

# Black Hen and Little Chick

By Suzanne Down



Following is the instructions to make the Black Hen, little chick, and a cozy nest for Suzanne Down's Mama Hen Surprise story in the Spring 2011 issue of *Living Crafts*:

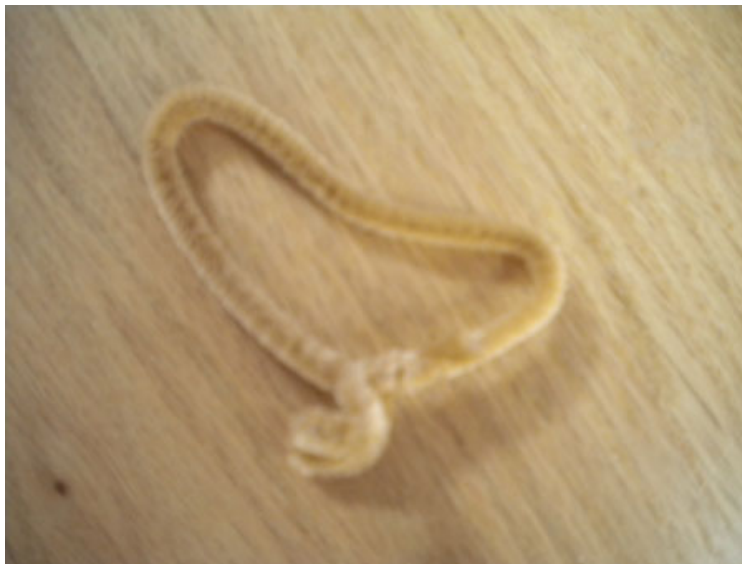
1. Form a hen shape with dark pipe cleaners



2. Add a second pipe cleaner part way down from the head to just below the tail to create a 3-dimensional shape. Wrap any extra wire around itself.



3. Cut a third pipe cleaner in half and shape leg lengths and little chicken feet. Attach to each of the two bottom wires.



4. Wrap black wool wisps around the pipe cleaner frame. Make sure the wire is well covered with wool.

5. Take a poufy length of black wool roving the size of your hand and roll it around in your palms. This pre-felts it softly. Place it in the inside of the chicken form. This will help create a 3-dimensional chicken.



6. Using wispy lengths of black wool, begin wrapping it around the form of the chicken, needle felting each length to the inner wool to hold it in place. The inner wool will help to maintain the 3-dimensional shape as you work.

7. Pull the lengths smoothly and firmly around the wire form to get the chicken shape. For the head and tail area, use shorter lengths. Do this until you have a nice plump chicken form. Needle felt to give more form to the chicken. The more you needle in one area, the more it contracts in – this is the sculpting power of needle felting!

8. Using a light brown wool roving and small wisps, wrap the legs and feet, needling to attach and strengthen the wool. Join the leg wool to the body wool too.



9. With black wool, take two small equal proofs of wool and shape wings on a large sponge, one next to the other so they will be the same shape. Needle through the wool, into the sponge, and shape around the periphery. Peel them off the sponge, hold them up to the chicken to check proportion, then needle on the other side of the wings.

10. Needle felt them to the hen's sides, leaving a part of them free.



11. For the beak, take a very small amount of light brown wool and roll it in the palm of your hand. Shape it on your sponge into a 3-dimensional beak in proportion with your chicken head. Needle it in place onto the chicken head.

12. Now it is time to create the red combs on top of the head and under the “chin.” Take small bits of red wool roving and roll (prefelt) in your palms. Shape them on your sponge as shown. Attach to the head of the chicken with your needle.



13. Needle felt on a tiny amount of white wool with dark brown wool over it for eyes, careful to balance each eye so they are symmetrical.



14. All that remains now is adding any decoration you might like. I have used tiny lengths of white to add to the feather look on the tail. This is optional.



The little chick will be made in exactly the same way, just start with a much smaller wire frame and keep the wool fuzzy. You may decide to make several, some black, some yellow. The little chicks will just get a tiny beak, and they do not yet show their combs.





To make a cozy nest, use light brown wool roving. Roll a thick length of roving into a circle shape big enough for your black hen to easily sit with room to spare. Needle the ends together to hold the circle. Place a round of wool to make the next bottom and needle felt all of it into a whole.



And now you have the most important props to make your story visual!