

## Express Yourself with a Needle Felted Pin



A needle felted Japanese Kanji Pin will make a big statement, whether you wear it on a sweater or attach it to a hat or purse. Kanji is the name for the symbolic characters in the Japanese writing system. Our model is wearing the character for fire. You can find more Kanji characters, and even custom translations, on the Internet.

The pin takes very little time or materials and is an excellent project for learning the amazingly simple technique of needle felting. Made of hard, brittle steel, felting needles have notches on the first 1" of the tip. When punched into wool yarn or roving placed over a foam pad or brush, these notches snag the wool and drag it back and forth, causing the scales on the fiber to interlock into a dense fabric. It's so easy to create great-looking fashion accessories, it's addicting!

Try your hand at needle felting one of the symbols we've provided, and learn a bit of Kanji while you're at it!

### Japanese Kanji Pins

*Designed by Kooler Design Studio exclusively for free distribution on the Leisure Arts Web site. For a complete guide to needle felting and more projects, see the Leisure Arts book, Needle Felting: Artful Fashion (#4296) by Kooler Design Studio.*

#### Materials:

½ ounce of white wool roving  
½ ounce of black wool yarn  
Pin back

#### Tools:

Multiple needle felting tool plus a single needle  
6" x 6" x 3" foam pad  
Sewing needle and white thread to match wool roving

**Instructions:**

**Note:** To make the base for these pins you must create a small piece of fabric using the wool roving. Think of how fibers in a woven fabric look. The fibers go both horizontally and vertically. When you needle felt, it is very important to remember you are making fabric, and follow these same rules. By laying the roving in both directions, you will make a solid piece of felt that won't shred.

1. Begin the base piece by stacking the roving in 3 layers about 1½" high. Using the needling tool, begin needling at the center and work outward using light poking motions. The wool will felt down quickly and you need to pull it gently up from the foam so it doesn't stick. Turn the felt over and needle the other side. Make a well-felted piece measuring 1¼" wide x 2" high x ½" thick, with loose fluffy edges **beyond the felting**. The side you needle will be smoother, and the other will be fuzzier. When you turn the roving and work both sides, the result is a more pleasing piece of fabric.

2. When the piece is about ¼" thick with fuzzy edges, it is ready to shape into a finished rectangle. Using a single felting needle, needle a straight edge along one edge. Go over the "line" 3 or 4 times to define it. Brush the fuzzy edges back toward the middle of the felted piece with your finger and use the tool to blend it in and create a straight, "hemmed" edge. Repeat this for the other 3 sides to form a finished rectangle.

3. Using the black wool yarn and the single felting needle, recreate the design of the kanji as shown in the picture. The sign on the model is the character for fire.

4. On the backside, stitch a jewelry pin back in the center of the upper third of the felted piece.

FIRE

WATER

HAPPINESS

GOOD LUCK

MOTHER

FRIEND

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