

FAQ'S... Fiberella responds to frequently asked questions:

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Q: How does machine needle felting work and what do you love about it?

&A: How machine needle felting works is mostly about the needles. The needles on Baby Lock's Embellisher, Bernina's Decorative Needle Punch Accessory, the Brother Felting Attachment, and The Pierrot from Embroidery Source are all designed to basically do the same thing. They have little barbs or hooks with soft shoulders above the hooks (I think of the tiny hooks on a crab's leg). As these needles travel down through layers of fiber, fabric, yarn, etc., they pull fiber from the top layer(s) and move some of this material down through, underneath the bottom layer.

It's soft and fuzzy-looking underneath, a more blurred coloration emerging there. There is no right or wrong side; it just depends on the effects you are after. Crisper shapes are achieved by adding materials (ones that don't distort as much) to the layer that will be the "top" in your finished piece. I often reverse the fiber/fabric "sandwich" many times in the creative process.

Unlike traditional felting, there's no smooshing or rolling or pounding ... but yes, you do get "felt." It's a dry process, but in some sense has the spontaneity of liquids, at least when it comes to color mixing.

Here's the thing that turns me on so much.... You can create new colors and textures simultaneously! It's right-brained fabric making. No warp, no weft, no particular sequence of assembly required. It's more like fiber-felted collage, with the additional fun of seeming as pliant as polymer clay; I can build felt in layers, cutting, reassembling, etc. My creative life hasn't been the same since this way of working has been added to my palette. Secretly, I think it's what I had been waiting for...

Q: How durable is machine needle felting?

A Tale of Three Fabrics...





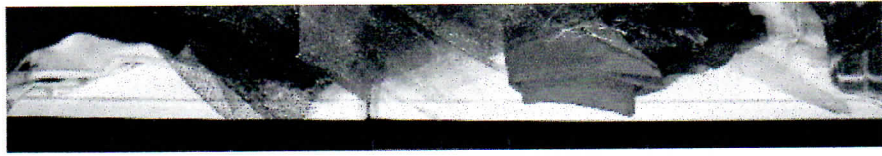
&A: From machine washable,
to hand washable
to that which probably shouldn't be washed (gallery work, art work of many types)
to what I could vacuum lightly through a screen without damage
to where gentle pulling may cause materials to fall apart, meaning perhaps...
.....oh please put me under glass.

Some of my wall pieces are designed to be hand washable. My purses are recommended for either hand wash or gentle machine wash, depending on my choice of ingredients and whether I have added any stitching to some of the less willing materials. My clothing trims are very durable for wash and dry or are removable for separate hand washing. Lots of things I machine needle felt can stand up to gentle machine washing, including some kid-friendly materials (for kids to create with or to wear). But not all fiber and textile art needs to withstand washing. I would ask myself, what is necessary to maintain the beauty of this creation based on its purpose? Will it be handled? Is it archival? etc...

The Tale: I'm reminded of a piece I had barely begun that was accidentally vacuumed during a rare and sudden burst of domestic activity. It went through the central vac system in my house, was rescued from the can in my garage and promptly tossed into the washer. The bond was untouched... I can't pull them apart ...two polyester sheers and a piece of linen!

Q: Do all materials need to be felt in order to be used in machine needle felting?
The Willing & the Unwilling





&A: Some of the materials must felt, but you can combine some of the unwilling with the willing!

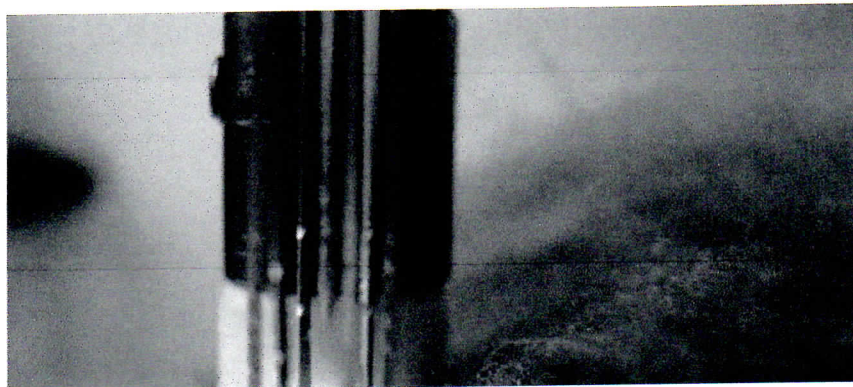
To discover the potential of various materials, test 'em out! Both fiber content and weave structure have an effect on the felt-ability of materials. There are some differences in the way the various manufacturers' needles work. In general, materials from animals are most likely to felt. Plant based materials offer some great possibilities, and some synthetics may surprise you. Metallics and ultrasuede don't felt at all.... but you can combine them effectively with materials that are highly willing to felt.

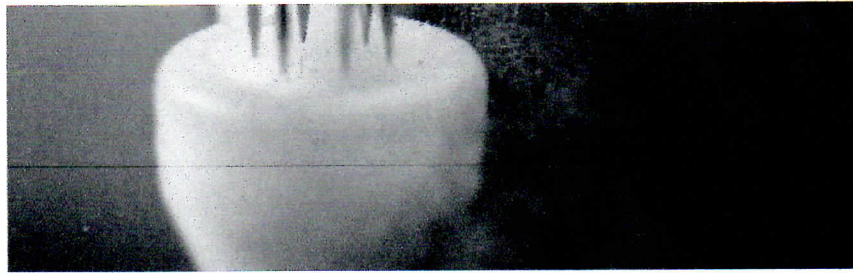
It's fun to learn more about the characteristics of the materials you would like to work with. You'll soon find that, similar to the way different pigments in watercolor possess various innate traits (more or less opaque, willing to granulate, different degrees of light fastness, etc), you'll be able to recognize and expect somewhat predictable behavior from certain materials. Most have characteristic ways of responding to machine needle felting. Again... the different manufacturers have used differed cuts and placements of cuts on their needles, so this will vary some with brands of felting needles.

Here's what I recommend to learn about your materials and to aim for the level of durability you desire for your project:

1. Test materials to rate how well they will felt to themselves. Pair extremes, using more of the willing.
2. Select materials based on the degree of wash ability you require for your project. All willing is the most washable.
3. Combine the willing and the unwilling; proportion is key! The willing will need to dominate in your combinations.
4. When in doubt, reverse the sandwich while working. This is more likely to drive the willing into the unwilling in as many ways as possible. Remember, the unwilling doesn't move.
5. Toss in the added option of free motion stitching here and there. The crispness of line quality this offers is like having a nice sharp pencil where you need one. You can define details while adding strength to areas that require it.

Q: How can I avoid needle breakage on the new Janome Xpression, Baby Lock's Embellisher, The Pierrot from Embroidery Source, Bernina's Needle Punch Accessory and Brother's Feltscaper?





&A: If you are an adventurer creating wild and wooly, natural and synthetic felting experiments, you are tempting a bent or broken needle. Discovery is worth it, but after a while I learned that it is possible to be excited, thrilled, exhilarated... and save needles all at the same time.

Here are some tips for avoiding breakage with all needle felting equipment: Turn the hand wheel toward you to lower the needles into the fabric before stepping on the pedal. Begin learning with a slow to moderate motor speed. Use moderate speed for most textile combinations; employ full speed only with highly felt-able materials and in thin layers!

Just like with free-motion stitching, developing a rhythm is helpful. Listen for a consistent motor speed and then aim for a smooth and consistent speed to move the fabric around. Try to avoid tugging on the fabric with jerky motions. Smoothly changing the direction of the fabric is good. Get familiar with speeds other than full throttle. Brick-on-the-pedal as a constant speed is tough on needles.

The thicker and/or denser the sandwich, the more likely you will begin to break or bend needles. To test, turn the hand wheel toward you, carefully lowering the needles into the sandwich. If the needles won't go through with hand cranking IT'S TOO DENSE, so I will extend congratulations because you have found your limit. You are all done with that, experiment! If on the other hand, the needles do move through the sandwich, do this by hand a couple of times and it will soften up the sandwich enough to run the motor on that area. Be aware that some synthetics, like polyester sheers, can become very dense and hard when felted, causing a tendency toward needle breakage.

If you are using unspun fibers, make sure that they are not being caught on top of, looping around and over the cloth presser foot or the foot that comes with your attachment. I like to pat the fibers down. I spread my hands on both sides of the needles and use them to prevent the roving from jumping up.

Periodically empty out the lint compartments on needle felting machines. Carefully clean out around the bobbin areas (easy enough to do) when using the Bernina or Brother. The mini vacuum attachments for your home vacuum are great for the occasional cleaning of all of the equipment in your sewing room.

To avoid needle breakage on the Embellisher: In addition to the tips mentioned above, always lower the cloth presser foot lever and then adjust the cloth presser foot adjustment knob. Select a height that allows your fabric sandwich to glide with ease. Be careful not to allow excess ease or vertical space, or the fabric/fiber sandwich will flop up and down while working. Flopping breaks needles.

The most important new thing I have discovered about needle breakage and The Embellisher has to do with the exact placement of the brass barrel, or needle clamp, as you reinstall it on your machine. Scroll down to the next Q & A for details.

Q: How does Fiberella replace needles?

&A: **To replace needles** on The Embellisher I don't exactly follow the method in the instruction manual. In print this looks like a great deal of info. Actually it's very simple to do and doesn't take but a minute.

I turn off the machine, turning the hand wheel toward me to lower the needles. Then I lower the cloth presser lever, and

also turn the cloth presser knob clockwise to the lowest position. I then remove the entire head without having to bend my head or slump in the chair to see it. Get the larger of the two allen wrenches. Loosen the brass barrel or needle clamp by turning the set screw with the red dot to the left. (This will make a really hard snap noise the very first time). When it's loose I let the needle clamp gently glide down into the throat plate. Then I carefully lift it straight up and, just before it reaches the top, I angle the entire head just a bit to remove it. If you angle too abruptly, or before you have lifted straight up, you can bend the needle tips... so move slowly and watch carefully as you do this. Practice a few times and it will be easy. And by the way, be careful not to drop this puppy on your foot! (How do I know this...)?

To loosen the individual needles, use the smaller allen wrench Baby Lock has provided. Turn the set screws three full turns to the left before removing or inserting needles. (Careful... six full turns and you may be down crawling through the carpet searching for the little set screw that holds the needles in place). As I insert the new needles, I tap the tip of each one very lightly with my fingertip. I watch to see that the needle has fully dropped in before tightening it back up.

The middle one is supposed to look lower on the clamp. Sometimes I use the tweezers to gently tap that one into place. Tighten firmly to the right making sure all needles have been properly secured.

New Important Info!

Watch out for this as you reinstall the barrel on The Embellisher. YOU MAY SAVE NEEDLES!

1. Be sure that the cloth presser ring is still all of the way down (lever on the back of the machine is lowered and the cloth presser height adjustment knob on top of the machine turned clockwise as far as it will go). The shaft that holds the barrel should be all the way up for clearance. Adjust with the hand wheel if necessary.
2. Use the red dots as a general visual guide and carefully angle and then lower the brass barrel back into place. Let it drop gently, coming to rest on top of the cloth presser ring.
3. Use the hand wheel to lower the shaft down toward the barrel. It will stop just above the barrel.
3. RAISE THE CLOTH PRESSER RING so that the barrel slides up onto the shaft and more importantly, so that you can see the openings in the throat plate. Note: You will still need to hold the brass barrel vertically in its highest position as you tighten the set screw.
4. Insert the larger of the two allen tools into the set screw marked with red.
5. HERE'S THE TRICK! BEFORE you tighten this set screw, rotate the brass barrel just a bit both clockwise and counter clockwise and observe where the needles are with respect to the openings in the throat plate. Are they nearly hitting along one edge, or are they centered? Tighten the set screw so that the needles tips are dead center on the opening in the throat plate. Otherwise one wrong tug on the fabric, which can cause a slight bend to the needles, and you will have spiraled and broken needles. Much better to have some extra room around the needles!

&A: To replace needles on Bernina's Needle Punch Accessory is very simple. As always, first turn off your machine. No more wrenches for the updated attachment! It's easy to remove the needle assembly and simply loosen one screw which will let you replace any or all needles. This is fast and easy to do. A big perk to the Bernina equipment is that you will break fewer needles with the one large opening in the throat plate.

&A: To replace needles on Brother's Felting attachment, turn off your machine. Remove the plexiglass guard and foot with the turn of one screw. Then loosen a second screw to replace the entire needle clamp unit. On the Brother, all of the needles are replaced as a unit. Their five needle design is very closely spaced. The tight configuration of the needles with a single hole in the throat plate seems to make them less susceptible to breaking. In the rare event that you should bend or break a needle, you might try to cut the bent or broken needle off so you can continue using the remaining needles without a blunt end making contact with the fabric. With 1500 stitches per minute you can easily cover a great deal of ground quickly.

&A: To replace needles on Janome's Xpression machine, it's easy. Turn off your machine, use the allen key provided in the free arm of your machine. On the right of the barrel clamp lefty-loosen the set screw. Notice the position of the flat side as you remove the old clamp. Insert the new one the same way; tighten and you're done.

of the hat size as you remove the old clamp. Insert the new one the same way, tighten and you're done.

&A: To replace needles on The Pierrot from Embroidery Source turn off your machine and simply loosen a knob to remove the brass needle clamp. Use the allen wrench to loosen the fixing screws and replace any needles individually. It's easy.

Q: What are some things to consider as I get ready to purchase equipment?

&A: Consider features, your budget and... dealer/manufacture support. A Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price or MSRP* is generally higher than what you are likely to pay; prices will vary from place to place. As you compare costs, don't overlook the importance of working with a dealer/manufacture you are comfortable with. Support is extremely important... a lesson that will come home to you the first time you really need their help. The warranty is definitely something to ask about. I know it's difficult to imagine which features you might want most, especially when you are not sure yet of what kinds of projects you would want to do with machine needle felting. Here are a few things to consider. *NOTE: All MSRPs were verified with the manufacturers on June 9th & 10th, 2005.

Stand-alone machines are nice because you can create a spot just for your felting activity. Or if you have a second sewing machine you can do the same thing with an accessory. What's one more machine! They don't take up much space, are quite portable and nothing needs to be set up or taken down whenever you wish to machine needle felt. Sometimes, especially on landscapes, I enjoy the layering of effects, going back and forth from machine needle felting, to stitching free-motion line and then back to felting, all without set up or break down of equipment. I enjoy having it near a sewing machine I love to free-motion on.

Pfaff and Husqvarna: I've sat only briefly with the Pfaff/ Husqvarna machine. Needles are individually replaceable, with five in all. Nice fit and finish. Large foot print to the foot; its height is adjustable. Competitively priced, it makes another nice addition to the marketplace. Current MSRP (May 2007) is \$349.

Janome's Xpression: This wonderful new addition to the ever growing array of felting equipment sports five needles of a terrific gauge for fast felting. Needles are permanently mounted in an easy-to-replace head. Replacement cost for needles will likely be as competitive as the cost of the machine. MSRP is \$399 for the machine. Great fit and finish, a pedal that almost feels like it has needle up and down and a lint/broken-needle-tip safety guard that's easy to see through. The foot is large, has an adjustment knob on the back and protects your fingers well. Motor speed is very good

Individual holes in the throat plate prevent material from being stuffed into them. This machine is a huge bang for the buck. Head room is very slightly smaller than other stand alone equipment. Introductory DVD included. Don't miss the additional DVD (available through any Janome dealer) called "Janome Creative Series *Artistic Xpression* DVD."

Baby Lock: The Embellisher had an original MSRP of \$1,099. As of summer 2006 it has been reduced to \$899. Dealer prices vary (sometimes considerably) as the selection of machine needle felting equipment continues to expand. The Baby Lock machine exclusively offers seven needles for machine needle felting and has a throat plate designed with seven small holes. Why does that matter? Seven needles will cover more ground more quickly and the seven holed throat plate prevents fabric confetti and other materials from being pushed down into a single larger opening. BL's adjustable cloth presser ring keeps your fingertips well protected (providing you adjust the height as needed which is simple and easy to do with their convenient up-top knob). It effectively prevents materials from flopping (a cause of needle breakage). It is also easily navigates in and around a variety of surface heights and textures. For example, the small size of the foot allows you to adjust to a specific low relief region, even when surrounding areas are much higher in elevation. Since this foot has a bottom or sole (with matching holes for the needles), small confetti bits do not skewer up the needles. Beware of slightly bent needles... there isn't much tolerance or room in these holes or those in the throat plate. Visibility with the Baby Lock is excellent. You can reduce the risk of needle breakage in The Embellisher by carefully installing the brass barrel each time, making sure that the needles are hitting dead center in the throat plate holes (the tolerance or spacing is adequate but specific). Baby Lock's individually replaceable needles are terrific for a wide range of felting activities. The machine is quiet and pleasant to work with. (More information on needles is provided below). Baby Lock's Embellisher has very good motor speed.

Embroidery Source: The Pierrot has an MSRP of \$750 (AU). At current exchange rates, that is the equivalent of US \$600 including shipping to the US. The Pierrot's five needle approach features a single large opening in the throat plate

(as does Bernina and Brother); the extra clearance typically found in the single hole approach allows more room around the needles as they enter the throat plate. This contributes to a reduced risk of needle breakage. The Pierrot's plexiglass shield/foot easily attaches and provides good visibility and an extra layer of protection from lint or broken needles. The Pierrot has a roomy flat bed area with an ultra smooth, very nice fit and finish to the working surface area. Also known as the SP1000 and Nancy's Fab Felter.

The Embellisher and The Pierrot have roughly the same size opening to accommodate your projects. They weigh between 12 and 13 pounds and are both sturdy yet portable. They both have lint chambers that are easy to access and clean.

Attachments offer the possibility of pairing needle felting with another machine you desire, maximizing your sewing pleasure for the dollars spent. They are a terrific option to consider when they fit a machine you would also really like to have. There are quite a few choices! It takes only a minute to clean around the bobbin area after felting. It's really no biggie. The new improved Bernina Needle Punch Accessory Set is a breeze to set up and to remove. If you have more than one sewing machine it's also wonderful to set up and use next to your favorite free-motion equipment (or easy enough to switch back and forth on the Bernina). Having equipment side-by-side makes layering stitched lines and felting very convenient. It's also fun to add decorative stitches and even embroidery to the softer visual effects possible with felting.

The two companies that currently offer a needle felting accessory or attachment are:

Bernina: Bernina has many fine sewing machines (all CB Hook style) compatible with the Bernina Decorative Punch Accessory Set. These include six in the Activa line, the 125, 135 & 145 (all retired) and the 220, 230 and 240. In the Aurora line (with BSR stitch regulator), the accessory set fits the 430, 440 and 630. Bernina's Artista 165 and the 170 will also work with this accessory. Basically, any of their CB Hook style machines could work, but these are the models Bernina is making the customized throat plates for. The customized throat plate comes with the set and has a large hole to accommodate the circle of felting needles. Be sure your dealer knows which machine you plan to use it on. MSRP's on the CB Hook style sewing machines range from \$599 - \$3,999. The MSRP on the Bernina attachment is \$149.95. I have found it extremely easy to clean the machine after felting. As an added and welcome perk, needle up and needle down plus a knee lift are available on Bernina machines. The motor speed is excellent. To prevent "flagging" or having fabric bits running up the needles while working with confetti techniques: Hold tulle over the bits while felting and then simply pull off the tulle. The tulle doesn't felt. Be sure to keep fingers well clear of the opening on the right side of the foot. Bernina has a nice CD to introduce the tool to you.

Brother: Brother offers three machines in their PQ series. The Brother Felting Attachment fits all three of their PQ series machines. Compare features carefully. Their top-of-the-line in this series has a Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price or MSRP of \$1,699.95. This machine offers the fastest motor speed of all the needle felting equipment (1500 stitches per minute), enough room to easily fit a king-size quilt, needle up and down plus a knee lift. The attachment has a plexiglass cover to direct lint behind you and to protect in the rare instance of needle breakage. The variable presser foot height will allow for thicker items than any of the other equipment. There are several steps in attaching and detaching the equipment. The Brother Felting Attachment has an MSRP of \$279. The Feltscafer booklet that accompanies the Brother tool offers a good foundation in approaches to the machine.

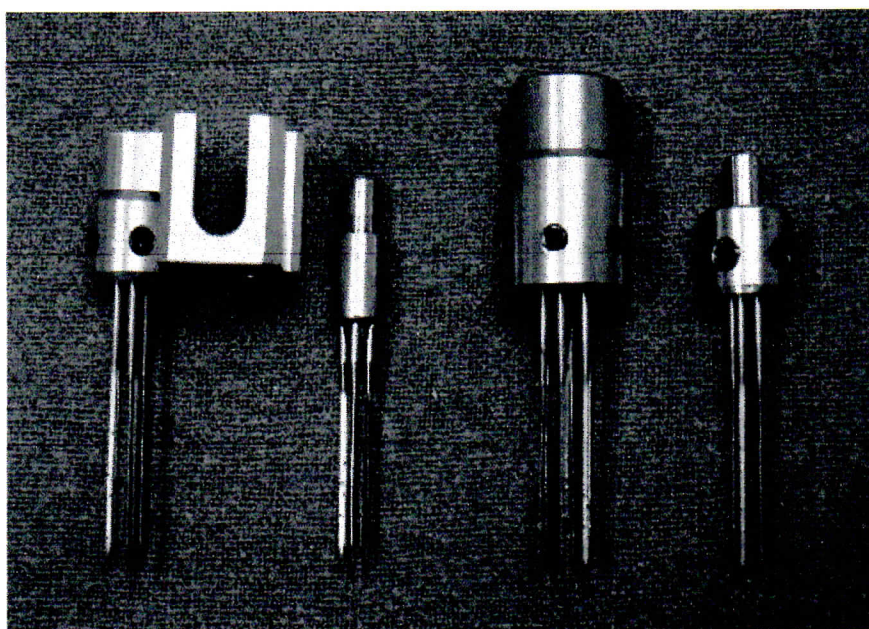
Q: What's the story on needle compatibility? Do the needles from Baby Lock's Embellisher, Bernina's Decorative Punching Attachment and The Pierrot machine from Embroidery Source fit in each other's machines?

&A: I have run Bernina, Baby Lock and Embroidery Source needles in all three machines. Seems like a viable option to me. To read more about how the felting action of these needles varies, scroll down to the next question. Brother needles are not interchangeable with the other machines. The Brother needles only fit the Brother equipment. Same is true for Janome's Xpression.

Q: How does Fiberella compare and contrast the needles for Bernina's Decorative Punching Attachment, Brother's Needle Felting Attachment, Baby Lock's Embellisher machine, & The Pierrot

machine from Embroidery Source?

A picture of the updated Bernina Needle Punching Accessory will be posted a.s.a.p.. It's nice to see improvements in the industry. You no longer have to individually access the needles. It's faster and easier to change needles.



&A: Can you see the chisel shaped cuts on the needles above? Some differ in both placement and depth of the cuts on the needles. One brand has sharper tips. Two manufacturers seem to be supplying the identical needles. Here's my impression of their performance as they appear from left to right in the picture above...

Bernina Needles: The Bernina needles are very effective on a fairly wide range of fibers, fabric and yarns. Bernina needles may not be aggressive enough for a few of the synthetics in the marketplace but are kinder to most fabrics. They are probably equal to the Baby Lock needles in how quickly they will felt wools. In general they are very kind to the fabrics and tend to require a few more passes of the needles to accomplish felting when working with some of the less traditional felting materials (no wool content, etc). Bernina needles offer more clarity, a maintained crispness in certain types of designs with more delicate detail. Since the cuts are a bit less deep, the needles are also less fragile.

Brother Needles: The Brother needles have an extra sharp tip, are permanently mounted in the brass head in a tight configuration and seem to have less of a tendency to break. Since they are mounted in place, they cannot be removed from the head for individual needle replacement. When you wear out the needles over time, you replace the entire head. Last time I checked the replacement cost was very reasonable. So far I have not broken any of the needles on the Brother.

Baby Lock Needles: Baby Lock needles perform extremely well on a wide range of fibers, yarns and fabrics, both synthetic and natural. The chisel cuts are deeper, they felt more aggressively, but are a bit thinner and more prone to breaking. The Baby Lock needles are exceptional for creating soft blends that you want to achieve at a faster rate. They do tend to blur details in some instances.

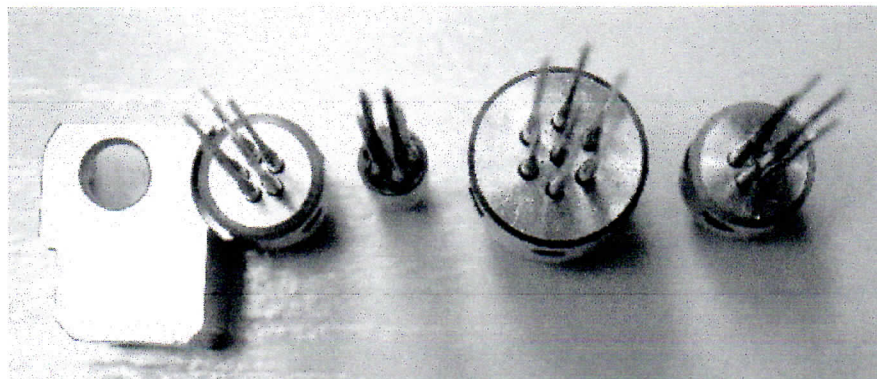
Embroidery Source Needles: I am just beginning to test The Pierrot needles in-depth. They visually appear identical in the placement of the chisel cuts to the Bernina ones. As far as the eye can see and my fingertips can tell, the cuts appear to be to the same depth as well. So far they are testing just fine, same as Bernina's. I will update as I learn more.

Janome Needles: These are really terrific, able to felt a wide range of diverse materials (fiber content & weave structure) in record time.

Let's hope a wide range of various styles of needles will be available for all brands of equipment... SOON!

Q: Do all of the manufacturers offer the same number of needles? How does configuration of the

needles affect performance?



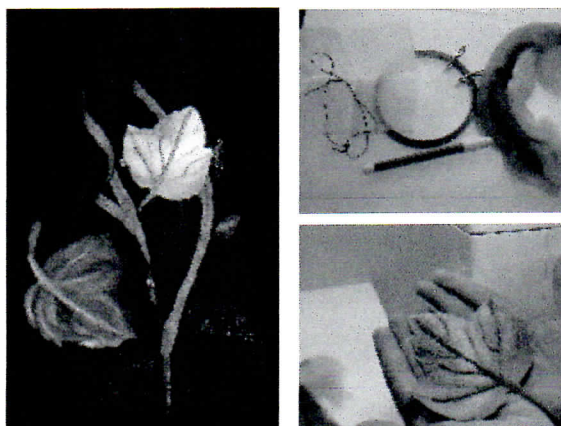
&A: Most have five, one offers seven. From left to right in the picture above are the needles from the Bernina, Brother, Baby Lock & Embroidery Source. Some of their features are:

Bernina: The five needles are able to be replaced individually by loosening just one simple screw on Bernina's updated attachment. The configuration of five needles offers less frequent need to remove some needles for working in detail areas and while couching narrow yarns to a delicate base fabric. Bernina's configuration of needles is a good size, slightly larger than that of the Brother, not as far apart as on the Baby Lock and about the same as The Pierrot.

Brother: Brother's attachment, with its five needles, covers ground efficiently in combination with its 1500 stitches per minute motor speed. Needles cannot be individually replaced. Since their configuration seems to be the tightest, I don't ever feel the need to remove any for detail work. The needles are permanently mounted in the needle clamp; to replace, install a new clamp with five new needles.

Baby Lock: The seven needles on The Embellisher, and their spacing, can cover ground quickly. You also have the option of reducing to fewer needles for detail work. Sometimes I like to leave the center needle in place along with three adjacent ones along the outside edge; this gives me a smaller "brush" for details, couching narrow yarns, appliquéing small shapes, etc.

Embroidery Source: The Pierrot machine also has the option to replace individual needles. Their five needle clamp has needle spacing about equal to that on the Bernina needle clamp.



Q: Regarding your free tutorial on the Resources page, why do you use a stabilizer on your leaf project? What kind is it? How durable is the leaf? Can you wash it? Could you use a permanent stabilizer or foundation instead?

&A: Stabilizer: The stabilizer used in the leaf directions (.pdf free lesson from Fiberella found on the Resources page of this site) is used mainly as a visual guide for coloring inside the lines of a motif. It happens to be a leaf, but could be anything you desire... a shell, a bug, a peach, etc. You can source designs from appliqué patterns, coloring books, stain glass designs, tracing images from your own photos or make up your own designs. As you mark guidelines with a water soluble pen onto a water soluble stabilizer, the stabilizer won't melt from the little bit of liquid in the pen unless

you hold it in one place for a very long time. Once you have a visual guide you can enjoy a lovely, gradual process of layering roving and blending colors as you "color" in your motif; *you can specify placement within the visual image*. You can control the size of your motif in an offsite way, making ingredients for a larger project that will fit together. So the stabilizer provides a visual guide to color within. There's another advantage: it gives you something to hold onto. I find it's especially important to have something physical to hold onto while creating small motifs. * Used with or without a hoop, it also helps to keep things laying flat (if that's what you are after). I find it a bit easier to build a consistent height to the surface when I want to; I can hold it up to the light to check for variations in density.

Stabilizer Type: When I choose to use a stabilizer with machine needle felting, I often choose a water soluble that is cloth/paper-like in feel. Call it Vilene, or Wash-Away (available from Nancy's Notions) or Madeira's Avalon **PLUS** which is described as their "water soluble fabric." There are many names for the same or similar stabilizer. The plastic-like ones are too easily perforated by the felting needles. Some of the water soluble fabrics will pucker; look for one with a paper/cloth like feel (imagine a semi transparent paper towel).

Durability: The stabilizer is not needed for strength, providing you are working with roving that has a high felt-ability like merino wool. The strength is in the felting itself; the combination of a highly willing roving and the repeated use of the felting needles will accomplish the task. You can add to that durability by crisscrossing the layers of roving as you lay the fibers down.

Washability: You don't *have* to wash out the stabilizer, but I usually do for two reasons. I want to remove all traces of the water soluble pen lines and I love the 100% natural drape of the merino wool. The ink will disappear completely front and back during the felting process once it is covered with roving that comes all the way through to the underside. However, when you cut and trim outlines, a bit may show through along the outer edge. I just soak my motifs in tepid water for several minutes and rinse extremely well to dispense of that. It's fun to shape the motifs while they are damp! You can also simply use a wet cotton swab to go along the outside edge and eliminate any visual trace of the stabilizer that may be visible there.

Permanent Stabilizers: Yes, you can use a permanent stabilizer. Experiment! Make selections based on the amount of drape or body you wish your material to have. Cotton scrim is a very interesting one! I will have an entire chapter on this in my upcoming book, so stay tuned.

* **AN ADDED NOTE:** For more random coloring and for greater speed, try simply felting lots of streaks of roving over an expanse of water soluble stabilizer and then cut leaves (or whatever motifs) from your new sheet of fabric. You can also felt roving together with no stabilizer at all; it's a fun thing to do with all of your scrap roving at the end of any work session

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