



FRENCH PRESS COFFEE COZY

There's no denying a French press makes a delicious pot of coffee, but that elegant glass carafe isn't so great at keeping your coffee hot. Enter this simple knitted, felted cozy with optional needlefelted decoration.

MATERIALS

1 skein (125 yards/114 m) Lambs Pride Bulky (85% wool, 15% mohair)

US #15 (10mm) 16" (40 cm) circular and doublepointed needles, or size needed to obtain gauge

GAUGE

9 stitches = 4" (10 cm) BEFORE felting

DIMENSIONS

Before felting: 13" (33 cm) high by 11" (28 cm) wide (22" [56 cm] circumference)

After felting: 9½" (24 cm) high by 9½" (24 cm) wide (19" [48 cm] circumference)

DIRECTIONS

Cast on 50 stitches, join, knit 1 round, purl 1 round.

Knit until work measures 10" (25 cm) from purl round.

Decrease for top, changing to doublepointed needles when necessary

knit 8, knit 2 together (repeat from * to * around)

Knit 1 round

knit 7, knit 2 together

Knit one round

knit 6, knit 2 together

Knit one round

knit 5, knit 2 together

knit 4, knit 2 together

knit 3, knit 2 together

knit 2, knit 2 together

knit 1, knit 2 together -- 10 stitches remain

Bind off 10 stitches; this will leave a hole in the top of the cozy to accommodate the plunger on the French press.



Orange cozy before felting, gray cozy after felting

Felt in washing machine (see ABOUT FELTING, below) until desired dimensions achieved. While still damp, stretch the opening at the top of the cozy to make sure it will comfortably accommodate the knob at the top of the French press. Set in a warm place and leave to dry thoroughly (this may take a couple of days). Trim ends.

You may leave your cozy plain, or you may embellish it with needlefelted or embroidered designs.

ABOUT FELTING

This cozy is knitted using untreated, nonwashable wool and mohair, and then doing just that—washing it, with hot water, a little soap, and lots of agitation—until the fibers pull together, shrinking and felting (or, more correctly, fulling) the fabric. This is best achieved in a top-loading washer, which you can start and stop mid-cycle to check on the progress of the felting. It is also possible in a front loader (which is what I have), but a bit trickier as you cannot manipulate the cycles as easily.

Whichever kind of washer you use, be sure to put the cozy into a zippered pillowcase (this will keep the wool and mohair lint from clogging your washer) and wash the cozy with a couple of large towels or pairs of jeans to ensure sufficient agitation. I found that these cozies felted most—but not all—of the way in one regular or heavy-wash cycle, using hot water, a little soap, and the least amount of spin cycle possible (spinning can crease the felted fabric).

At that point, however, the cozies were not done. I then finished felting each of them, by hand, in a basin of hot water with a few drops of dish soap or wool wash. Be warned, hand felting is not easy! Each of these took 10 or 15 minutes of vigorous rubbing in the hot water—the equivalent of a strenuous upper body workout in my book—until the cozies were the just the right size to fit my French press. Basically, I would rub and scrub until my arms screamed for a break, and then I would gently squeeze out the excess water and slip the cozy over the French press to check my progress. I repeated this process until the right fit was achieved.

