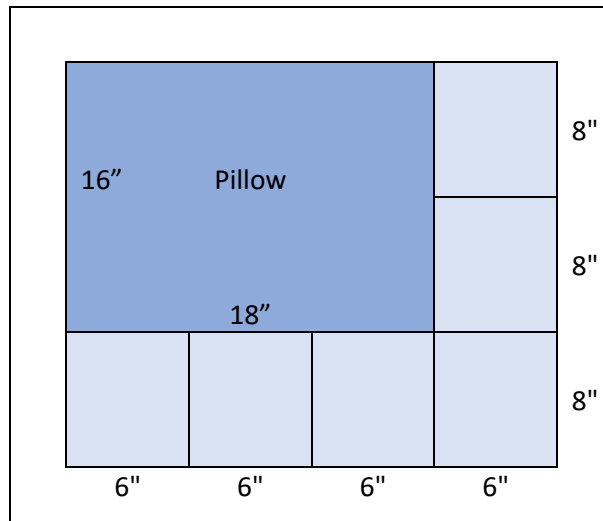# Supplies for Beginning Bobbin Lace

To begin bobbin lace, you need a pillow, bobbins, threads, pins and some instructions.

Pillow:
Styrofoam is available at local building supply stores and are found in a display called Craft Foam. The price is $7.99 for one piece measuring 24" x 24" x 1".

The piece can be cut to 16" x 18" for the pillow. This is a good size for travel. Measure and mark the lines. Score to make a shallow cut with a long knife, turn over the pieces and "snap" to break.

There will be left over styrofoam pieces and the 6"x 8" sizes can be used for a pillow prop so the back of your pillow is raised. This gives a good angle for the bobbins and is more comfortable than having the pillow flat. The pieces can also be used to make a pricking mat for making the holes in your pattern before you begin your project.

For the small support, cut 2 pieces of fabric, each 8" x 10". Sew ½ inch seams and leave the end open. Turn the fabric seams to the inside and insert one blue block. Stitch the seam shut or pin the fabric to close.

Note: Because the styrofoam piece is an inch thick, your pins should be less than one inch long as the pin will pierce through the back of the styrofoam. Two inch thick building foam is also available, usually in longer 8 ft. lengths. These are much more expensive but the cost can be shared.

Trim the four corners of the pillow at a 45 degree angle and cover your styrofoam piece with a plain non glare fabric that goes around to the back of the piece. Turn over the edge of the fabric and sew a channel for elastic. Leave a small opening. Attach a safety pin to guide the elastic inside the folded edge and gather the elastic to fit. It's wise to have another safety pin at the other end as well. Trim, tie the ends, or sew ends of the elastic together.

Bobbins:
Danish continental bobbins are a good choice as they hold a large amount of thread for your projects! The patterns usually indicate number of bobbins and divide by 2 to get the number of pairs. Some patterns have extra bobbins that hold heavier threads. They will be included in the count along with a list for the type of threads.

Some bobbins have a circle of beads at the other end for weight. These Midland bobbins are drilled near the bottom to hold a wire to attach the beads.

Threads:
The worker pair will need much more thread than the passives. The passives generally need thread to reach the end of the pattern plus any extra angles on the pattern will increase the amount needed slightly. Some authors include the information on thread length. Some patterns have bobbin pairs that hold gimp threads. These threads are often thicker, with contrast to the other threads, or sparkle type threads to add interest.

Pins:
The pattern may suggest a certain pin size. The pins vary in length and diameter. Sewing pins found in local fabric supply stores can be used in most patterns. Larger pins can be used for heavier threads. Pins used for making picots are quite a bit larger in order to make the loop for each picot.

Patterns:
There are many patterns available for different types of projects. Torchon lace is a good type for beginning lacemakers. To start, choose an easy pattern that requires about 12 bobbins or six pairs.

Basic Instructions: See the first lesson for Beginner Lacemakers in the Free Resources section on the Canadian Lacemaker Gazette website. It shows the three basic types of stitches: cloth stitch, cloth stitch and twist (or double stitch), and half stitch.

Colour threads such as DMC 5 or 8, or DMC 12 will help to see the directions of the threads for the different stitches. Once you are familiar with the basics, try white threads or variegated threads. Measure your thread length carefully to avoid knots in your work.

Resources:
Beginner bobbin lace lessons can be found on Etsy, or search other websites. Watching YouTube lessons online will be helpful. Soon you will be able to work with more confidence and your speed will increase. Have fun learning bobbin lace!

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