

How to make a Punch Needle Fern



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Spinning a Yarn



Wool is amazing. Not only is it natural, renewable, biodegradable, and sustainable, but it is also an adaptable craft material. This is one of four worksheets which will help you learn about Somerset's rare and endangered species as well as different wool crafts.

Punch Needle is a hand tufting technique that is traditionally used to make rugs. A punch needle tool has a metal tip with a hole through it and a channel through which the thread or yarn runs.

Ferns Luscious temperate rainforest once covered a vast area of the British Isles, but now only fragments remain in the west of Britain.

Here you will find Oak, Birch, Rowan, Holly, Alder, Willow and Hazel trees, often growing in open glades or alongside rivers.

Temperate rainforests are wet, wonderful places. Within them can be found a rich tapestry of life, including ferns, mosses, liverworts and lichen, covering the surfaces of rocks, tree trunks and branches.

You will need:

Open weave fabric, suitable for needle punch.

Size: 30 cm square

New or second-hand wool yarn.

Half a small ball - 15-20 metres - of two colours: a neutral background colour of your choice and green for the fern.

Extra handy supplies

Felt or fabric (30 cm square) to back your finished work



A punch needle and threader - choose a needle that has an eye big enough for your yarn/thread to go through, that will also pass through your fabric easily.

These tools come in different sizes to accommodate various thicknesses of wool, from embroidery floss to bulky yarn. Size 10 regular is good for beginners.

Scissors.

20 cm non slip gripper hoop.

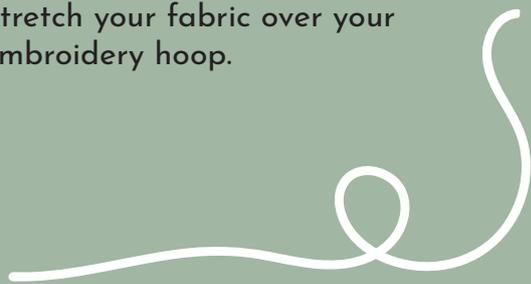
A felt-tip pen to draw your design onto your fabric.

Small amount of PVA glue or glue gun for finishing off

Materials Resources sheet available
at spinning-a-yarn.org

Step 1

Stretch your fabric over your embroidery hoop.

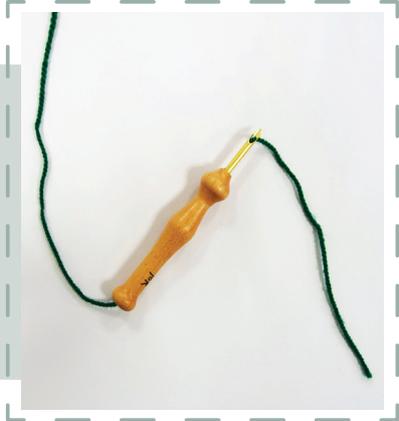


Step 2

Use the template provided and draw the outline of your Fern onto the backing fabric. This is the front of your piece.

Step 3

Thread your needle with green yarn. Make sure you have enough slack for the yarn to run freely. Hold your needle like a pencil.



Step 4

Punch all the way through the fabric. The grip needs to touch the fabric. This keeps the tension even and creates a good look to the stitches.

Step 5

Lift the needle out just enough to move to the next stitch. The stitch distance should be separated by 4 holes in the fabric.



Step 6

Punch the outline of an area and spiral inwards towards the centre to fill in the section. If you make a mistake you can simply pull the thread out and start over.

Step 7

Repeat for each section in that colour to complete your Fern. It's like colouring in with stitches.

Step 8

Now take your second colour and follow steps 3-5 to create your background. This could be one colour or sections of colour. To create your own design, think about the forest floor where you would find a Fern in nature.

Step 9

You have now completed your Fern. Check your work over to make sure you have not missed any parts.

Step 10

Once finished turn your work over and trim any long yarn ends. The loops will be secure in the fabric and should not require glue. You may wish to glue (PVA) the back of your work, but you don't have to.

Step 11

Unscrew your hoop and cut around your work leaving a 4cm border. Cut into the fabric around the curved edge to create tabs then glue the tabs down at the back so you cannot see your backing fabric from the front.

Step 12

Admire your work. Hand it in or send it to us to join the other species in the exhibition.

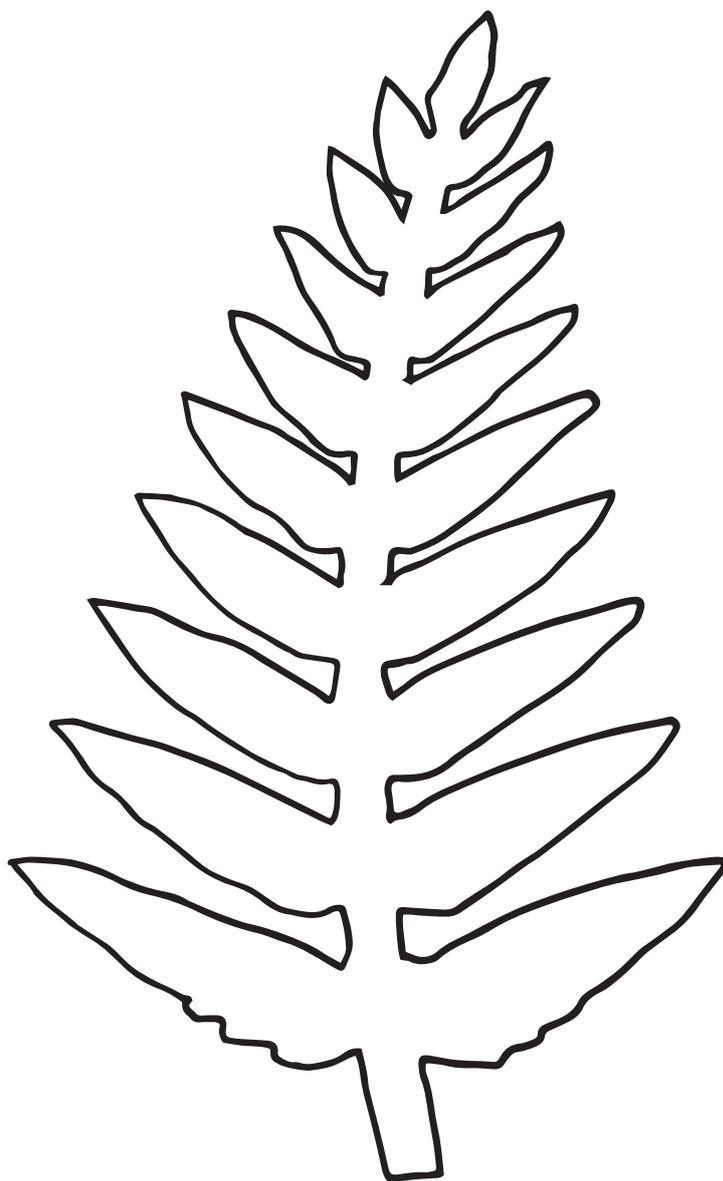
What next?

Have you caught the punch needle bug? How about making some of our other species of flora and fauna linked to Woodland Ferns like Bluebell flower, stag beetle or Harts-tongue fern. Have a look at our Nature Resources sheet to get more ideas.

spinning-a-yarn.org

**Spinning
a Yarn**

Fern template



Spinning a Yarn

Take Part Resources created by Lydia Needle and Nina Gronw-Lewis

If you would like your work to be part of an exhibition at the Somerset Rural Life Museum in September, as part of Somerset Art Weeks Festival, please send your completed pieces to: ACEarts, Market Place, Somerton, Somerset TA11 7NB by 31 August 2024.

Max dimensions 20 x 20 cm

DISCLAIMER: Due to the nature of this project, we are unable to return any work after the event. Please note we may not be able to accommodate all the works submitted.

Spinning a Yarn: Telling the Story of Wool in Somerset,

spinning-a-yarn.org #wildforwool #countyofwool