

# Reiki Lifestyle

*Illuminating the Light of Joy*

## Reiki Tote Bag

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*By Colleen Benelli*



Reiki guided me to knit with its healing power, intention, and prayer. It is an emerging gift that blends healing, creativity, color, meditation, and rhythm, through our heart and hands, into manifested form. Reiki goes well with knitting because as one is knitting, it is possible to think of Reiki and place the Reiki energy into the yarn and project.

Call to the Reiki symbols and feel love coming through your hands. Chant the sacred names of the symbols; fill the space around you with prayer and intention. Focus your mind, allow stillness to surround you, and enjoy the click of the needles. Soon you will hear your own heartbeat, and hear the chant of the symbols repeating softly in your mind as they call to the heartbeat around you. The rhythm will soften the day and your mind can slow down while you knit the heartbeat and rhythm into life.

Fill your bag with the intention that it holds the blessings of Reiki within its stitches and create your knitting with beauty. Cast on your stitches intending Reiki to fill each stitch. Chant the Reiki symbols, and as you knit, send Reiki into your bag. Soften your eyes and allow Reiki to flow through them and into the stitches. See the colors and the fibers fill with intention. Fill your breath with Reiki and breathe its light into the yarn. Chant the symbols as mantra. Continue imbuing your bag all the while you are knitting.

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**To read the complete article by Colleen Benelli on KnittingWith Reiki please see the Winter 2005 Reiki News Magazine available on [www. reiki.org](http://www.reiki.org).**

### **Materials**

**Note to knitters** -Because felting is so forgiving, I did not use a gauge. Your knitting should be loose and the bag will be much larger than the finished size before you felt it. It is possible to knit the same project and have different results each time you knit it. Have fun and allow the bag to turn out randomly.

If you are a new knitter and do not know how to knit with the different colored yarns, just knit with one color and use a contrast color for the needle felting.

- Finished size of my bag 20 x 14 inches
- Main Color (MC) 660 yards worsted weight 100 % wool yarn.
- Contrast Color (CC) – 220 yards worsted weight 100% wool yarn.
- Size 8 & 10 ½ needles. (I use bamboo for the easiest knitting.)
- 4 lg grommets, 3 closing, ½-inch magnets, needle-felting kit.
- The entire bag is knit in Stockinet Stitch. (St. St.) - Knit one row, purl one row.
- Woolite Dye Magnet (catches the excess color during the felting cycle preventing color running)

**Front** With MC and larger needles, cast on 30 sts, change to CC. cast on 30 sts, change to MC and cast on 30 sts. Knit in St.St. and in color pattern until piece measures 41/2". Next row, decrease one stitch each end, then decrease one stitch each end every 10<sup>th</sup> row 10 times. At the same time, continue working color pattern in St. St. until piece measures approximately 26" or desired length. Cast off all sts.

**Back** Work same as front using only MC.

**Straps- Note:** For those knitters familiar with I-cords, the straps can be knit that way. However, I made three different sets of straps before I was happy with them. The final set is the following technique. Knit 2 straps. With size 8 needles and MC, cast on 7 sts. Work in st. st. until piece measures 52" or desired length. Cast off. Sew sides together while wrapping the knitted length around a cotton cording. The knitting will be a little scrunched to fit the cording. Sew each end closed. My finished straps are 40 inches each.

### **Finishing Bag before Felting**

Sew sides of bag together.

### **Felting your bag**

Set your washing machine to small load, fill with HOT water. Add a little soap. You may want to heat water in a tea kettle to add hot water to the water in the machine. Place bag, strap inside a zippered pillowcase, and put in machine. Add a color-catching sheet. (Such as Woolite Dye Magnet) Let agitate for approximately 5 – 8 minutes. Check bag to see if it is felted to the desired amount. If not, continue agitating in the machine. DO NOT leave bag in the machine for the spin cycle. It will leave marks in your bag. Rinse in sink. Let dry completely before beginning needle felting.

### **Finishing after Felting**

Turn the top of the bag to the inside and decide where you will sew the edge down to give the top a more finished look.

Before you sew the edge to the inside, Attach the magnets to close the bag approximately 1” from the top.

Then sew the edges with your yarn or thread. Be careful to catch only the inside of your bag so the sewing does not show on the outside.



### **Needle Felting Reiki Kanji and Symbols**

Only felt when bag is completely dry.

Note: The following pictures were taken after I finished needle felting the kanji and finished the bag.

Place foam inside bag under the area to be needle felted.



Using your MC yarn and felting needle follow the Reiki kanji pattern. I did this free style and it worked well. I worked each line of the kanji before continuing to the next line. Stab the yarn with the felting needle to tack it down on each part of the kanji. Snip excess yarn off, and then continue stabbing the yarn to secure it in place. You may need to use a pair of tweezers to hold the yarn in place while needle felting. Stab straight down with the needle until the yarn is firmly in place. If you make a mistake, you can pull the yarn up and begin again.



I am including these photos of needle felting tools so you can find them easily. Needle felting is very easy. All you need is a piece of foam to put under your project and a felting needle to punch your yarn. The packets can be found in craft and yarn stores.



Turn bag inside out and needle felt the Reiki symbols you are guided to use.



## **Final Finishing**

### **Gusset**

Turn bag inside out. Flatten the bottom of the bag, and create a 3” triangular gusset one each side. Sew across the bottom of each forming one triangle on each side. Fold each toward the top of the bag and sew them down with a needle and thread. This will give you a wider bottom.



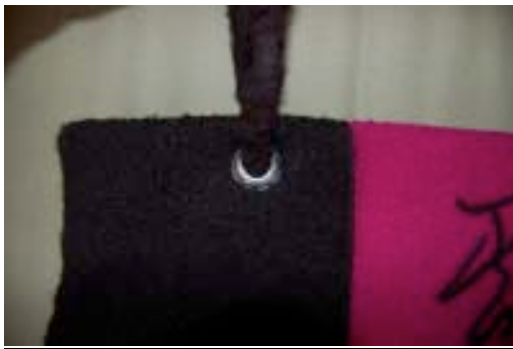
end of the strap through the grommet on the same side of the bag. Tie the knot on the inside. Do the same with the other strap on the other side of the bag. If the strap is longer than needed then simply cut the end to the desired length and sew together. Sew the end of the knot down to the bag with a needle and thread for a more finished look.



**Happy Knitting and Reiki Blessings!!  
Colleen Benelli**

### **Grommets**

Approximately one inch below the top cut a small hole through both layers of felting to place the grommet. Insert the grommets through the holes and secure according to the manufacturers instructions.



### **Straps**

Put the end of the strap through the grommet from the outside to the inside and tie a knot on the end of the strap to secure the strap to the bag. Put the other