

Lacing Cards: Teach your child early sewing skills!



Sewing is such a big part of my life, I do it for fun, I do it for my job, I make things for our home, my children, my friends. My daughters have been introduced to sewing from their early days with the hum of my sewing machine acting as white noise while they play. My oldest daughter is 5 years old and has become even more interested in learning how to sew herself. And while I was nervous at first (pins and needles and rotary cutters and fabric shears and her tiny fingers, oh man!), I began to think about how to teach her early sewing skills safely but in a fun way.

Enter lacing cards.

How To Make and Sew with Lacing Cards

Lacing cards are any shape or picture that is on a heavy weight paper (think poster board or paper plates) with holes punched in that children (target ages 3-6) can lace yarn, or other thicker string in and out of. It's a great way to learn early sewing skills, but also develops fine motor skills and hand eye coordination that are important in their early writing journey!

There are many different lacing cards that you can buy ready to roll for your kid, but if you're anything like me, I always see if there is a way I can craft something up myself before buying

something premade. These are so easy to make with things you may have already lying around in your house!

MATERIALS

- Cardstock, poster board, or any other heavy weight paper - feel free to use paper or plastic plates if that's what you have!
- Scissors (I used one for my yarn and one for paper)
- Hole Punch
- Yarn
- Large plastic embroidery needle



I bought a pack of brightly colored poster board and a small skein of yarn from my local dollar store to make things a little prettier for our readers. To be honest, I was also ready to break out some old princess themed paper plates and white yarn left over from a birthday party and halloween costume if necessary!

STEPS

1. Cut Your Shapes

The poster board pieces inside this pack were larger than needed (you want the cards to be easily manageable in small hands), so I cut them into smaller shapes. I did a few round shapes, and a few zig zag shapes - different shapes will introduce new challenges for your new sewer.



2. Punch Holes in the Cards

Making sure to space them out as evenly as possible, punch holes in each card. The spacing between them can be up to you, I mixed it up with some cards having fewer and further apart holes and others with more holes closer together (this changes up the difficulty level). Make sure the holes aren't too close or too far away from the edge, give it about a half an inch or so.



3. Number the Holes

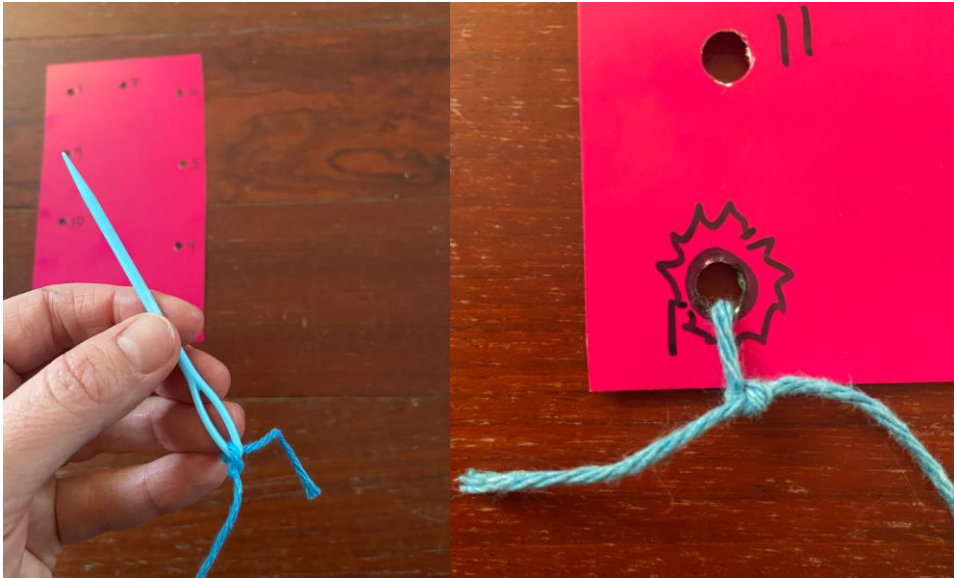
This step isn't absolutely necessary, but I found it helpful for my daughter to know which hole to start with and what direction to move in, so I numbered each one. You can even

go a step further and add arrows showing which hole you put your needle down into and which one you go up in.



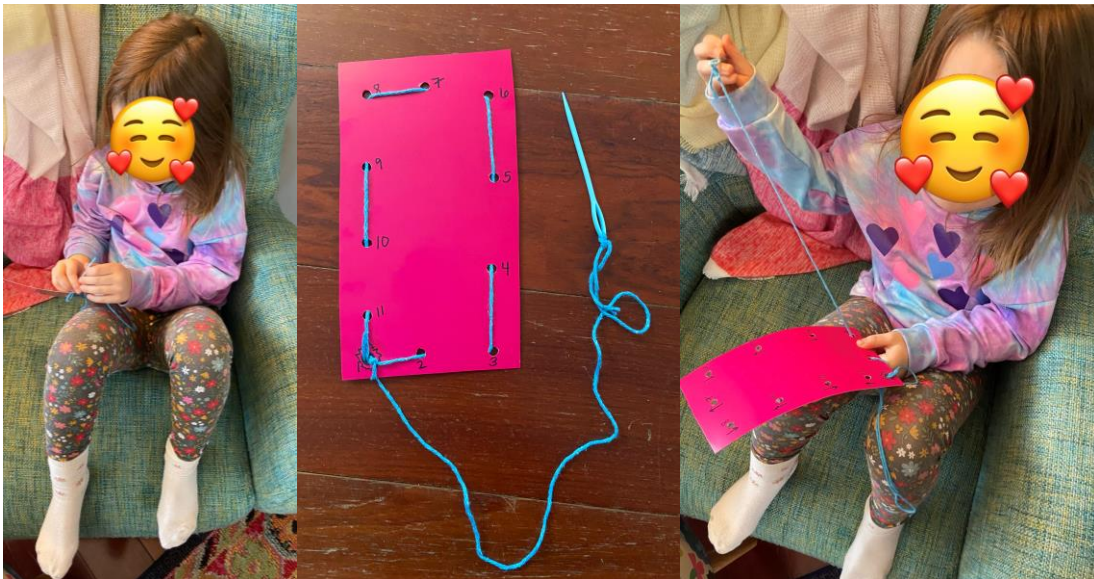
4. Add your Yarn and Needle

Measure your length of yarn to ensure there is enough to cover weaving through the holes, but not too much that it will overwhelm your sewer and get tangled easily. I think a good rule of thumb here is to measure out the total length of the edges of the card and multiply that measurement by two to get the right amount of yarn. Once you have your length of yarn, tie one end to the #1 hole (as seen below) and the other end to your embroidery needle (this will eliminate the possibility of the yarn escaping!).



5. Little Sewing Lesson

Give them a little lesson first, and then let them go at it! I took a few minutes to show my daughter the basics of weaving the needle and thread in and out of the holes and then I let her loose to do it her way. She explored, tried, made mistakes, asked for help, tried again, and finally found her way!



How To Make an Easy Stuffed Pillow by Hand

If you want to take this a step further, you can take the same idea and bring it to scrap fabric and left over cotton fluff filling. Your child can use these same skills to make a little stuffed pillow! The steps are similar!

MATERIALS

- Fabric - these shapes will be small, so any scrap fabric you have lying around will be enough.
- Cotton stuffing
- Hole Punch
- Fabric Scissors or [Pinking Shears](#)
- Yarn
- Large plastic embroidery needle

STEPS

1. Cut your Shapes

Using any scrap fabric you have, cut out two of the same shape. I used my pinking shears since we will not be finishing the edges of this; the pinking shears will minimize fraying. I cut out a heart, but you can cut out any shape you'd like.



2. Punch Holes

If you have a sharp hole puncher, you can punch holes into the two pieces of fabric at the same time, or you can mark where your holes will be and do each piece separately.

Punching the holes in both pieces at the same time will help keep the pieces together during the sewing process (we don't want to use pins yet with our beginners).



The holes may not fully punch out with thicker fabrics (I am using a jersey knit here) but with thin cotton fabrics you will have a more distinctive hole.

3. Add your yarn and needle

Similar to the paper version, you will tie one end of your yarn to the starting hole and the other end to the embroidery needle.

4. Sew away!

Just like in the lacing card exercise let your child explore, make mistakes, ask questions, and figure it out with a little guidance.



5. Stuff it!

Once your child has gotten close to the end of the holes (maybe five holes away from the end) stop them and let them stuff the shape with cotton fluff. This is a great dexterity exercise as they will need to get the stuffing into the entire area of the pocket they've made. Be careful not to overstuff it, as there will be gaps between each of the punched holes.



6. Close it up

After the pillow has been stuffed, have them finish off the last few holes and help them (if needed) to tie a knot at the end.

7. Congratulate them!

They have made their very first sewing project!



My daughter was so proud of herself when she finished her first sewing project! Please share in the comments below if you have tried any sewing projects with little ones in your life.

All the best,
Jackie
Product Designer for Madam Sew

[PDF download of this Sewing Lesson for a Child](#)

For more inspiration on learning how to sew, visit our other blogs on the Madam Sew Sewing and Quilting Blog!

