

THE TIME BETWEEN US – SITTING MAT - HOW TO MAKE ONE – HANDOUT

CHAPTERS:

BASICS OF THE SITTING MAT

PHASE 1: FELTING

PHASE 2: FABLAB – LASERCUTTING

PHASE 3: FOLDING THE MAT TOGETHER

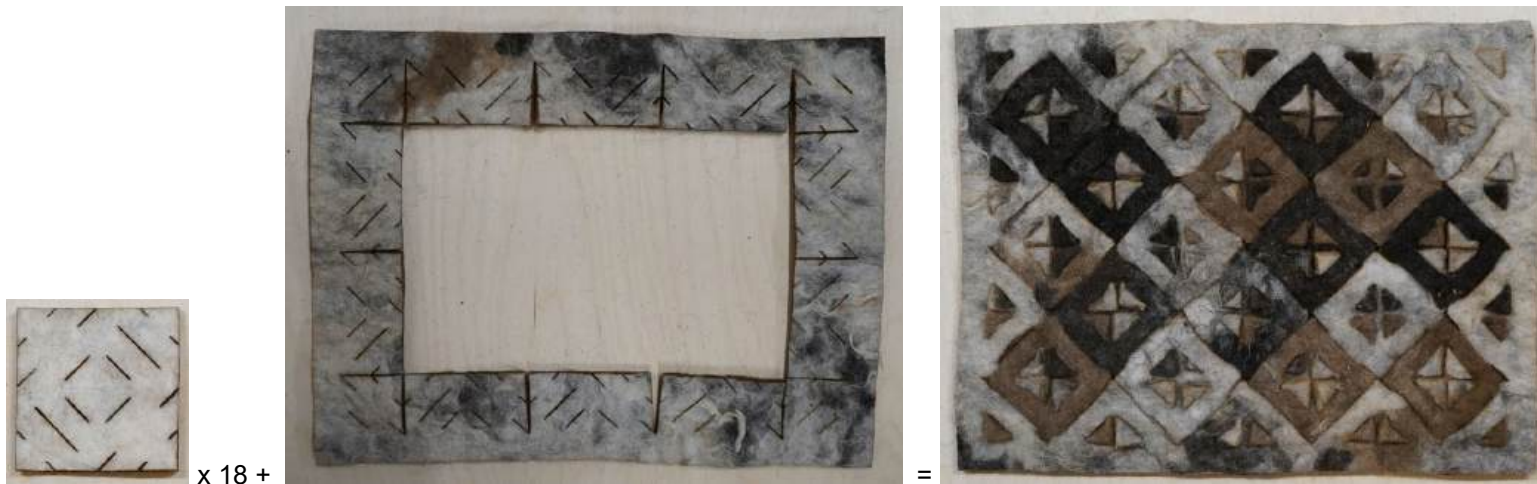
ABOUT - THE TIME BETWEEN US - SITTING MATS

CONTACT

BASICS OF THE SITTING MAT:

The sitting mat is created by 19 modular pieces:

- 18 squares of felt (each square is 85x85 mm)
- 1 big felted ' frame' for the outside of the sitting mat (30 x 40 cm)



This handout will guide you through the steps from the felting, to the lasercutting, to the folding of the sitting mat.

Before you start, watch this short video showing the basic outline of the process.

Video: <https://vagur.fo/upload/tinytce/db8ca4a80612acfcf841946af14a7fcbe2fdf76f.mp4>

PHASE 1: FELTING

What are you going to make/do:

- 2 pieces of felt - small size = Felt A (outcome is about 29 x 19 cm)
- 1 piece of felt - big size = Felt B (outcome is about 55 x 35 cm)

What do you need:

- 250 Grams of Faroese Wool (washed)
- 1 flat box with the size of +- 32 x 24 cm (an office A4 size paper tray) for Felt A
- 1 flat box with the size of 68 x 44 cm (at the Fablab Vágur) for Felt B
- Green soap
- Lukewarm water
- Carding tool
- 4 / 4,5 hours in total (but you can split it up in activities of 30 minutes)

How to felt:

Step	What	How	Picture
1	Separating inner and outer fibres (Nappa)	The wool has long and short hairs. The really long hairs that also feel more sturdy are not so good for felting. Take those long hairs out by pulling on the hairs and the wool. You can do this quite course. Is not a problem if there are still some long hairs, but try to use maybe 30 minutes on all the wool, to take the most rough ones out.	
2	Card the wool (give it a direction) (Karða)	Carding the wool gives the wool a direction and makes it more fluffy. It is important for the felting that all the wool is carded. Ask someone to show you if you've never done it.	

3	Way the right amount of wool	33 gram for 1 small size = called Felt A 150 gram for 1 big size = called Felt B In total you need: - 2x Felt A (2 x 33 gram) - 1x Felt B (150 gram) <u>after</u> taking out the long hairs	
4	Put the wool in the tray with a direction	When you place the wool into the tray for felting, place a very thin layer of wool from the left to right (carded wool also in this direction). Then place a very thin layer of wool from the upper side to the lower side ((carded wool also in this direction). Repeat this, thin layer for layer in opposite directions, until your 33 gram is finished (about 5/6 layers).	
5	Add the lukewarm water with green soap	- Make a mix with lukewarm water and some green soap - Pour it over the wool and start felting - Ask advice from someone who has done it before - You start very gentry moving your hands up and down, so the wool grabs onto each other but does NOT move from left to right IMPORTANT: The felted wool should have a relatively even texture, make sure the wool does not move or get more thick/thin on one place. - Once the wool is a bit more felted, flip the wool and continue. After a while you can be a little bit less gentle. - Once it seems pretty much felted, you can take it into your hands and continue.	

		- Felt 15 min longer than you think – it needs to be 'tight' And the side of the wool should now be much smaller than the tray.	
6	Wash and dry your felt	- Once the wool is felted, you can wash it with water until the soap is out of the wool - Dry the wool horizontally	
7	Create 3 pieces of felt	Do this process for: - 2x for Felt A - 1x for Felt B - You will experience that the big felted piece, Felt B, will be harder to make, so start with the 2 small ones.	

PHASE 2: FABLAB – LASERCUTTING

What are you going to make/do:

- You will lasercut the felted wool (2 small pieces and 1 big) into the shapes that you need for the sitting mat
- After phase 2 you will have 19 modular parts of the sitting mat (18 small square shapes and 1 big 'frame', see pictures below:

What do you need:

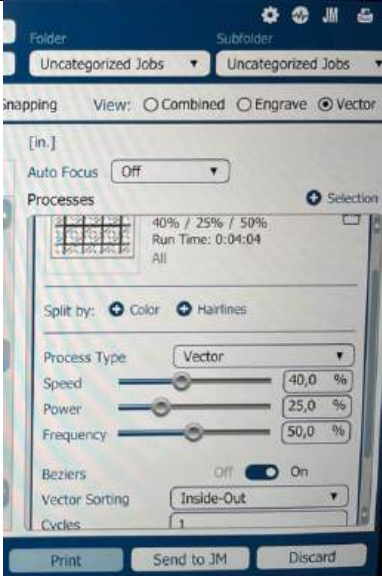
- We used the - Epilog Fusion Edge - Lasercutter (at Fablab Vágur) = size is 30x60 cm
- 2 pieces of felt - Felt A - (about 29 x 19 cm)
- 1 piece of felt - Felt B - (about 55 x 35 cm)
- [1_SITTING_MAT_6_SHAPES_SQUARE_85MM.svg](#) computer file for lasercutting- Felt A
- [2_SITTING_MAT_OUTSIDE_RECTANGLE.svg](#) computer file for lasercutting - Felt B
- Someone to explain to you how the lasercutter works – You need a short explanation at the Fablab before starting

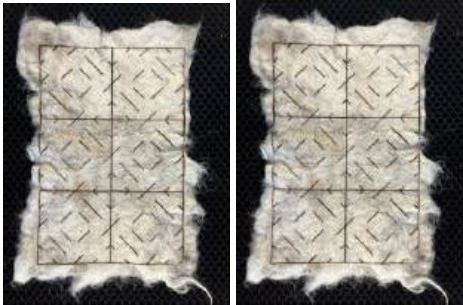
How to laser cut Felt A:



Picture of the outcome Felt A after lasercutting – You can see that there are 6 square shapes cut out of the wool.

Step	What	How	Picture
1	Get the lasercutter ready	Open the .svg file on the computer that is connected to the lasercutter - Turn on the lasercutter	Folder: SITTING MAT File: 1_SITTING_MAT_6_SHAPES_SQUARE_85MM

2	Place 1 piece of Felt A in the lasercutter	- Place the FELT A in the middle of the machine, underneath the camera - Focus the lasercutter on the wool - Check if the squares that the lasercutter is going to cut, are indeed 85mm by 85 mm - Use the camera on the lasercutter + the wooden example shape in the 'Fablab Vágur sitting mat box' to check the sizes' or measure before you cut	 1 square = 85 x 85 mm
3	Settings for the lasercutter	The settings for the lasercutter are: - View: Vector - Process type: Vector - Speed: 40% - Power: 25%	
	Laser-cut the wool	- Turn on the suction. - When ready – send the file to the lasercutter by pressing print on the computer - Press the 'play' button on the lasercutter and it will start' IMPORTANT: Repeat the lasercutting 4 times before taking out/moving the felt. The settings are not finetuned to cut through the wool at once. When you cut it 4 times with these settings, it will have cut through almost everywhere. The small little connections you can cut with a scissor.	

	Repeat the same for Felt A number 2.	Do the same with the second small piece of felt – Felt A	
	Outcome	In total this part of the process will give you 12 square pieces of 85x85 mm.	

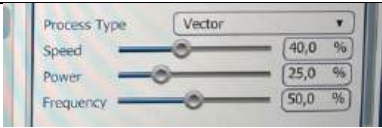
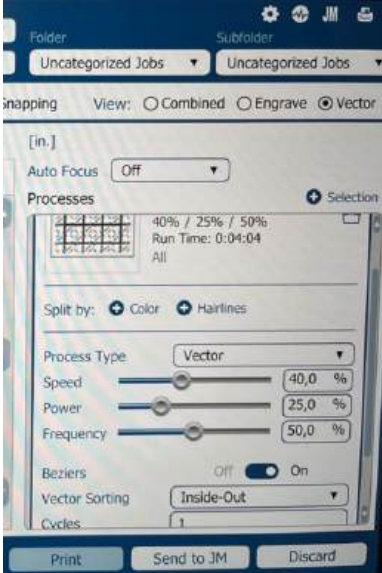
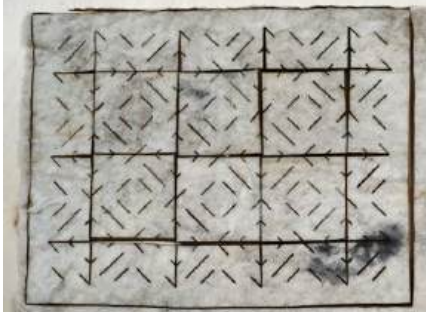
How to laser cut Felt B:



Picture of the outcome Felt B after lasercutting – You can see that there is a 'frame' + 6 square shapes cut out of the wool.

Step	What	How	Picture
1	Get the lasercutter ready	Open the .svg file on the computer that is connected to the lasercutter - Turn on the lasercutter	Folder: SITTING MAT File: 2_SITTING_MAT_OUTSIDE_RECTANGLE

	Make Felt B fit the lasercutter	- The shape of the Felt B will not fit in the lasercutter. It needs to fit quite perfectly, and to do that you have to cut some felt from the top and from the left side - Cut of the minimal amount to get a straight line from the top of the felt (long side) - In a 90 degree angle with the top, cut of the minimal amount of felt from the left site (short side), so it fits the lasercutters left upper corner.	 Example of how it will look like after cutting
2	Place Felt B in the lasercutter	- Place the FELT B in the upper left corner of the machine and make sure the wool touches the upper and left side of the 'measuring tool' inside the lasercutter – The felt should fill the whole laserbed. - Focus the lasercuter on the wool - Check if the 'squares' that the lasercutter is going to cut (inside the 'frame') are 85mm by 85 mm This is a way to check that the scale and size of the file are correct. If not, adjust and scale until 1 square inside is the correct size. - Use the camera on the lasercutter + the wooden example shape (85x85 mm) in the 'Fablab Vágur sitting mat	  1 square = 85 x 85 mm

		box' to check the sizes' or measure before you cut	
	Settings for the lasercutter	The settings for the lasercutter are: - View: Vector - Process type: Vector - Speed: 40% - Power: 25%	
	. Laser-cut the wool	- Turn on the suction. - When ready – send the file to the lasercutter by pressing print on the computer - Press the 'play' button on the lasercutter and it will start' IMPORTANT: Repeat the lasercutting 4 times before taking out/moving the felt. The settings are not finetuned to cut through the wool at once. When you cut it 4 times with these settings, it will have cut through almost everywhere. The small little connections you can cut with a scissor.	
	Outcome	In total this part of the process will give the outside 'frame' for your sitting mat and 6 square pieces of 85x85 mm. Option: You will still have a small leftover piece – you can still cut out 3 more squares from that if you need/like and want some backup	

PHASE 3: FOLDING THE MAT TOGETHER

Step	What	How	Picture
1	Check if you have everything	You should have: - 18 squares of 85x85 mm felt - 1 felted 'frame' for the sitting mat	 
2	Folding the sitting mat together	The folding of the pieces is not too complicated, but it takes some practice and trial and error. Read step 2 and 3! Please bring one of the finished sitting mats with you when you want to fold, so you can see and check how it is done. Start with the inside of the sitting mat and use the 18 squares. Each square has a 'male' and a 'female side' the male and the female side can fold together. Start with folding 2 squares together, and continue from there.	 

		See the example in the 'Fablab Vágur sitting mat box' or ask someone who has done it before.	
3	Folding	IMPORTANT: It matters if you first make the felt 'go down and up' or 'up and than down'. To get a regular pattern, you will have to keep doing it the same way each time. This comment will make sense once you do it ☺ On the picture you see the same sitting mat, from 2 different sides (folded consistently the same way so you get 2 different patterns and not a mix)	
4	Folding the inside and outside together	Once the inside is finished, you can connect Felt B, the outside frame. Place it over your inside and find a way to match the slits/cuts (male and female). There is only 1 way that it will fit. Turn in upside down and/or clockwise until it matches.	 Before After
5	Outcome	Your sitting mat is finished! The sitting mat will smell a bit like burned wool for a while, but it helps to air it outside and use it.	

	Wrap	For our sitting mats in Vágur, we've also created a wrap, that makes it easier to bring with us. Feel free to create one yourself (size 38 cm to 48 cm) of any kind of fabric.		
--	------	--	---	--

ABOUT: THE TIME BETWEEN US - SITTING MATS

“Wool is Faroese gold” - “Ull er Føroya gull”

This saying has held true for many years in the Faroe Islands. As the hearty sheep have provided vital protection from the harsh elements at sea in the form of fishermen's sweaters, hats, gloves and socks. Today, their sustainable wool transcends into cosy sweaters to rugged outerwear. Thus, connecting the land and the ocean in many ways, as it also connects generations and traditions.

For this project, the local wool connects old techniques and skills with new digital technology. But most of all, it connects by the unique opportunity of many hands from in and around Vágur to meet during creative workshops. Working with the Faroese wool allowed us all to share our; stories, knowledge and skills.

PROCESS

Throughout autumn 2023, all the necessary steps for making the sitting mats have been performed. We started at the sheep farms, then into the schools, elderly home, Fablab and private homes.

From the sheep growing the wool to; shearing, washing, selecting, carding, felting, lasercutting, folding the sitting mat together.

Many hands from all over southern Suðuroy collected the wool for this project. The 4rd grade pupils from Vágs Skúla learned washing and carding the wool. Students from Ítróttaháskúlin and visitors of the Fablab learned felting, lasercutting and folding the sitting mats during educational workshops.

The pattern was developed by the Icelandic designer Margrét Katrín Guttormsdóttir in the Iceland Textile Lab, and tweaked a little bit for the handmade Faroese felt. With the lasercutter in the Fablab, a 19 piece modular sitting mat was created. All the pieces, each from different sheep with their own unique color, are folded into each other and form a strong but soft sitting mat.

Just as the sitting mat is connected by the different pieces, it represents the connections between the many people and sheep, who have been working on creating this sitting mat while sharing an experience or story together.

HOW TO USE THE SITTING MATS

The sitting mats are part of the library. When you go for a walk in the mountains, you can come and pick one (or many) up. When you bring them back, they can dry in the cabinet.

By using them, the wool is brought back to the mountain where it came from. There you meet the sheep that will provide for next years wool supply. This way, we will continue to share stories and time together.

When you return from your walk, this booklet is provided for you to tell your own story of using the sitting mat in the Faroese landscape.

'Tíðin Millum Okkum' was a 3 month community art project in 2023, where a great variety of people connected to Vágur have been participating in. The project was initiated by Floortje Zonneveld, Martijn Bastiaans and Eva Bullens together with Vágs Kommuna.

CONTACT

Contact us if you have any questions:

<https://www.theslowadventure.nl>

Floortje Zonneveld: floortje@ijsblink.nl

Eva Bullens: eva@collectivepractice.org