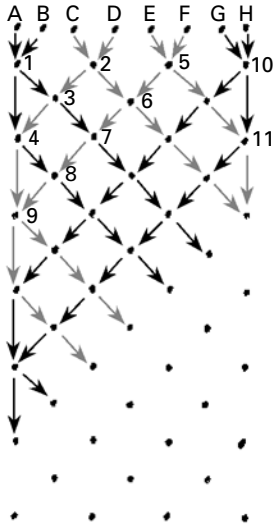
# Torchon Ground Sampler 1

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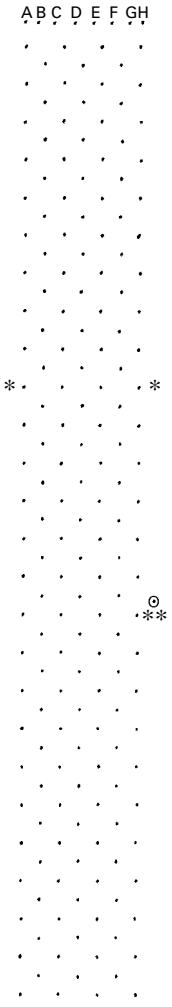
Torchon lace is one of several different kinds of lace and is probably the best one to start with as it is worked in a very regular way and the threads used are not too fine. The ground is the net part of a piece of lace and can be worked in a variety of ways.

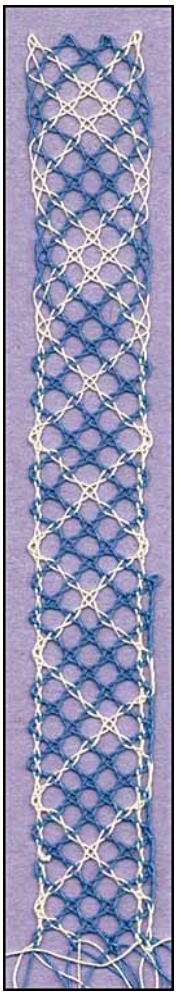
For this sampler you will need nine pairs of bobbins wound with DMC Special Dentelles 80 or a similar weight of thread — four pairs with white thread and five with another colour. They all need about a metre of thread on each bobbin. Hang the white pairs on pins A, B, G and H, and four of the coloured pairs on C, D, E and F. (These pins are support pins and will be removed once the pairs have been worked.)



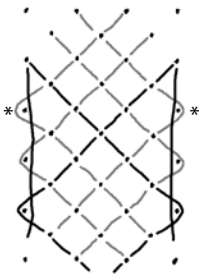



Pairs hung on side by side

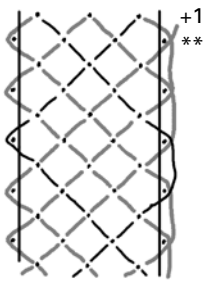


1. With the pair from A and the pair from B and work a half stitch, put in pin 1 between the pairs and work another half stitch — this is known as *closing round the pin* or *enclosing the pin*. You will see that the pair from A is now on the right, the pair from B on the left. Remove pins A and B and gently ease down the pairs.
2. With the pair from C and the pair from D and work a half stitch. Put in pin 2 and close round the pin with another half stitch. Remove pins C and D.
3. With the left-hand pair from pin 2 and the right-hand pair from pin 1 work a half stitch, put in pin 3 and close round the pin with another half stitch.
4. With the left-hand pair from pin 3 and the left-hand pair from pin 1 work a half stitch, put in pin 4 and close round the pin with another half stitch.
5. Torchon ground is worked diagonally so you now go to the top of the next diagonal row and work pin 5 with the pairs from E and F. Remove pins E and F and continue the row working half stitch, pin, half stitch at each pin-hole. The edge pins should slope slightly outwards, the centre pins slightly backwards.
6. After working pin 9 go to the top of the next diagonal row and work pin 10 with the pairs from G and H. Remove pins G and H and continue as before working half stitch, pin, half stitch at each pin-hole. Once this row is completed, the next starts with pin 11. You should find that the colours move as shown in the illustration — if they don't then you've make a mistake somewhere!
7. From the starred pin-holes (*) work cloth stitch and twist, pin, cloth stitch and twist at the edges — this will give a firmer edge. The colours will also move differently.
8. Hang on the fifth coloured pair at the ringed pin-hole. Work cloth stitch and twist with the pair from the ground and the edge pair (as usual), then with the pair from the ground and the new pair, work another cloth stitch and twist. Place the pin to the left of both these pairs. Give the right-hand pair an extra twist, leave it, and work back with the left-hand pair — cloth stitch and twist (no pin), then half stitch, pin, half stitch for the ground. This will give a *Torchon footside* edge on the right. Continue working this footside edge on the right to the end of the pricking.




Cloth stitch & twist edge




Footside edge on the right

# Torchon Ground Sampler 2

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8 pairs Special Dentelles 80 — 4 colour A and 4 colour B

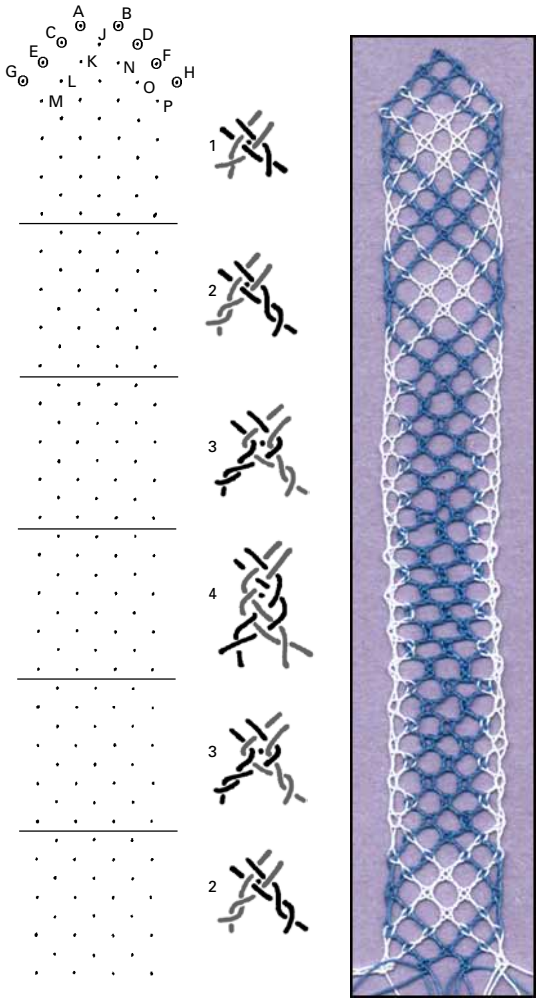
### Starting at a point

1. Hang the four pairs of colour A on support pins A, B, C and D; hang the other colour on pins E, F, G and H.
2. With the pairs on A and B work half stitch, pin, half stitch at J; remove support pins.
3. With the left-hand pair on J and the pair on C, work half stitch, pin, half stitch at K; remove support pin.
3. With the left-hand pair on K and the pair on E, work half stitch, pin, half stitch at L; remove support pin.
4. With the left-hand pair on L and the pair on G, work half stitch, pin, half stitch at M; remove support pin.
5. Work pins N, O and P in a similar way starting with pairs from J, D, F and H.
6. Continue working Torchon ground stitches (half stitch, pin, half stitch) up to the first horizontal line.
7. Change to the next ground stitch and work to the next line. Repeat for each section in turn.

### The different ground stitches

1. Torchon Ground: half stitch, pin, half stitch
2. Dieppe Ground: half stitch, pin, half stitch, twist
3. Half stitch, twist, pin, half stitch, twist
4. Cloth stitch & twist, pin, cloth stitch & twist

The stitches used affect how the colours move in the lace.



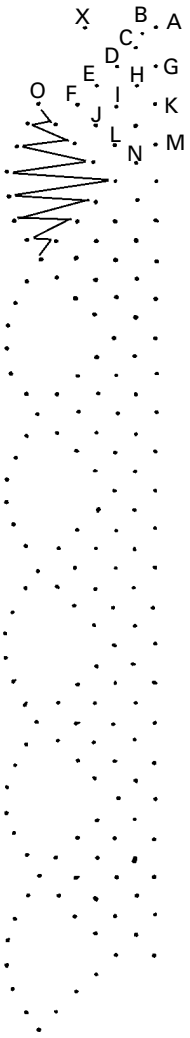

**Running out of Thread**

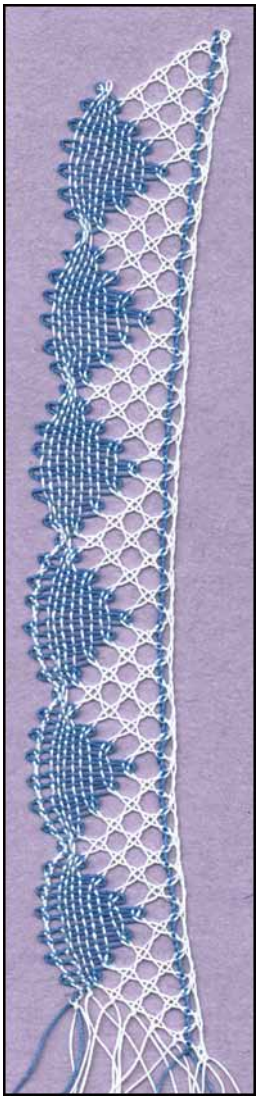
This is something all beginners worry about! If a bobbin is running out of thread, wind thread on a spare bobbin (a single bobbin, not a pair) and fasten the thread to a pin behind the work. Place the new bobbin beside the one which is running out, twist the two threads together lightly and fasten the bobbins together with a rubber band (or a safety pin through the spangles). Work with them as one bobbin for a short distance (1–2 cm). Then discard the old bobbin by putting it to the back of the pillow (it can be cut off later). Once the lace has been removed from the pillow these ends can be cut off close to the work (no need to darn them in as they are already overlapped).

Always try to think ahead and replace a bobbin where it will show least e.g. in an area of cloth stitch or at the footside.

# Torchon Fan Edging

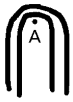
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For this edging you will need ten pairs of bobbins wound with DMC Special Dentelles 80 or a similar weight of thread — eight pairs with white thread and two with another colour. Use about 1 m thread per bobbin for the white pairs and one of the coloured pairs and about 2 m for the other coloured pair which will be the weaver pair for the fans.

Hang 2 white pairs one inside the other at A, the blue pair with least thread at B, and 4 white pairs one at a time on X. (The other 3 pairs are added after the first section of ground and footside has been worked.)




Pairs hung one inside the other

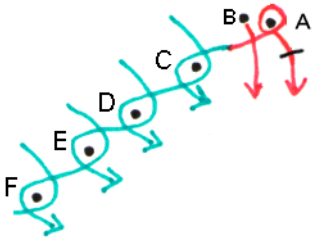


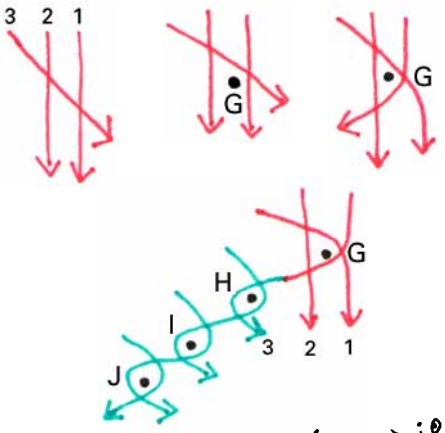

1. Twist both pairs at A, work a *cloth st & twist* stitch and twist the right-hand pair once more (1 line = 1 thread).

**NB** In the coloured diagrams below 1 line = 1 pair, red lines crossing = *cloth st & tw*, green lines crossing = *half st*

2. Leaving the right-hand pair, work the left-hand pair through the passive pair on B (the coloured pair) in cloth stitch and twist stitch, then work a ground stitch (half stitch, pin, half stitch) at C with the pair from X.

3. Release and gently pull down the pair from X. Hang another pair on X and use it and the left-hand pair from C to work a ground stitch at D. Release the pair at X, hang on a new pair and work a ground stitch at D. Continue in this way working ground stitches at E and F.

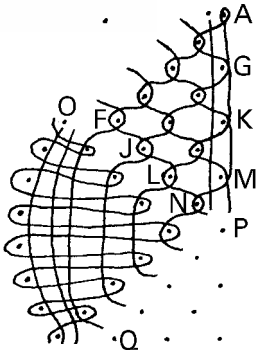



4. Return to the footside and use the third pair from the right (the pair at C) to work the next footside pin — work *cloth st & twist* with the passive pair and then the edge pair, twist the pair on the right once more, place pin G inside the two right-hand pairs (i.e. to their left). Leave the outside pair, work back through the passive pair in *cloth st & twist*, then work ground stitches at the next three pins H, I and J.

5. Return to the footside and use the third pair from the right to work the next footside pin at K, followed by two ground stitches finishing at L (as in 4 above).

6. Finally work footside pin M followed by a ground stitch at N. All the pairs from the ground needed to work the fan are now in place.




7. Hang the remaining three pairs on O with the coloured weaver pair at the left. Using the weaver pair work cloth stitch through the two other pairs at O and the pair at F, twist the weaver pair once, place pin under it and work back to the outside edge in cloth stitch, twist weaver pair twice. Place pin under weaver pair and work back through three pairs and the pair at J, twist weaver pair once, place pin and work back to the edge, twist weaver twice and place pin. Continue like this working one more pair before each inner pin until the pair at N has been worked. Continue with the fan but now leaving one pair at each inner pin ready to work the next area of ground and footside. Twist each of the four pairs left out of the fan once and start by working footside pin P followed by a line of ground stitches finishing at Q.

# Torchon Fan Edging with a Corner

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Add corners to the fan edging to work an edging for a lavender bag, pincushion, photograph frame or handkerchief — the number of fans on each side will determine the finished size. Work the fans in cloth stitch as in the previous sample or in cloth stitch or half stitch with a cloth stitch and twist edge as shown below. Before pinning the pricking to your pillow think about where the bobbins will be as you work round the edging. It's difficult to work if they're hanging over the edge of the pillow!

1. Start with a fan — preferably near one corner rather than in the middle of one side. Once the fan is completed use the remaining 3 pairs to start the footside at A, then work the first triangle of ground. After completing the last fan of the first side, check that all the pin-holes above the line shown in diagram 1 (left) have been worked.

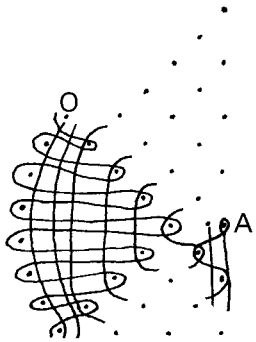
2. Work pin Y between the fans to bring the weaver into position for the first fan of the second side — take the weaver through two passive pairs, twist it once, place pin Y and work back to the outer edge. Twist each of the four pairs left out of the fan once.

3. Turn the pillow and the cover cloth through 90˚ and work the first fan of the second side — diagram 2.

4. When the fan is complete, work a ground stitch at T with the pairs from R and S, followed by a line of ground stitches to U. Work the footside pin V as usual (using the third pair from the right) followed by ground stitches to W.

5. Continue working the footside and ground until all the pairs needed to work the next fan are in place, then work the next fan — diagram 3.

While working the lace you should leave pins in the first two repeats (unless using a pillow with movable blocks) and at the footside and headside, but you can remove the pins down the centre of the lace as long as you leave pins for about two inches behind where you are currently working. Towards the end, and probably earlier if you are working a small square of lace for a lavender bag, you will need to push down the pins and cover the lace with clear plastic or a cloth so that the threads do not catch on the pin heads.



Starting with a fan

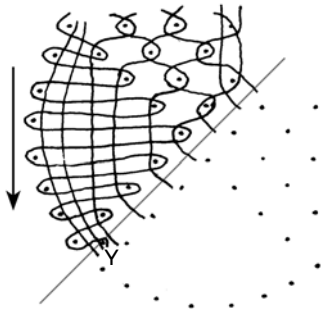


Diagram 1

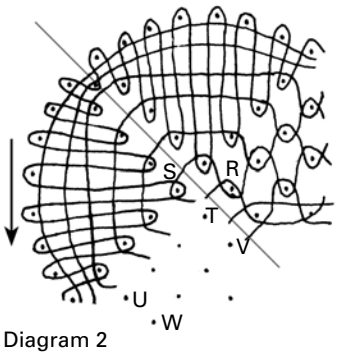


Diagram 2

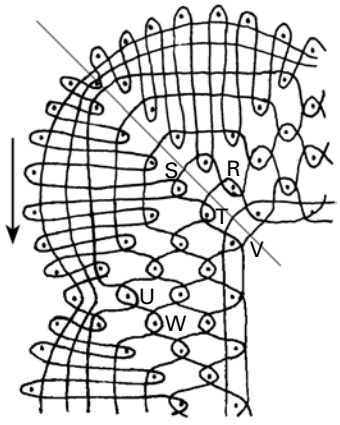
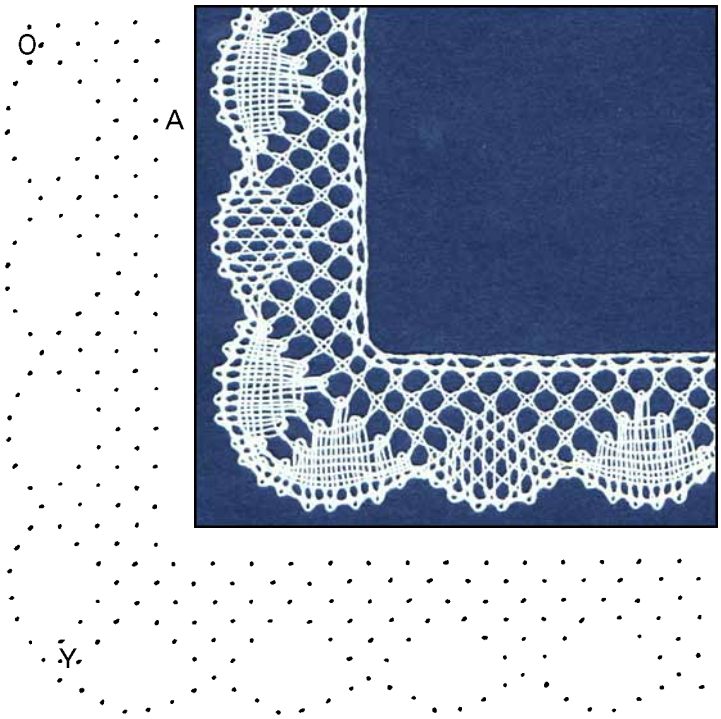


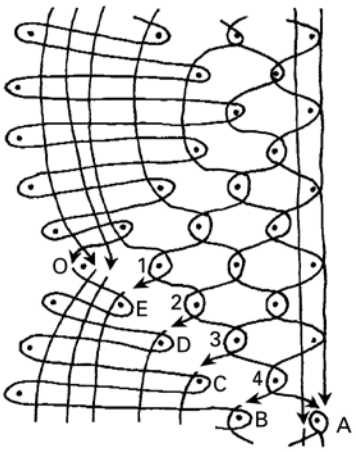
Diagram 3



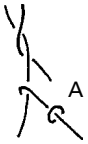
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## Joining lace end to beginning

When you have worked the last section of ground you should have three pairs hanging to the right of pin 4 — the passive footside pair, the pair from 4 which has just worked cl st and tw with this passive pair, and the edge pair. There should be one pair hanging from each of pins 1, 2, 3 and 4 and three pairs near pin *O* — the two passive fan pairs and the fan weaver. To join the lace each pair is 'sewn' to the start at the place where it would have worked if the lace had been continued. You will need either a fine crochet hook (0.6mm) or a Lazy Susan (see below).




1. At *A* sew in the edge pair (twisted twice) and the pair from 4 (twisted once).



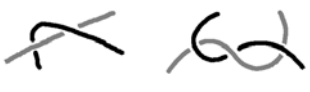

1. Remove pin at A. Using a fine crochet hook (or Lazy Susan) pull left-hand thread of pair through pin-hole loop A.



2. Pass the other bobbin of pair through the loop formed, then pull both bobbins gently to tighten the join. Replace pin.

   Taking the *left-hand* thread of the pair is important — if you take the right-hand one instead a twist will disappear.
2. The passive pair is sewn into the loop which was supported on a pin behind *A*.
3. Sew in the pair from 4 at *B*, from 3 at *C*, from 2 at *D* and from 1 at *E*. These pairs should all be twisted once.
4. Sew in the remaining two passive pairs (untwisted) and the weaver (twisted twice) at *O*. When you remove the pin you should find three loops — one for each pair.

Once all the sewings have been made, tie each pair of threads with a reef knot.



Reef knot part 1: Right over left, under and up. Pull tight.



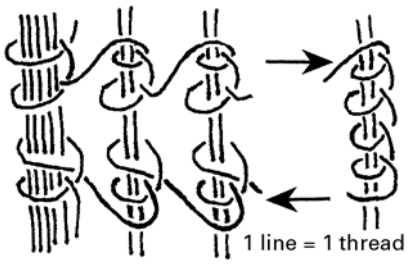
Reef knot part 2: Left over right, under and up. Pull tight. The knot should lie flat.

At this stage please do not just cut the threads close to the knots as the short ends will almost certainly stick out and look untidy and could also easily come undone. Instead the threads can be tidied away in various ways:

1. If the lace is to be mounted on card or fabric, cut off the bobbins leaving ends long enough to thread in a needle, and sew the ends through the backing.
2. Cut off the bobbins, thread the ends in a needle and darn them into the lace following the path of the bobbin threads.
3. Tie the ends into bundles with a series of hitches and fasten each bundle to the lace with a couple of stiches using the thread that made the hitches. (I find that this is best done with the bobbins still attached.)
4. Where several pairs finish over an area of cloth stitch e.g. at the edge of a fan as here, work from left to right using one thread to make two hitches first around the other threads at O, then around each pair in turn, and then work from right to left doing the same. Make a couple of extra hitches in the opposite direction and cut off all the bobbins.



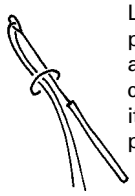
Fastening a bundle of threads with a series of hitches



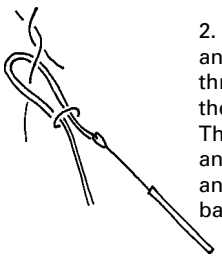

Finishing by using one thread to make hitches around the pairs sewn into the cloth-stitch fan

## Using a Lazy Susan instead of a crochet hook

A Lazy Susan, a flexible needle with its point fastened into a handle, can also be used for sewings.



1. Thread the Lazy Susan, preferably with a contrasting colour, and push it through the pin-hole or loop.

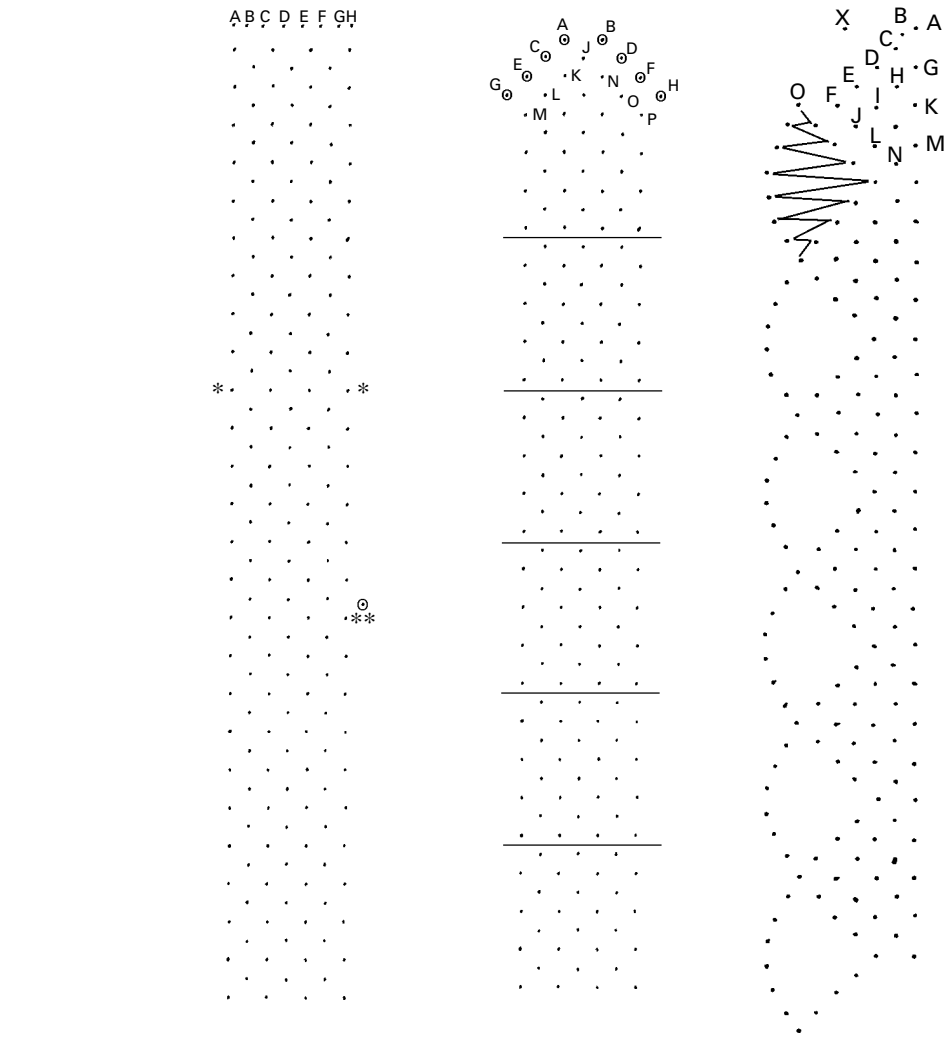


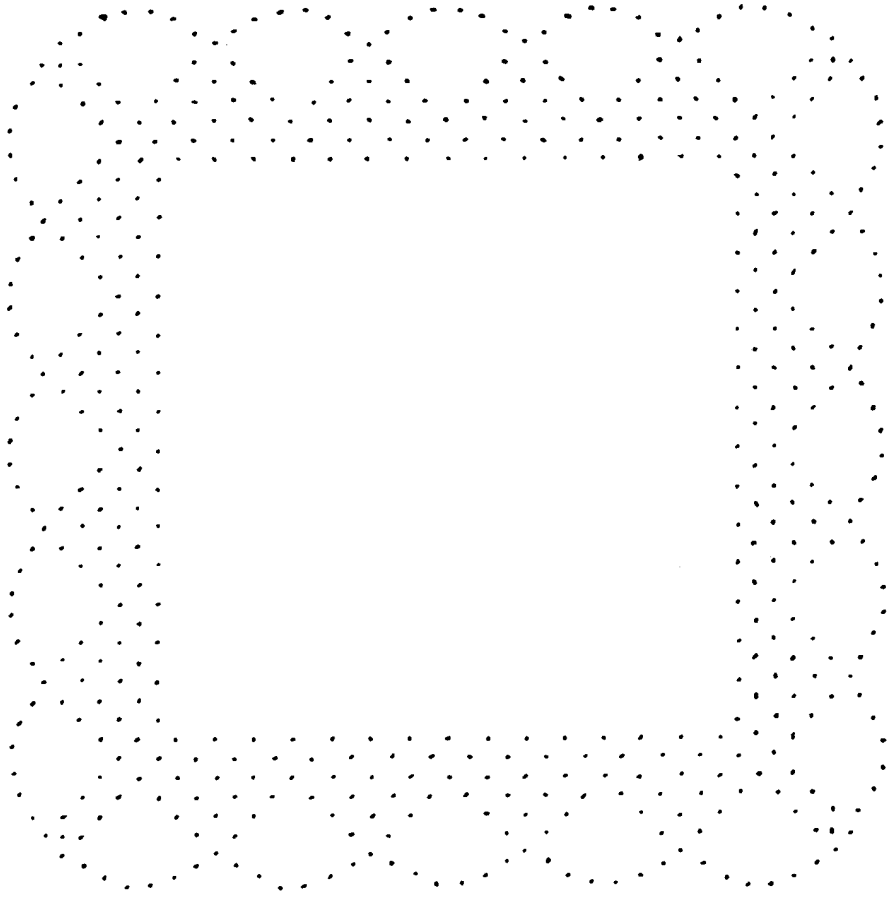
2. Pull the Lazy Susan back and pass the left-hand thread of the pair through the loop it leaves behind. Then hold the Lazy Susan and the ends of its thread and pull the bobbin thread back through the pin-hole.



3. Remove the Lazy Susan and pass the other bobbin of the pair through the loop formed, then pull both bobbins gently to tighten the join. Replace pin.

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This line should be 10 cm long — if it isn't the prickings are the wrong size