

PUNCHNEEDLE NOTES FOR TEACHING AT RETREATS

Note: The words highlighted in red are clickable links

Supplies for Punching

-punchneedle tool - go over each needle and how to change the tip

1. [Smart Punch](#) (my preference)

2. [Ultrapunch](#)

-hoop, [stretcher bars](#) or gripper frame

I use artist stretcher bars because I staple the cloth to it and it never gets loose. Also they are inexpensive so you can have several projects going at once. They lay flat and easy to store. You can reuse them over and over. I buy mine on Amazon.

-pattern - show mine and what they get

-weaver's cloth ([available in my Etsy shop](#))

-embroidery scissors

-embroidery floss listed in the pattern

-light box or [LED light box](#) or use a window

-fine point marker

-tape

-[press-on board for finishing](#)

What your pattern will include

- Some patterns will come with weavers cloth but you have to trace the design onto the cloth
- Some patterns come with nothing but the pattern so you'll need to buy the weavers cloth separate. [We sell it in our shop.](#)
- Very seldom you'll find patterns with the design pre-stamped or printed onto the weavers cloth
- Simple instructions and a map to show where the floss colors go on the design

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Tracing your image

- **LED light pad** (optional) or window
- Tape your design to the weavers cloth. Remember, since you are working from the back, the design is reversed so any letters or numbers will be backwards.
- Use a fine tip marker or even a ball-point pen will work for tracing.

What to use to hold the weavers cloth

- Morgan no-slip hoop, 7", 9" or 10" You can also get one as a lap-stand. You will have to continually pull the weaver's cloth tight if using a hoop.
- Gripper frame like used for rug hooking
- Artist stretcher bars - my preference - very inexpensive and widely available. After you put the frame together, you'll use a stapler to attach the cloth to the frame. When done punching your project, you'll just pull the weavers cloth off the frame. Use needle nose pliers to pull the staple out of the frame.

Threading the Needle and Punching - for both needles

- Use three strands if using DMC, Weeks or CCW- which you have to separate yourself. I use about an arm's length...you can go longer if you wish
- DMC Skein (8.7 yards) - \$.66 / 17 yards - 3 strands (.04/yard)
- WDW & CCW Skein (5 yards) - \$2.55 / 10 yards - 3 strands (.26/yard)
- Use one strand if using Valdani 3-strand floss (cotton) \$3.90/29 yards (.13/yard)

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- Use 2 strands if using Valdani Perle cotton 12 - pull 1 from the center & 1 from the outside of the ball so you can punch continuously \$5.99/109 yard (.11/yard)
- Use 1 strand if using Valdani Perle cotton 5 or 8 \$5.99/73 yards (.08/yard) - it's like punching with 6 strands of DMC, WDW, CCW. If you want a more primitive look, your pattern doesn't have a lot of detail or when punching large areas like the background then this is a good way to go.

Instructions

- Once you've traced the image onto the weavers cloth, put your the cloth on the frame or in the hoop so that it's drum tight.
- Set your Punchneedle to setting #1 - this makes the shortest loops which I prefer but play around with the loop lengths and find what you like best. Setting #1 will also use the least amount of floss.
- Thread your needle. Use the instructions that came with your punchneedle for visual help or watch my quick video for instructions [HERE](#).
- When you start to punch, outline a motif, then fill it in
- I punch **on the line** of the drawing. If you punch inside the line, the motif will be slightly smaller; if you punch outside the line, your motif will be slightly larger.
- Start with icons in the center of the design and work out
- Leave the background for last
- When you punch words, punch one row very tight unless the words thick and you're punching them more than one row.

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- When punching eyes or something that requires just one punch, do that last.
- When punching a new color, punch with the front of your needle facing away from the color you already have punched so they don't get tangled on the front.
- When you change colors, just clip close to the weavers cloth. No knotting or tying off bc as you punch it gets tighter and tighter and the loops won't pull out
- I rest my wrist on the project
- I also have my elbow close to my body
- The beveled side of your needle (front) is always away from your hand. The flat side of the needle (back) of the needle is towards your hand.
- I punch up or away from my body
- As I punch, my needle goes through the weavers cloth all the way until it won't go in any further, then as you pull it out, have your needle leaning in the direction you're going (if you punch up and down or away and towards your body) so when it comes out of the weaver's cloth it will slide just a bit (maybe 1/16") and then you punch back through, and repeat until you need to change colors or run out of thread.
- There's no measuring or thread counting to make sure you're punching exactly the same distance each time. It takes practice. You will get in a rhythm.
- Turn your project not your needle when you need to change direction.
- As you're punching, if you run out of thread, just reload and start punching. The tail can be clipping on the other side.
- When you need to change colors, after the last punch of the color you're working with, put a finger on the project after you pull your needle back through to hold the last loop in place then you can clip the floss.

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- If you don't like how it looks or you used the wrong color, just pull the floss out and you can use a toothbrush or your fingernail to "erase" the holes on your weavers cloth. The floss you pulled out is still useable.
- If you're using a variegated floss for the background, you can make shapes or meandering in order to make the background more interesting.
- When you get all the motifs punched and you start punching the background, I start by punching around all of the motifs and keep going and going around until the background is filled in.
- You may notice the straight lines framing the design aren't so straight anymore. Just use your triangle or a ruler and re-draw the lines so they're straight. This happens to larger Punchneedle designs more than small designs.

NOTE: When you first start your project and turn your hoop or frame over to see how you're doing, it will look like a hot mess. Please don't be discouraged! You're doing great. As you continue to punch, it will look better and better as the loops will hold each other in place.

Troubleshooting

- If the floss is pulling out as your punching, there could be a knot down in the shaft, your hand could be resting on your floss (make sure your floss is "free") OR your needle isn't properly threaded.

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- On the finished side, if the loops are “misplaced”, you can use the tip of your needle to manipulate the loops so they are in the right place.
- As you punch and fill in the center of your project, the border might get wonky and not be a straight line anymore. I always use a triangle or square quilt to re-draw straight lines.

Finishing

- Once your project is complete, turn it over and clip any wild loops.
- Use the tip of your needle to manipulate any loops that got intertwined with loops of another color.
- Remove your project from your hoop, gripper or stretcher bars.
- Trim extra weaver's cloth leaving about an inch.
- Steam iron the back of your project
- Using fabric glue or hot glue (my preference) glue corner to the back.
- Then glue the sides to the back.
- Then use a coordinating permanent marker to color the weaver's cloth on the fold where it meets the last row of punching. A black Sharpie marker is mostly what I use. This just keeps the white weaver's cloth from showing when you attach your project to your book or finishing item.
- If the last row of punching AND your finishing piece are both a light color, you may not need to color the weaver's cloth. Hold your project to the finishing piece to determine this.
- If you're adding trims, such as rick rack, chenille, or mini pom pom, do that now using hot glue or fabric glue.

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- Next, cut a piece of mat board, sticky board or quilt batting 1 1/2 - 2 inches smaller than your piece. Then glue it to the center of the back of the piece. This will keep your project from “sinking” in the center.
- Lastly, glue your Punchneedle piece to a finishing item (suggestions listed below)
- There are many items you can use for finishing: felted purses, wooden plaques (from Hobby Lobby, JoAnns), [Chantelle's 141 Company wood products](#), antique books, other antiques, such as, small handheld chalkboard, child's dustpan, grater, etc.
- NOTE: for pillow finishing, make sure to keep the glue from the edge of the piece when folding the weavers cloth to the back so you'll be able to get a needle through.

I share videos and livestreams in my Patreon membership site all about Punchneedle. I also give my Whimsies (Patreon members) a coupon code to get my Punchneedle tutorial for FREE (a \$37 savings)

To learn how to become a Whimsy, [go here](#).