

Shuttle Tatting

Tatting is a form of lace making that has undergone cyclic interest since the early-mid 1800s. Currently in a resurgence, this fiber art has the advantages of being extremely transportable and compact, minimal cost, reasonably quick to produce, and capable of a broad range of designs from jewelry to doilies to clothing accessories.

Learning to tat is not difficult and, once the basic steps are mastered, the full universe of patterns available online and in books is open for consumption.

While tatting can be done with needles, using shuttles appears – based on Facebook groups – to be somewhat the more favored method currently.



What supplies will you need? All can be found at Handy Hands (<https://hhtatting.com/>) or Hobby Lobby.

2 tatting shuttles

Tatting shuttles in a variety of styles may be used. You will need 2 of them (in different colors if you like), as most tatting designs require 2 shuttles. Personally, I recommend the plastic “Aerlit” or “Moonlit” models with the small metal hook on one end for doing joining. Shuttles without the hook are perfectly fine, although you will need a separate very fine crochet hook if your shuttle lacks one.



Thread

For thread, perhaps the best size to start with is size #20. You should be able to find balls in several colors at the sites above. Pick any colors you like. I recommend the Lizbeth brand.

Other useful tools you'll eventually want

- Very thin scissors such as cuticle scissors for close trimming of thread ends. Fingernail clippers also work well.
- Straight pins for picking loose those knotting mistakes you will make. I keep several stuck in an old wine cork
- A blocking board. I use a large cork board with indelible lines drawn on it.
- Extra bobbins for your shuttle (if your shuttle uses bobbins)
- A needle and threader
- A very fine crochet hook (if your shuttle does not have one)
- A small, convenient case to carry everything in (you can see my travel kit all fits in an Altoids box in the photo above)



An excellent source for on-line Youtube lessons (or refreshers) can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZYhtWspladbX5RH2Y1vTQ>

You can really get a jump-start to your first lesson by studying the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iMT6I5FVPe4>

This video introduces the “double stitch” which is the foundation of all tatting. Since everyone encounters some early difficulty maintaining the hand positions and getting the stitch (and “flip”) correct, this video may help you to start.

There are literally thousands of patterns for bookmarks, ornaments, jewelry, doilies, etc. available. Just google “tatting patterns” and you’ll be overwhelmed with the varieties. Another great place to look is on Pinterest. Just use “tatting” and “Patterns” as keywords.

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