



## Felting your Hat

**Items to gather before starting:** liquid dish detergent, bowl for a form, stuffed stocking [with scrap material or rice etc] for rolled brim [optional], clear sink area, counter-top space to work, scissors, towels for wiping hands, and an iron.

Making felt is not hard. I am going to lay out a very simple method on producing a hat similar to this picture but your design can differ.

Find a bowl, bucket or other object that is approximately the size of your head. Make sure when working with the bowl that it is deep enough as your finished hat will shrink as the felt forms. Take the bowl [or whatever you are using – it can be a form] – take the batt and lay it across the bowl. If you are going to do a brim make sure to allocate enough material for the brim – if a rolled edge, be sure to leave enough that will permit a good roll – excess can be trimmed off later. Cut the batt to be approximately what you will need with excess for shrinkage approximately 3 additional inches. Take the piece cut off and hold it aside as you will need it for double layering. To make a rolled brim, you may wish to take a stocking and stuff it to use as a form for the rolled brim.

**Coat the bowl** with liquid detergent – I use my normal dishwashing liquid. Take the batting and lay it across the bowl – the detergent will help hold it to the bowl. Make sure the material is thick enough – if necessary you can use double layer on the crown as it will thin out more during the next step. You may also choose to double or triple layer the hat. The **next step** is to wet the batting, I take the detergent and squirt some on the crown of the hat, take the sprayer from the sink and spray the batting with hot water. You have to be careful and use a gentle spray and not to thin out spots in the batt. Now gently rub your hands over the batt covered bowl to start the process - making sure to have adequate detergent and water on the material. Make sure to rub the material that will soon be the brim. Your **initial felt skin** should appear in about 10 minutes. After you have developed the skin of the felt, gently take the material and flip it inside out and return it to the bowl. Repeat the rubbing and if necessary add more detergent and water. Continue rubbing until your felt can pass the **pinch test** [pinch the fabric to see if the fibers hold together] and then it is ready to “set-up”. **Take the material** and remove it from your form, and gently knead it [as you would bread dough]. This process may take another 10 minutes. Rinse well and gently remove as much water as possible. The felt works better when hot so you may wish to microwave it to heat it up before stretching it back over your form [or whatever you are using for a form]. **Take the heated felt** and gently stretch it over the form. I usually tie a string around the base of the crown before I start working on the brim. You can now smooth out the brim [if going for a flat one] or take your rolled stocking and circle the crown and pull the edges up over it and pin it in place. Allow the hot to dry in place, you may need to anchor or weigh down the flat brim while drying. You may also use a Hot Iron to press the brim to help shape it. The hat, once dry can be embellished with ribbons, hand-stitching, flowers or other fabric for decorations. Have fun with it and enjoy your new hat.