

Advanced Framing Up

Diploma Course



You will need:

- Slate Frame & Split Pins
- Pencil
- Tape measure
- Base Fabric (Calico)
- Sharp needles (size 5 or 7)
- Fabric Scissors
- Bracing Needle
- Ball of Cotton string
- Acid Free Tissue

Framing Up Fabric using the string method in a Slate Frame

The string method is an alternative way of framing up offering the following advantages:

- You will be able to make your fabric tighter in the frame.
- Achieve better tension and accuracy when stitching.
- Recommended for heavily stitched embroidery such as Goldwork and Silk Shading.



Preparing the frame

Step 1

Measure each roller from the inside edge of the large holes and mark the centre of the webbing with a pencil.

TIP: The reason for measuring from the holes is because you cannot always rely on the webbing having been applied centrally. It is important to get this measurement accurate to ensure fabric will be placed straight in the frame.

Preparing the fabric

Step 2

Chose your piece of base fabric for framing up and cut it out along the grain of the fabric.

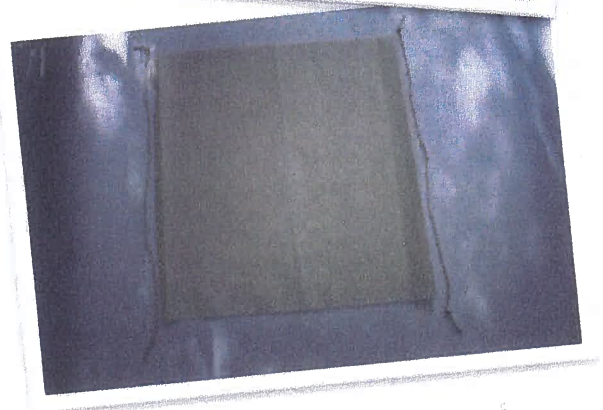
TIP: Don't worry if it does not look square, if you cut it accurately along the grain line of the fabric, it will be forced true once applied into the frame.

Step 3

Decide on the direction and orientation you wish the fabric to be. The top and the bottom of the fabric will be attached to the rollers. And the sides will be stretched with string. Working from the middle of the edges out ward, fold the side edges of the fabric under itself by pinch creasing 1.5cm (1/2in) along the grain line. Repeat along the opposite side edge.

Step 4

Cut two identical lengths of cotton string about 10cm longer than the height of the base fabric and tie a knot in the end of each length



Step 5

Place each length of cotton string into the crease of each fold and pin the two layers of fabric together to hold the string in place.

TIP: The knots you tied on each end of the string are to stop the string being pulled through the fabric tube.



Step 6

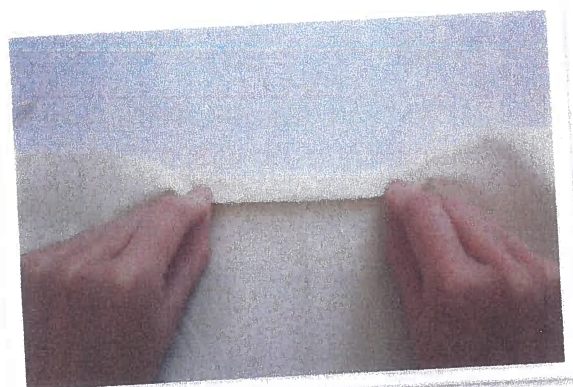
Thread a size 5 or 7 sharp needle with buttonhole thread and stitch a back stitch through both layers of the fabric close to the string trapping it between the layers of fabric.

Repeat on the other side of your base fabric using the other piece of string



Step 7

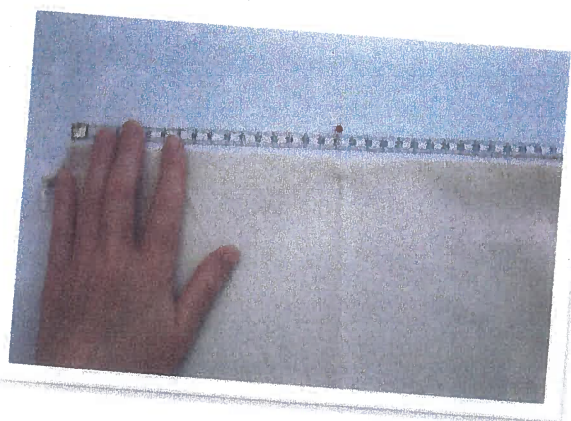
Fold a 1.5cm (1/2in) turning along the unstitched edges. Working from the middle of the edges out ward, fold the top edge of the fabric under itself by pinch creasing 1.5cm (1/2in) along the grain line. Repeat along the bottom edge.



Step 8

Measure along the crease to find the centre of the top folded edge and mark it with a pin. Use a second pin to follow the centre grain line southward to the bottom folded edge and mark the centre with the pin.

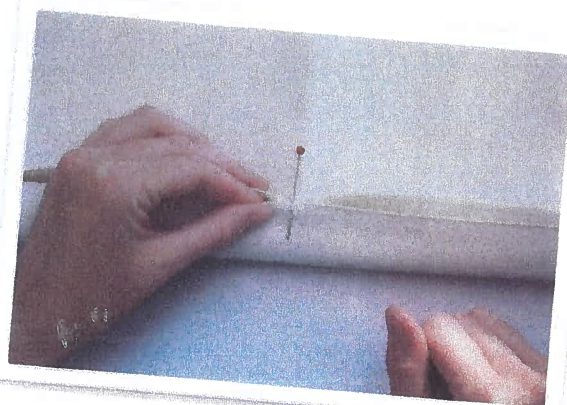
TIP: Use the line between the two pins to centre your work in case the fabric has not been cut truly on the grain.



Attaching the Fabric to the Frame

Step 9

Match up the centre of the folded edge with the point marked earlier on the webbing and pin the centre points together. Working from the middle out ward, pin the fabric edge to the webbing sandwiching the 1.5cm (1/2in) length between the webbing and the rest of the fabric. Repeat on opposite end.



Step 10

Thread a size 5 or 7 sharp needle with buttonhole thread and tie a knot in one end. Remove the central pin from the roller closest to you and take your needle through the webbing to the front, hiding the end knot between the webbing and the fabric.



Step 11

Take the needle through the fabric and the webbing from the back to the front slightly left of the centre point, repeat slightly right of the centre point and this will produce a small oversewn cross to secure your thread.



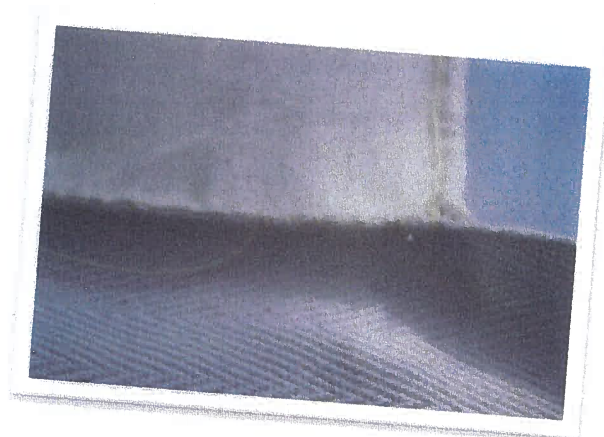
Step 12

Oversew the fabric and webbing continuing to work to the right removing the pins as you go.

TIP: When applying a densely woven fabric keep stitches 2 to 3 mm apart and no more than 4mm deep, but if using a canvas or an evenweave fabric, you should use larger and more varied length of stitches so that the buttonhole is not securing the fabric along the same grain as it may detach once stretched.

Step 13

Once you reach the right side of the fabric edge oversew from right to left working back over your stitches for about 2.5cm (1in) then stitch two small holding stitches and cut your thread.



Step 14

Repeat steps 11 to 13 working along the edge in the opposite direction from the centre to the left hand side.



Step 15

Turn the frame around bringing the top roller closer to you and repeat steps 9 to 14.

Preparation for stretching the Fabric

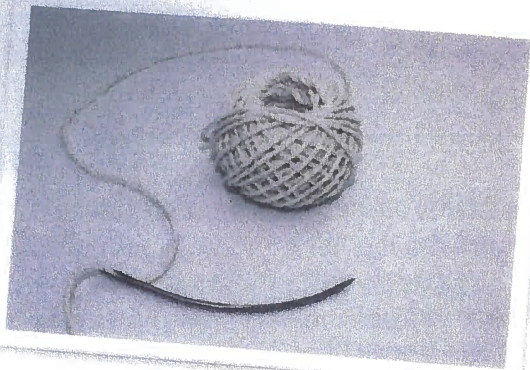


Step 16

Insert the stretcher into each side of the rollers and use the split pins in the small holes in the stretcher to keep the rollers away from each other.

TIP: The idea is to keep the fabric taut by gradually increasing the distance between the pegs on alternate stretchers.

In case the holes for split pins have not been drilled accurately, it is a good idea to double check the distance between the rollers on each side with a tape measure.



Step 17

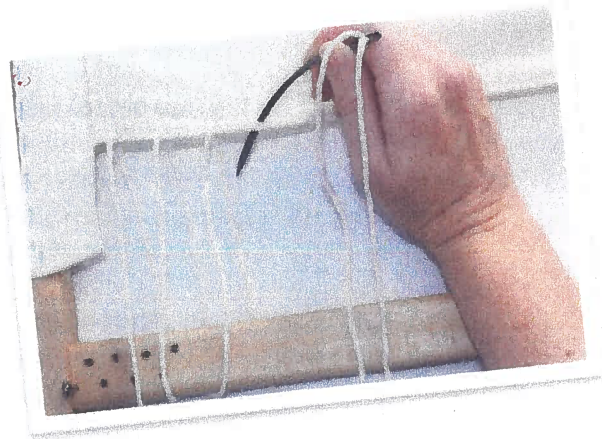
Thread a Bracing needle with one end of a ball of string.

TIP: Be very careful, new Bracing needles can be extremely sharp and you want to avoid getting blood on your clean fabric.

Step 18

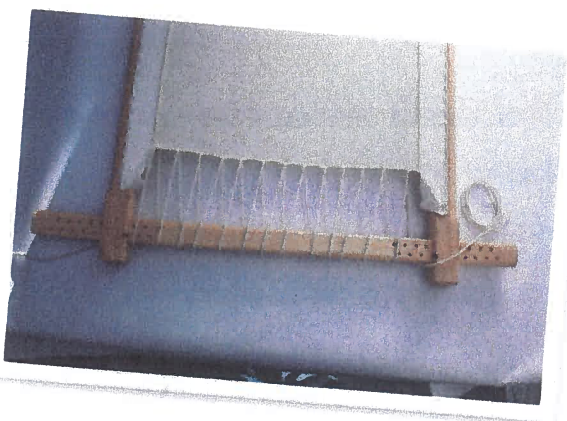
Take the sharp end of the Bracing needle down through the Calico base fabric, just inside the back stitch that holds the string in place. Pull through a good length of string. Take the bracing needle underneath and up around the stretcher and back through the Calico at 2.5cm (1in) intervals.

TIP: This may also be a good time to move from your table workspace to your trestle.



Step 19

Leave a good length of string at each end before cutting and repeat on the other side.

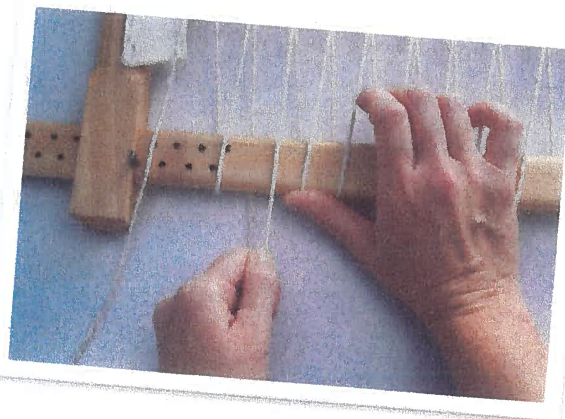


Stretching the Fabric in the Frame

Step 20

Starting from one side of the stretcher work along the stretcher pulling each loop of the cotton string against the stretcher. Use the thumb of your opposite hand to hold the string taut as you pull the following loop. Work each side and secure the string with a slip knot, before working the opposite side.

TIP: Work each side of the frame gradually to avoid pulling the fabric off centre until the fabric feels firm in the frame.



Step 21

Stand the frame upright on the floor and use the sole of your shoe to push down the bottom roller whilst you gradually increase the distance between the split pins to tighten the fabric.

TIP: The split pins positions in the stretcher holes should be mirrored on the opposite side of the frame. Check that the fabric is tight in the frame by lightly banging on the fabric with your hand, it should sound and feel as tight as a drum.

Cover fabric with Acid free tissue.

Check list

- Is the fabric inserted straight in the frame?
- Is the fabric stretched equally on both sides?
- Are the peg placements mirrored on the opposite stretcher?
- Is the fabric under enough tension?

