



## BUTTONHOLE BAG (THE UNPATTERN)

Materials: Lamb's Pride Bulky yarn, 3 skeins

Needles: Size 15 circular

Gauge: (before felting) 9 sts/4 inches/10 cm

Note: The Buttonhole Bag is a small felted handbag with integral handles that are formed by making 10-stitch buttonholes centered on the front and back. You can play with the shaping or add length to get the bag you want.

THE YARN IS USED DOUBLED THROUGHOUT THE PATTERN.

Abbreviations:

CO: Cast on.

KFB: Knit into the front and back of the stitch, resulting in an increase of one stitch.

K2tog: Knit 2 stitches together.

SSK: Slip 1 st purlwise, slip 1 st purlwise, then insert left needle into the front of these two sts and k2tog.

M1: Make one by picking up the horizontal strand between the stitch you just finished and the next stitch, and knitting into the back of it.

Sl: Slip.

BO: Bind off.

Using two strands of the yarn held together, CO 3 sts.

Row 1—Knit

Row 2—KFB, K1, KFB (5 sts)

Row 3—Knit.

Row 4—KFB, knit to the last st, KFB

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Repeat Rows 3 and 4 until you have 11 sts

Knit 20 garter ridges (40 rows)

Next row: SSK, knit to last 2 sts, K2tog

Next row: Knit.

Repeat these 2 rows until 3 sts remain.

Knit 1 row.

Bind off 3 sts.

Repeat these two rows two more times, until 3 sts remain.

Knit 1 row. Bind off 3 sts. The strip forms the bottom of the bag.

With the right side of the strip facing and using the yarn doubled, pick up and knit 30 stitches, ending at the stitch before the center of the cast-on edge. (NOTE: 'Pick up and knit' means that immediately after picking up each stitch, you knit it before picking up the next stitch.)

Place marker, then pick up another 30 stitches, ending at the center of the bound-off edge, and place a different color or type of marker so that you will be able to tell that this is the start of the round.

Knit 1 round.

Next round: M1, Knit to 1 st before the next marker, M1, K1, SI marker, M1, knit to 1 st before the next marker, M1, K1.

Repeat the last two rounds 3 more times, for a total increase of 16 sts (76 sts).

Knit straight for 10 rounds. (Here is where you can lengthen or shorten the bag by adding or subtracting rounds.)

Next round: K2tog, K to 3 sts before the next marker, SSK, K1, SI marker, K2tog, Knit to 3 sts before the next marker, SSK, K1.

Knit 1 round.

Repeat the last 2 rows once more (68 sts).

Knit straight for 3 more rounds.

Form buttonhole handles: Next round: K12, BO 10, K12, SI marker, K12, BO 10, K12.

Next round: K12, CO 10 (using the 'backward loop' or 'thumb' method of casting on), K12, SI marker, K12, CO 10, K12.

Knit 3 more rounds straight. Bind off all sts.

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#### FINISHING:

Weave in all ends on the inside of the bag, and trim them short.

#### FELTING:

Place in washing machine filled to the lowest water level with hot water. Add a small amount of detergent or liquid soap and a pair of jeans or other clothing (be careful that it not be clothing that will either bleed onto the bag, or that will be ruined if the bag bleeds onto it). Let the washer run through its wash cycle. You can check to assure yourself that the bag is not felting too much, although this is not much of a risk with this bag, which is knit rather tightly and therefore will only shrink to a point. Rinse in cold water. Take the bag out of the machine as soon as it finishes the spin cycle, to avoid creases.

You will still be able to see the stitches and garter ridges faintly, but the fabric should be very dense and solid. If you repeat the felting process, the bag will shrink a bit more each time, but the greatest amount of shrinkage will occur during the first wash.

Shape the bag into the form you want, placing it upright on a flat surface. Fill the bag with rolled-up washcloths or small towels, which will help it dry by absorbing water from the inside. Steam the bag to set its shape and make it spiffy.

If you desire a less fuzzy fabric, use a disposable razor to shave off the excess fuzz. (Free Relationship Advice: If you don't have a disposable handy, be careful whose razor you use. Men have a mortal fear of any woman borrowing their razor, for any reason. It could get ugly.)

THE GRAND FINALE: Send a picture of your bee-yoo-tiful buttonhole bag to [www.masondixonknitting.com](http://www.masondixonknitting.com). We live for this.