

## ***Lace Courses for Distance Learning***

### ***Torchon Basics***

### ***Equipment List***

**Lace pillow:** An 18inch/45cm or 20inch/50cm (preferred) diameter domed (mushroom/cookie) lace pillow made from either straw, seagrass or moulded from high-density styrene. Whether the pillow is borrowed, bought or home made is not important. (Free Information Note No.2, *Making A Domed Lace Pillow*).

**Cover cloths:** A minimum of three cloths used to protect threads as you work. (Free Information Note No.3, *Making Pillow Covers and Cover Cloths*).

**Pincushion:** You will need a pincushion on your lace pillow; it may be of any shape and should be approximately 90cm/3inches across.

**Bobbin roll:** You will need to make a bobbin roll for storing your wound pairs prior to setting up and working. (Free Information Note No.9)

**A pricking board:** A board covered with a permeable surface material for making 'prickings'. Prickings are perforated card patterns over which the lace is worked. (Free Information Note No.5, *Making A Pricking Board*).

**Pricking card (or glazed card):** This should be available from suppliers of lacemaking equipment (England, Australia and New Zealand, U.S.A.) but not everyone stocks it. You need a medium thickness of this card.

This is a special card that is exceptionally dense and very smooth with a slightly shiny surface. This card does not bleed when ink markings are drawn onto it, nor does the surface break up readily when using implements to join the lace.

It is used in the manufacture and repair of electric motors and transformers. If you cannot find any supply, please contact me. If you contact a local motor repairer they will usually be prepared to sell you a few meters/yards. This glazed card is called Presspahn or Elephantide in Australia and Germany.

**Substitute pricking card:** Use file cards or separators. *I do not accept paper patterns covered with 'contact' or other adhesive plastic film.*

**Candle end:** Small stub of ordinary paraffin wax candle to help lubricate the needle when making prickings.

**Pin vice:** A pin vice is used to hold a needle, for making the perforated pattern over which the lace is worked. (Free Information Note No.6, *Making A Pricking*). A needle fixed into a wooden handle is not adequate.

**Sewing needles:** If using the 0.70mm listed pin size, then No. 5 or 6 Sharps sewing needle for pricking holes in the pricking card. Otherwise you will need to match the pin thickness to the needle thickness (0.55mm pins will require a No. 8 Sharps needle). These needle sizes are readily available from haberdashery and fabric shops.

**Lace pins:** You will require approximately 100gms of lace pins.

Lace pins available now are made in Germany and sold under the brand name Prym. Pins for lacemaking are manufactured from brass (gilt or nickel plated), Stainless steel and [mild] steel. Unless the label on steel pins includes the word 'Stainless' in the description, the pins will be hardened mild steel and should not be used.

Purchase only Brass Pins or Stainless Steel Pins for lace making.

I suggest beginners working torchon should use a medium thick pin because the size of the stitches formed around these pins allows for easier joining of the lace.

Prym manufacture a pin 26mm long with a diameter of 0.70mm (26x0.70mm) and of the limited sizes available, this is my preference. However, if you are using a styrene pillow, these larger diameter pins will leave rather large holes in the styrene so you will need to use a pin with a diameter not more than 0.55mm.

Prym Brass Pins - nickel plated, 26x0.70mm are usually sold in a single 500gm box but some suppliers of lace making equipment package them into smaller quantities. (I sell them in 100gm lots, See Haberdashery, Lace Resources Shop).

An Acceptable alternative to my preferred pin size is both thicker and longer; Brass Pins sold as 'Danish Flower Lace' Pins; these are considerably thicker but make for very easy joining of the lace,

**OR** another possibility if you can find them, are Stainless Steel 'Dressmaking' pins. In the USA this size of pin is a **No.20 Dressmaking Pin**; *not to be confused with a No.20 Silk Pin, which is finer.*

Prym Brass Gilt 'Lace Pins' 26x0.55mm (1inch long by roughly 0.02 thou of an inch thick) are sold in 15gm containers and are suitable for using with styrene pillows. In Australia they are readily available in retail outlets selling fabric and haberdashery items.

**Lace Bobbins:** You will need a total of 18 pair (36 bobbins) of East Midlands style lace bobbins for the Torchon Basics patterns, plus beads and wire for making spangles. These narrow wooden lace bobbins have a hole in the bottom for adding a 'spangle'. A spangle is a hoop of wire threaded with beads then attached to the bobbin to add weight and to prevent the bobbin from rolling when on the pillow. (Free Information Note No.8: *Spangling Bobbins*).

Bobbins are available made from wood or plastic: the material is of no importance at all, what matters is the shape of the small neck, which must be graduated or the hitches will not run. (See examples on the web page)

**Crochet hook:** You will need one crochet hook for joining the lace: **No. 0.6mm** if using the preferred or larger pin size, or a finer **0.4mm** if using finer pins. These finer hooks are very expensive.

If you already know how to use a **Needlepin**, you should continue to do so. Using the pinvice (pricker) with its needle is a perfectly acceptable substitute for an actual needlepin. Instructions for taking sewings with a Needlepin are available.

**Thread for working the lace:** Any ONE of the threads listed below may be used to work patterns for Torchon Basics. Take care to note the PLY and the NUMBER for each thread type. The ply number is the single figure number to the right of the slash (00/3).

Threads manufactured as lace threads are generally white, cream or black, but some brands manufacture a range of coloured lacemaking threads. Quilting threads and most other sewing machine threads come in a range of colours.

I must be able to see individual stitches of the lace samples clearly; please avoid the dark shades of thread because they tend to acquire heavy shadowing when scanned. No really dark colours please and no variegated threads!

Most people manage with two of the smaller reels of thread (150metres) but if you work additional samples, you may need to purchase more.

Do not substitute synthetic threads for cotton threads (**no Polyester, Acrylic or Rayon**).

**No. 40/3 Mettler Quilting Thread** white or any pastel/light shade (150m). This thread is slightly fluffy but the fluffiness is not a problem for the samples and first pieces. I am suggesting this brand of thread because it is readily available from retail outlets stocking quilting threads/sewing machine threads/craft supplies, and comes in large and small reels. One large or two of the smaller reels will be more than adequate for the first Torchon Basics sample patterns. (When you reach Unit 5 you might like to purchase proper lacemaking thread for the full handkerchief edging, but there is no requirement to do so). OR...

**No. 30 Madeira Tanne (large cops)** a 2 ply German thread manufactured for embroidery and suitable for lacemaking. I suspect that in the U.S.A., Tanne is marketed as Cotona. A thread called Madeira Cotona is listed as being available in sizes usually only associated with the Tanne and restricted to white, black and ivory; also usually only associated with Tanne. One cop will last well beyond this course.

**No. 32/2 Brok Lace Cotton** (is available in 52 colours). This thread is thinner than the Tanne but is still a suitable thread to use.

**No. 40/3 Presencia-Finca** bobbin lace thread, white. This thread is manufactured in Spain from Egyptian cotton, specifically for bobbin lacemaking (Bolillos). I have included it in this list because it may be all that is available in your locality. This thread is available in Australia from some specialist craft suppliers. Relative to other brands of thread, the 900m reels are not expensive.

**No.28, 2ply Aurifil quilting/machine embroidery/lace thread**, white or pastel *but not variegated*. This thread is manufactured in Italy from Egyptian cotton. Aurifil uses a thread size-to-reel-colour coding system so a No.28 thread size is wound onto a **dark grey** spool. This thread is also good value for money as there are 1100m of this size thread on a reel. In this range, the different weights have different thread quantities.

Try local suppliers of quilting and/or patchwork materials. Do not purchase a different size of thread in this range because it will be too fine for the patterns.

**No.80/2** linen thread either Bockens or Freesia brands, which are commonly available, or **No.90/2** Campbell's Irish linen thread.

**Scissors:** 1 pair of small embroidery scissors or similar small sharp scissors. A large pair of scissors for cutting pricking card and paper or you may substitute a large craft knife, providing you have a 30cm steel ruler to cut along and a suitable cutting surface.

**Rulers:** I suggest you purchase a small 150mm/6inch steel ruler for gauging thread size and for marking out the small pattern shapes on the pricking card, and a larger steel ruler if you are using a craft knife to cut the pricking card.

Buy steel rulers that have a dull finish, not a shiny finish because they are too difficult to read when the light bounces off the polished surface.

The small rulers are generally available from Hardware shops and the larger rulers are available from some News Agencies, Office Supplies and Stationers.

**Fabric:** You will need a piece of fabric on which to mount your handkerchief edging (Unit 7).

Any of the following will be suitable: Cotton lawn, Batiste, linen lawn, Handkerchief Linen or other fine fabric with a plain weave.

**Tapestry Needle:** No.20 tapestry needle will be required for the stitch you will be working to attach the lace to the fabric.

## Part 2: Pens & Stationary

**Paper for printing the notes:** You will need a lot of paper to print out all the notes. Verbal instruction in a classroom can be given in scant minutes but written instruction covering the same ground amounts to many printed pages. I suggest you buy a good grade of paper because these notes are your reference for the future.

Many of the instructions include diagrams and illustrations so the clearer the printing is for these, the better. If you intend to print the notes double sided, you should buy the heavier grade 90 or 100gsm paper.

**Storage folders:** I suggest you arrange the course notes in plastic sleeves within folders that have loose sleeves, not fixed sleeves. If the instruction pages are printed as single sided sheets they should be arranged back to back, two pages per sleeve. If they are printed as double-sided sheets they must be arranged as single sheets, one per sleeve.

Folders that have loose sleeves will be more appropriate than folders with fixed sleeves because you will need to refer to different sections at different times whilst you are working the lace, and the folder/s must lie open.

**Index pages or tabs:** Arranging and indexing the notes for easy access will be essential. Some of the topics have close to 30 pages of notes, broken into 5 or 6 sub sections and others have been separated into parts (e.g. Thread, Parts 1-3, with sub sections A to D).

**Rough notebook:** Inexpensive notebook for listing exercises prior to carrying them out, and exercise results prior to entering them into your workbook.

**Workbook:** You will need to keep a workbook for your own use. Whether this is in a loose-leaf form or other is your choice. This workbook will be for your future reference and should be used to document your progress, experiments, exercise results, thread to pricking size and all your thread estimations as well as a place to store your lace samples.

**Permanent ink pen:** 0.3mm thickness *fiber tip* pen (not ball tip) for marking prickings. In Australia, *Uni-pin and Pilot* are two brands available in larger News Agencies that stock drawing pens and stationary. These are not expensive pens.

**Propelling pencil:** A propelling pencil or similar pencil that has 0.5mm leads is ideal for marking out prickings prior to putting in the ink markings.

**Soft eraser:** You will need to have a good quality plastic eraser to remove pencil drawn lines from your pricking after marking in with ink. There are many brands but Staedtler is one that is commonly available in Australia and elsewhere.

