

felted kodama pattern

yarn:

i made these out of two strands of white buffalo unspun (it comes as six un-twisted strands, so i separated them out). another worsted-weight white or off-white yarn will do, as long as it will felt nicely. you don't need a lot of yarn – these little guys will knit up out of scraps – but you will need it wound into three separate balls.

needles:

5.5mm (us #9) double-pointed needles

knitting:

in order to avoid the dreaded seaming, and the also-dreaded trying-to-knit-something-really-small-in-the-round, these are mainly double-knit as tubes.

if you've never tried double-knitting tubes before, you might want to do a practice run with some scrap yarn. basically, what you do is cast on an even number of stitches, carefully slip it *off* your needle, fold it in half, and then slide it back on to your needle, alternating stitches from each half. So, if you had eight stitches on your original row, you'd pick them up in this order: st 1, st 8, st 2, st 7, st 3, st 6, st 4, st 5.

when you start knitting, you keep the two halves separate by knitting one stitch, bringing the yarn to front, slipping one purlwise, bringing the yarn to the back, knitting one stitch, bringing the yarn to front, slipping one purlwise, bringing the yarn to the back. keeping the above example, you'd knit st 1, slip st 8, knit st 2, slip st 7, knit st 3, slip st 6, knit st 4, slip st 5, then turn, and knit st 5, slip st 4, knit st 6, slip st 3, knit st 7, slip st 2, knit st 8, and slip st 1. it takes a bit of practice to keep the two halves separate – it's easy to get the stitches caught around one another – so take it slow.

there's a really great description of how to use this technique to knit two socks at once at <http://www.knitty.com/ISSUEfall06/FEATextreme2in1.html>.

one thing to remember – what feels like knitting two rows is actually only knitting one row, since you're only working half the stitches. so when you're knitting this pattern, remember this if you're counting rows as you knit them – or just count up from the bottom.

- cast on 2 sets of 6 sts with 2 balls of yarn
- arrange on one needle as for 2 double-knit tubes
- knit as 2 double-knit tubes for 8 rows with 2 balls of yarn
- knit all the way across as double-knit tube with yarn from ball 1. break yarn from ball 2, leaving long tail
- continue knitting as 1 double-knit tube with ball 1 for 2 rows
- cast on 2 sets of 4 sts with 2 more balls of yarn

- arrange on needle on either side of main body as for 2 double-knit tubes
- knit as 3 double-knit tubes for 4 rows with 3 balls of yarn
- knit all the way across as double-knit tube with yarn from ball 1. break yarn from balls 2 & 3, leaving long tail
- continue knitting as 1 double-knit tube with ball 1 for 1 rows
- spread all 20 stitches over three needles, and continue knitting in the round
- next 3 rows: dec 1 at each shoulder, front & back (4 sts total each row) - 8 sts on needles
- knit 1 row
- next row: inc 1 every stitch (16 sts on needle)
- next 2 rows: inc 4 evenly across row (24 sts on needles)
- next row: shape mouth - cast off 4 sts front & centre. k until cast off sts.
- next row: turn & purl
- next row: turn & knit. cast on 4 over mouth
- next row: knit
- next row: shape eyes - cast off 2, knit 2, cast off 2 over mouth
- next row: knit all the way round, casting on 2 over each eye. dec 4 evenly across row
- next row: dec 4 evenly across row (16 sts on needles)
- next 2 rows: k 2 tog all the way around (4 sts on needles)
- break yarn leaving a long tail, and pull through remaining 4 sts to finish
- pull all tails to inside
- felt in washing machine or by hand – they don't take long; i put 33 in the sink with a squirt of dish soap, and they were done in about fifteen minutes.