

100% Wool Design Felt Maintenance + Cleaning

About Wool Design Felt

Wool felt is one of the oldest man-made textiles. Since felt is a nonwoven and does not require a loom for its production, ancient people were able to produce it quite easily. Felting of animal hair has been a means of creating clothing, shelter and artistic expression since at least 700 BC. Design Felt is high quality, eco-friendly, durable, with highly saturated colors, and is perfect for demanding design applications.

Water Repellency

While the core of the Merino fiber is capable of absorbing up to a third of its dry weight in moisture, the surface has a waxy coating that repels liquids. Water droplets on the surface of Merino will bead and roll off instead of being absorbed into the felt.

Mildew Resistance

Wool fibers have a natural water wicking property that prevents moisture from being retained in the felt and naturally inhibits mildew. Wool also has natural anti-microbial properties because bacteria tend to be attracted to smooth positively charged surfaces like those of synthetic fibers rather than the scaly, neutrally charged surface of the Merino fiber.

Stain Resistance

Lanolin, the naturally occurring waxy coating on wool fibers, makes wool water repellent and provides an inherent stain resistance. This allows time for liquid spills to be blotted away before permanent staining can occur.

Maintenance and Cleaning

Like any natural fiber, a minimal approach should always be taken to clean wool felt since the cleaning method could potentially do more damage than the stain. The cleaning approach should be (1) dust with a lint roller, (2) vacuum with a clean, soft brush, (3) clean with water and mild detergent, (4) clean with chemical spot remover. **Always test any cleaning method first in an inconspicuous area.**

Wool has a low degree of dry soil pick-up compared with other fibers. However, to remove the accumulation of general airborne debris, wool felt may be cleaned with a standard masking tape lint roller. It is always a good idea to use the lint roller first in any area intended to be spot cleaned. Once per year, it is recommended that the entire surface is given a light vacuum with a clean, soft horsehair upholstery brush. In a clean office environment, it may not be necessary to do this annually. Please note that slight shedding of wool fibers is normal and not indicative of any defect. These loosened fibers are easily vacuumed away and will decrease over time.

If a wet spill should occur, blot up the liquid as soon as possible with a dry cloth to avoid absorption. Avoid aggressive rubbing as this can continue the felting process and change the surface appearance of the felt. For removal of minor stains, if the felt can be removed it is best to obtain the services of a professional dry cleaning company that is familiar with the special care of wool. If not possible, a mild enzyme-based detergent (such as Tide Free) is recommended. Create a dilute solution by adding three parts water to one part detergent in a clean container. Use a clean paper towel to gently blot the detergent into the stain. Press and release, press and release. Using a separate container of just clear water, use clean, moist paper towels to blot more water into the stain. Press and release, press and release. Finish by blotting firmly with clean, dry paper towels until the area is nearly dry.

There are many solvent-based spot removers available. Although they are not recommended except in the case of emergency, the best choices for wool felt are dry cleaning fluids. Be sure to test in an inconspicuous area first. Blot the stained area with a clean cloth soaked in dry cleaning fluid, then blot with a clean cloth until dry.