

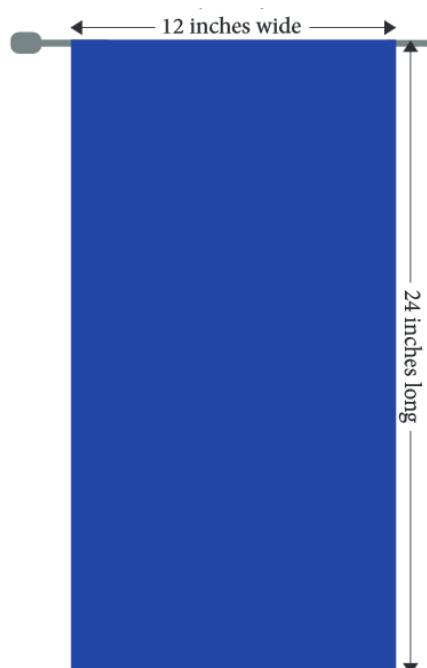
TwiddleMuffs

A TwiddleMuff is a woollen muff, with twiddles attached inside and out, designed to provide a stimulation activity for the restless hands of disoriented or confused patients particularly those with dementia. When distributed at the hospital, they are labelled with the patient's name to prevent any cross infection and patients will be able to take them home with them so there will always be a need for many more to be made.

Muffs can be knitted with odds and ends of different types of wool. You will need:

- Wool oddments – approx. 150g will probably be enough, but it can vary.
- 1 Pair of needles (size depends on the type of wool you use).
- A tapestry needle for sewing up.
- Oddments of yarn, ribbon, trimmings, buttons, beads etc. for decoration.

The width of the TwiddleMuff should be about 12 inches (30 cm.) wide. The length of your piece of knitting needs to be twice this width to provide a lining.



If using lighter wool, cast on 60 stitches, or the number of stitches to give you about 30cm width. Muff sizes vary and this is OK.

Using chunky wool or 2 strands of finer wool; use 40 - 45 stitches.

Keep knitting until you reach about 24 inches / 60 cm or double the width.

Most knitters use stocking stitch at first for a smooth finish and after about 12" add different colours and stitches to add variety, interest and/or texture. It is your choice.

Keep knitting until you have approx. 24 inches / 60 cm in length and then cast off.



Fold along the long length, inside stitches facing you and sew along this length. See left.

Turn the muff inside out so the right side is showing. (*Below left*)



Now decorate the TwiddleMuff on the right side of the knitting. Remember to add at least 3 or 4 twiddles to the first 12" rows that you knitted which form the inside of the muff.

Finally sew the cast on and cast off edges together.

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TwiddleMuffs can also be crocheted



Crocheted TwiddleMuffs are made in two layers and each layer is worked in the round and in a spiral with no need to join rounds unless instructed to do so. In the outer layer you could carry along strands of textured yarns - mohair, ribbon, chain and boucle in some rows. The bobbles are optional; you can work rows of bobbles, individual bobbles, or none at all in the outer layer

Instructions are given for two different diameters of muff

and length can be adjusted by working more or fewer rows.

Finished dimensions: S/M 10.5" long by 7" diameter, laid flat.

M/L 10.5" long by 7.5" diameter, laid flat.

Yarn: Aran

Hook: 8mm (or size required for tension)

Tension: 10 stitches and 9 rows to 4"

Abbreviations: ch - chain dc - double crochet

htr - half treble crochet mb - make bobble

Make bobble (mb): [Yarn over hook, hook through stitch, yarn over and pull through 2 loops] 5 times in same stitch, yarn over and pull through all 6 loops on hook, 1 ch to secure (ch does not count as a stitch for next rnd).

Inner/ outer sleeve: (make 2)

With aran yarn and 8mm hook chain 36 (40). Taking care not to twist the chain slip stitch into furthest chain from hook to make a ring.

Rnd 1 (RS): Ch 1 (does not count as first stitch), 1 htr in same ch, 1 htr in each ch to end of rnd, place marker if using, 36 (40) sts.

Rnd 2: 1 htr in each st to end, move marker to denote new end of rnd, 36 (40) sts. Rnds 3-21: Repeat rnd 2.

Rnd 22: 1 htr in each st until 1 st remains, 1 dc in next st, sl st in next st.

Fasten off and break yarn leaving a long tail (at least 2 metres) for finishing off.

To make a bobble round mb in next st, dc in next st to end of rnd.

Make bobble (mb): [Yarn over hook, hook through stitch, yarn over and pull through 2 loops] 5 times in same stitch, yarn over and pull through all 6 loops on hook, 1 ch to secure N.B. following a bobble round remember that the chain that secures each bobble does not count as a stitch and should be skipped over on the next round.

Decorate inner and outer sleeve as desired with buttons, zips, beads and ribbons. **Please make sure that**, all sewn-on twiddles are securely stitched in place, and all ends are securely woven in.

Join inner and outer sleeves

Turn the inner sleeve inside-out and slip it inside the outer sleeve. Make sure that you have one long yarn tail at either open end. Using 8mm hook and long yarn tail join the inner and outer sleeve together by working a round of dc, working into the starting chain of one layer and the final round of the other. Do this at each end to form a double-layered tube. Weave in all ends.

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Decorating a TwiddleMuff - a few things to consider:

- Try to use lots of different coloured wools with a variety of textures and stitches on the muff.
- Choose a good variety of decorations and try to include five or six twiddles **all around** the outside and at least three on the inside - more if you can as they are very popular with our patients. We find that muffers with decorations on all aspects of the outside occupy patients for longer than those with very few twiddles.
- It is easier to attach twiddles more securely onto the muff, if the knots are tied safely in between the inner lining and outer decorated side. Please tie these knots at least three times so they will stay knotted.
- Starting on the next page, you will find ideas on how to make a variety of twiddles produced entirely from wool. These are much safer for many of our more confused patients.
- Patients who are agitated can find great strength and could easily pull off insecure buttons or beads which they are often tempted to put into their mouths. Please make sure everything is sewn on very tightly so they cannot be pulled off and there are no loose threads which could be pulled through by inquisitive fingers.
- Please try to use buttons with large shanks or if flat buttons - ones with larger holes. This will enable you to stitch through again and again, attaching them more securely. We have found that crocheting around the shank of sewn-on button a couple of times makes it much more secure and is more difficult for patients to chew through rather than simply using thread.
- Alternatively pass the thread through the twiddle several times, some of our knitters have developed a way of securing it close to the right side of the muff by using a crochet hook to continually hook a stitch from the muff to the thread holding the twiddle.
- Whilst pompoms are attractive, strands can almost always be pulled out from most of them. Some pompoms can often be double stitched through in strategic places to prevent this but please test this to ensure that our patients do not end up eating strands of wool.
- It goes without saying that twiddles should not be sharp or dangerous. All buttons, beads or other attachments should be smooth with no sharp edges.
- Many knitters have attached bracelets or sections of necklaces as twiddles. These are very attractive but please ensure that you thread in between every bead so that patients cannot easily remove them.
- Whilst bells are a great attraction as a twiddle, we can all imagine how annoying they may be for fellow patients, so please do not use them for TwiddleMuffs for hospital patients.
- We have learned that some frustrated patients are tempted to use their TwiddleMuff aggressively. Please consider whether sewing on any metal objects could result in it being used as a weapon.
- Larger hard twiddles may also cause pressure sores if the patient falls asleep whilst lying on it.

We appreciate that some knitters don't enjoy decorating them and this is fine.

If this is the case, please leave the knitted strip unsewn so that it is easier for one of our volunteers to make sure that the twiddles they attach are securely knotted in between the inner and outer layers.

Finally, please be assured that we have a team of assessors who look over all donated TwiddleMuffs before they reach the wards. They often have to re-secure, add or remove twiddles. Reading the above suggestions may save them some time and effort.

Ideas for creating knitted twiddles

- [The Windmill](#)

The windmill in the photograph was made with size 8, (5 mm) needles with fine wool and sewn completely around all sides onto the muff which has pale blue bobbles on already so one of these was used for the centrepiece. Otherwise a bead or large French knot would suffice.



Cast on 9 stitches. All rows are in knit. Row 1 forms the base of each segment and this is the wrong side of the windmill. Each alternate row i.e. 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 are plain knit stitches. The even rows are also knit stitch and form the right side of the windmill. These rows 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 have an increase and decrease in them to create the shaping of the sails. Even rows (right side): make 1 stitch, knit to last 2 stitches, knit 2 together. N.B. to save confusion, mark in some way which is the right side. If using several colours, this could reduce frustration.

Every row continues to have 9 stitches. After row 11, cast off but keep the last stitch on the needle. This forms the fist of the six sails.

With right side facing, pick up another 8 stitches along left edge so you have 9 stitches. Work Rows 1-11 and repeat this sequence, to make 6 segments in total.

Sew together and attach securely to muff.

Windmills can be decorated or multicoloured with each segment a different colour or alternately coloured segments.

Other knitted geometric shapes can be attached to Twiddle Muffs. Putting a little padding inside the securely attached shape adds texture.

- [Pockets, with a button hole](#)

Cast on desired amount of stitches for the pocket. Knit in any stitch although knitting is easiest. Knit to the point where the buttonhole is required.



To make a buttonhole, slip the first stitch on the left needle as if knit.

Move the yarn to the front of the work and leave it there. Slip the next stitch from the left needle to the right needle as if to knit. Pass the first slipped stitch over the second slipped stitch and off the needle. Repeat until you have removed sufficient stitches for the size of the buttonhole.

Slip the last stitch from the right needle back to the left needle. Turn. Bring the yarn to the front of the work. At the edge where the buttonhole was begun, cast on the number of stitches you cast off plus one additional stitch. Turn. Slip the first stitch from the left needle to the right needle as if to knit. Pass the extra cast on stitch over the next stitch; then slip this stitch back to the left needle.

Knit 2 or 3 rows after creating a button hole and cast off.

Sew onto outside of muff near the button or knitted strap with a button that will reach the button hole.

This buttonhole pattern was published in Maggie Righetti's [Knitting In Plain English](#) (St. Martin's Press, 1986). The instructions have been rewritten.

- 'Octopus' with five or more tentacles

Increase or decrease the number of tentacles. Knit every row

Row 1 Cast on 20 sts (using knitting on method) (20 sts)

Row 2 Cast off 16 sts knit remaining stitches (4 stitches)

Row 3 Cast on 16 sts (20 sts)

Repeat Row 2 and Row 3 at least four times.

Row 4 Cast off 20 sts

N.B. Experiment with needle size and try using 2 to 6 strands of multi coloured and plain yarn together.

For Spiral Tentacles cast off using a needle at least 2 sizes smaller than those used on your cast on row.

Sew buttons and beads onto tentacles for additional interest.

This 'octopus' idea is ideal inside of a muff and is quite often used on the outside as well.

The 'octopus' idea uses the CoCo technique described below:



Cast On Cast Off Technique – CoCo plaits

Cast on and then cast off with no other knitting required - a really easy, yet effective, way to produce plaits or cords on which to secure or join other twiddles.

Use quite thick wool or several strands of wool with largish needles. Cast on as long a row as you require. Cast off these stitches. For Spiral Plaits cast off using a needle at least 2 sizes smaller than those used on the cast on row.



CoCo Plaits can be used on their own secured at each end to add texture.

To make a CoCo Plait into a ring – either sew each end together or include the cast on stitches when casting off.

Some have a small ring (made from a shorter CoCo) which has been joined together and placed on the CoCo plait before securing it

Another idea is to join two rings together before attaching.



Secured at both ends and under a small length of soft tubing this twisted plait is very tightly attached at both ends with additional stitches picked up several times with a crochet hook.



This CoCo Plait was made by knitting the lacy scarf wool which was popular recently. It is not unfurled but knitted as a strand of yarn. It makes an attractive flat plait securely sewn on under the button.

Flowers

There are a number of patterns for flowers on the internet. We have chosen a selection here for you to see how flowers are great for visual impact and using different colours and textures of yarn.

Please respect authors' requests for non-commercial use of some of these patterns.

- Ruler Flowers

These are very simple to make, require no special equipment and very effective.

Wrap several strands of wool repeatedly over a small ruler:



Tie the ends together and tuck inside the flower except for the strand(s) which will be used to coil the flower. Use one or more of the strands to catch all the loops by using a darning needle to slip this strand through the loops along one length of the ruler whilst still on the ruler. Do this twice if possible and tie tightly together to form a circle.



To finish, place some decoration in the centre. This bead is firmly secured to hold the flower in place.



- Small Flat Flower

Cast on 36 stitches

K one row, P one row

Stocking Stitch 3 rows (Purl, Knit, Purl)

Decrease row by K2tog across

Stocking Stitch 3 rows (PKP)

Decrease row by K2tog across. Purl row

Decrease row by K2tog across.

Break yarn leaving a tail 18" long

Thread yarn through stitches, draw tight. Sew edges to make a circle

For a larger flower cast on 48 or 60 stitches and continue as above increasing decreasing as necessary.



- [Really Easy Knitted Flowers](#)

These are so quick to make. Only two rows and can be made in a variety of yarn and needle combinations:



Cast on 31 stitches. Knit one row.

Row 2: Knit 3 sts onto right needle, cast off 2nd st by passing over the 3rd.

[Knit another stitch onto right hand needle and pass middle stitch over the one just knitted to cast it off]. Continue 3 times more until 5 stitches are cast off.

* Knit 2 more stitches onto your right hand needle from the left needle. Cast off the 2nd to last stitch off by lifting it over the last stitch just knitted*. As above repeat from * to * 4 more times until a further 5 stitches have been cast off.

Knit a further 2 stitches onto your right hand needle and continue this process until you have reached the end of the row. You should have 6 stitches left on your right needle.

Cut your yarn to leave a tail of around 15 cm. Thread this yarn tail through the eye of a darning needle and pass through the middle of the 6 remaining stitch loops. Gently pull your yarn to draw the 6 stitches together – pulling into a circle flower shape. Fasten off and darn in any ends.

- [Loom Flowers](#)

A number of wooden or plastic peg looms are available in knitting shops or online and several online videos demonstrate how to achieve really effective decorations. Many of our knitters have added embroidery or a well sewn on button in the centre to produce a more robust twiddle.



- Simplest Flower

Cast on 30 stitches Row 1: Knit. Row 2: Purl
 Row 3: [Knit first stitch and place back on left needle. Slip next 5 stitches over first stitch and off of left needle in between the two needles, Knit first stitch again] Repeat [] 4 more times. (total 5 sts). Purl row
 Cast off leaving a tail for a needle to take stitches off of the knitting needle to pull tail through all stitches and bring the flower together. Leave tails on flower to attach to muff.



- Very Pretty Petals Flower

Cast on 57 stitches Purl one row
 [K2, K1 and slip it back onto L needle, pull next 8 sts onto L needle over the knitted stitch, Yarn over twice and Knit this stitch again] repeat to last 2sts, K2
 Purl row – purling into 1st YO and then back into next YO
 K2 together across next row
 Purl row. Thread yarn through remaining stitches and form the flower.



- Puffy Flower

Can be used singly or grouped to make a posy



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2.25mm (USA size 1, UK 13) needles and 4 ply yarn –

Cast on 5 stitches

row 1: **slip 1, knit 3. Turn leaving remaining stitch on needle

row 2: purl 3, turn leaving remaining stitch on needle

row 3: knit 3, turn leaving remaining stitch on needle

row 4: purl 3, turn leaving remaining stitch on needle **row 5:** knit 4

row 6: purl 2 together, purl 1, purl 2 together (3 stitches)

row 7: knit 1, knit 2 together and pass first stitch over to give 1 stitch on needle

Use this stitch to cast on 4 more stitches (5 in total) and repeat from ** to give desired number of petals (3, 4 or 5)

For a larger flower, simply cast on 7 stitches and follow the same principle of working only on the centre 5 stitches for the first 6 rows and then decreasing by knitting 2 stitches together at both ends of the following rows until you have a single stitch again. Repeat for the desired number of petals.

To finish, thread end through last remaining stitch and then gather up the middle of the flower by catching up 2 stitches the from base of each 'petal', pulling up tight and tying off the ends.

- Carnation 1

With largish needles, cast on 3 sts.

Row 1: [K1, Yarn Over (yo)] twice, K1 – 5 sts. Row 2: P.

Row 3: * K1, yo; repeat from * to last st; K1 – 9 sts.

Repeat last 2 rows 3 more times – 65 sts. P 1 row.

Next Row: * [K1, slip st just made back onto left needle] 3 times, k2tog, slip st just made back on to Left needle;

Repeat from * across, end by cutting yarn and pulling through last st.

Roll Petals into shape, stitch into place.



- Carnation 2

Cast on 256 stitches.

Knit ALL odd rows

Rows 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 Knit 2 together all across row.

Row 12 Purl

Row 14 Purl

Cast off

Fold cast off row and sew together into ruffles.



- Easy Twirled Flower

Cast on 10 stitches

3 rows stocking stitch. K; P; K

Row 4: K Increase into every other stitch. 15 sts

Continue in reverse stocking stitch i.e. alternately knit and purl rows but with purl side outer.

Row 5: P.

Row 6: K Increase into every other stitch. 22 sts

Row 7: P

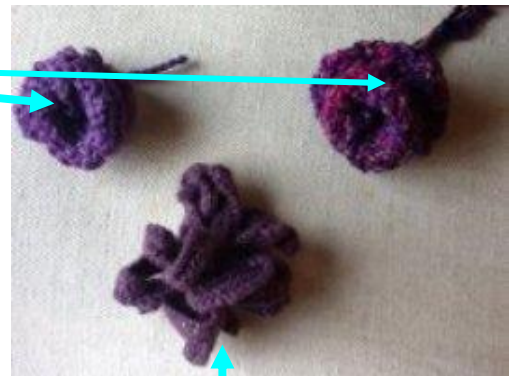
Row 8: K Increase into every other stitch. 33 sts

Row 9: P

Row 10: K increasing as above.

Cast off Knit wise

Roll flower until it spirals into a flower shape with initial stocking stitch rows on the inside and sew together.



Easy Loopy Flower (see below)

- Easy Loopy Flower

The sample was knitted on 3.25 mm (UK 10) needles with fine double knitting wool.

Cast on 30 sts. Row 1: Knit all sts. through back loop. Row 2: as row 1.

Row 3: cast off except for last stitch which forms the next petal. Cast on a further 29 sts. Repeat rows 1, 2 and 3. Repeat these rows until sufficient petals are made. If desired, make some shorter straight petals with only 16 sts. which can fall in between the longer, looped ones. Loop the ends of the longer petals in two and sew together. Gather the base of the petals together and sew to form a loopy flower.

- Curled Cord flower

Create a CoCo plait with smallish needles and DK wool. This is then shaped into a number of petals to create an open flower. Decide how many petals you'd like your flower to have. Casting on 90 sts and placing a removable marker every 15 stitches before then casting off will provide sufficient for 6 petals. 1st row cast on 90 stitches 2nd row cast off all sts.



Shape flower by bringing together the cast on and cast off edges PLUS the points designated by markers. Stitch them together, shaping as desired

Alternatively this method can be achieved using French Knitting or I-Cord for a more substantial flower. Decide the length by twirling it every so often and seeing what the flower looks like. Making an I-cord appears mysterious but once mastered is very simple. It does involve double-pointed needles but making an I-cord is really quick and can then be used for all sorts of twiddles.

I-Cord is cord knitting similar to French knitting which is made on double-pointed needles. It can be made as long as required from any yarn. Use needles that are similar in size to the gauge of the yarn (smaller needles with finer yarn, bigger needles with heavier yarn). Cast on a few stitches (between three and five). Knit the first row. Slide the stitches to the opposite end of the needle. Now, the working yarn appears to be at the wrong end of the row. Persevere and keep knitting, pulling the working yarn firmly up the back of the piece so you can work with it. Again, slide the stitches to the opposite end of the needle. Repeat in this manner for as long as you like. As you pull the yarn the back will close up on itself, like magic. There are a number of clips on the internet which demonstrate this useful method of knitting a cord.

- Chains

A very effective and absorbing twiddle which can fill as much or as little space as required. The chain pictured was made from 4 I-Cord loops which were joined together as the chain progressed. Chains can also be made from French knitted loops or CoCo strips. There is endless scope for work with colour and texture.



- Flexible frills

This is a line of kinky, frilly knitting which provides interest and texture as well as coverage of the sewn-up seam or to emphasise a particular twiddle e.g. a large bead. The amount of kinks depends on the number of rows added after picking up the stitches.

Pick up stitches along any part of the twiddle muff. This can be as long or as short as required. It is also possible to pick up a curved line of stitches for variety.

It is sometimes easier to use a smaller needle to pick up the first line of stitches and change to a slightly larger size afterwards but do not worry how many are picked up initially.

Next Row: Increase in every stitch knitting into the front and back of each stitch. Continue to do this for as many rows as you like. Every row Knit. Cast of all stitches.

The more rows that are knitted whilst increasing the stitches, the tighter the frill becomes.



Examples of TwiddleMuffs



Use of wool to secure buttons
Different wools used
Use of knitted textures on the muff



Use of wool twiddles secured with wool



Use of wool to secure twiddles
Knitted Twiddles
Thick wool with textures



Use of wool for twiddles
All other materials for twiddles
secured tightly



Twiddles made from wool
Use of wool to secure twiddles
and buttons



Use of different wools for good textures
All buttons secured on well that are
smooth with no Sharp edges