Adult Takeaway Craft: String Art (Fox)

Supplies

Included
- Black 7"x7" foam board
- 80 pins
- Tape
- 1 floss in white, burnt orange, and black

- 1 picture hanger
- Craft glue
- 1 fox transfer image

Not included
- Hammer (optional)

Instructions provided by: Make your own string art by Kayla Carlson. 746.0471 Car https://laconia.biblionix.com/catalog/biblio/426051183

Directions

1. Position the design in the center of the board, secure at the corners with tape
2. Gently press a single nail into each dot of the pattern to make pilot holes
    3. Make sure you get every dot
4. Remove the paper and tape
5. Press the pins into the pattern piolet holes—hold straight up and down
    6. Deep enough to be secure, and roughly even in height
    7. Have the image next to you to compare, so you can see where the pins go
8. With the white floss, tie a knot around the foxes' inner ear.
    9. Add a small dot of glue
    10. Trim off the tail
    11. You will have remaining white floss to fill in the face area
12. Begin to string randomly across all the pins of the area to fill with color—do not go around the outline yet
    13. Keep the floss taught, but not too tight. You want the pins to stay straight up and down
    14. Occasionally wrap around one of the pins twice, to secure it from unraveling
15. Once you are satisfied with the coverage, begin the edge wrap around the outline of the area.
    16. To edge wrap, wrap the thread along the outside of the area in an X shape
    17. When you get all the way around and back to where you started, tie a knot around the last nail and secure with a dab of glue
18. Following the same method outlined above in steps 8-17, complete the other inner ear with white.
19. Following the same method outlined above in steps 8-17, fill in the forehead and outer ears **with burnt orange**.
    20. Be sure not to string over the white of the inner ears you have already done
21. Following the same method outlined above in steps 8-17, string one side of the mask with white.
22. Following the same method outlined above in steps 8-17, string the other side of the mask with white.
23. Following the same method outlined above in steps 8-17, string the nose with black.
24. Following the same method outlined above in steps 8-17, string one eye with black.
25. Following the same method outlined above in steps 8-17, string the other eye with black.
26. Affix the picture hanger to the back of the foam board for display.
27. Share your creations with us! @laconialibrary
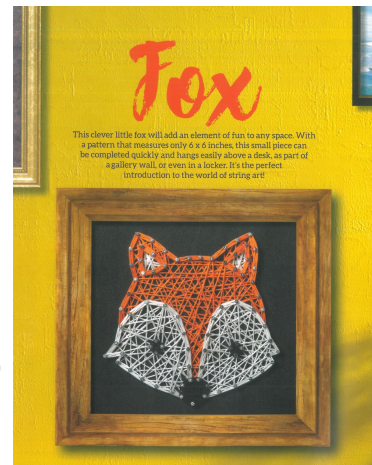
Other crafts on our YouTube Channel

Low Maintenance Houseplants with Jamie   https://youtu.be/1xnuBCnI26M

Propagation and Repotting with Jamie   https://youtu.be/1xxq8CIeics

How to Make Paneer with Shayla   https://youtu.be/HQ13zUomEvs

Acrylic Pour with Amanda   https://youtu.be/JWzQ-wBGn9Q

Mango Strawberry Salsa with Shayla   https://youtu.be/rjicvM5S7do

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What should we make next?

We were going to make so many fun things this year, but our format has had to change. Until we are able to craft in person again, I'd like to know what kinds of things you would like to make!
Email me: aalwyn@laconialibrary.org

Happy Crafting! —Amanda

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PLACE THE NAILS

Foam or other lightweight background: When using foam core, cork, or any other lightweight material, it's best to make pilot holes in the background. Begin by taping the four corners of your pattern onto your background. Take one nail and gently press it into one of the dots on the pattern, then remove the nail. You do not need to make a deep hole—just create a visible impression in the background. Continue to do this on every dot throughout the pattern. Then gently remove the tape and pattern: You will see the nail hole pattern in the background. Now, take your nails and press them one by one into the background to a depth of ½ inch.

Wood background: Hammer a nail into every dot on the pattern to a depth of ½ inch. Whether you are working with wood or a lightweight background, your nail should go into the background about two-thirds of the way. For a ¾-inch nail, you will sink the nail to a depth of about ½ inch and have ¼ inch on which to string. If you are not expert with the hammer, you may wish to hold the nail you are hammering with a pair of needle-nose pliers to keep your fingers out of the way! Once you have finished hammering in all the nails, carefully remove the tape and pattern from your piece of wood. If you have not used tape on the back of your pattern (see "Save Some Time" on p. 7), your pattern may rip, leaving small bits around the nails. Simply pull these out with your fingers or a pair of tweezers. Hammer any nails that come loose back into place before beginning to string.

¼ INCH

String Your Project

This is where the real fun begins! You have a lot of latitude in stringing, and there are no rules here. Using a lot of thread or a little, string back and forth or up and down or both, make the stringing look organized or totally random—the choice is up to you. The following are a few terms and tips that will help you understand how to get the best effect.

TIE ON AND TIE OFF

Before you begin to string, you will tie one end of your chosen stringing material to a nail, as indicated in the instructions. Unless the project instructions direct otherwise, tie the thread in a tight double knot. To keep the knot secure, add a small dab of glue to the knot. A toothpick can be handy for applying the glue with precision. Then cut the tail of the thread. This is called "tying on."

To tie off, ending the stringing of a particular section or switching to a new skein of thread, tie a tight double knot around a nail. Add a small dab of glue to secure the knot, then trim the tail of the thread.

OUTLINE

Some projects may call for you to outline (note that some say to outline with an edging wrap—see p. 9), or you may simply want this effect. Outlining is simply wrapping thread around a nail that defines a shape (generally, around the outside of the animal or object you are depicting), moving to the next nail in the shape, wrapping the thread around that nail, moving to the next nail, and so on.

OUTLINE WRAP

FILL

Once you have tied on with your thread, you can begin to fill the space by stringing inside the area indicated. Keeping the thread taut, begin stringing randomly between nails across the pattern area specified using the "U" wrap and the outline wrap, occasionally wrapping the thread around a nailhead twice to keep it secure. If you are

FILL "U" WRAP

working with a lightweight background and small nails or small-head pushpins, you will need to be careful not to pull too hard on the thread, or you will dislodge nails. (If this happens, simply push them back in.) Wood is more forgiving because the nails are more secure in the background.

You may choose to string either horizontally or vertically, for a more orderly look, or you can string back and forth and at any angle to get random coverage. You can string to the same nail several times to fill out the area. Each nail in the shark project is strung two to four times, for example.

For some projects, you will need to avoid an interior area, such as an eye or a mouth. Simply string to the nails surrounding that area, but do not cross it. Project instructions in this book will remind you when you need to avoid such an area.

Stand back from your project from time to time to assess how the fill looks. If you don't like the look, just unweave the string and try again. How do you know when you're finished? That is completely subjective. Your fill is done when you are satisfied with the way your project looks!

EDGE-WRAP

Many patterns in this book are outlined at the end with an edging wrap, and this wrap is also used for special features like the shark's teeth. Individual projects will indicate when and where you should edge-wrap. This technique gives your finished piece a nice clean edge and a polished appearance.

To do an edging wrap, first wrap your thread in an "X" between two nails, then wrap the thread completely around those two nails, encircling the "X." You then move to the next nail and complete the "X" again and circle again, continuing around the area designated.

STEP 1   STEP 2

Add Finishing Touches

When you are finished, carefully touch up any background damage you may have created while hammering or during stringing. Acrylic paint or paint pens can be used to color the nailheads if you want to blend them in with the string color; otherwise, they can be left as they are.

If you want to hang your piece, you will need to add a picture hanger, such as a sawtooth hanger, to the back. Simply hold your piece upright with one hand and gently press the hanger into the back of your piece with the other hand, centering it so that the piece will hang evenly.

For a wood background, you will need to hammer in the hanger. The easiest way to do this is to place your string art piece facedown on two 1-inch boards positioned on a table so the boards border the top and bottom of the art piece, where there are no nails; this holds the nails of the string art above the surface of the table. Then, gently hammer in the picture hanger. Voilà!

STRING ON!

You're now armed with the information you need to create impressive DIY art that will add beautiful color, texture, and dimension to your walls. With the projects in this book, you can create a full menagerie of delightful string art animals!

CRAFT GLUE

While it's not strictly necessary, a dab of glue on the knots as you begin and end your thread will prevent the knot from loosening and keep your string tight over time. Make sure to choose a glue that dries clear.

PICTURE HANGER

If you want to hang your art on a wall, use a sawtooth picture hanger, available at hardware stores or in the picture-hanging section of a chain superstore.

TAPE

If you are using a wood background, cellophane tape or packing tape on the back of your pattern can preserve your pattern and keep you from having to pick pieces of paper from around your nails (see p. 7). You will also need tape to hold your pattern in place on your chosen background. If you are using an unembellished wood background, cellophane tape will work fine. For a foam core background, or any background that has been painted or covered with paper, choose low-tack tape such as high-quality painters' tape. You do not want to create the perfect scenic backdrop for your animal, only to mar it by pulling up the background when you remove cellophane tape.

BACKGROUND

Foam core, cork, and canvas can be purchased at your local craft store in different sizes. These materials have the advantage of being lightweight, easy to work with, and widely available. Choose foam core or corkboard/tile that is at least ½ inch thick; you can glue two pieces together to achieve your desired thickness.

If you like the look of canvas, you can cut a piece of foam core to the size of the wood frame surrounding the canvas and wedge the foam tightly within the frame. The foam core anchors the nails in place, while the canvas provides the look of a polished art piece.

A wood background is more durable and gives a nice finished look as well. If you choose wood for your project, check your local hardware store for pieces in the dimensions you need (see individual projects). Lumber yards often sell wood scraps at deeply discounted prices, and online sites also offer a platform for home carpenters looking to offload odd-sized pieces of wood. And, of course, garage sales are a tried-and-true venue for inexpensive items—such as scrap wood, tools, and hardware—that homeowners would like to sell. Don't forget to search your own garage for wood leftover from other projects.

If you are using wood as a background, sand the surface well before beginning your project. Wipe the wood with either a tack cloth or a damp cloth to remove any wood dust or debris from the surface and allow to dry well. Then either stain it, paint it, polyurethane it, or leave it raw, depending upon the look you want for your completed piece. Or, if you'd prefer a patterned background, glue cardstock or scrapbook paper to the surface of your background.

How to Make String Art: The Fundamentals

Before beginning your string art project, read over the project instructions and gather the materials you will need. The following are some basic skills and a few tips that will help you achieve a stellar result the first time and every time.

SELECT AND PREPARE THE BACKGROUND

Choose your background and prepare it according to the instructions in the project. Be sure to read the "background" sidebar in the project to determine whether you will need to factor in time for your background to dry. You can easily tailor the background to suit your tastes or decor—just flip through the book and find one you like, then follow the instructions. To give your animal the right environment, you can paint, stain, polyurethane, or paper the surface—or you can leave it plain. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the product(s) you are using and make sure to leave enough dry time before beginning to apply nails and string.

CREATE AND AFFIX THE PATTERN

Because you will need to preserve the printed template in the book for reference, you need to make a pattern. Simply photocopy the template onto white paper. The instructions will note whether you need to enlarge the pattern to get the size depicted in the book. You could always use the template at the size provided, but the nails will be somewhat closer together than they appear in the finished piece. Most home printers now photocopy, and public libraries as well as office supply stores usually have commercial photocopies you can use.

Alternatively, you can simply trace the template, marking the outline and the nail holes. If you are doing this project with your kids, tracing is a fun and familiar activity they will enjoy.

When you have your paper pattern, affix it to the prepared background with cellophane tape or low-tack tape, taping down the four corners. It is safest to use low-tack tape when working on a foam core, painted, or paper background so you do not accidentally damage the background surface when removing the pattern.

Save Some Time!

If you are using wood for your background, begin by covering the back of your pattern with cellophane tape or packing tape, making sure to cover all the nail holes indicated. The tape protector will prevent little bits of paper from getting stuck under each nail when you remove the pattern. You won't spend time picking little scraps of paper from around the nails, and you can likely reuse the pattern.

You Will Need

- Pattern
- Background (foam core), approximately 7 x 7 inches
- 79 nails, at least
- 1 skein of white embroidery floss
- 1 skein of burnt orange embroidery floss
- 1 skein of black embroidery floss
- Hammer
- Cellophane tape or low-tack tape
- Protective eyewear
- Picture hanger
- Craft glue (optional)

1. Photocopy the fox template or trace it on a sheet of paper to make a pattern, so you can reserve the template in the book as a reference. Position the pattern on your foam core and tape it in place. Press the nails into the background on each dot in the fox pattern. Remove the pattern carefully. If nails come loose as you remove the pattern, just press them back into place. When working with foam core, it is often simplest to make pilot holes, remove the pattern, and then secure the nails (see pp. 7–8).

2. Fill the fox's inner ears: Tie the white thread in a double knot around one of the nails that outlines the left inner ear. Add a small dot of glue to the knot, then cut the thread's tail. Keeping the thread taut, begin stringing the yarn between nails randomly across the inner ear area, occasionally wrapping the string around a nailhead twice to keep it secure. When you've filled the space, tie a double knot and add a drop of glue. Cut the tail of the thread close to the knot. Repeat these steps for the right inner ear.
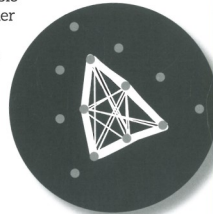
Fill the inner ear

3. Fill the forehead and outer ears: Using the burnt orange thread, tie a double knot around any of the nails bordering area A (marked on the pattern). Add a small dot of glue to the knot, then cut the thread's tail. Keeping the thread taut, begin stringing between nails randomly. Make sure to go up into the outer ears of the fox, but do not string across the inner ear space. String across the fox's forehead and down to his nose, occasionally wrapping the string around a nailhead twice to keep the thread secure. The more you string back and forth, the more filled in the fox's forehead will be. Step back every once in a while to check for areas that might need more thread.
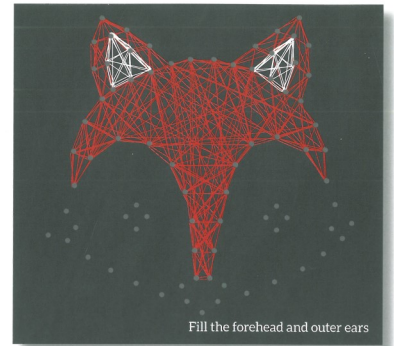
Fill the forehead and outer ears

4. Outline the top of the head and inner ears: When you are satisfied that the forehead has the coverage you want, begin the edging wrap for the top of the fox's head. String to nail 1 on the left side of the fox's face (do not tie off). Start to edge-wrap and continue all the way up, around the left ear, across the top of the head, around the right ear, and finish at nail 2 on the right side of the face. Tie off, add a dab of glue to the knot, and cut the tail. Next, tie on
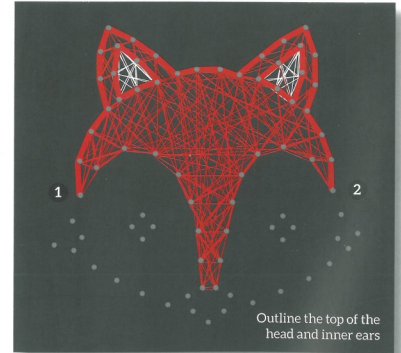
Outline the top of the head and inner ears

using the burnt orange thread to one of the left inner ear nails, add a small dot of glue to the knot, then cut the tail. Edge-wrap around the inner ear area, until you have completed the triangle. Repeat the steps to edge-wrap the right inner ear.

5. String the "mask": Using the white thread, tie on to any nail bordering area B (marked on the template), add a dab of glue, and cut the thread's tail. Keeping the thread taut, begin stringing between nails randomly, making sure to string to the nails of the eye and nose but not to pass through them. When you are happy with the way the left side of the mask is filled, string to number 1 near the nose and begin the edging wrap around area B, working your way around until you reach nail 2. Tie off, add a dab of glue to the knot, and cut the thread's tail.
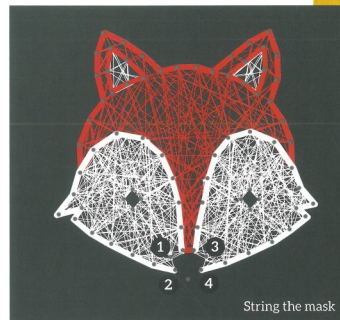
Follow the same steps to complete area C (marked on the template) around the fox's right eye; when you begin the edging wrap, start at nail 3 and work your way around until you reach nail 4.

String the mask

6. String the nose: Using the black thread, tie on to any nail of the nose, add a dab of glue to the knot, and cut the thread's tail. Begin stringing between nails randomly throughout the nose area to fill. When you are satisfied with the coverage, start the edging wrap. Edge-wrap all the way around the nose, then tie off, add a dab of glue to the knot, and cut the thread's tail.

String the nose

7. String the eyes: Using the black thread, tie on to nail 1 of the left eye, add a dab of glue to the knot, and cut the thread's tail. String from nail 1 to nail 3, 3 back to 1, then 1 to 2, 2 to 4, and 4 back to 2. Then begin the edging wrap around the eye. Circle the entire eye, then tie off, add a dab of glue to the knot, and cut the thread's tail. Follow the same steps to complete the fox's right eye.
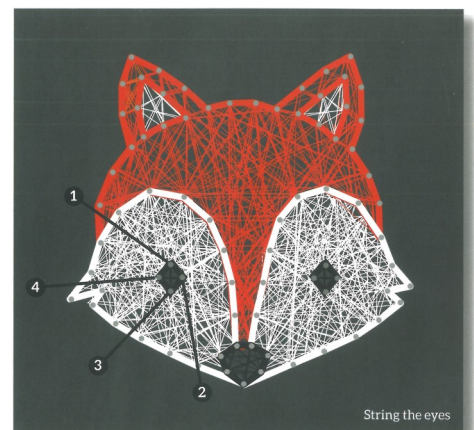
String the eyes

8. Add a sawtooth picture hanger to the back of the piece for easy hanging.

Solid Background

For the background shown here, use the foam core included in this kit. To make future fox string art projects, you could choose a wood background. If you should opt for wood, sand the piece and then wipe it free of dust with a damp cloth or a tack cloth. You can also stain the wood or paint it with a fast-drying acrylic paint.