 90 "Leather" machine sewing needle
- Polyester sewing thread



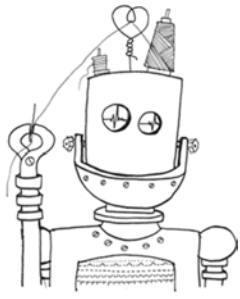
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1. Find a sturdy box or container to serve as a form for making your basket. Look for a box somewhat smaller than you would like your basket to be. The basket made on this form will be somewhat larger all around, depending on how tightly you weave. The box you use as a form should not have sides longer than approximately 10" (25 cm). The basket will not hold its form well if made wider than this length. At 10", the basket will have a soft form, but will be fully functional. Smaller baskets will be sturdier.

TIP: If you don't have a box the right size, stack hardcover books of the same size and wrap with plastic wrap to keep them in place to serve as a form for your basket.

2. Cut strips of 3 mm felt. The strips should each be between 1"-1 1/2" (2.5-4 cm) wide.



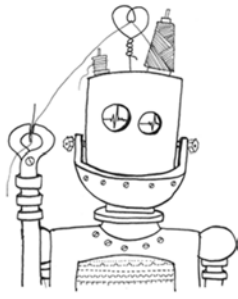


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3. Stitch the strips into a continuous piece by abutting the ends and stitching together with a wide, closely spaced zig zag stitch. Stitching the strips together and then cutting to the exact length will help conserve material.



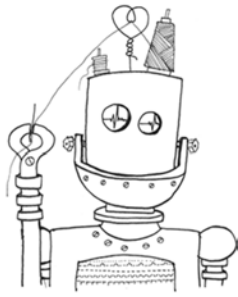
4. Cut the strips to the correct length. The cut length of each strip should equal the two sides plus the bottom of the box, plus an additional 1 ½" - 2" (4-6 cm) to allow for loss of length through weaving. Add 6" (15 cm) extra length on two strips, if you want to include handles.



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5. Begin weaving in the center of the basket base like this:

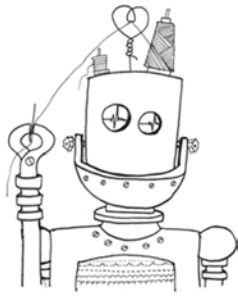




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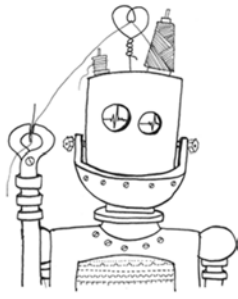
6. Continuously adjust the strips to make a tight, even basket weave (improve the “tension”). The more tightly the basket is woven, the more stable it will be.





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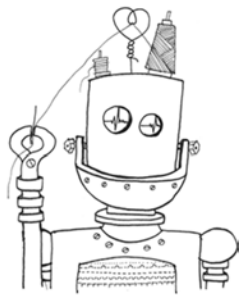


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7. Once the base is complete, measure the circumference of the basket with a tape measure. Cut strips of 3 mm felt to this exact length. Stitch the strips into rings by tacking the abutted ends together with wide, closely-spaced zig zag stitches.



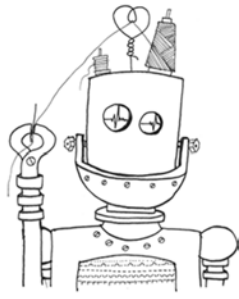
8. Place the first ring over the edge of the basket base.



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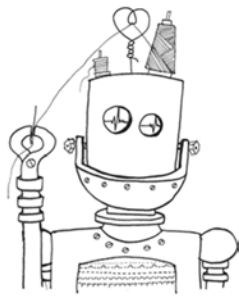
9. Pull every other strip over the ring in a basket weave fashion.



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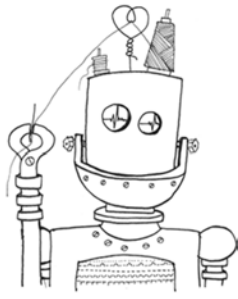
10. Continue placing rings onto the basket and weaving the strips over and under until you are approximately 1-1 ½" (2.5-4 cm) from the top edge.



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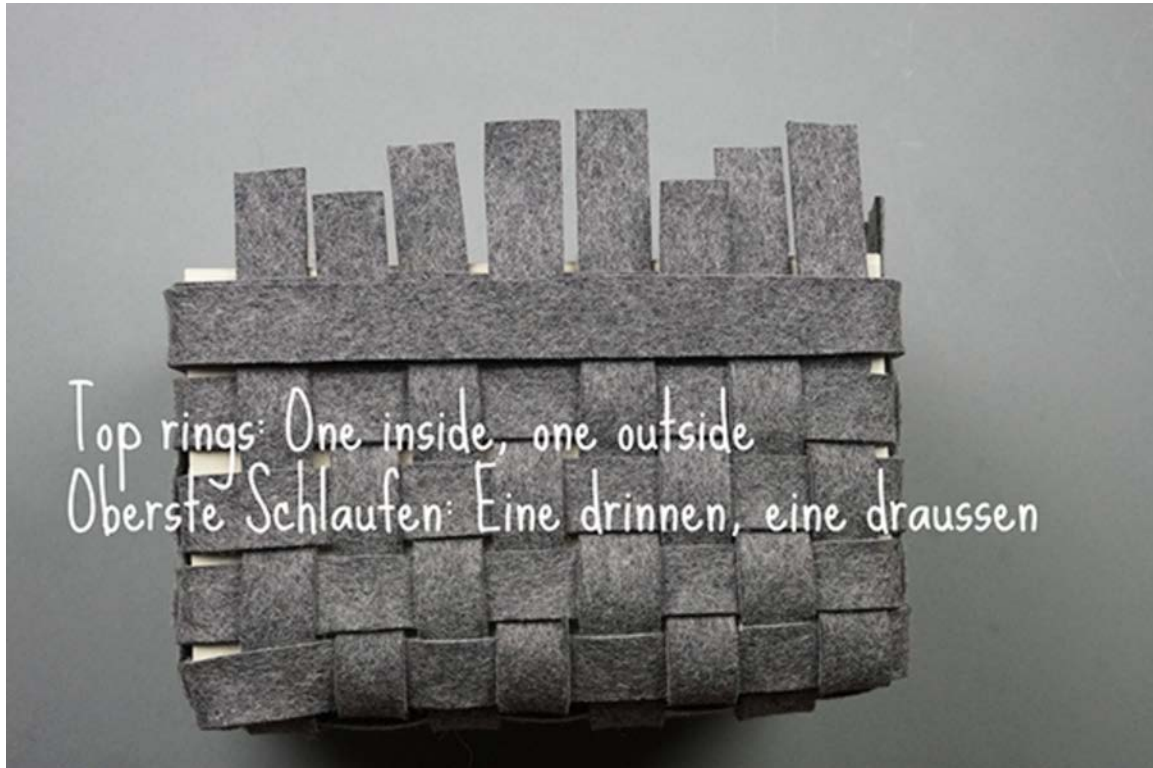
11. Take the two longer strips from two sides and pin these pieces together, so you remember them, however wait to stitch together as a last step.





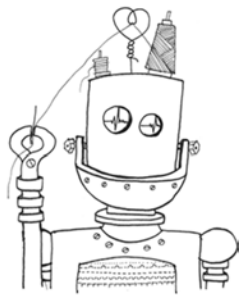
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12. The top band of the basket is not woven. Instead, two rings are placed on the top edge: One inside the basket and one around the outside.



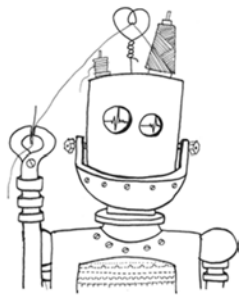


13. Pin the top bands in place and carefully remove the basket from the box form. Adjust and re-pin the basket as desired to achieve the desired tension and look. Using a No. 90 "leather" needle, stitch the two rings to the top of the basket by edge stitching along both edges. Remove the pins as you stitch before they reach the sewing needle.



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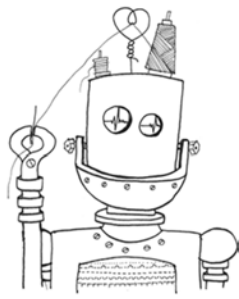




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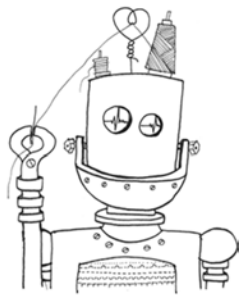
14. Trim any excess material. If you have included handles, stitch those together by abutting the ends and tacking with wide, closely spaced ziz zag stitches.





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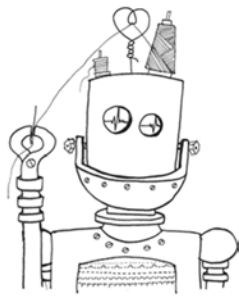
And a little Valentine's Day bonus for you: Try these hanging baskets on a bit of hemp rope! Hang this near the front door and make dedicated pockets for your cell phone, keys, sunglasses, mail to be posted...all those little things you need to grab on your way out!





You will need:

- Six 1" strips, 12" long stitched into rings.
- Four 1" strips, 15" long
- Sewing thread
- Hot glue & glue gun

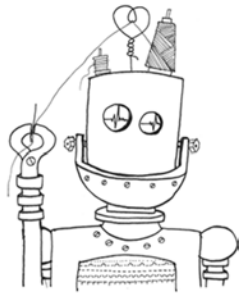


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Stitch six rings from 1" strips by butting the ends and satin stitching over both ends.





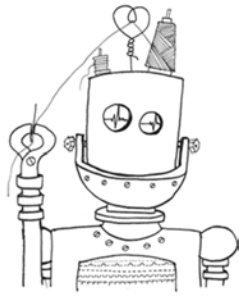
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Begin weaving the strips through the rings.



Weave strips through rings.





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Fold strips at bottom ring and weave up the opposite side.



Top ends should remain OUTSIDE the top ring.





Glue the top ends to the top ring.



Notice that the top ring is all “inside” and the ends that are left long on the back side.

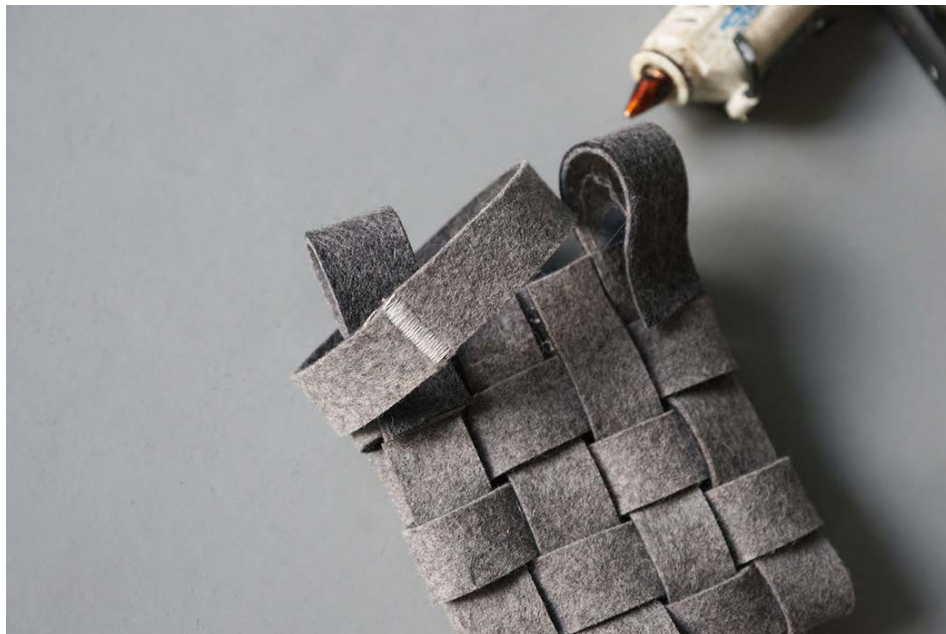




Fold outermost strips back and glue.



Trim ends. Slide the last ring over the top of the pocket and be sure to cover the ends of the hanging loops.





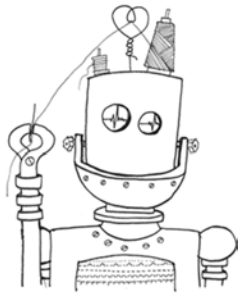
Glue last ring over the top.



String along a bit of hemp rope and hang. All done!



The heart-shaped pocket is simply two ♥-shaped pieces of felt stitched together with grommets set in the back 😊. This is a handy pocket for storing your sewing shears.



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Thank you for making this with me!