

# Basic Punch Needle Instructions:

- Prepare Fabric: Stretch monk's cloth or similar open-weave fabric tightly in an embroidery hoop or frame. It must be very taut.
  - If it's not staying taut, use fabric stripes to wrap around the hoop and then put your monks cloth on and it should act like a grip for the fabric
- If you wish to have a pre-drawn design, now is the time to draw a design on the fabric (use a reverse image if you want the loopy side to be the front). If you're going to finish with glue, it will remoisten the marker, so use a permanent marker or pencil so it won't bleed onto the yarn (though if it's a dark yarn, it won't be seen!).
  - Round and geometric shapes will be easier to start with, as detail is a bit more advanced
- Thread the Needle: Insert the wire threader through the tip of the needle and all the way down to the base. Place the yarn through the wire loop and pull it back through until you have the end back out. Then, thread the yarn through the eye of the needle, going through the curved side and leaving a short tail outside of the needle hole. Adjust the amount of yarn to be just a few inches long
- Punch Technique:
  - Holding the punch needle like a pencil in your hand, adjust so that the yarn coming out the bottom of the tool (which is facing you now, since the tip will be inserted in to the fabric) and allow the string to go over your hand so you can ensure the tension is loose enough to move forward and that you have plenty of slack.
  - Push the needle fully into the fabric until the handle touches it.
    - On your first stitch, pull the thread all the way through so there is a tail (the first stitch of any new year, is the ONLY time you'll do that).
  - Pull back up slowly, keeping the tip close to the surface.
  - Move forward (gliding along the cloth) less than a millimeter and not more than a stitch length and repeat. Always make sure the needle's scooped-out side of the tool faces the direction you are moving. The length of your stitch should be short, and you'll start to notice what looks best for the design you have created what looks best. If you don't like how it looks, you can always pull it out and start again!

- Tip: Outline the area you'll be working within - then fill it in either in rows or in a circular fashion.
- Managing Yarn: Keep the yarn feed loose, as tension will cause loops to pop out.
- Finishing: When changing colors or finishing, pull the needle out, snip the yarn, and push the end to the back. There's an option to glue the back to secure stitches. Or to close the fabric around the back!
- Loop Side vs. Flat Side: The side with the loops is generally the "right" side, but flat stitches can be used for a different texture.
- Density: Punch closely to avoid gaps.
- Turning Corners: Keep the needle down in the fabric when turning a corner to maintain stitch consistency.

If you need to go back, just pull the thread out ,and you can start a design over

Common mistakes:

1. Prep your hoop by making sure the closure is SUPER tight, and the cloth is tight - like a drum! It will help your loops stay even.
2. Make sure you have plenty of yarn that has slack - if there isn't slack it will pull out the stitches. Make sure you have plenty of yarn hanging/unraveled or taken off the ball so that it can pull from the loose yarn. This can also happen if you're leaning on the yarn.
3. Keep the tip of your punch needle touching the fabric between each stitch. Do not pull it up and out. Just up, across, and down.
4. Push your needle into the fabric ALL the way on EVERY stitch
5. Make sure to rotate the needle in the direction you are punching.

## **History of punch needle resources**

1. Lost in the Fray: Unraveling the History of Punch Needle - punch needle world

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQyrHOQMACs>

2. History of punch needles

<https://www.sister-mag.com/en/magazine/sistermag-no-61-may-2021/the-history-of-punch-needle/>

3. Sheldon museum: Punch needle rug hooking and vermont roots

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1sXBYFTy5w>