Sew a Hand Warmer with CBTV Live

Chapter 1 - Chapter 1
Sew a Handwarmer Cozy
- Hey everybody, it's Faith from Creativebug, coming at you live like we do every Tuesday and Thursday at four o'clock Pacific Standard Time. I'm particularly excited about this project today, because to me, it is a great example how crafting can turn tragedy into treasure. The tragedy here being accidentally felting a sweater. This has happened to me more times than it should, but sometimes it's hard to remember that you've tossed the sweater into the pile of laundry and then you just throw it all into the hot washing machine. It doesn't matter why it happens, it has happened, and here's how we're going to fix it, by making these really adorable hand warmer cozies. So I have two little sisters who live in Jackson, Wyoming, it's been very cold there recently, and I know that they spend a bit of time with those hand warmers that you can buy at an outdoors sports store and you shake them up and they activate and they're warm for like six hours. I made a sample version using rice and muslin and if you heat this in the microwave for one minute, it stays warm for 10 minutes, so better than nothing. But for the real cold weather, you're gonna want to go for the fancy stuff, which, incidentally, you are allowed to carry on airplanes. I did not know that before today. But it was in a frequently asked question section of a hand warmer company. So for this project you will need a felted sweater. If it hasn't happened to you yet accidentally, go to Goodwill and you'll see it's happened to plenty of people. They wash their sweater accidentally and dry it on high heat, because that's how you get the best quality felted sweater. And then they can't wear it anymore, because it's as hard as a cardboard box. And so then they send it to have other people wear it. But you shouldn't wear it, you should use it for craft supplies. So this is a sweater I dug into already. We're going to be working with the edge of the fabric. This is one of the unique things about working with this as a material, with felted sweaters as a materiel, 'cause you have a built-in finished edge, so you don't have to worry about hemming. Also if you are a fiber fanatic but don't have great knitting skills yet, this could be a good way to really play with some wools and techniques without having too much skill. So our hand warmer is two inches by four inches. Going to make ourselves some templates by cutting an inch all the way around, because we're going to use a half an inch seem allowance on your sewing machine. Also you're welcome to sew this by hand, if you like. Sewing machine is faster. So I've cut a template that is for the front section. It's five inches by three. And then for the back you'll need two separate sections that overlap in the middle by an inch. So it's still three inches wide, but it's three inches long. So first we'll cut these sides and label them for myself, in case I wanna make more, which I certainly do. I feel like I should just make hand warmers until there's no more sweater left. I think I can probably get five or six more, five or six in total, something like that. So you lay it on the edge and use fabric shears that are really sharp. It's a uniquely satisfying feeling cutting through felted wool. And we'll cut the second one. If you want to, you can trace around it with a Sharpie marker and just cut inside the lines, if that's easier for you. But we're having such a big seam allowance anyway, that being precise isn't as important to me. So I like the idea of the pattern continuing around in a full loop. You could do it sideways if you want a different look, but I really like the way this cable running down the middle looks. So I'm gonna cut this out longways. Could also try it on a diagonal. I have not done that yet. If you do, you'll have to let me know how it turns out. I think that can be pretty interesting. Also, if you have any questions about this process, feel free to ask. But I'm more interested in hearing your personal

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tragedies of accidentally felted sweaters, because it's a unique pain, and this is a safe space for you to share. - [Woman] Faith, for those who are just joining us, can you go over what you're doing again today? - Yes, we're making hand warmer cozies. So buy yourself a chemical hand warmer, and get a felted sweater, and we're gonna make one of these darling hand warmer cozies. Also, you can use this process for if you want to cover a hot water bottle, or even a heating pad, just make sure you follow the same format and increase your size and use the bottom edge of the sweater as a built-in hem. So we're at the point where we've made ourselves templates for the size that we're cutting. We have a front piece, and two back pieces that will go together like this, they'll overlap. And now we're going to do a little decoration, and this is a really fun, fairly addictive technique, that's also kind of dangerous. That's what I like about crafting, when it's dangerous and fairly addictive. So we're going to be needle felting a small design onto here. We have a class on our site with Rad Megan, called Needle Felting, she shows you how to felt cocktail olives, they're adorable. So you'll need roving, this can be purchased at a craft store. Also, it's strangely available at Daiso, the Japanese dollar store. And specially made wool felting needles. They have really tiny barbs in them that catch fibers and make them interlock. And you also need something to do it on, so I've used this adorable eraser. But if you get in a kit, you'll probably get something that looks more like a sponge or a hair brush. Now, I made this super cute little heart on my sample. This one I'm gonna do a moon. My sister who needs this the most sometimes has night shifts working at an airport. So we're gonna make her a little moon hand warmer. So coil it up, make yourself a little biscuit, and place it down, and then you're going to start stabbing the heck out of it. Make sure the needle goes at least a centimeter down. You're gonna want to catch as much of those barbs as possible, and you're gonna cover the whole surface. And you see it's starting to deflate a little bit, to lose its fluff. In Megan's class, she has these beautiful long nails, and she pushes the needle against the edge of her nail to avoid stabbing her finger. I have short stubby nails, so I just make sure to keep my fingers out of the way. I have stabbed myself in the past, and it's terrible. But also a little nostalgic, like when you're a kid and you go fishing and you get the barb stuck in your finger, except for then dad would help you, and dad couldn't help me with the barbs felting needle, because I don't live at home anymore. So you're gonna continue this about a minute doing full coverage. You'll see on the back, some fluff has come through, that's perfect, that's exactly what we want. And the seam properties of wool that make the sweater felt so well are the same properties that work for the needle felting. So in the fibers in the hair, the scales matte together when they're agitated. And so with this, we're pushing the scales on the fibers against each other, and they're interlocking. That's why when you want to felt a sweater, don't use something like cashmere, those fibers are too soft and their scales, they lay too flat, that's why it feels really soft against your neck, but it's not good for felting. Okay, so we're almost done, it's pretty flat. It's easy to get obsessive about this. Now we're going to move on to the machine. - [Woman] We have a comment. - [Faith] Yes. - [Woman] We have many comments. - [Faith] Wonderful. - [Woman] And they all say how much they love you. - [Faith] I love you, too. - [Woman] And Deanna says, "Faith, you need to do "a whole broadcast that's just you "telling stories from your childhood." - I mean, I could do a whole broadcast telling stories from my childhood about felting sweaters. I did make a floor-length duster, it was pretty nerdy now that I think about it. But it was all these beige sweaters, and then I cut them up and stitched them all together. It's a really versatile material, felted sweaters. Also, aside from heating pads, hand warmers, water bottles, you could do pot holders, if you had like an emergency blanket type material in the middle of it. It's so fun, I'm telling you. Our next step is to sew the short sides together, and then we'll sew the long sides together. Also, this will be turned inside out, so make

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sure that your outside is on the inside. So right side's facing would be the sewing terminology. Now this is pretty hefty for standard machines. You might want to use a walking foot. I feel comfortable enough with this machine to manhandle a little bit, but keep in mind, this will be fairly thick. So, one way I get around that is lifting up the presser foot, but then this machine is friendly enough where I can push it up even higher. So you're keeping a half an inch seam allowance, and sewing to the edge, off the edge. I like to cut my threads as I go along. Repeat with the other side. And if it seems like a super bulky seam to you, it is on purpose, and then we'll trim it down. Also, if you want it to be super durable, you would want to tie, oh no, that's not even true, 'cause we're cutting off the corners. I don't know what I just said. It is as durable as it needs to be. - [Woman] Faith, what kind of needle are you using? - I am using the needle that was on the machine when I found it, but that's a very good question. Um, I wouldn't use a ballpoint needle, because that's for jerseys, and that's not particular relevant for this fiber, but maybe a denim needle would work a lot better. Thank you for asking that question. Use a denim needle. But if you don't have a denim needle, a regular needle works just fine. Okay, so we're doing our last two sides. Make sure these are overlapped in a sandwich of three. It's gonna be pretty hefty, just be patient with your machine. Also, usually in sewing, you should let the machine pull the piece through. This might need a little bit of encouragement. Doing a little back stitch at the edge there. That's for safety. We got our final edge. I just love this so much, so sweet. You could use pins, but it's so bulky as it is, and it kind of, the wool sticks to itself, that's fairly stable. Just ran off the edge for a second, so I'm getting back to where I was. Okay. Now we're going to trim the edges to between a 1/4 and an 1/8 of an inch. So 3/8 of an inch, which does sound very specific, but less than 1/2 an inch, more than a 1/4 of an inch. And I suppose it doesn't have to be, the sweater doesn't have to be felted out of disaster, maybe you have a moth-eaten sweater that's beyond mending and it's a good way to pay tribute to it, is to give it a second life. - [Woman] Should the sweater be wool, or could you do this with acrylic sweater? - [Faith] Definitely wool, that's super-duper important. I think I've done it with sweaters that have a little bit of nylon or a little bit of acrylic, but mainly wool is the most important thing. Now we're going to cut the corners off. As you can see, the corners are gonna look lumpy no matter what, but this prevents that a little bit. We're almost there. Okay, now we turn it inside out. It's gonna require some finagling and jamming of the corners. Oh my goodness! A full moon. And you can do a lot more with the needle felting, this is just simple for. - [Woman] Like a baby's, like baby fleece. - [Faith] Oh my goodness! - [Woman] It's adorable. - (laughs) That's really precious. You can make, I mean, anything you can do with wool felt you can do with the felted sweaters. Okay, so we have, we finished it. And now we need a hand warmer to put in it. I'm gonna steal from this one. So if you're using this in the home, you would, well, no, not in the home, because that means your house is so cold. But if you're using your rice bag, heat it up for a minute and it'll last for 10, if you're using the synthetic ones, shake them out and they should last for up to six hours and then you simply slip it in here. You could do some with initials on it. I was thinking of doing a sunshine to remind of the warmer days. And I did have one more project. I'm not gonna walk you through the steps, but I wanna show it to you, because it's the best felted sweater project that I can't take credit for. I went home one year for Christmas, I'm not supposed to be telling the story, so I'm not gonna name any names, but the person who came home with me, I bought him a brand new sweater, he wasn't familiar with the settings on my parents washing machine. He threw it in the washing machine, some nice person in my family threw it in the dryer, and it went from human size to the size of a waffle. And so my mother gave it to the dog who used it as a dog bed. He loves the sweater. So this project is how to make a dog or a cat bed using a sweater. It takes maybe a half an hour, it requires

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a few simple seams. So I've already sewn the neckline shut from the inside, then you sew from armpit to armpit, you stuff the shoulders and the arms with polyfill and then tuck the sleeves into either ends, and then you stitch it around the bottom. You can even stuff like some t-shirts, some old t-shirts in here so that, 'cause I know my cat's pretend that my clothes are their clothes. And you would sew the edges to each other. Thank you so much for joining us. I hope that you are inspired to destroy sweaters that you or the people in your life love very much. We'll see you on Tuesday.

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