

Sustainable Ewe

The Home of Sustainability in Central Hawke's Bay



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How to run a Beeswax/Tulle Bag Workshop -

Teachers Notes

We found it useful to pre-cut the Tulle bags, and in some instances pre-thread the needles (Depending on age group). By running the two workshops together little hands were kept busy making bags while waiting for a turn at the iron - thus boredom and breakdowns were avoided! To make cutting the cotton fabric easier for the children - a simple template made of cotton or Corflute can be traced around with a felt pen.

The bags were made as per the sewing machine method - HOWEVER for children we used **tapestry needles and crochet cotton**. Depending on the age group this can be stitched with a simple running (tack) stitch or a more complicated blanket stitch at the sides and running stitch at the top.

When preparing your baking paper - mark one side "TOP" or "THIS WAY UP" - this will be your top sheet - ensure the children keep the writing top-side. This ensures less waste and helps to keep the iron wax free!

Do NOT be tempted to use more wax than you should! It will melt, run out from under the paper and cause a mess. You will also find that a saturated cotton wrap will not fold nicely.

The wraps dry very quickly - But having somewhere to lay them out flat (e.g. on an old towel) Is useful.

Encourage experimentation:

- Instead of ribbon use a shoelace, a string, bias binding.
- There is no rule that says wax wraps have to be square

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Safety:

This method involves the use of a HOT iron. We recommend adult supervision at the iron at all times. You may consider starting the workshop by explaining what an iron is and how it is used as many children may not have seen one before. Point out the surface of the iron that will be hot.

Likewise children may not be familiar with pinking shears and it is helpful to point out that they work better on fabric than they do on fingers!

Where to buy:

Spotlight has an amazing array of 100% cotton fabric in fun prints. (Wash fabric before using at the workshop)

The best local source for beeswax is Kintail Honey in Takapau. A block of wax starts at \$9 for 500gms.

Notes on the Beeswax Wraps:

- Too little wax on your fabric: Simply add more wax and re-iron
- Too much wax on your fabric: Use a second piece of fabric to blot up the excess, then after removing the first piece the second piece can be finished by adding a little more wax (if required)
- Over time the fabric/beeswax will wear. The wrap can be reinvigorated simply by re-ironing (between baking paper sheets). If necessary more wax can be added.
- Wraps can be molded around the top of bowls etc for storage in the fridge (by using the heat of your hands)
- Perfect for sandwiches, cheese, plate/bowl covers however **DO NOT** store meat using your wraps (as they can not be washed in hot water)
- Want to get crafty? Sew your wraps into handy pouches for slipping into kids lunchboxes! Or make circular wraps and add elastic for bowl covers!