DIY Drop Spindle with CBTV Live

Chapter 1 - Chapter 1
DIY Drop Spindle
(upbeat music) - Hi everybody, it's Faith from Creativebug coming at you live, like we do every Tuesday and Thursday. And I was inspired to show this to you by browsing through a local creative Reuse. It's a place where people bring their old art and craft supplies. And I found this beautiful dyed roving and I had a full blown flashback about the little old lady I used to be. I used to spin my own yarn constantly and it all started with a simple drop spindle. It was a sheep and wool festival, there was all these cool people around with these brightly flashing drop spindles made out of CDs. I spun like three yards and got fully hooked. So if you're even remotely interested in this project I think that you should totally dive in. My favorite thing about it is the more you learn about yarn if you're already a knitter or crocheter or weaver, the more you learn about yarn the more interesting the finished product is. It's like you can drive your car, but if you know how the engine works it's a much more pleasurable driving experience. Even though I don't know how engines work, I do know how drop spindles work and that's what we're going to do right now. You'll need a 3/8 of an inch dowel and you'll cut it into 12 inch lengths. One dowel gives you approximately three of these lengths. You'll need some medium grit sandpaper, two CDs, you'll need an O-ring that's 3/8 of an inch. This will be found in the plumbing section and this was about 45 cents. You'll need a 3/4 of an inch brass hook. And then this is a rubber grommet, this was also in the plumbing section. The inside needs to be 3/8 of an inch and the outside needs to be 5/8 of an inch. So this took us a little bit of time to find it in the store, but we found it eventually. You'll also need a piece of yarn, I use just a synthetic Red Heart, that is approximately 24 inches long. And you'll need your roving. This, of course, I found at a thrift shop, but you can buy it online in many different places. You can get it in solid colors and multicolors and tons and tons of different fibers. I really like a basic fiber and it will be marketed as like easy to spin. Usually it'll be like a Corriedale or a Bluefaced Leicester, I believe that's how it's pronounced. These are all different sheep breeds and they're fairly easy to spin. Also the longer the staple the easier to spin. So do not start with cashmere or angora, that is a recipe for disaster. So once you've cut your dowel down to the length the edges will be a little scratchy, so just get them nice and flat. So we've gotten most of the burrs off there. You don't need to spend too much time with the sandpaper, because we'll give it a couple of strokes down. But if you do too much then the grommets won't stay and you'll have to rescue it using some Scotch tape. So just a little bit of sanding. You basically wanna get off any splinters or rough edges that are gonna snag on your yarn. Then we will get our CDs. Make sure you've transferred the music to iTunes first. And doesn't this look imaginary? This looks like a prop and I almost tried to play it, but then I thought it could bring about the end of the world. Put the silver sides together, it might be tempting to put the silver sides out, but you'll end up being blinded in certain circumstances. At least that's what I found. Though you could if you wanted to put them out and then Terrance suggested then you could stand in the field and be a human scarecrow, 'cause birds hate CDs and all things reflective, but mainly CDs. So once we have them shiny sides together we're going to put these insides into this notch. And that just takes some finagling. This might escape from you and roll far away. That's okay, that's part of it. And then when it's in pretty good we will insert our dowel. And we want it to live about two to three inches from the top. This is a top-whorl spindle. There are bottom-whorl spindles, but I am a lot more comfortable with this version. - [Moderator] And what size is that

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dowel rod you're using? - This dowel is a 3/8 of an inch dowel. And it is 12 inches long. The question was what size is the dowel. The answer was previous. Now we're going to get one of our O-rings and we're going to slip it over the end on the bottom side. And this is to hold it into place. You don't always need this, but I figure why not? It's one more thing to get at the hardware store. So this is staying pretty good. And then we need our hook. Now I read some instructions that had said to drill a hole and use a clamp and have safety goggles, but I found that you could really just push it in with your hand. So find the approximate center and turn it. It's probably a lot more precise if you use a drill, but this works just fine. And make sure you've screwed it all the way in. This part you might benefit from some pliers. I do have exceptionally strong forearms, so if you have just normal human strength forearms get yourself some pliers for this step. And it's pretty much flush with the top. And now we're going to tie on, this is our leader string, and I like to fold it in half and knot it just around the bottom here. And you can double knot it if you want. And we snug it up to here. This is a little bit separated, so I'm just gonna make sure that both CDs are in the center lip. Okay, there we have it. And now our spindle is ready. We're going to pre-draft our roving. So this roving came in a braid, this roving is in a bit of a crocheted chain, so I'm gonna pop it out like that. And if this is your very first time you can pull off a long, thin strand or a short, fat chunk. The choice is yours. And you'll, it's one of those things where if you try to pull it apart really tightly and hold it firmly in your fists it's impossible, but if you gently tease it out it's a lot easier to separate. You can see that there. So this if we were doing short chunks. I find it's even better shortcut if you do a long, thin strand. So we're gonna pull out something that's about index finger sized. I was gonna say thumb sized, but maybe a little smaller than thumb sized. And when you're first starting to spin don't worry about planning anything. I think that that's a sure-fire recipe for stressing yourself out. If you decide you're going to have a DK weight and it's gonna be a three-ply and you're gonna make these particular booties with it, when it's not a DK weight and you can't make those booties you're gonna be bummed. So do yourself a favor and have no expectations for your basic beginning yarn. Just decide that you're gonna learn something new and maybe get totally hooked. So now I have this strip of roving and you can see some parts of it are chunkier than others, that's fine. We're going to pre-draft. And drafting is pulling apart the fibers, we're giving it a little bit more air. This is ensuring that the fibers stay in line, that they're all running parallel to one another. And you can do this all the way down the roving, putting your hands approximately eight inches apart. And if you pull too hard, oh, it falls apart, that's totally okay. We can still use it just the same. And if you don't pull it enough it'll make it a little bit harder to spin, but you will figure out what works for you. Another funny thing about spinning is teaching spinning is almost like teaching swimming. You have to feel it for yourself and you have to keep moving or else you will sink to the bottom of the pool or your yarn breaks. But just like you can swim to the surface, you can also fix your yarn really easily. So I'm actually going to break it off, so I don't have to pre-draft this whole thing. And here is where it gets exciting. I'm holding it in my right hand and the fiber will be in my left hand, because I'm right handed. Try it out both ways. And we're going to hook it under the hook. I'm pulling my roving through our leader and I'm going to fold it in half. So when I spin this I'll spin it and I'll clamp it. This is a good thing to start too if you're on a stool or in chair you can clamp it between your knees. I'm going to use my thigh and the table. And this hand serves as the break, so the twist doesn't go into the rest of the fiber, and this hand will draft it out. So we're going to tease these two segments apart. And right now all the twist is below into the leader yarn. So here we go. Be patient with yourself. And now I'm going to let go of this hand and it's going to run up here. So we clamp it again, draft, let go, and it runs up. Spin, stop. Draft and let the twist go up. You can draft and let the twist go up. Also, don't forget we

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are live, so if you have any questions don't hesitate to ask. In our initial drafting we've gotten about 10 inches plus the leader yarn, so now I'm going to wind it up right underneath the CD. And now I'm gonna rehook it back on. I can see this is looking a little low, so I'm going to bump it up and move everything with it. And I'm going to repeat that entire process. Spin, stop, clamp, draft a little bit, release the twist. Also, please promise me you won't worry about getting even singles when you do this. It's kind of like when you first learn how to knit and it's so chunky and funky and charming and adorable and it's all messed up and lumpy and then you get good at it and you can never recreate that. I find that I have a really hard time making yarn that's intentionally thick and thin. It's almost one of those things where you have to get really good at it to be able to go backwards. Kind of like, I don't know, like Picasso. He had to learn how to paint wonderful portraits before he could paint crazy portraits that don't look like people. Spin, clamp, and the fun part about this is once you really get going you do not have to clamp it. You can spin it, here, I'm gonna drape this over my arm, you can spin it and continue to draft. Look at that. It's so satisfying. Stop, wind it up. And if I was doing this not on a live I would be extending this until it almost hits the ground. And you'll see a well balanced spindle, this is wobbling a little bit, it shouldn't wobble all that much. And also the more fiber I have on my spindle the less it will wobble. So it starts gaining momentum. If you do bottom-whorl spindles they have their own areas of rotation. Some spin faster, but for less time. And also you can get a pretty nice draft spindle for not all that much money. I think 25, 30 is like a basic rate. But I find this so great and inconsequential, because if, like let's say it's a disaster, I don't like committing to things that I'm not gonna be great at. That's my secret shame is I'm kind of bratty about things like that, so I don't like to invest a lot of money until I have a little bit more experience under my belt and this is fantastic, 'cause you could make this for a couple bucks. And then if you get really hooked, oh, goodness gracious, if you get really hooked, because obviously it's a full blown adventure, then you could buy something a little bit nicer and that'll work a little bit better. So you just saw a minor disaster. But let's talk about a major disaster. Oh no, I've pulled too much. Don't worry. Stop the spin, you'll draft out a little bit, and you'll overlap the ends. That is it. And then when you respin make sure the twist is going up into that. Oh, thank heavens. Look at that. We have totally remedied that. So once you get a lot of yarn on your spindle, until it looks about like a turnip, like half the width of your drop spindle will be full and it'll go down maybe this far, the longer length you have you can go kind of down and back up again, but we only are working with really short lengths, so we're only wrapping right underneath. So once you have the singles you'll need to ply it. Singles are very difficult to spin evenly and balanced. I like to overtwist my singles, so that when I ply it together it looks really cool and tightly wound. So you'll remove it from your spindle and make it into a ball. And these are just tightly wound. And then you can use your same drop spindle to ply your yarn. And that is where it gets really exciting. So here we have two balls. And you can see how it wants to be plyed by when you, it folds in on itself. And there's a certain number of twists. And so we're going to try to replicate this with the two yarns together. Now because we've been spinning it clockwise, which way do you think we're gonna spin it to ply them together? Hope you guessed counterclockwise, 'cause that would make you correct. We're just tying these two together to our hook. I'm gonna put each of these in a bucket, so they don't get tangled together. I've seen them also adorably done in flowerpot plying. That was actually the first way I learned to ply. You turn the flowerpot upside down and you bring it out of the hole. And so you separate it with your fingers and you spin it counterclockwise. And we ply it together. Oh, that's going really nicely. And when you push it towards itself it shouldn't twist up on itself. So we're heading in the right direction here. It should just naturally joop right up. Now I'm going to take it off the hook and wind it around my

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spindle. Also, if you are a spinner and you have a favorite sheep or fiber, please let me know. The world of fiber is so fascinating. - [Moderator] We did have somebody wondering if you could do this with a llama? - The question was can you do this with a llama. Absolutely. Even better, alpaca. However, if you do begin spinning you might come into a position in your life where friends and family start giving you fleeces and fibers. And I would not suggest spinning directly from that, because it needs to be washed and treated and have the vegetable matter removed. And that can be really demoralizing if you're brand new to spinning to have to go through all those processes. So yes, llama's terrific. If someone wants to ask the question I'm gonna answer it anyway, can you spin with cat hair? Yes, you can. And two Creativebug instructors, Fancy Tiger Crafts, not only spun cat hair, but they knit a tiny cat out of it, which I would really like to do one day for my cats. One of them is not doing so well, so I better get all his hair before he croaks. If you wanna spin with dog hair (laughs) there actually is several people online who will spin your pet hair for you and then there is a wonderful book called Spinning with Dog Hair that I think should be on every serious fiber artist's shelf if only to astound and discuss visitors to your home, because people are really uncomfortable with the idea and I can see why. I'm covered with enough cat hair as it is. So we're going to continue, I'm basically gonna do this essentially for the rest of my life, but for the purpose of this demonstration until we can build up a little bit more. And you can see, it's not particularly even. This is a, I'm sure you will have aesthetic goals of your own once you begin spinning, but it's okay for it in the beginning for it to be kind of rough and fuzzy and gnarly. And you can also see how, even though this is kind of a vibrant looking fiber, when you spin it up it gets really diffused and the color is really light. And I did a previous example with this exact same yarn and here it is already plyed. So this is, this is just a couple of yards. And you'll see it hang, see, this it hangs with a little bit of a twist. That means it's not well balanced, but it's fine balanced. Then I'll soak it and my favorite part is once you've soaked it and you can wash it and condition it and then you whack it against the wall and it startles everyone you live with, 'cause it's very loud and it has that like fleshy noise, but you slap it against the wall and it helps set the twist. That's our final goal of knitting. If we don't have any more questions. - [Moderator] Well, I wanna know how long, this is my question, how long would it take you to spin 100 yards? - We have a question from our moderator who wants to know how long would it take me to spin 100 yards. And this is a great question, because there are too many answers for me to be able to answer it appropriately. It all depends on how big your yarn is and how easy your fiber is to work with, are you knitting cat hair that has short little fibers? That might take you longer. Are you knitting with camel hair that has longer fibers, but it gets really itchy and then you have to go to the bathroom all the time and rinse yourself down, because ugh, gross, camel hair. Thank you so much for joining us and if you end up spinning your own yarn you'll have to let us know in the comments below and if you enjoyed this video like, share, subscribe, and we will see you on Thursday. (upbeat music)

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