

## A Simple Mouse Guard Pouch

The Mouse Guard is Lochac's order for children judged worthy of recognition by the Crown. Its token is a pouch bearing a white mouse on its hind legs, with a knotted tail, facing left<sup>1</sup>. Lochac is currently facing a shortage of these tokens.

These instructions lay out how to make a simple Mouse Guard pouch. There is no one right way to make a Mouse Guard pouch and you are welcome to deviate from these instructions as long as you follow Mistress Rowan's more general instructions on the Broiderer's Guild website<sup>2</sup>.

### In Your Kit

You should have the following:

- Red wool 20x40cm with mouse and eyelet positions drawn on
- White cotton 20x40cm for lining
- Bobbin with 12m thick white silk
- Bobbin with 1.5m each of white and red sewing silk
- These instructions

You may also have one or more cords if you've indicated in advance that you will not be making your own.

You will need to provide you own: Pins, needles, scissors and measuring tape/ruler.

### Summary of Steps

The process of making the pouch can be divided into four steps:

1. **Cords** Each pouch requires 3 red and/or white cords, approximately 80cm in length: 1 for the hanging cord and 2 for the drawstrings. Cords can be executed in any technique, such as fingerloop, tablet weaving or lucet cord. You will need the hanging cord partway through sewing up the pouch. The drawstrings can be done last. The making of the cords is not covered in this document but ask Amalie or the fibre nerd of your choice if you want advice on making them or would prefer to be provided with some made by others.
2. **Embroidery** The mouse is outlined in chain stitch. Embroidering the mouse will probably take you 2-3 hours.
3. **Sewing up the pouch** This entails sewing up the sides of the pouch and the lining, sewing the hanging cord to the pouch, and sewing up and topstitching the lip of the pouch. This phase will probably take 3-5 hours.
4. **Sewing the eyelets** There are 6 eyelets on each side of the pouch which are sewn with buttonhole stitch. This will probably take 2-3 hours.

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<sup>1</sup> This is the *reversed charge* from the device of Her Excellency Mistress Keredwin the Mouse: "Gules crusily botony, a mouse sejant erect to sinister, tail nowed argent"

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.sca.org.au/broiderers/Docs/mouseguard\\_pouches\\_instructions.pdf](http://www.sca.org.au/broiderers/Docs/mouseguard_pouches_instructions.pdf)



## Embroidery

The mouse is outlined in chain stitch<sup>3</sup>. This stitch is simple once you get the hang of it. If you've never tried it before, practise on a scrap of fabric before starting on the pouch.

Use the thick white silk to embroider the mouse on the red wool where it is stencilled. Tips:

- Stitches should be about 2mm in length.
- Don't worry about what direction you're sewing in; it makes a small difference to the appearance but looks good regardless
- Starting a new piece of thread neatly in the middle of a straight line is difficult so try to coincide this with turning corners. The back of the mouse is too long to get away with this so just do your best.
- If the mouse drawn on your wool is unclear, use the mouse at right<sup>4</sup> as a guide. If it's very unclear, ask to get it re-stencilled.



## Sewing Up The Pouch

1. Fold the red wool right sides together, so the fold is at the bottom when the mouse is facing upright and the back of the embroidery is visible. Pin in place. Sew up the side seams using the red silk thread, in running stitch<sup>56</sup>. The seam should have a width of 1cm.
2. Fold the white cotton and sew up the sides as you did the wool (except using the thin white silk). It is important that the distance between the seams (should be about 18cm) is exactly the same at the top of the pouch on the wool as on the cotton. Due to slight variations in the width of the pieces of fabric, measure the openings at the top against each other to be sure.
3. Turn the wool right side out. Take your hanging cord and lay it against the right side of one of the seams (now on the other side of the pouch), so the end of the cord overhangs the top of the pouch by a few mm. Take the leftover red silk thread and sew the cord to the top 5mm of the pouch, over the seam. Make sure to sew through the cord, not just around it. Do the same with the other end of the cord, on the other side seam.
4. Put the lining inside the wool, so the seams line up. All around the pouch, fold the top seam in by 5mm, so the edge is hidden between the outer wool and the lining. Pin in place. The ends of the hanging cord should be hidden inside as well. Overcast stitch<sup>7</sup> (whip stitch) all the way around the top with the thick white silk.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.wikihow.com/Sew-Chain-Stitch>

<sup>4</sup> From Mistress Rowan's instructions: [http://www.sca.org.au/broiderers/Docs/mouseguard\\_pouches\\_instructions.pdf](http://www.sca.org.au/broiderers/Docs/mouseguard_pouches_instructions.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <http://heatherrosejones.com/archaeologicalsewing/wool.html#WSRunning>

<sup>6</sup> Since it will not be visible, you can probably get away with machine-stitching this and/or the lining side seams, if you are so inclined.

<sup>7</sup> <http://heatherrosejones.com/archaeologicalsewing/wool.html#WSOvercast>

5. Follow that up with a row of running stitch about 3mm from the top, all the way around, also with the thick white silk.

## Eyelets

Start by tacking a line 3cm from the top of the pouch, all the way around, as in the picture at right. This and the running stitch you just did should stop the outer and the lining from sliding around against each other while you are cutting and sewing the eyelet slits.

Now the time has come to be brave and cut the eyelet holes. Fold the top 1.5cm of the pouch inwards so half of the marked eyelet slits are on each side of the fold, and cut through all layers. Each slit should be 1cm in length.



Sew around each eyelet using buttonhole stitch<sup>8</sup>. When all are done, remove the tacked line below the eyelets.



That's it! Throw the pouch through a warm wool wash to remove traces of the fabric pen. Don't worry if the white silk goes very slightly pink. If you have them, thread the two drawstrings through the eyelets before handing it back.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://heatherrosejones.com/archaeologicalsewing/wool.html#holes>

