

# TRAVELING CHECKERBOARD AND BAG

*Designed and woven by Constance Hall*

**Difficulty rating:** Easy

**Size:** The checkerboard measures 21" X 21" and the bag measures 6" high x 5 1/2" wide.

**Yarn:** 195 Black Malabrigo Worsted, 2 skeins; 611 Ravelry Red Malabrigo Worsted, 2 skeins. (If you substitute other yarn, weave and wash a test square to be sure that the yarn will felt and make a thick fabric.)

**Other notions, equipment or tools:** Crochet hook; yarn needle; scissors; needle and sewing thread; two pieces of 1" wide black grosgrain ribbon, 34" long; button for bag closure; checkers.

**Overview:** Weave the checkerboard, roll it up, and take it along on your next trip. Weave equal amounts of black and red squares, sew them together, and felt to create a dense fabric that will stand up to travel and play. We also wove a coordinating bag for the checkers. This is a great gift for friends or family on the go.

**Weaving:** Weave 32 red squares and 32 black squares for the checkerboard. Weave 4 red and 4 black squares for the bag.

**Assembly:** Sew 8 strips of alternating red and black squares. Use the long tail to sew each square to its neighbor. Keep all stitching on one side, which will be the wrong side of the checkerboard. As each short seam is finished, work the extra yarn back into the seam and clip it to a 1" length. Don't cut the tail flush until after felting.

Using black yarn, sew the 8 strips together to create the checkerboard. Be sure to align the strips with the black and red squares alternating. Take extra care to match up the corners of the squares. This will make or break the checkerboard effect.

**Felting:** The felting may be done by either hand or by machine. If using the washing machine, put the checkerboard and the unsewn rectangle for the optional checkers bag in the washing machine with a tablespoon of laundry detergent. Set agitation on slow and water on hot. Check every few minutes until the fabric felts to the degree you wish. Rinse with clear cold water and spin the water out. Immediately take the



pieces out of the washer and stretch the checkerboard out into a square, blocking it like you might for a sweater. The center always shrinks more in the felting process and the edges tend to flare out. While still wet, firmly stretch the center out but do not stretch the edges. It helps to pin it down and let it dry. Once dry, steam press flat.

**Finishing:** If desired, work a blanket stitch using black yarn around all of the edges of the checkerboard. Roll up the board and tie it with the ribbon and it's ready to travel.

## CHECKERS BAG

Sew 8 squares into a rectangle, alternating colors. Felt the rectangle before sewing the bag. Using black yarn, crochet a loop for the button in the center of the seam at one of the short ends of the rectangle. Fold up 1-1/2 squares of the rectangle and sew the sides together. Fold the top of the rectangle down for a flap and sew a button on the front of the bag. Attach the loop to the center edge of the flap. Blanket stitch around all edges if desired.

