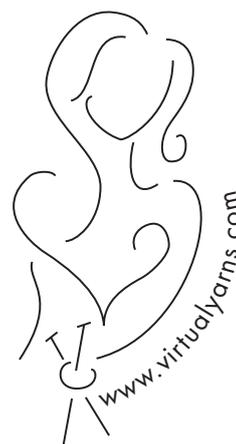


Mermaid's Purse by Alice Starmore



Measurements

Length before felting from top to bottom corner: 43cm. After felting: 34cm.
Width before felting at widest point: 22cm. After felting: 17cm.

Materials

Of Alice Starmore™ Hebridean – 75g of 3 Ply. Oddments of 2 Ply for embroidery. Oddments of 2 or 3 Ply for tassel.

5.5mm needles. Stitch holder. Tapestry needle.

Bamboo felting mat or bubble wrap measuring at least 60cm x 45cm.

Note: A bamboo mat is more effective for felting knitting. Bubble wrap will work but it takes more time and energy.

Abbreviations

k - knit. **m1** - make 1 new st by knitting into the loop of the st below the next st to be worked.

p - purl. **pssso** - pass slipped st over. **rem** - remaining. **RS** - right side. **sl** - slip(ped). **ssk** - slip, slip, knit - slip the first 2 sts separately knitwise, then insert the left-hand needle-point through the fronts of the 2 sl sts and k them tog from this position. **st(s)** - stitch(es). **St.St.** - Stocking Stitch (k RS rows; p WS rows). **tog** - together. **WS** - wrong side.

Purse

Lower Left Corner

• With 5.5mm needles make a cast-on stitch. Turn.

Row 1 (RS): K into the front then the back of the st. 2 Sts.

Rows 2, 4, 6 & 8 (WS): P.

Row 3 (RS): K1; m1; k1. 3 Sts. ••

Row 5 (RS): K2; m1; k1. 4 Sts. **Row 7 (RS):** K1; m1; k2; m1; k1. 6 Sts.

Row 9 (RS): K1; m1; k4; m1; k1. 8 Sts. **Row 10 (WS):** P8; cast on 2. **Row 11 (RS):** K10.

Row 12 (WS): P10; cast on 1. Break off yarn and place sts on a holder.

Lower Right Corner

Work as lower left corner from • to ••.

Row 5 (RS): K1; m1; k2. 4 Sts. **Row 7 (RS):** K1; m1; k2; m1; k1. 6 Sts.

Row 9 (RS): K1; m1; k4; m1; k1; cast on 2. 10 Sts. **Row 10 (WS):** P10.

Row 11 (RS): K10; cast on 1. **Row 12 (WS):** P11.

Join Corners

With RS facing k1; m1; k10 over right corner; cast on 5; with RS of left corner facing, k10; m1; k1. 29 Sts. Work St.St. for 3 rows.

Shape Pouch

Next Row (RS): K1; m1; k to the last st; m1; k1. 31 Sts. Work St.St. for 5 rows.

Next Row (RS): K12; m1; k7; m1; k12. 33 Sts. Work St.St. for 5 rows.

Next Row (RS): * K11; m1; rep from * once more; k11. 35 Sts. Work St.St. for 5 rows.

Next Row (RS): K10; m1; k15; m1; k10. 37 Sts. Work St.St. for 15 rows.

Next Row (RS): K10; k2tog; k13; ssk; k10. 35 Sts. Work St.St. for 5 rows.

Next Row (RS): K11; k2tog; k9; ssk; k11. 33 Sts. Work St.St. for 5 rows.

Next Row (RS): K12; k2tog; k5; ssk; k12. 31 Sts. Work St.St. for 5 rows.

Next Row (RS): K1; ssk; k to the 1st 3 sts; k2tog; k1. 29 Sts. Work St.St. for 25 rows.

Next Row (RS): K1; ssk; k to the last 3 sts; k2tog; k1. 27 Sts.

Next Row (WS): P9; Leave the rem 18 sts on a holder; turn.

Next Row (RS): Cast off 3; k to last 3; k2tog k1. 5 sts. **Next Row (WS):** P5.

Next Row (RS): Cast off 2; k rem sts. **Next Row (WS):** P3.

Next Row (RS): Sl2tog knitwise-k1-p2sso. Fasten off.

With WS facing, rejoin yarn and cast off 12 sts purlwise; p the rem sts.

Next Row (RS): K1; ssk; k3. 5 Sts. **Next Row (WS):** Cast off 2; p rem sts. **Next Row (RS):** K3.

Next Row (WS): P3. **Next Row (RS):** Sl2tog knitwise-k1-p2sso. Fasten off.

Make another identical piece. Darn in all loose ends.

Felting

Wear household gloves to protect your hands from the hot water (see the button-felting videos). Dissolve a generous amount of soap in very hot water. Have a basin of very cold water at hand. Immerse the pieces in very hot soapy water. Lay the felting mat or the “bubble” side of the wrap on a flat, waterproof worktop with the longer end at right angles to your body. Place the wet soapy pieces on the mat/wrap so that the bottom ends of the purse are closest and the top ends are furthest away from you. Make sure that the pieces are perfectly flat and shaped as knitted. Roll up the mat/wrap into a tube away from you, then roll the tube back and forth (as though you were rolling pastry) quite vigorously for a couple of minutes. Then open the roll and plunge the pieces in the hot soapy water again. Then place the pieces on the mat/wrap so that they are side-on to you. Making sure that they are perfectly flat and shaped, roll the mat/wrap up again and repeat the rolling process. Repeat this whole process, working the pieces lengthways then widthways until the knitting has felted sufficiently – the gaps between stitches should close up completely and the stitches should be barely discernable.

Plunge the pieces in the cold water, then back into the hot water and repeat a couple of times.

Rinse thoroughly in hot water and then lay on the mat/wrap perfectly flat and shaped once more, lengthwise. Roll up again and give them a final rolling.

Find two suitably sized and shaped smooth stones or other objects which will enhance the pouch shaping of each piece. Place the objects on a towel and lay the pieces RS up, with the pouch area over the objects, using them as moulds to emphasise the shape. Allow the rest of the pieces to lie on the towel and check the edges and shaping. Leave to dry away from direct heat.

If you cannot find any suitable object to hand for a mould then shape by hand or roll a tennis ball around the pouch (do this on the WS) and then lay them on the towel RS up and stuff the pouch shape with bubble wrap cut up to make a smooth shape.

Embellishments

Embroider both pieces at will. Sew the pieces together along the sides and bottom. Make plaited or twisted cords and sew on top of the side seams, making a loop at each of the top corners for attaching a handle. Make a cord or plaited handle, or knit a tapered felted handle as shown in the photo (instructions are below). To attach the tapered handle put each end through the cord loop and then sew it back on itself in a twisted vine-like position. To make a crinkly tassel, knit a 3 Ply swatch (or 2 ply for a finer tassel) of 25 to 40 sts. Stripes of different colours will use up oddments). Remove the needle (do not cast off). Press the swatch firmly with a hot iron using a damp cloth. Then cut the first and last sts off the sides of the swatch and gently unravel the strands. Line up a bunch of strands and then fold them in half. Wind a length of yarn tightly about 1cm down from the folded end so that there is a loop of strands at the top ready to pass a cord through for fastening to the purse. Make cords or embroider or knit an edging to decorate the opening edges of the purse.

Tapered Handle

With 5.5mm needles and 3 Ply cast on 80 sts. P1 row.

Next Row: K to the last 15 sts; sl1 purlwise; yarn forward; turn.

Next Row: Sl1 purlwise; yarn forward; p to the last 15 sts; yarn back; slip1 purlwise; turn.

Next Row: Yarn back; k to the last 20 sts; sl1 purlwise; yarn forward; turn.

Next Row: Sl1 purlwise; p to the last 20 sts; yarn back; slip1 purlwise; turn.

Next Row: Yarn back; k to end of row.

Turn and cast off all sts purlwise. Break off yarn leaving enough to loosely oversew the cast -on and cast cast-off edges together into a tube so that the purl side is facing out – i.e. going with the natural curl of the knitting. Stretch as you oversew to make sure the tube does not pucker. To felt, immerse the handle in hot soapy water and roll it in your hands like a sausage moving back and forth along the whole length until it is evenly felted. The handle will get longer and narrower as you work.