

Free Information Note No. 5

Making A Pricking Board

Lace Resources International provides this Information Note **free of charge**.

This material is original work, written by Judith Markham for Lace Resources International. Similarity to material from any other source if entirely coincidental.

This free Information Note remains the property of Lace Resources International and the materials contained in this free Information Note are covered by international copyright conventions.

You may use this free Information Note for your personal use. Distribution of this material for any *for profit or non-profit* activities, including teaching, requires special licensing. Contact Lace Resources International for details:

Via Web page www.laceresources.com.au/license

Via e-mail admin@laceresources.com.au

Via snail mail Lace Resources International
 PO Box 465
 Moonee Ponds, Victoria 3039
 Australia

Making a Pricking Board

Bobbin lace is made over a perforated pattern card. A pricking board is used in the making of those perforated patterns.

A pricking board has a base made from a hard material, with a softer material glued onto the top. The top of the board is known as the *pricking surface*. The material used for the pricking surface does not need to be any softer than a cork table mat, just soft enough to allow a sewing needle to pass through it with only minimal pressure being applied to the pricking tool. The more resistant the material, the less appropriate it is.

There are no set dimensions for a pricking board, size rather depends on the size of pattern you are working and the type of lace. A pricking board suitable for a range of Torchon lace patterns would be at least 12inches and not more than 15inches square/ 30 or 40cm square. If you were intending to make very large patterns for tablecloths or similar, or lace patterns requiring thick thread, then a larger pricking board would be advisable, but not otherwise.

Note: Work with one set of measurements or another, the two are not interchangeable.

For the base

- Fine and coarse sandpaper
- Glue suitable for the material being used
- Scrap felt, or thin fabric such as old sheeting or calico.
- Thumbtacks if needed. See instructions below for covering the base.
- A piece of board, preferably a square, of a size to fit your lacemaking needs.

I suggest particleboard or craft wood. A thickness of ½-inch/12 to 15mm is perfectly adequate. The bottom surface should be smoothed with sandpaper or covered by gluing baize or thin fabric over it. This will give protection to any surface you lay the board on.

Material for the pricking surface

There are many potentially useful materials available for use as the pricking surface, use what you can find. Look for materials of not less than 1/8-inch/3mm thick, nor more than ¼-inch/6mm. Preferably, it should be available in sheets not less than 12inches/30cm square, and with right-angle edges, not beveled edges. Half size sheets can be placed side by side and glued down edge to edge, providing the edges are not shaped.

Possible materials

- Unfinished, natural cork tablemats, preferably those made from fine cork, not large lumps. These are sometimes available from craft supply shops.

- Synthetic cork sheet, sometimes available from haberdashery shops or hardware shops.
- Old computer mouse mats made from 'Selfhealing' foam.
- Thick, strong, closely woven felt. Felt comes in a range of qualities. Try fabric shops for the better quality felt and buy the thickest available (rarely more than 1/8-inch/3mm).

The materials listed above can readily be glued onto a board using ordinary PVA craft glue, although a water based wood glue such as **Aquadhere** is stronger. Materials listed below need different glues. Ask about adhesives at the point of sale.

- Neoprene rubber sheet. Available from workshops that manufacture floor mats (for cars) in this material.
- Thin sheets of high density styrofoam; if it has visible round segments, don't use it because some areas will be softer than others and the size of the pinholes will differ too much.

When working with glues always follow the safety directions on the container, as well as the directions for use!

Smooth the board with sandpaper first to remove any rough edges or lumps from the surface. Wipe off all the dust.

If you intend to cover the base of the board, decide first whether you will cut it to the exact base measurement or allow extra to pull up around the sides. Cut the fabric accordingly. Spread glue over the surface or surface and sides, leave for the time recommended on the container, then lay the cloth on top and smooth it down. If you have covered the sides too, use thumbtacks to hold it in place until dry. Leave it to dry.

Roughen the top surface of the board with the coarse sandpaper. Wipe off all the dust. Spread glue over the roughened surface following the directions on the container. Cork is a material that will soak up a lot of the glue, so allow plenty or the cork will not stick to the board.

Lay the surface material over the top. Roll a bottle or rolling pin lightly over the top surface to force out any air bubbles.

Turn the board upside down and lay it on a plastic/polythene grocery bag or similar, weight it down firmly and leave to dry for at least twelve hours. The glue must be fully dry before you move it, not just 'touch dry'.

If you have a material that cannot be glued to the board, you can lay it on top of the board when needed or fix it permanently to the board with thumbtacks, floor tacks or other means.

