

# QUILLING

The art of paper filigree



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# CONTENTS

## 1 STARTING OUT

---

## 2 WORKING WITH PAPER STRIPS

---

## 3 MAKING SPIRAL COILS

---

## 4 LOOPING TECHNIQUES

---

## 5 TIGHT COILS AND 3D MODELLING

---

## 6 AFFIXING YOUR QUILLING TO A BACKGROUND

---

## 7 SPECIAL EFFECTS

---

## 8 CREATING WITH PAPER STRIPS

---

## 9 BORDERS

---

## 10 INFILLING

---

## FURTHER READING AND SUPPLIES

## INDEX







**A selection of quilled items made by the author, showing a range of applications.**

# STARTING OUT

In the sixteenth century, nuns in France and Italy began trimming strips of paper from the gilded edges of Bible pages and rolling them into filigree shapes to adorn their sacred reliquaries. The results so closely resembled real gold that the process must surely have seemed like alchemy.

Later, in eighteenth-century England, as ‘accomplished ladies of leisure’ employed paper filigree techniques to decorate tea caddies, picture frames and fire screens, their pastime became a versatile creative outlet through which innate artistic talents could be channelled.

The term ‘quilling’ is popularly supposed to have originated from the practice of rolling paper strips around the quills of birds’ feathers in times gone by, but the truth of this is unlikely ever to be proved. What is certain, however, is that the apparent ‘magic’ by which rolled paper can readily be transformed into beautiful filigree shapes will continue to inspire creativity for centuries to come.

Quilling, as defined by the Quilling Guild, is the art of rolling narrow strips of paper and then shaping them to make exquisite designs. These can range from simple gift tags and cards to pictures, jewellery, three-dimensional models or decorations for frames and boxes.

The strips used are typically either 5mm (just under ¼in) or 3mm

( $\frac{1}{8}$ in) wide (sometimes even narrower), and are set on edge so that the design produced has both depth and texture. In fact, quilling has been described as a method for creating pictures that even blind people are able to 'see' through touch!

The intricacy of a quilled design can be both impressive and daunting in equal measure. However, when broken down into its constituent parts (that is, the basic shapes which are all described in detail in this book), a quilling usually reveals itself as much less complex than appearances may suggest.

There is a fluidity to quilling whereby the gentle curves of different shapes fit naturally together. As soon as you begin creating them, you will find that the simple act of arranging and re-arranging your shapes in an exploratory manner produces myriad ideas for attractive patterns. Indeed, this practice is to be positively encouraged, as it helps the beginner to develop a natural feel for the ways different shapes can be assembled.

Multiple shapes can also be assembled together in a composite manner to create more complex elements – a practice which contributes greatly to the overall visual impact of quilling. This should always be borne in mind, even when you are just starting out to learn techniques, as it really does help to fuel the creative process.



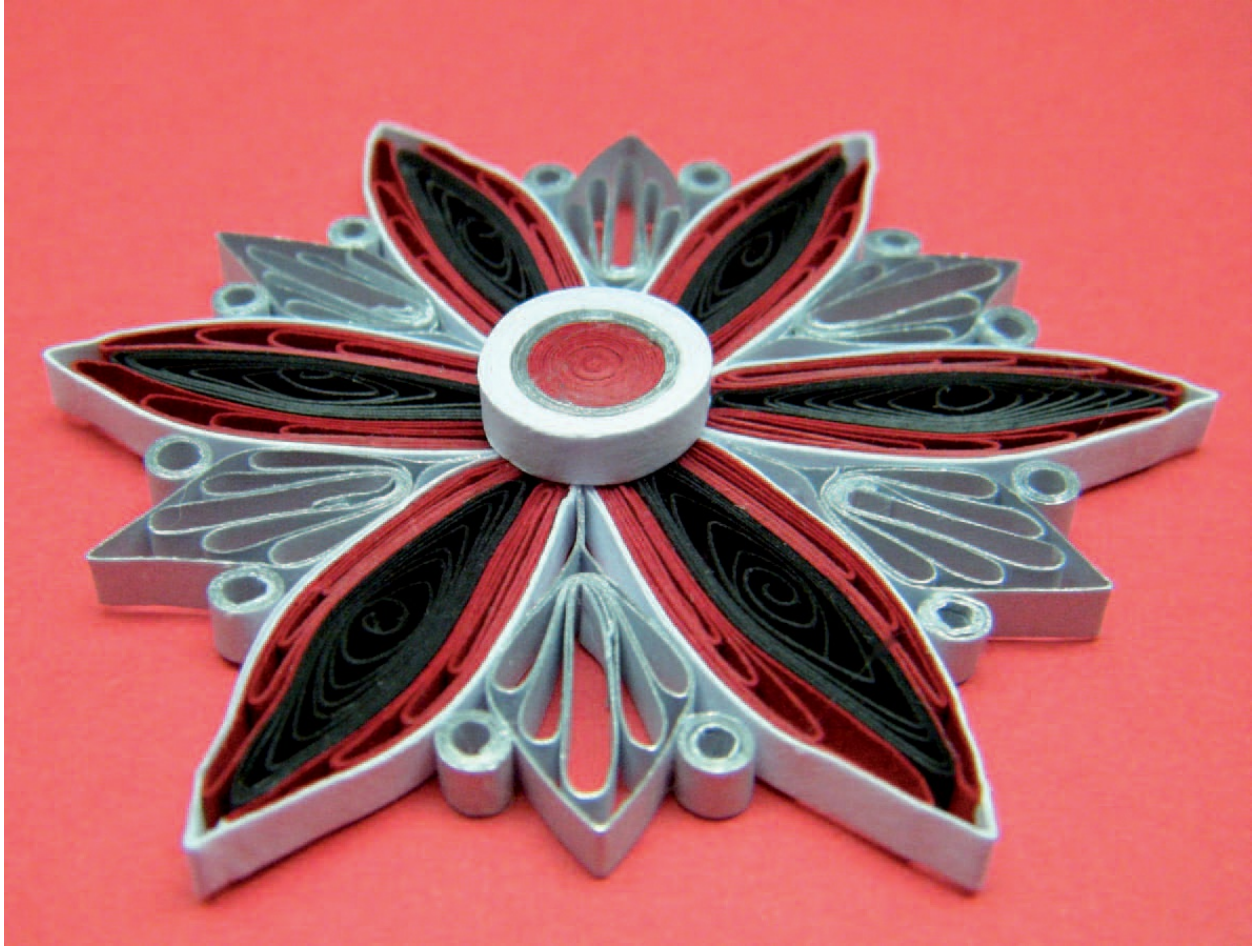


The nine commonly-used quilled shapes shown here can be assembled to create a design such as this butterfly.



Like pieces in a jigsaw puzzle, quilled shapes readily fit together to form designs. Here, curved, leaflike shapes nestle against circles, while coiled filigree shapes touch and intertwine.

At its most fundamental level, there are just three basic elements required to begin quilling: your fingers, paper strips and glue. Various additional tools and accessories may undoubtedly be found useful, as will be seen later in the course of this introductory chapter. To begin with, however, consideration must be given to the two most essential material elements: paper and glue.



Quilled shapes can be combined into composite elements like the petals of this flower.

## Paper

---

Quilling is done with paper which has been cut into narrow strips. The strips may be cut by hand, bought commercially or even produced with a shredder, but the most basic requirement is that the type of paper used should be of sufficient weight/robustness to hold its shape when coiled. In practical terms, this ideally means that strips should have been cut from stock with a minimal weight of 100gsm (US equivalents: 28lb bond stock; 70lb book stock). Strips of a lighter weight can be used, but they are less likely to deliver satisfactory results, especially in the hands of beginners. Heavier strips can also



be utilized, provided they can be manipulated in the fingers to produce smooth shapes. In practice, this takes the range of material suitable for quilling from good quality higher weight paper into the realm of light card.

If cutting your own strips, it is important to remember that the main visual impact of quilling comes from viewing shapes from above after they have been set on edge. The colour and textural integrity of the strips' cut edges is therefore of vital importance. Commercially produced quilling strips are manufactured to satisfy this requirement: a standard strip that is blue on each side, for example, will also have blue edges. By contrast, a sheet of paper selected individually for hand-cutting may be coloured or patterned on one side only, resulting in strips that are bilateral in appearance and which are also likely to have white edges when viewed from above.

Strips that have been cut with a shredder may sometimes have finely serrated edges instead of straight ones, depending on the type of machine that has been used. Serrations may add interest to the appearance of quilled shapes, but straight edges generally produce a more acceptable 'clean-cut' impression.

Commercially produced quilling strips come in a vast array of different colour shades and variations, particularly when sourced from specialist suppliers. Standard, single colour strips can be purchased in a variety of different widths. The length of the strips can vary, too, depending on the brand. They are generally supplied in sinusoidal packs of 100 or more strips, bound at each end by easily detachable webbing.

The choice of commercial strips is not limited to plain, solid colours. 'Graduated' colour strips can be purchased which are dark at one end, fading to a lighter shade at the other. A variation of this is the 'dark centre' option, graduating from white at each end to a coloured section in the centre. Working with such strips produces some



interesting visual effects. Then there are strips with metallic or pearl coated finishes, and others which have been 'edged' with special metallic or holographic applications, producing an opulent and often spectacular appearance in quilled designs – echoing, perhaps, the nuns' gilded papers of old.

Quillers naturally want their work to remain in good condition for as long as possible, and so it is always worth utilizing strips which have been cut from acid-free paper of 'archival' quality.

Quilling strips can sometimes be found in good craft shops, but the best option is to search for details of specialist suppliers – these can readily be found online.

## Glue

---

Poly vinyl acetate (PVA) glue is most commonly used for quilling. Such glue is white in appearance when wet, but has the advantage of drying clear.

As with the paper strips selected for quilling, quality is of paramount importance. A good PVA glue should be quite thick in consistency, unlike the rather thin, 'watery' versions which are typically used in schools.

PVA is water-soluble, and the wet product can therefore be wiped away with a damp cloth should any inadvertent spillages or misplacement occur. It starts to become 'tacky' on exposure to air, but allows for glued surfaces to be repositioned (if necessary) for several minutes following application, making it quite amenable for quillers to use without undue time pressure.

In quilling, glue is applied in very small amounts, ideally just sufficient to secure quilled shapes in place without leaving visible 'blobs' which, although transparent when dry, do nevertheless remain

shiny. A method of application must therefore be adopted which not only dispenses the glue in the requisite small quantities, but also which does so in a convenient and controllable way.

This can be achieved very simply by pouring a small quantity of PVA into a container such as an upturned plastic bottle top, and then dipping the pointed end of a cocktail stick in it as a means of picking up tiny spots of the glue. As an alternative, some quillers prefer just to pour a little glue out onto a tile. The disadvantage, of course, is that the glue starts drying as soon as it is exposed to air, so the supply has to be constantly refreshed while quilling. Needless to say, the source container in which the main stock of PVA is stored should be always be kept closed when not in use.



**A finely-tipped glue dispenser (left) delivers PVA in tiny quantities when needed. An alternative is to dip a cocktail stick into a small pool of freshly-poured glue.**

The alternative is to invest in a glue dispenser with a very fine metal applicator tip which can be purchased from specialist quilling suppliers. In this type of applicator, the glue is contained in a plastic bottle which is turned upside down and then gently squeezed whenever a spot of PVA is needed. A pin is inserted into the metal tip when the dispenser is not in use, preventing air from getting in and causing the glue to set. Dispensers like this are best kept inverted in a jar or similar container at all times, so that the glue never gets the chance to drain back away from the nozzle. When the pin is not in place (whilst the dispenser is in use), it is always a good idea to have a damp sponge or rag at the bottom of the container to keep the tip moist and prevent the glue from clogging or drying out.

## Other items that can be useful

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Once the basics in terms of paper strips and glue have been obtained, it is also worth considering the acquisition of various other items which may assist the quilling process.

### Quilling tools

There are two different types of 'quilling tool' on the market which many quillers like to utilize. The first of these is generally referred to as a 'slotted tool' and is characterized by a tip which is split into two prongs, rather like a miniature tuning fork. This type of tool is useful for creating twists and turns in a quilling strip, which must first be inserted between the prongs. Many quillers also favour using a tool of this kind to secure the end of a strip when creating spiral coils; you can read

more about the relative pros and cons of this approach in [Chapter 3](#).



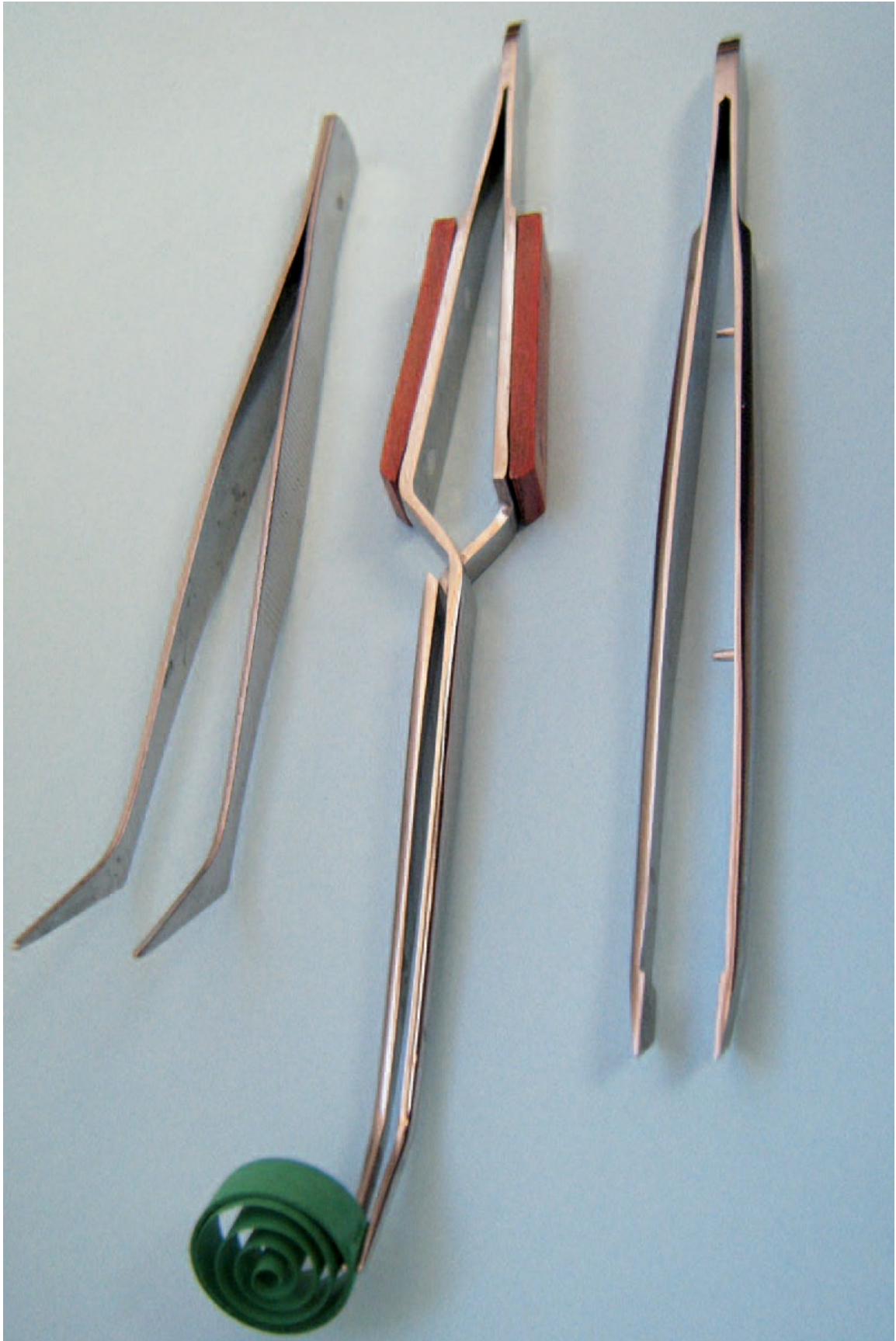
**Slotted tools (left and centre) are sometimes used to grip and twist quilling strips, creating a kink in the paper. A needle tool (right) can be used as an alternative to produce coils with a neat round centre.**

The second type of 'quilling tool' is a straight, unslotted, finely pointed needle which has been inserted into a wooden or plastic handle. A needle tool of this type can be useful for creating coils and also for poking tiny pieces of paper into position when quilling. Needle tools can additionally be used in place of a wooden cocktail stick for applying tiny spots of glue. There is no pressing need to invest in one, however, since hat pins or corsage pins can serve just as well.

## Tweezers

A good pair of tweezers can be invaluable for picking up delicate quilled shapes and placing them into position when assembling a design. Tweezers with pointed tips are probably the most useful, although a set of different types can be a worthwhile investment.





Tweezers with pointed tips (left) are useful for picking up quilled shapes. Flat tipped tweezers (right) provide a broader grip which can assist when gluing down the ends of spiral coils. The tweezers in the centre are self-locking, which means that they maintain their grip after you have put them down, leaving your hands free.

## Cutting tools

Sharp, short-bladed scissors are invaluable for cutting quilling strips neatly and also, when creating quilled flowers, for ‘fringing’ wider strips at regular intervals. (Fringing techniques will be discussed in [Chapter 7](#).) A self-healing cutting mat, scalpel knife and metal ruler are also essential if you are considering cutting your own quilling strips from larger sheets of paper.

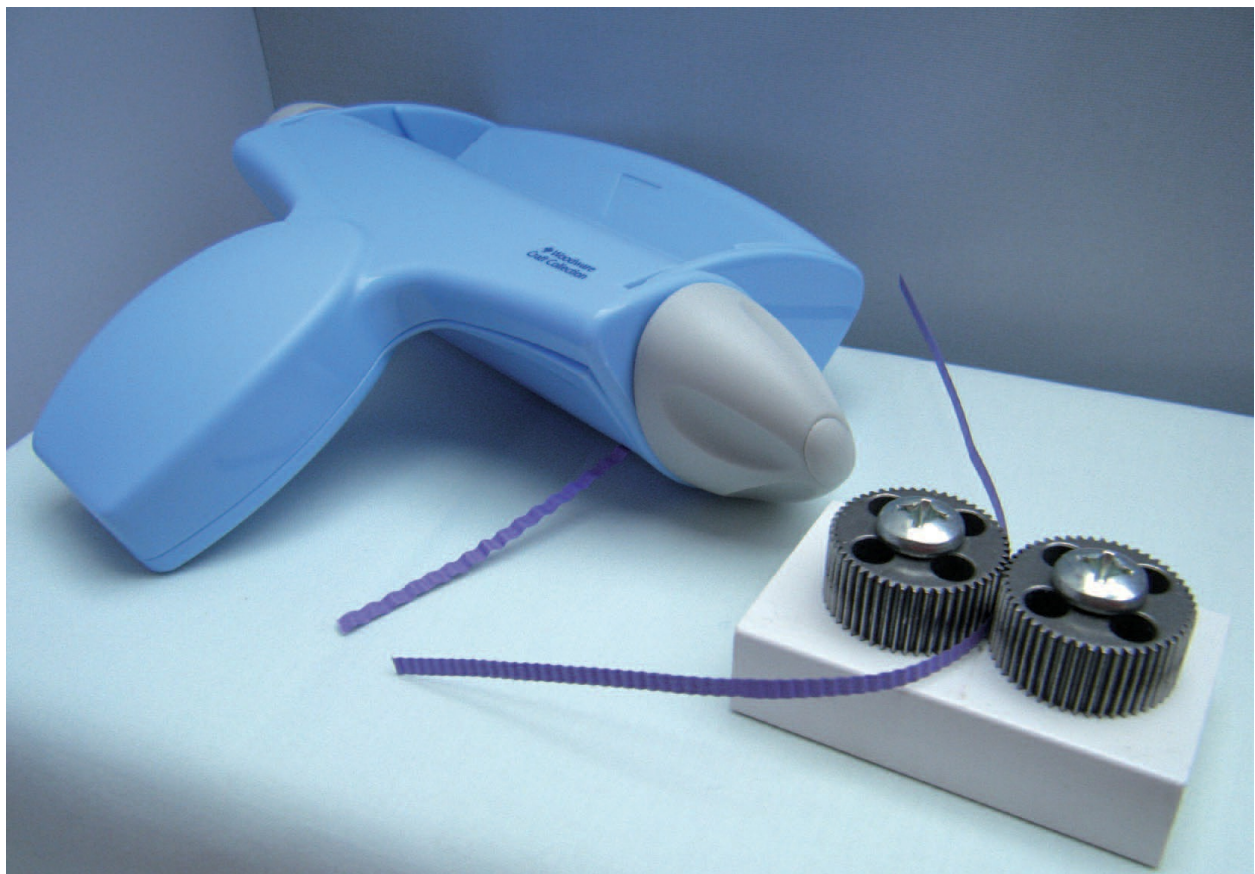
## Dowels

A set of round wooden dowels of different diameters will be handy if you want to create open rings of paper in uniform sizes (see [Chapter 5](#)). It is also worth gathering together a collection of various smooth-sided cylindrical household objects such as plastic bottles, small glass jars and applicator tubes for making rings.

## Work-board

When creating and assembling quilled shapes, there are often times when it is useful to be able to pin different elements together whilst the glue which has been applied to them dries. Pinning of shapes is also sometimes utilized in looping techniques (see [Chapter 4](#)). Plastic-backed cork quilling boards are commercially available which typically have a range of various circle- and shape-sizer holes in the plastic on one side, whilst enabling round-headed pins to be inserted into the cork on the other. Such boards can be used for pinning, as long as the

cork is covered with a layer of transparent cling-film to prevent glue soaking in and causing quilled pieces to become accidentally stuck to the surface. The layer of cork on these boards is generally quite thin, however, and does not allow for pins to be inserted very deeply. Instead, a more practical work-board can quite easily be created using a stack of three or four same-size pieces of foam-filled artists' mount board wrapped tightly together with cling-film. Such an arrangement enables pins to be pushed in to the full depth of the stack, ensuring that work is held securely in position at all times.



To give paper strips a crimped appearance, they can be fed through a device called a 'ribbler' (left) or between the cogs of a crimping tool (right).

Because your work-board will be covered with transparent cling-film, there is the opportunity to place patterns or graph paper on top of the board beneath the film to guide the assembly of your quilled pieces. Square graph paper is very useful for lining shapes up

accurately, whilst a round polar graph is invaluable for ensuring the symmetry of circular designs. Additionally, you can laminate graph paper sheets of this type and use them as convenient wipe-clean work surfaces on which to assemble quilled pieces in cases where pinning of work is not required.

## Miscellaneous items

While quilling, you will find it very useful to have a pack of wet wipes to hand for dampening the ends of strips, cleaning up unwanted glue and wiping sticky fingers. A supply of cocktail sticks and a few cotton buds can also be handy. You will certainly need a ruler for occasions when you need to measure lengths of strips. Additionally, a wide bulldog-clip will be of assistance if ever you decide to do any fringing ([Chapter 7](#)).

Every quiller has their own unique collection of tools/accessories selected individually for the kind of work they like to produce. The ones you choose will be a mirror of your own creativity!







**A selection of quilling strips.**

# WORKING WITH PAPER STRIPS

The many different varieties in which commercially produced quilling strips are available give a clue to the amazing versatility of paper filigree as a visual art.

Many beginners like to start their quilling adventure by using 5mm ( $\frac{1}{4}$ in) wide strips, which are narrow enough to create shapes that are reasonably delicate in appearance, yet wide enough not to be too fiddly when mastering techniques.

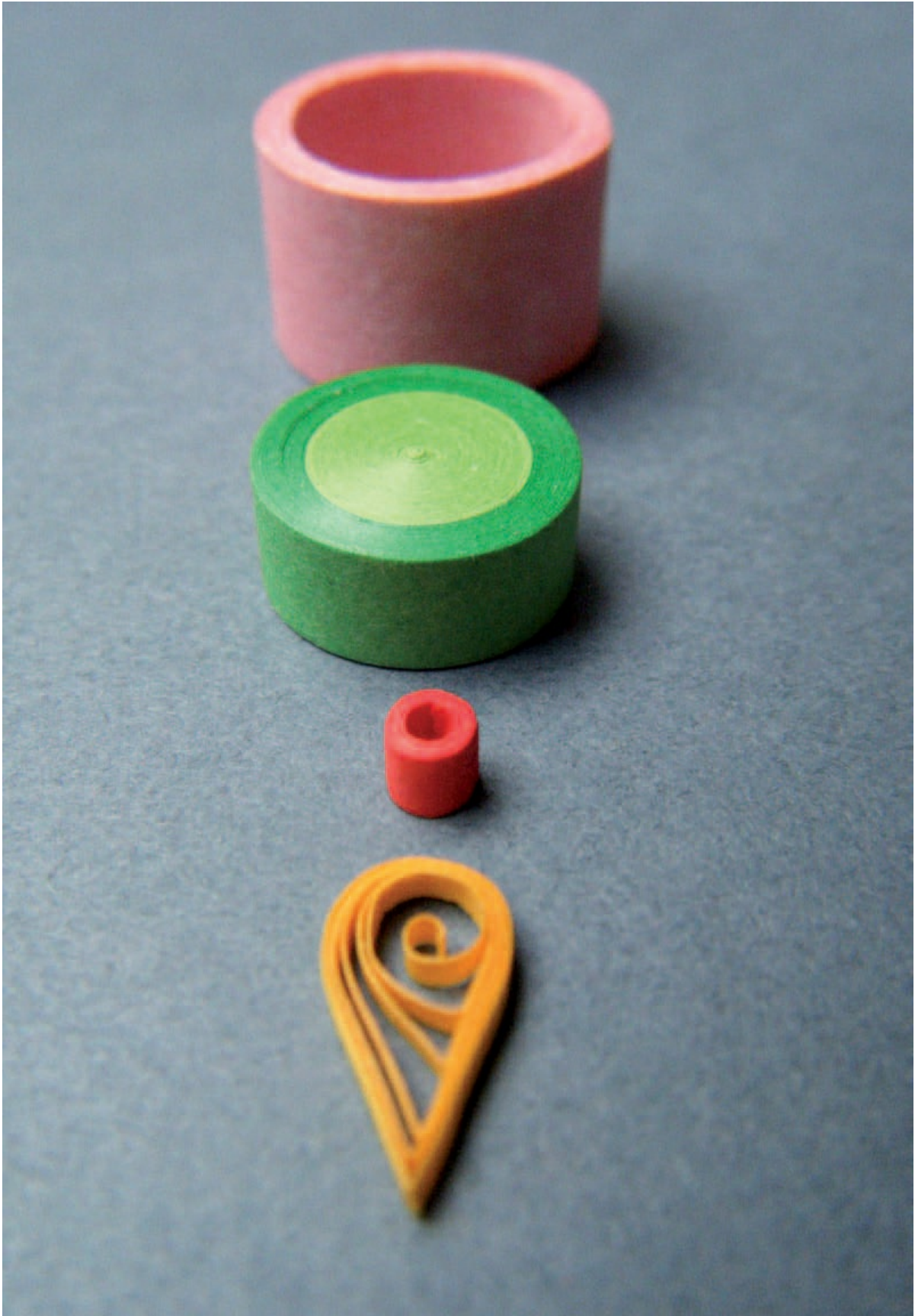
Wider 10mm (just under  $\frac{1}{2}$ in) strips are also available which give a very strong visual impression of depth when used for shapes which are set on edge.

The most commonly used strip width is 3mm ( $\frac{1}{8}$ in), whilst some very dextrous quillers may also opt for 2mm or even 1.5mm ( $\frac{1}{16}$ in or less) to achieve the maximum delicacy and fineness in their work.

By purchasing strips to which a special coating has been applied along one edge, it is possible to create visually arresting shapes that sparkle and shine in different lights. To create quilled effects resembling precious metals, look for strips which have been edged with gold, silver, copper or bronze-like applications. Metallic colour edgings are also available, whereby a pink strip may be edged with a complementary metallic pink, for example, or blue with metallic blue. Strips can also be purchased with holographic (holofoil) edging, which



deliver a spectacular shimmering effect, particularly when tightly coiled or closely packed together.



**A sequence of quilled shapes made from different width quilling strips, ranging from 10mm ( $\frac{1}{2}$ in) at the back, through to 5mm ( $\frac{1}{4}$ in), 3mm ( $\frac{1}{8}$ in) and 1.5mm ( $\frac{1}{16}$ in) at the front.**

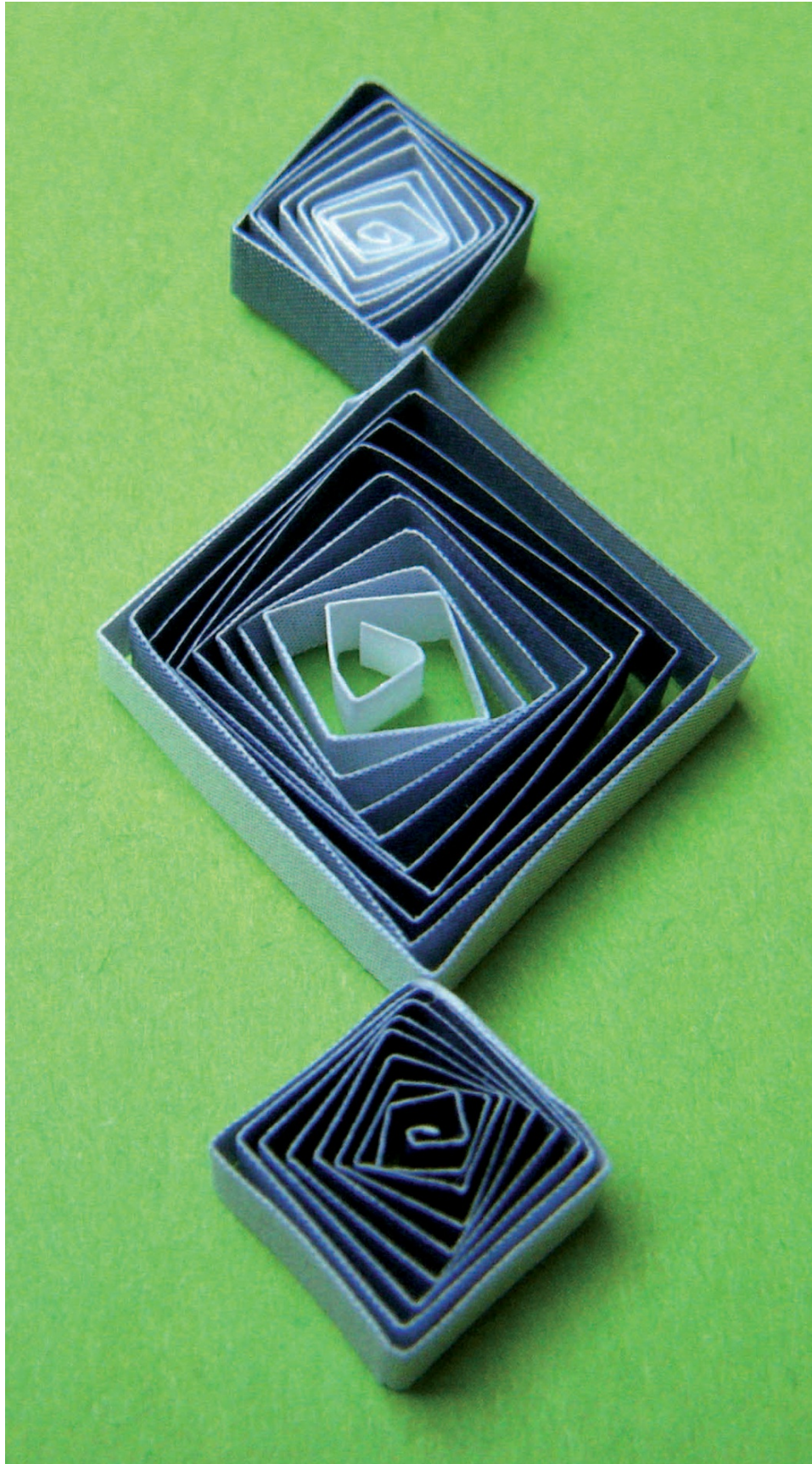
Even if you are cutting your own strips, it is possible to apply coloured/metallic edgings to them using marker or gel pens.

You may also come across strips being offered for sale with a pearlized (semi-matt) finish on one or both sides. When pearlized on one side only (and white on the other), such strips are intended for use when wrapping quilled shapes (as described in [Chapter 9](#)), in situations where only the coloured side is intended to show.



**This quilled motif has been made with a combination of different silver-edged 3mm ( $\frac{1}{8}$ in) strips: silver-edged pastel blue at the top; silver-edged solid silver in the centre; silver-edged black at the base.**







Graduated strips, in which the colour graduates from dark to light along their length, can be used to create interesting and varied effects, as illustrated by these vortex shapes.

## Conditioning strips

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Strips are generally supplied loosely coiled in packets so that, when first detached from the webbing that joins them together at the top and bottom, they tend to lie naturally in an S shape. The curve in the strip is unlikely to echo the final shape that the quiller desires to make, but a little knowledge about the composition of paper makes this natural curvature quite easy to change and control.

Paper is composed of a mesh of fibres which can be stretched or broken by dragging the edge of something solid along it under pressure. For quilling strips to be successfully manipulated into different shapes, it is often necessary to break down the fibres so that they no longer curve as they did in the packet, but instead take on a new degree of curl in the desired direction – a process which is known as conditioning. Just as a ribbon will curl up when pulled tightly over the closed blades of a pair of scissors, so the curve of a paper quilling strip can be redefined after the edge of a ruler, paper creaser (sometimes called a bone folder) or the tip of your thumbnail has been dragged along its length.

When conditioning strips with your thumbnail, be extremely careful! Concentrate on pulling your nail slowly down along the centre of the strip rather than along its edge. The edges of cut paper are notoriously sharp – particularly on the ‘wrong’ side (see *below*) – and inadvertent paper cuts can be painfully deep.



**Quillers store their strips in a variety of ways to prevent them getting tangled up or crushed. Here, strip packs are segregated in the compartments of two kitchen cutlery drawer inserts. Others prefer to suspend their strips in some way so that they hang down straight, or separate and store individual strips of particular colours inside cardboard tubes.**

The heavier/thicker the paper, the more conditioning it will require in order to mould it into a shape that will suit your requirements, but also the better it will retain that shape as you work with it. For this reason, strips produced from paper stock weighing significantly less than 100gsm (US equivalents: 28lb bond stock; 70lb book stock) can be quite difficult to work with, as they are relatively flimsy and lacking in the necessary strength to hold a well-defined curve. This is something to bear very much in mind, not only when purchasing quilling strips but also when cutting your own.

## Right and wrong sides

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As you become familiar with quilling strips, you will become aware that they have a 'right' and a 'wrong' side. It is helpful to be able to recognize the difference, because disparity between the orientation of strips in some applications can spoil the finished appearance of your quilled shapes. The ability to differentiate between the two sides is also helpful when learning how to condition and roll spiral coils.

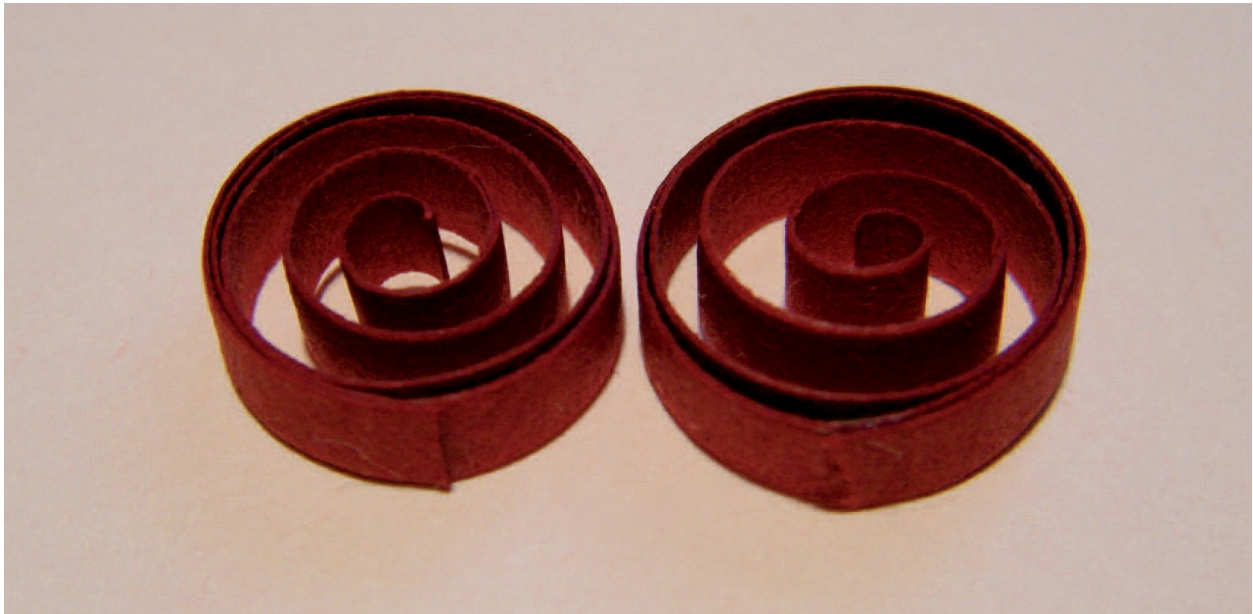
Commercially produced quilling strips are cut from large sheets of paper using a guillotine. The side of the paper on which the guillotine blade comes down takes on a very slightly convex (domed) appearance when cut, resulting in strips which curve downwards at the edges along their length. This side of the strip is the 'right' side, and it usually feels smooth to the touch. By contrast, the 'wrong' side can usually be felt to be slightly concave (cupped), and is often noticeably rougher when you rub it with your fingers. It is good practice to start trying to perceive the difference between the two sides as soon as you start learning to quill.

## Dividing strips by tearing

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You will find that you do not always need to use a whole full-length quilling strip to create a single quilled shape. In fact, it is common practice to divide up strips into halves, quarters, eighths or even sixteenths depending on the requirements of your chosen design. The quickest way to divide up a strip is by folding and tearing. For example, simply fold a 45cm (18in) strip in half, tear along the fold and you will then have two separate 22.5cm (9in) lengths. These are referred to as half-length strips. Fold each of these in half, tear again, and you will have produced quarters. Fold each of the quarters and

tear again to produce eighths, and so on. The approach is the same even if you find yourself working with packets of shorter length strips such as 30cm (12in) – simply plan your requirements in terms of halves, quarters, etc. and you can be sure that the shapes you make will be proportionate to one other.



The join in the coil on the left is clearly visible because it was made by gluing down the cut end of a strip. The join in the right hand coil was made with a torn end, and is therefore much harder to see.

After first detaching an individual strip from its webbing, you will see that each end is a neat, straight cut. Once you have torn the strip into fractions, however, the torn ends will appear fibrous and more ragged. Recognition of this difference can be used to great advantage in terms of the quality of your quilling.

When making a closed loose spiral coil, for example, as will soon be described in [Chapter 3](#), the shape is secured with a tiny dot of glue at the end of the strip that you have just rolled. If that end is a straight cut, the position of the join will be very obvious to see. If it is a torn end, however, it will be much less obvious, as the loose fibres which have been torn blend in almost invisibly with the side of the strip



beneath. It is worthwhile, therefore, to pre-plan your joins so that they always utilize torn ends. By contrast, however, a sharply cut end always looks better at the centre of a spiral. You can always transform a torn end into a cut end by trimming it with scissors, or change a cut end to a torn one by tearing its tip, if necessary. All it takes when quilling is just a little pre-planning in order to obtain the best visual results.





**An array of spiral coils and open filigree.**



# MAKING SPIRAL COILS

Many of the most widely used shapes in quilling are based on spiral coils. These can take the form of open coils and scrollwork (as typically seen in the design of wrought iron gates and balconies), or as round closed coils which are subsequently pinched and shaped into many different variations.

At the heart of each is a central spiral, and it may be helpful at this stage to be reminded of the true geometry of this beautiful, naturally occurring form. A true spiral begins at a fixed central point, circulating in whorls around that point at an ever-increasing distance.

In quilling, spiral coils can be created in various different ways. Some quillers choose to utilize a slotted quilling tool, by securing the tip of a paper strip between its prongs and then using it to roll up the strip along its length in a continuous twisting motion. However, the resulting coil will never fully share the beauty of a natural spiral, since its centre will inevitably be characterized by a noticeable kink at the point where the tool was inserted.

An alternative method is to dampen the end of a strip and roll it around the tip of a narrow pointed object such as a needle. Such an approach tends to result in a coil which spirals out from the edge of a small central circle rather than a single fixed point.



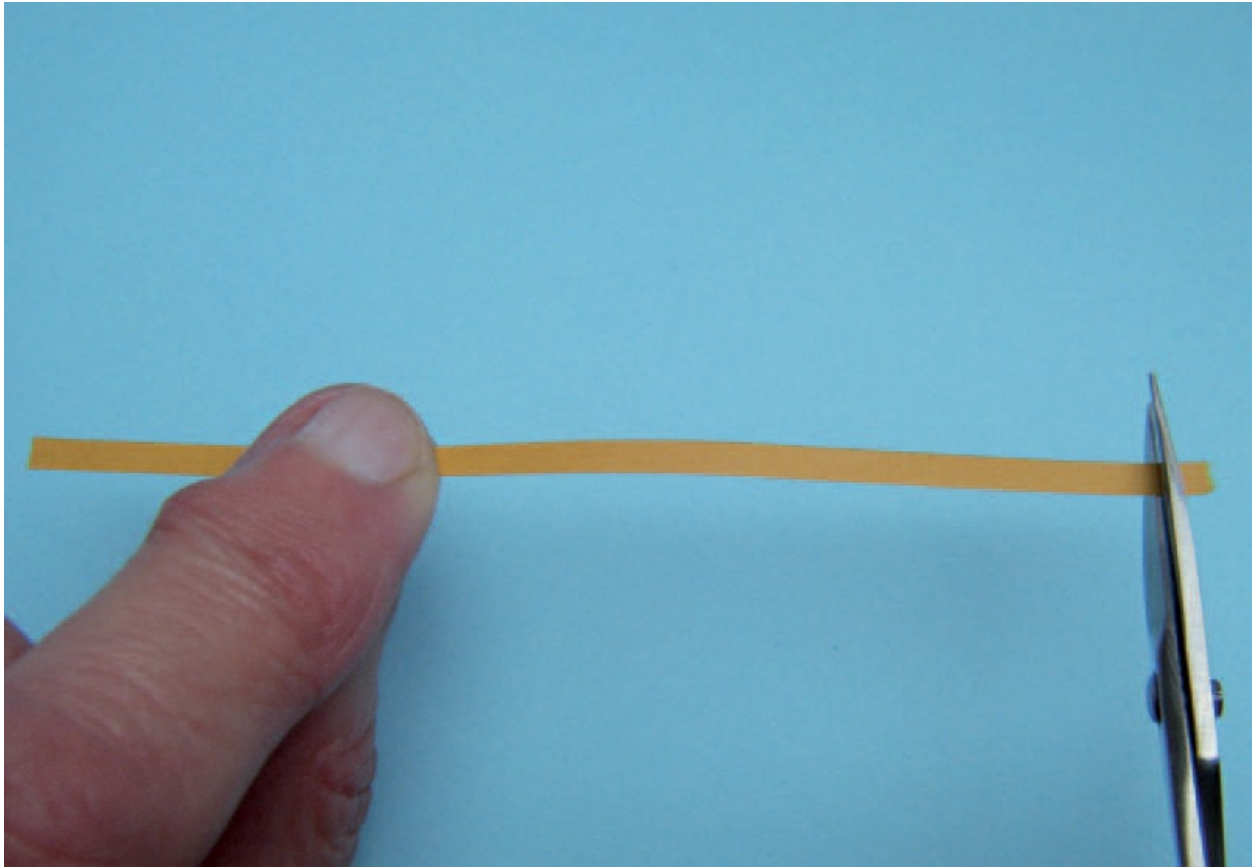
**This sea-shell provides a beautiful example of a spiral as seen in nature. A tiny hole is clearly visible at its central point.**



**The coil at the top left of this picture has been made with a slotted tool and clearly shows a kink at the centre. The rather uneven, round-centred coil at the top right was made with a needle tool. The coil in the foreground was finger-rolled to obtain a near-perfect spiral centre.**

By contrast, a coil simply rolled between the fingers, without the aid of a tool, comes closest to echoing the natural form of a true spiral. Finger-rolling is therefore the method favoured by those quillers who are particularly concerned about the aesthetics of their spirals. This chapter has been written from that particular view-point. It must be stressed, however, that there is absolutely nothing wrong with the use of slotted or needle-style quilling tools by those who prefer to do so – it is simply a matter of personal choice.

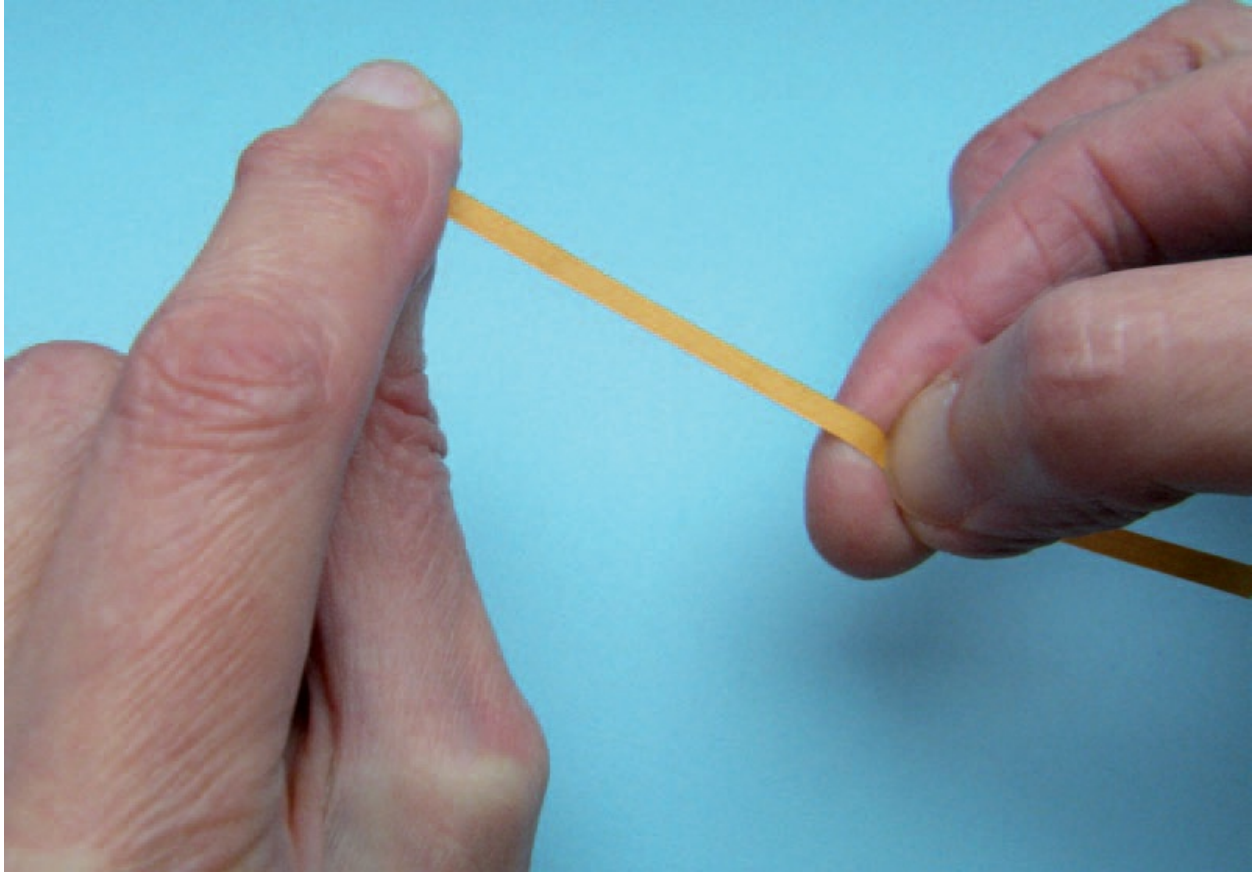
## Step by step: making an open spiral coil



**Step 1** A torn strip end is trimmed.

1. Take a quarter length strip measuring 7.5–11.5cm (3–4.5in) long. Trim the ends with scissors as necessary to ensure that both ends are sharp, not torn. (No glued joins will be created with this particular shape so there is no reason to retain a torn end, and a sharp cut looks better both at the centre and the tail end of an open spiral.)





**Step 2 Conditioning helps the paper start to curl. Here, it is being done with the thumbnail.**

2. Condition the strip firmly on both sides with your thumbnail, a paper creaser or ruler to break down the fibres of the paper and introduce some curl.



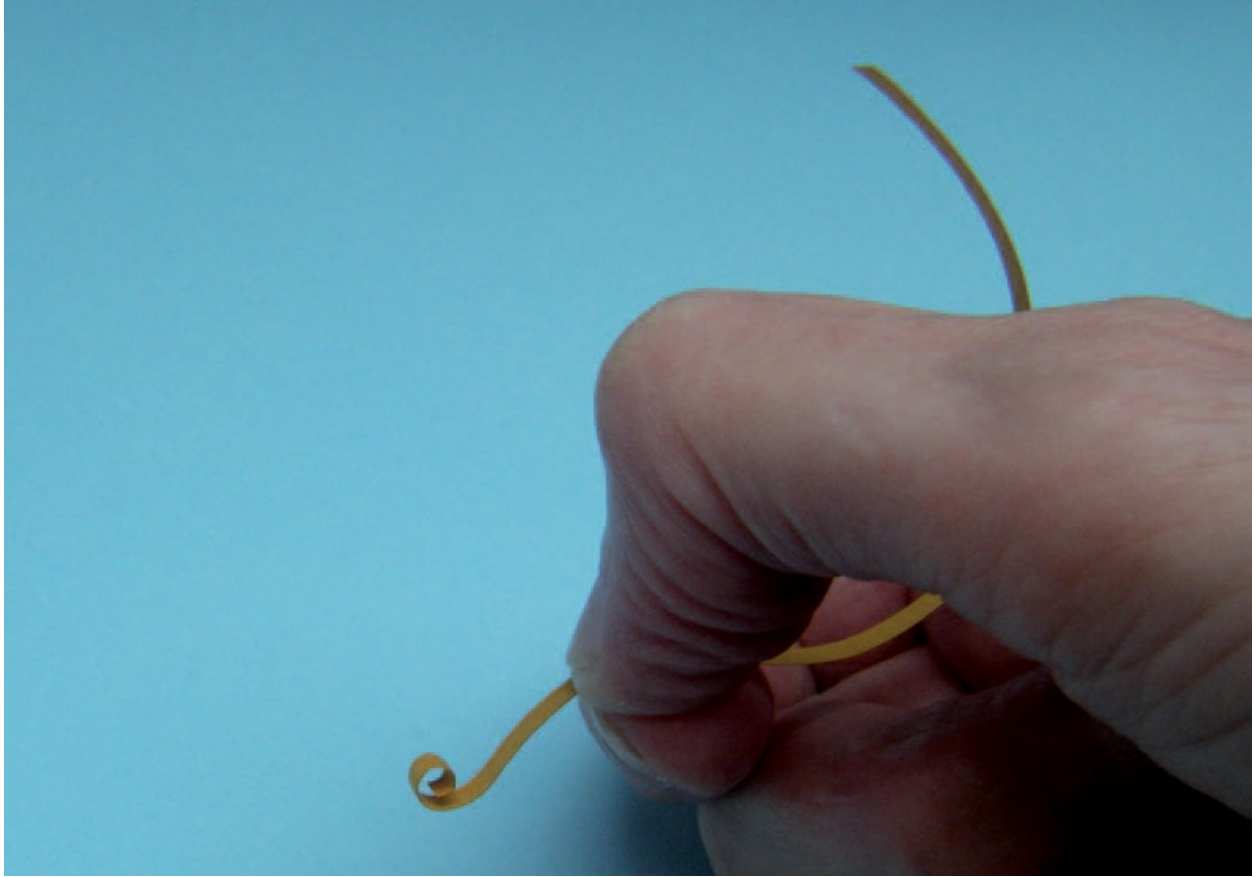
**Step 3 Create a hook at the end of the strip.**

3. Keeping the wrong (rough) side of the strip towards you, scratch the tip of one end quite sharply to break down the fibres even more. Using dampened fingers, lightly bend and roll this scratched end back-wards and forwards repeatedly between your finger and thumb (with the wrong side of the strip on the inside) until a well-defined hook is formed. This will be the centre of your spiral.



**Step 4 Manipulate the hook gently to form a spiral centre.**

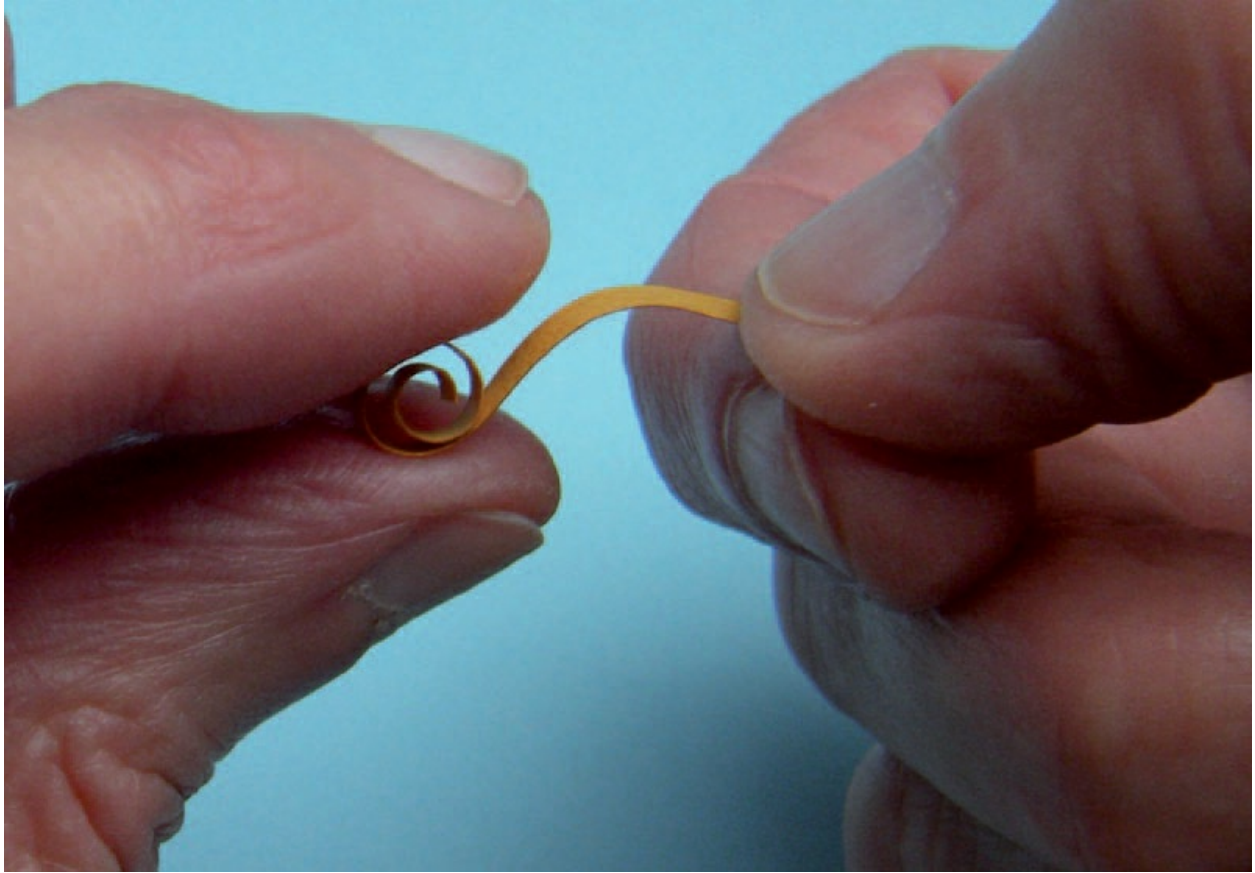
4. Adjust and re-roll the hooked end of the strip between your fingers in order to distance it from the side of the strip below, forming a recognizable spiral centre.



**Step 5 Prepare to start rolling up your spiral centre.**

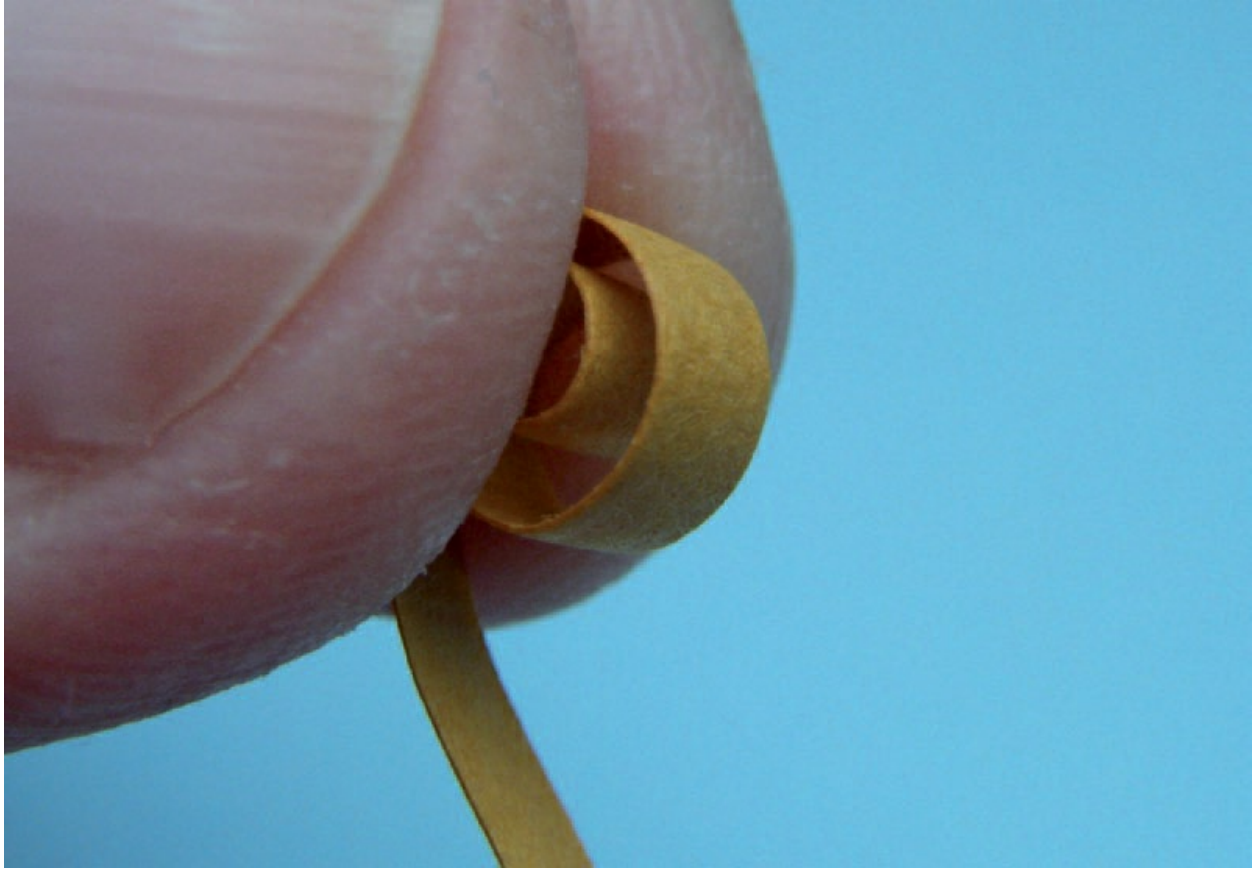
5. Hold the remaining length of the strip horizontally between the fingers and thumb of one hand, about 3cm (1in) away from the central hook you created in steps 3 and 4.





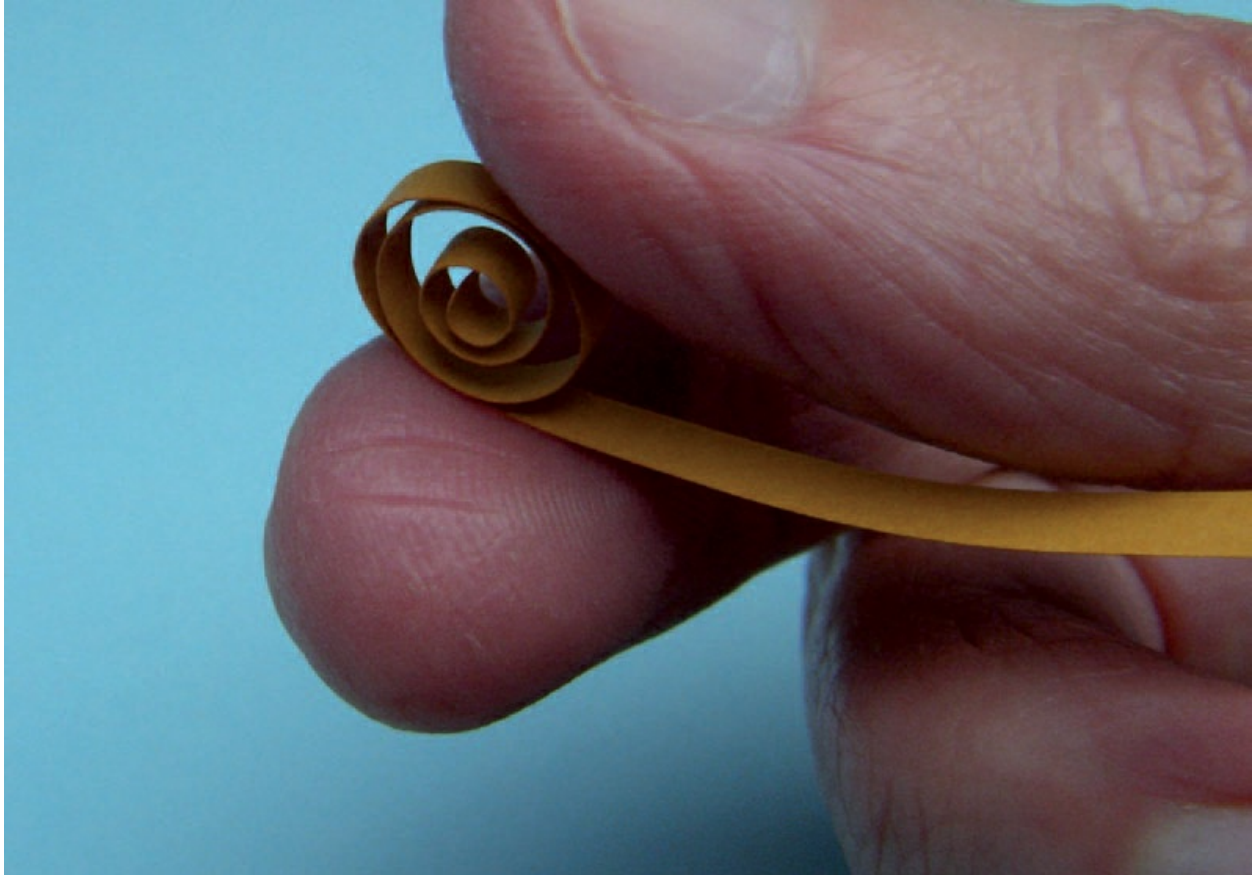
**Step 6 Push gently to begin the roll.**

6. Using the dampened finger and thumb of your other hand, roll the central spiral hook forward quite loosely for a short distance. This is achieved by pushing it gently. After a couple of rolling motions, you will find that the coil starts to become a little too big for it to be comfortable continuing in this manner. Now is the time to change your grip.



**Step 7 Change your grip to hold the spiral by its sides.**

7. Hold the sides of your partly formed spiral lightly between the forefinger and thumb of one hand.



**Step 8** After transferring the spiral into your other hand, you can now continue to roll it from above the remaining strip (as shown) or alternatively from below - whichever you find most comfortable. As the spiral forms, just keep passing it back and forth between your 'rolling hand' and your 'holding hand' until the end of the strip is reached.

8. Now pass the spiral to your other hand and continue rolling it gently between finger and thumb for just a short distance, this time using a pulling motion. Then pass it back and hold it momentarily by the sides again as you did in step 7. From this point, rolling becomes a rhythmical two-handed action as you continue repeating steps 8 and 7 alternately: roll a short way, pass the spiral momentarily back into the other hand while you reposition your 'rolling' finger and thumb, roll a short distance further and so on until you reach the end of the strip.



**Step 9 Do not be afraid to allow the finished spiral to relax and open out.**

9. When you have reached the end, let the spiral go completely and allow it to relax. Be assured that it will not revert to being a straight length of paper again as soon as you have placed it on the table! As it relaxes, the whorls of your spiral will open out and reveal their beauty. You have created an open spiral coil.

Before proceeding further, take a brief moment to reflect on your technique. If you find you have been holding the centre of the spiral in one hand and simultaneously wrapping the uncoiled tail of the strip around and around it as though it were a spool, it's important to recognize that you are winding instead of rolling. This is a commonly made mistake, and is unlikely to produce a beautiful, even coil. Carefully review steps 5–9 and have another go.

If you find it difficult to form the initial hook as described in step 3, try dampening the end of the strip and then shaping it around the tip of



a cocktail stick or needle. If you choose to do this, however, be sure not to skip step 4 – you will still need to re-roll and manipulate your hook into a proper spiral centre before proceeding.

If you are not happy with your finished coil, simply unroll it very gently and then roll it up again, focusing on making the whorls a little looser or tighter as required. Once a strip has been coiled, you may even find that it spirals all the better the second time around – just think of the first rolling as extra conditioning.

The technique of finger-rolling does undoubtedly require a little practice, but the effort involved pays massive dividends later on as you transform your coils into beautiful quilled pieces. Enjoy the process!



Open coils can be grouped together to create attractive borders and motifs. Here, the three green coils have been placed together in a trefoil shape, while the lilac and purple

coils have been positioned in an interlocking fashion. The two red coils were made without rolling the spirals all the way to the ends of the strips, leaving the tails just gently curved after a little extra conditioning.

## Open coil variations

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After making a few open spiral coils as described above, you will begin to see how conditioning a paper strip helps to form the basis of your desired quilling shape. For the basic open coil, conditioning the strip on both sides broke down the fibres sufficiently in a general way for a neat, circular spiral to be formed. In other variations, however, it may be more appropriate to condition different sections of the strip in particular ways, as will be seen below.

A simple, yet very beautiful open coil shape is the C scroll, which resembles the semi-circular curve of a letter C with scrolls at either end. To make one, take a quarter length strip 7.5–11.5cm (3–4.5in) long, with neatly cut ends. Starting in the centre of the strip on the wrong side, condition it as far as the right-hand end, and then do the same thing in the opposite direction, conditioning from the centre to the left-hand end. The result should be a curved strip which quite obviously wants to form itself into a circle.

To create the scrolls, create a spiral centre and roll gently for a short distance with a pushing motion as you did when starting the open spiral coil, but this time roll from each end towards (but no further than) the centre of the curved strip. Release the shape, and then gently unfurl the scrolls very slightly as necessary to open them up and reveal the finished C, whose curved back section was created as a result of the initial conditioning.



**Working with C scrolls: the initial conditioned strip can be seen at the top left of the picture, with an example of the finished shape underneath. To the right is a simple quilled motif in which two C scrolls (made with quarter length strips) have been glued together back-to-back.**

A similar approach is taken with the S scroll, except that this time you condition from the centre of the strip to one end on the wrong side, and then from the centre to the opposite end on the right side, creating the basic shape of the S.





**Here, the two C scrolls made previously have now been complemented by two additional S scrolls which were made with eighth length strips. Note the difference in the shape of the initial conditioned strip for an S scroll at the top left.**

C and S scrolls require nothing more than appropriate conditioning to get them started. Other types of open coils require an initial fold to be made in the strip in addition to conditioning, as can be seen in the heart, antennae and cherries variations.

To create a heart, take a short strip length and fold it in half, with the wrong side on the inside. Again, a quarter strip measuring 7.5cm–11.5cm (3in–4.5in) is an excellent length to begin practising with. Condition both halves of the folded strip on the wrong side from the centre to the end, so that you have a V shape with the tips of the strip



turning inwards. Create the scrolls by rolling each end inwards as far as the centre fold, just as you did previously. Try to achieve two matching scrolls by gently unfurling and re-rolling them if necessary. When you are happy with the scrolls of your heart, you can finesse the shape by pinching the central fold between your fingers whilst gently pressing down on the top of the two scrolls with your other hand. This helps to exaggerate the curve of the heart's sides.

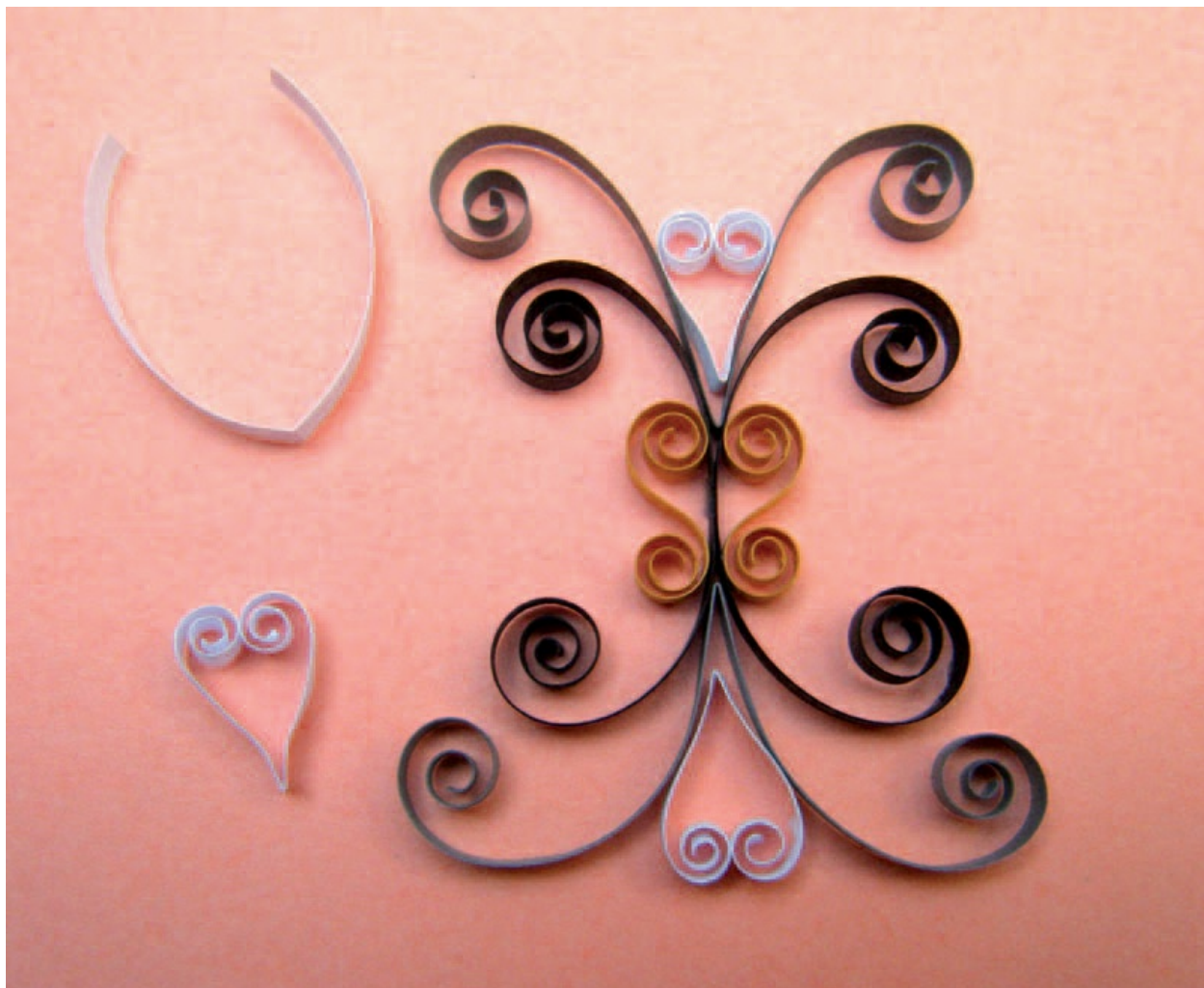
Exactly the same approach can be used to create antennae or cherries, by adjusting the conditioning as appropriate. In antennae, the scrolls are rolled outwards rather than inwards; in cherries, both scrolls are rolled in the same direction, one just a little further than the other.

Combining these different filigree shapes together results in intricate-looking and very elegant designs. To the untrained eye, such designs may appear complex, but that impression is easily dispelled once you are able to recognize the work's component parts.

Having mastered the basic shapes, you can differentiate them still further by varying the position of the fold in your strips and also the distance that your scrolls are rolled. Remember, too, that conditioning can be used to introduce extra curves to any part of a shape, or even to straighten out curves which are too pronounced. A little experimentation is all it takes to develop a filigree style that is all your own.



**Two pairs of antennae have now been added to this filigree design. They were each made by first folding a quarter length strip in half with the wrong side on the inside and then conditioning the two halves outwards as shown at the top left.**



**Hearts now nestle inside the antennae, adding further filigree detail. They were each made by first folding an eighth length strip in half with the wrong side on the inside and then conditioning the two halves inwards as shown at the top left. To emphasize the curved shape of the sides of the heart, the tops of the scrolls were gently pushed down whilst pinching the fold at the base.**



To complete the design, a pair of cherries has been inserted on each side of the S scrolls. These were made in exactly the same way as the antennae, except that both scrolls are facing in the same direction.

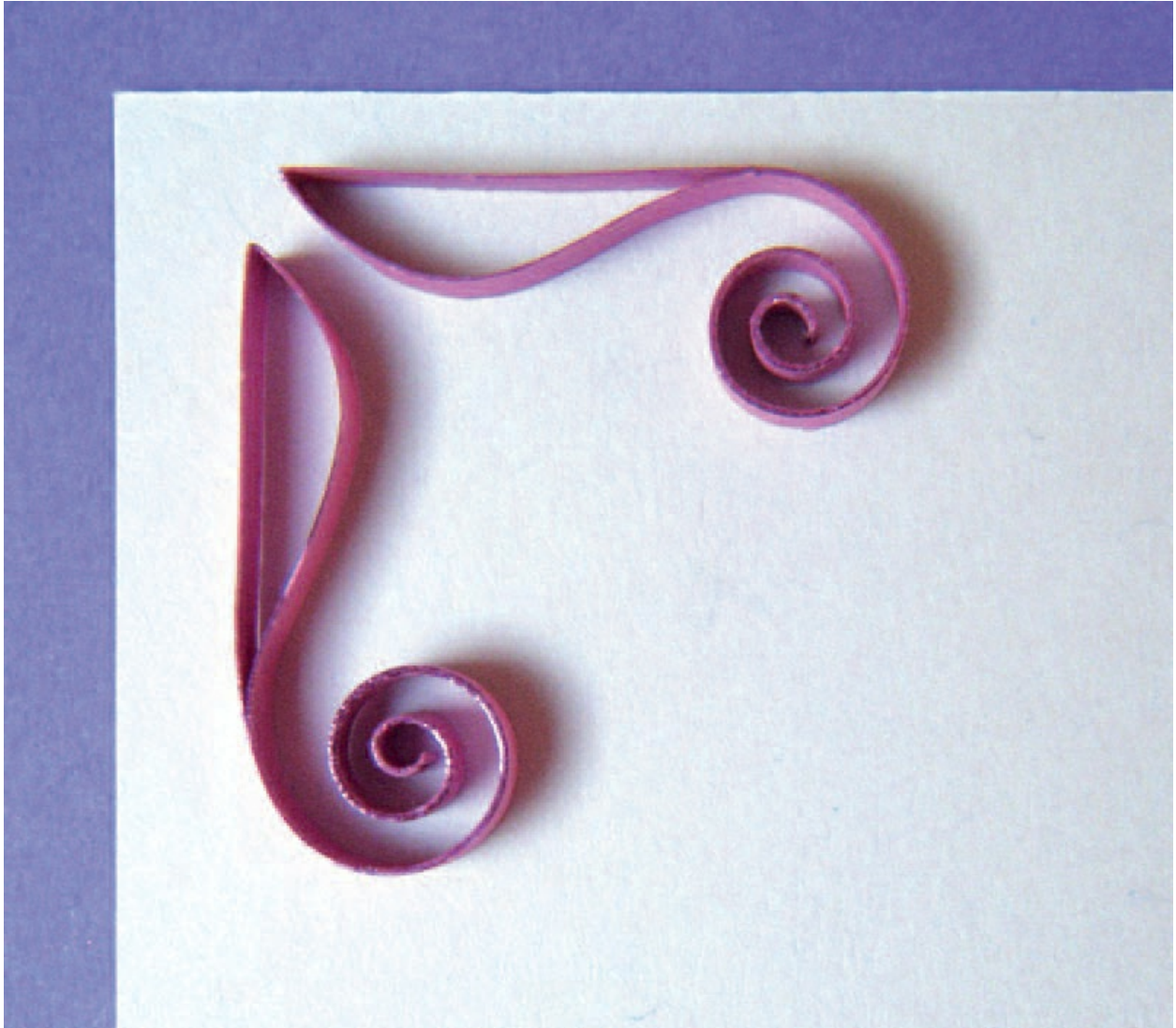




**Interesting effects can be produced by rolling scrolled ends by different amounts so that the resulting shapes are asymmetrical.**

Another useful open coil shape is the P scroll (sometimes called a seahorse), which is easily made by rolling up a folded strip. To make one, take a short strip length (a quarter strip is again ideal for practice), trim both ends with scissors, then fold it in half with the wrong side on the inside. Dampen both the cut ends, form a spiral centre with them both together and roll them up for a short distance in the direction of the fold. The excess strip length on one side will

automatically begin to bow outwards, creating a curved shape beneath the scroll you have formed. Shapes like this can look very attractive when joined together back-to-back in a design, or positioned as border pieces to mark out corners.



**P scrolls, placed at right-angles to each other, make excellent border motifs for corners.**

Design inspiration for the use of open spiral coils is easy to find once you start to look around you. Keep your eye on metalwork when you are out and about: ornamental gates, railings and balconies make extensive use of similar shapes, and they are often put together in

impressively intricate ways which can easily be interpreted in quilling.

## Closed loose coils

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This chapter began by describing the method for creating an open spiral coil, whose shape was formed simply by rolling without the need to use any glue. Now it is time to take that technique a stage further and create a closed loose coil – the shape that is perhaps the most widely used and popular basis for paper quilled designs.

A closed loose coil is simply an open coil whose end has been glued down to create a neat circular shape with a spiralling interior. All the same steps that you used to create an open coil can still be followed, except that this time one end of the strip must remain torn rather than cut at Step 1 – this is so that it blends in neatly when it is glued down (as described in [Chapter 2](#)).

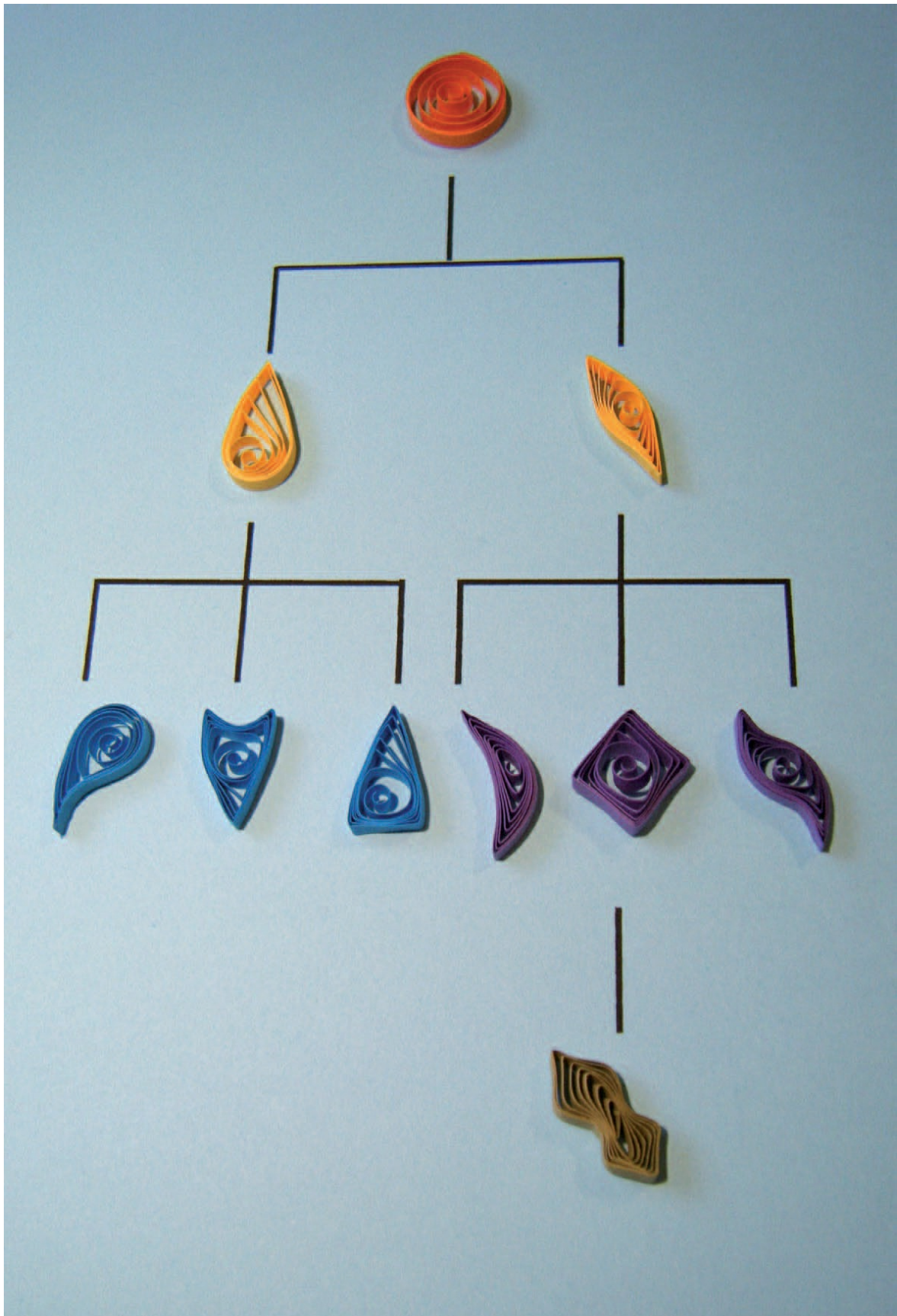
To practise making a closed loose coil, take a quarter length strip measuring 7.5cm–11.5cm (3in–4.5in) long. Make sure that one end of the strip is cut and the other torn. Roll up your coil from the cut end, creating a sharply defined spiral centre. When you have completed Step 9 and have allowed the coil to relax, apply a tiny dot of glue to the inside of the loose (torn) end, just short of the very tip, and smooth that end down very gently onto the side of the coil below to complete your circular shape. You may find it useful to grip the join for a few seconds using tweezers to ensure that it is well stuck down.



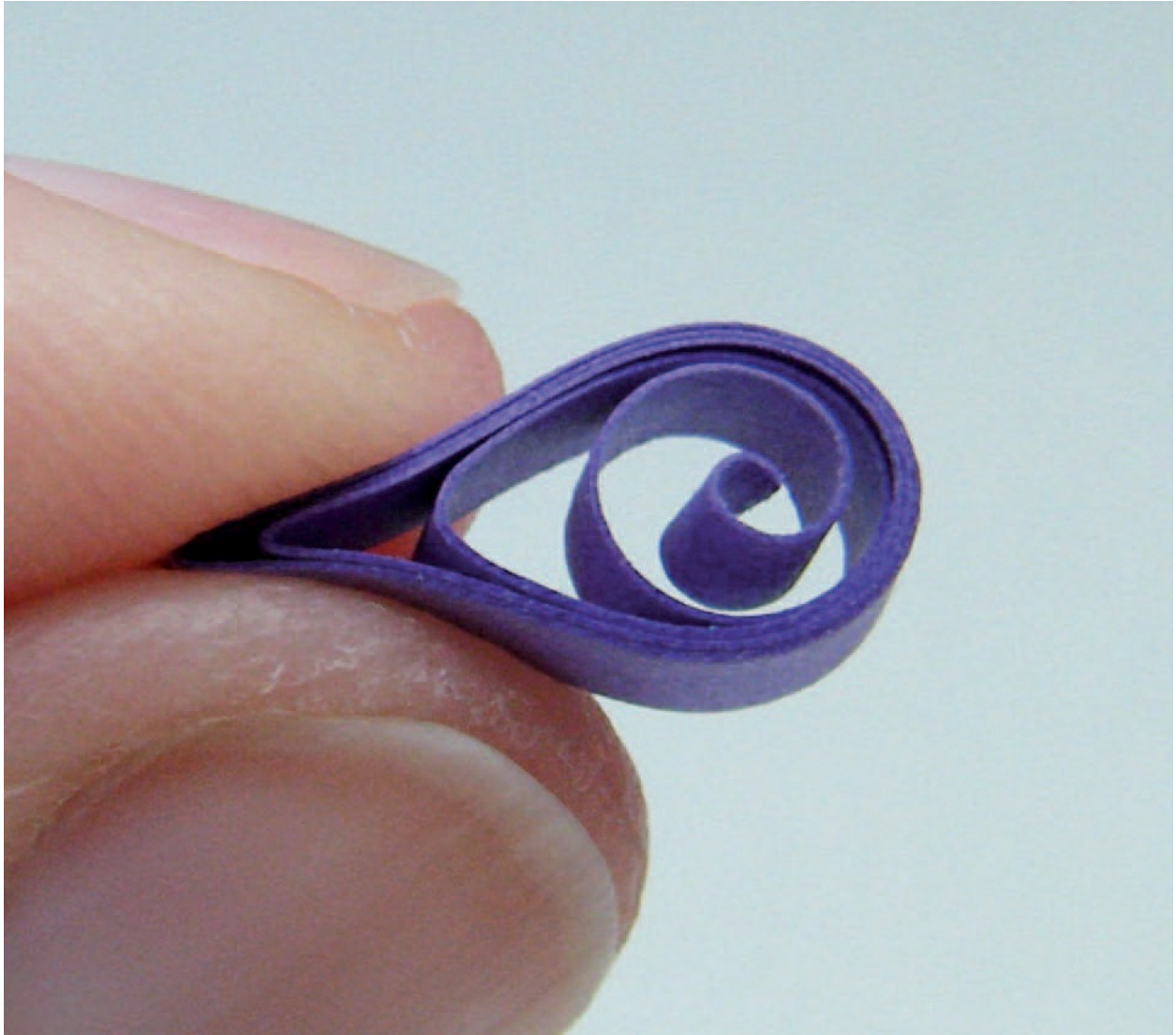


**When gluing down the end of a closed loose coil, apply a very small spot of glue as shown. If you position the spot of glue just a fraction below the end of the strip, it is less likely to ooze out beyond the join when you smooth the end down.**





The shapes that can be formed from closed loose coils may be grouped in a hierarchy which resembles the format of a genealogical family tree. The parent closed loose coil shape is shown in this picture in orange. Beneath it, in yellow, are coils pressed into a teardrop shape (left) and an eye shape (right) respectively. Shapes made by further manipulation of these two basic forms appear in the sections below.



To form a teardrop shape, move the spiral centre to one side of the coil and then pinch the opposite side. Take care not to pinch the centre of the spiral itself.





**Pinching the coil pushes the outer whorls of the spiral together and over to one side, producing this distinctive teardrop shape.**

Ideally, all the whorls of your spiral should be regular and evenly spaced. Achieving this is something that you may find a little tricky at first, but be assured that it does get easier with practice!

Your closed loose coil can now be manipulated in a multitude of different ways to produce beautiful shapes which can be used as the foundation building blocks for quilled patterns and pictures.

Shapes derived from closed loose coils all result from being pinched into either a teardrop or an eye shape.

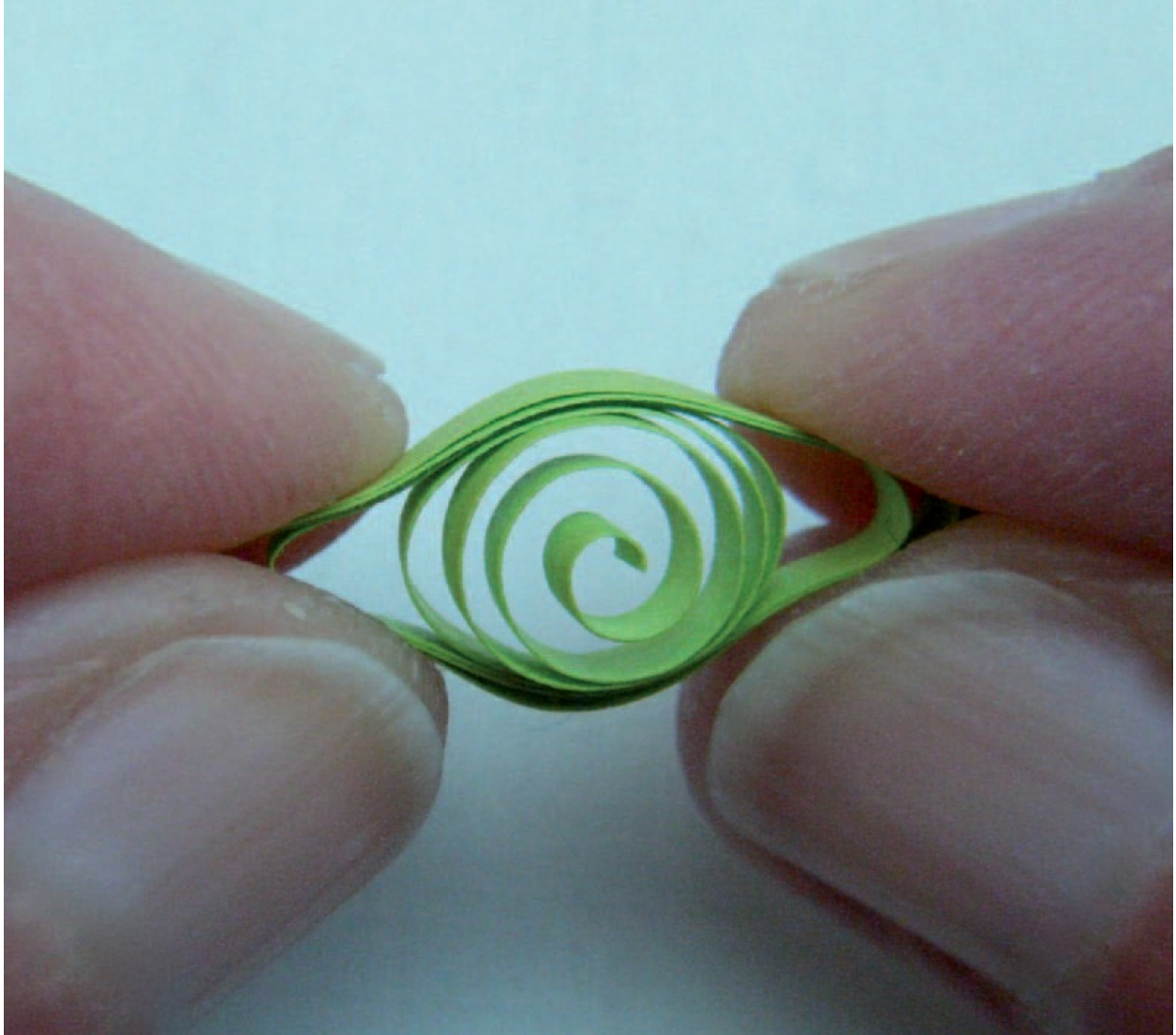
To create a teardrop, make a closed loose coil from a quarter

length strip as described above. After gluing down the end, pull the centre of the spiral gently towards one side of the coil. Now pinch the opposite side of the coil firmly between your finger and thumb, let go, and observe the beautiful teardrop shape that has formed.

Teardrops can easily be manipulated into other shapes. A curved teardrop is formed by twisting the pointed end to one side, so that it resembles a comma. A dart can be formed by pinching two points at the rounded end of a teardrop; this shape can be gently softened by pressing the sides to make it look more like a heart. With a little practice, it is also possible to pinch a teardrop into a triangular shape with three straight sides.

An eye shape is equally simple to create. Take a closed loose coil and pinch it simultaneously on two opposite sides, this time keeping the spiral centre in the middle. Eye shapes can then be curved gently to form crescents. By making two further pinches at appropriate points, it is possible to form diamonds, rectangles and squares. Another variation is to bend the two pinched ends of an eye shape in opposite directions, creating a curved shape resembling a leaf.





**Keep the spiral centre in the middle of a closed loose coil while pinching the sides to form an eye shape.**



**Here, two yellow teardrops have been placed above and below a central closed loose coil with two blue eye shapes in between, forming the beginnings of a semi-circular mandala design**





**The design is progressed by the insertion of further shapes derived from closed loose coils: a dart shape (created from a teardrop) in red, two leaf shapes (created from eye shapes) in green, two crescents (created from eye shapes) in purple and two curved teardrops in lilac.**

In fact, closed loose coils can be pinched and contorted into all sorts of other angular shapes in addition to those described here. Rather than attempting to torture beautiful spirals into alien, straight-sided forms, however, always bear in mind that there are other quilling techniques that may suit your purpose better, as described in later chapters of this book. The old adage that 'you can't fit a square peg into a round hole' holds true in quilling as in other areas of life, and there is a wealth of creative potential to be found beyond the realm of the closed loose coil! It pays to keep your horizons broad.

If you need design inspiration for using shapes derived from closed

loose coils, look no further than the natural world. Use your quilling knowledge to identify natural teardrops and eye shapes when observing flower petals or birds' wings, and think about how coils might be shaped and/or used together to reproduce the many different forms of leaves. Once you get into this habit of recognition, you will start noticing quilling shapes almost everywhere!





To create a holly leaf shape, hold the centre of an eye shape with tweezers, then push each point of the eye in towards the centre as shown here.

If you are eager to glue down some of the shapes you have made onto a background, you can find out how in [Chapter 6](#).

## **POINTS TO REMEMBER ABOUT CLOSED LOOSE COILS**

1. Choosing the right strip length for the coils in your design may be a matter of trial and error. Do not be afraid to experiment!
2. The longer the length of strip you use to make your closed loose coil, the more whorls you will get in your spiral and the more detailed your finished shape will be.
3. When you want to create a batch of similar shapes that are all the same size, create all the coils first and ensure they are all the same diameter before shaping them. If necessary, unwind and re-roll more tightly or loosely as appropriate in order to match the size of the first coil you made before gluing down the end. When pinching the coils in your batch, try to pinch through the same number of whorls on each one.
4. If you are unhappy about the spacing of the whorls in a completed closed loose coil, it is sometimes possible to adjust them a little by holding the spiral centre gently by its sides and turning the coil to wind them a bit tighter. Gently squeezing and releasing the coil repeatedly may also help to even out the whorls before pinching.
5. When pinching closed loose coils into different shapes, it is good practice to try and position one of the pinched points

where the end has been glued down, so that the join does not show.







**Looped wheatears with twisted inner tips in a starburst formation.**

# LOOPING TECHNIQUES

Spiral coils are not the only basis for creating shapes in quilling. In fact, if you found the rolling process somewhat challenging in the previous chapter, you are sure to be encouraged by the ease with which impressive looped formations can be made.

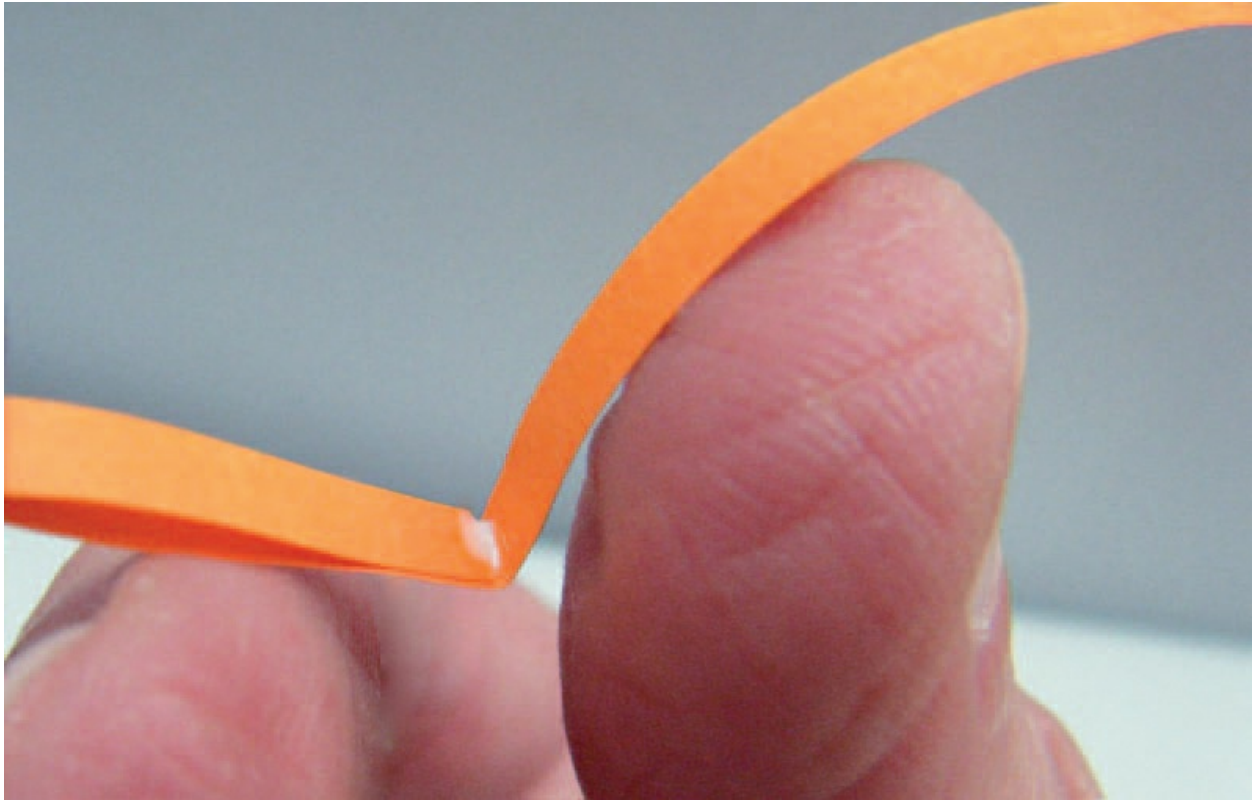
## **Step by step: exploring the possibilities of looping**



**Step 1** The initial fold creates the top of the first loop in your shape.

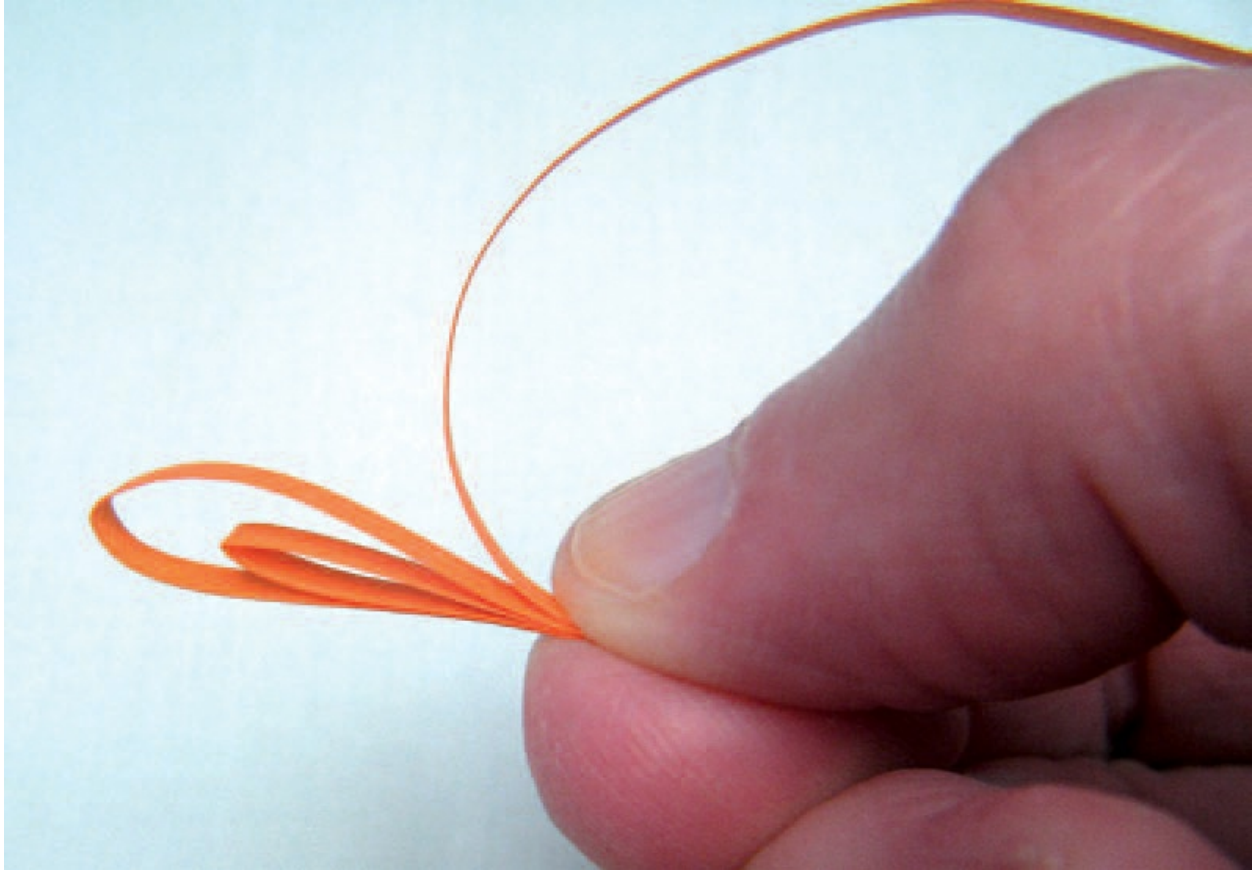
1. Take a full-length quilling strip – at least 30cm (12in) long – and

fold it about 2cm ( $\frac{3}{4}$ in) from one end.



**Step 2** A second fold is made right next to the tip of the strip where the glue has been dispensed, forming a secure base for the shape.

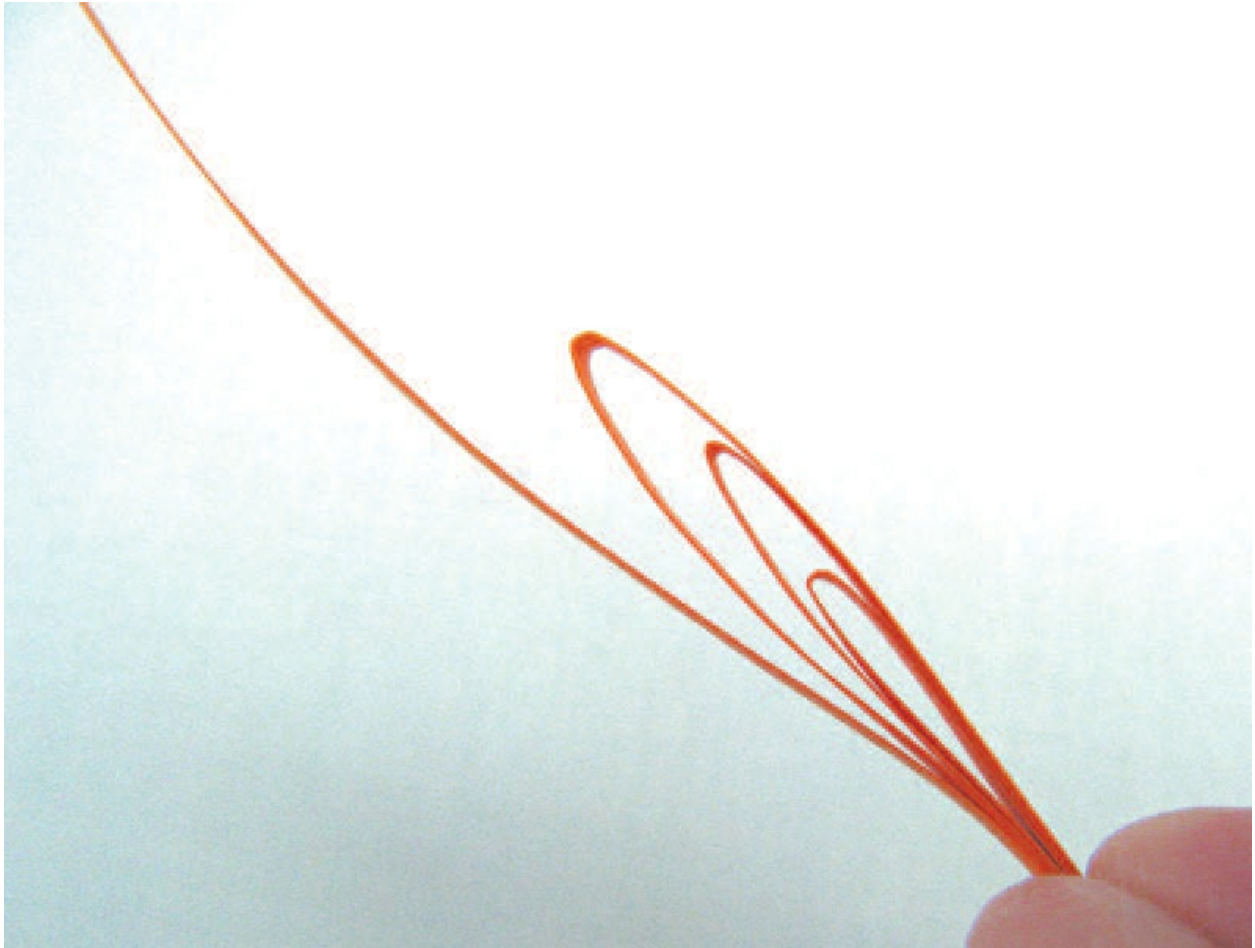
2. Dispense a tiny dot of glue at the very tip of the folded end and fold up the free length of the strip right next to it. The point where the glue is will be the base of your shape.



**Step 3** The second loop is secured at the base of the shape. To do this, fold the strip flush around the base, apply a dot of glue where the base touches the fold and pinch the strip into position, ready to form another loop.

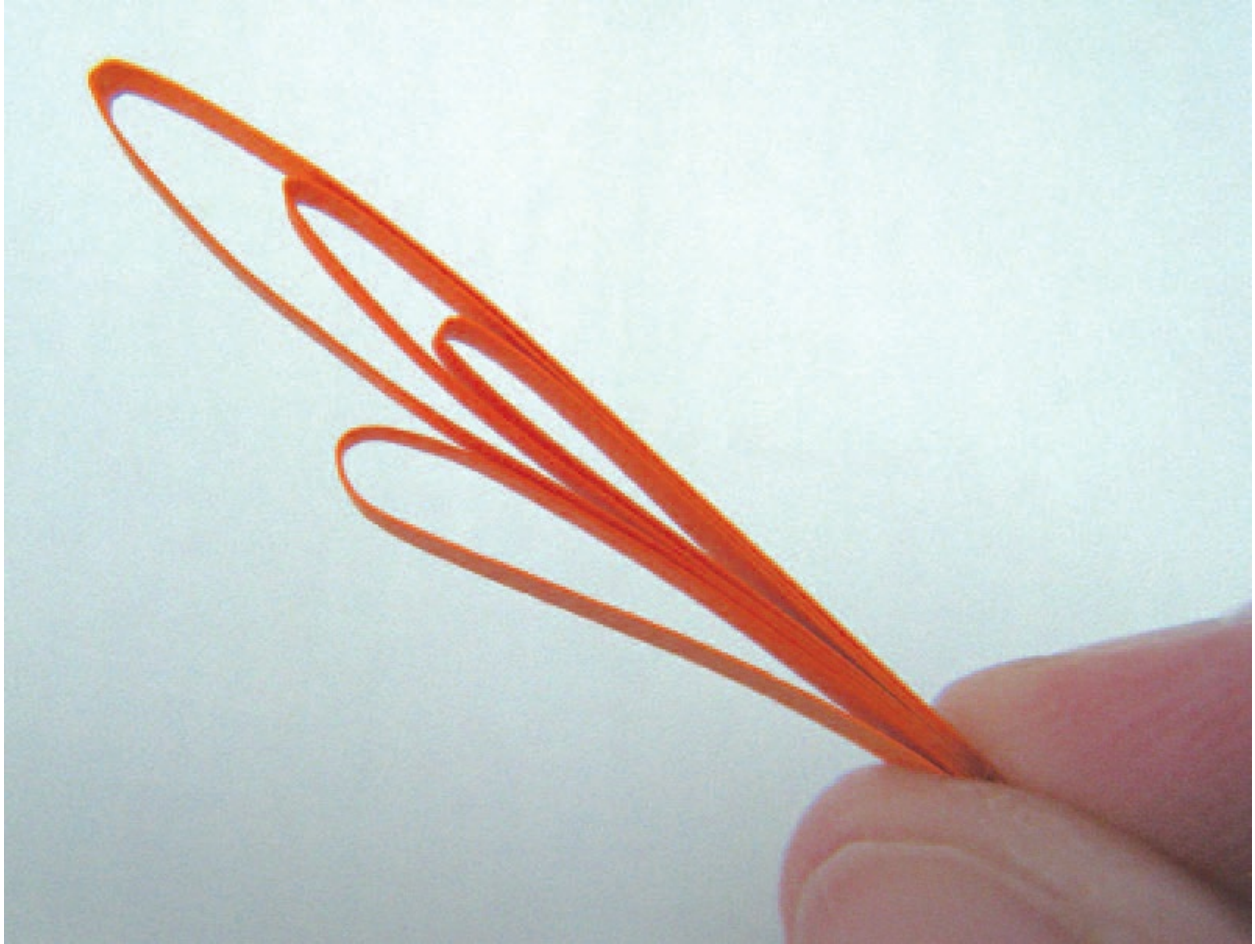
3. Take the free length of the strip over the top of the first loop to form a second loop above it, then bring the strip back to the base. Dispense another dot of glue at the base position to secure the second loop.





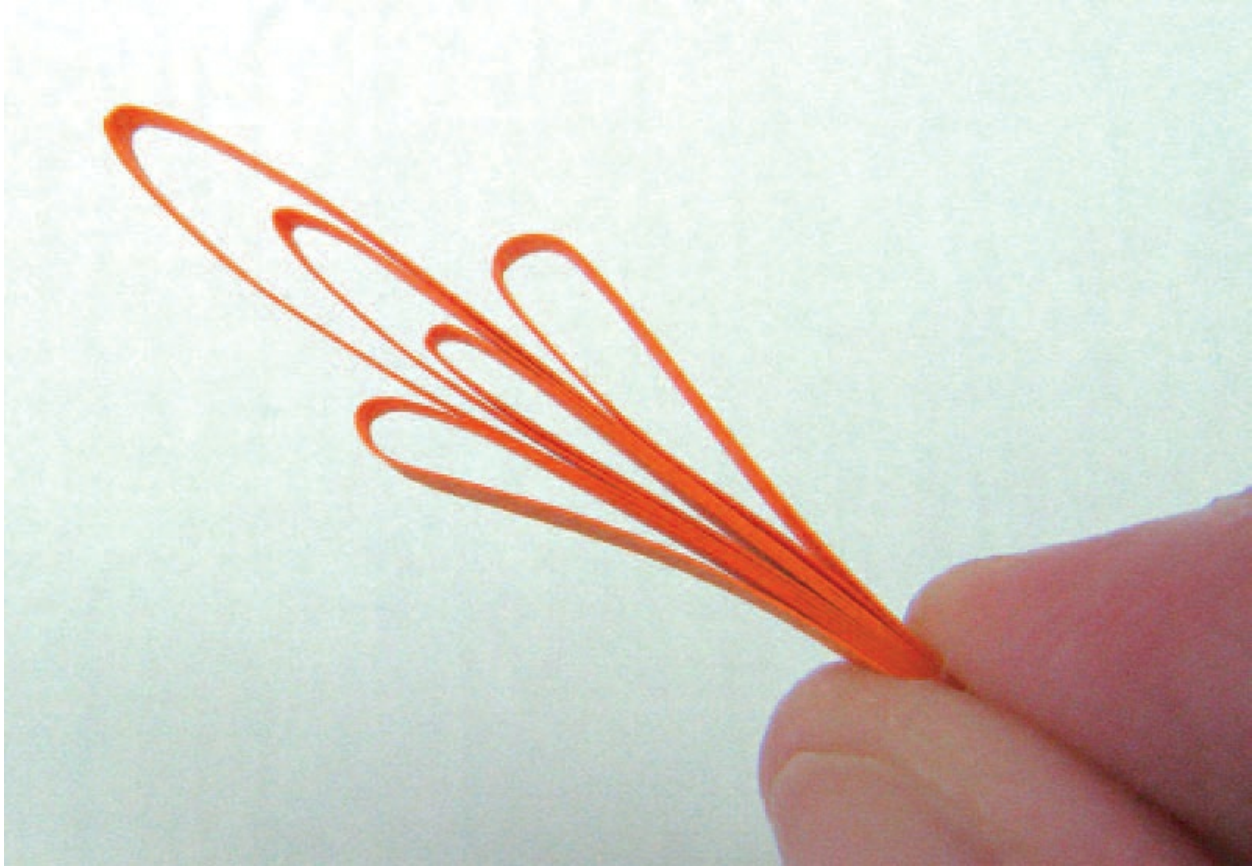
**Step 4** The third loop is secured at the base in the same way, forming a three-loop wheatear. The remaining free length of strip will now be used to develop the shape in another way.

4. Make a third loop above the second one, securing it at the base as you did before. The shape you have now created is called a wheatear. At this point, you could go on lengthening the wheatear by adding extra loops, but this exploration continues with a variation.



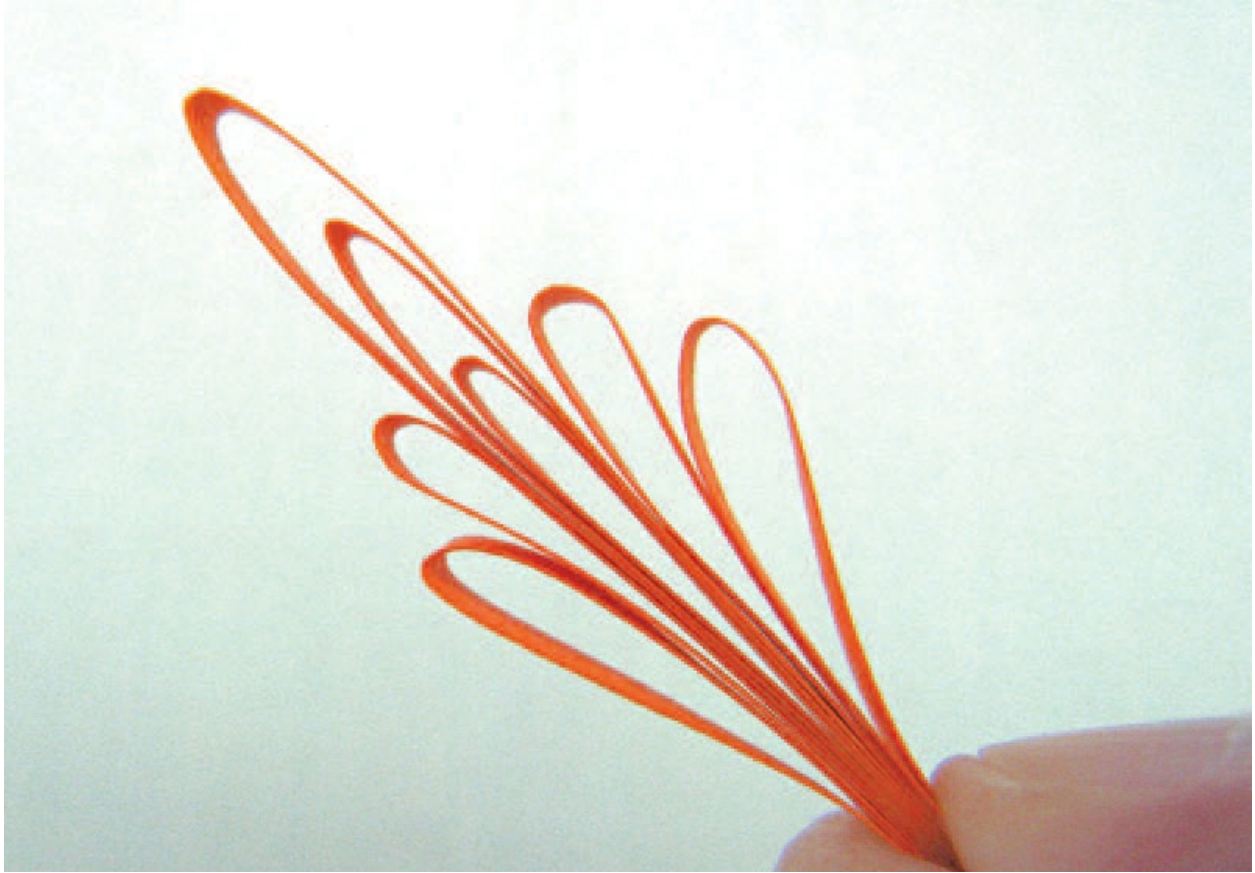
**Step 5 Making a loop to one side is the first step towards creating an alternate side looped shape. Secure it with a spot of glue at the base exactly as before.**

5. Use the remaining free length of strip to create a further loop, level with your first one, to one side of the wheatear shape. Secure it as you did previously at the base.



**Step 6 Pay attention to the size of your loops, making sure that the shape you are forming is symmetrical.**

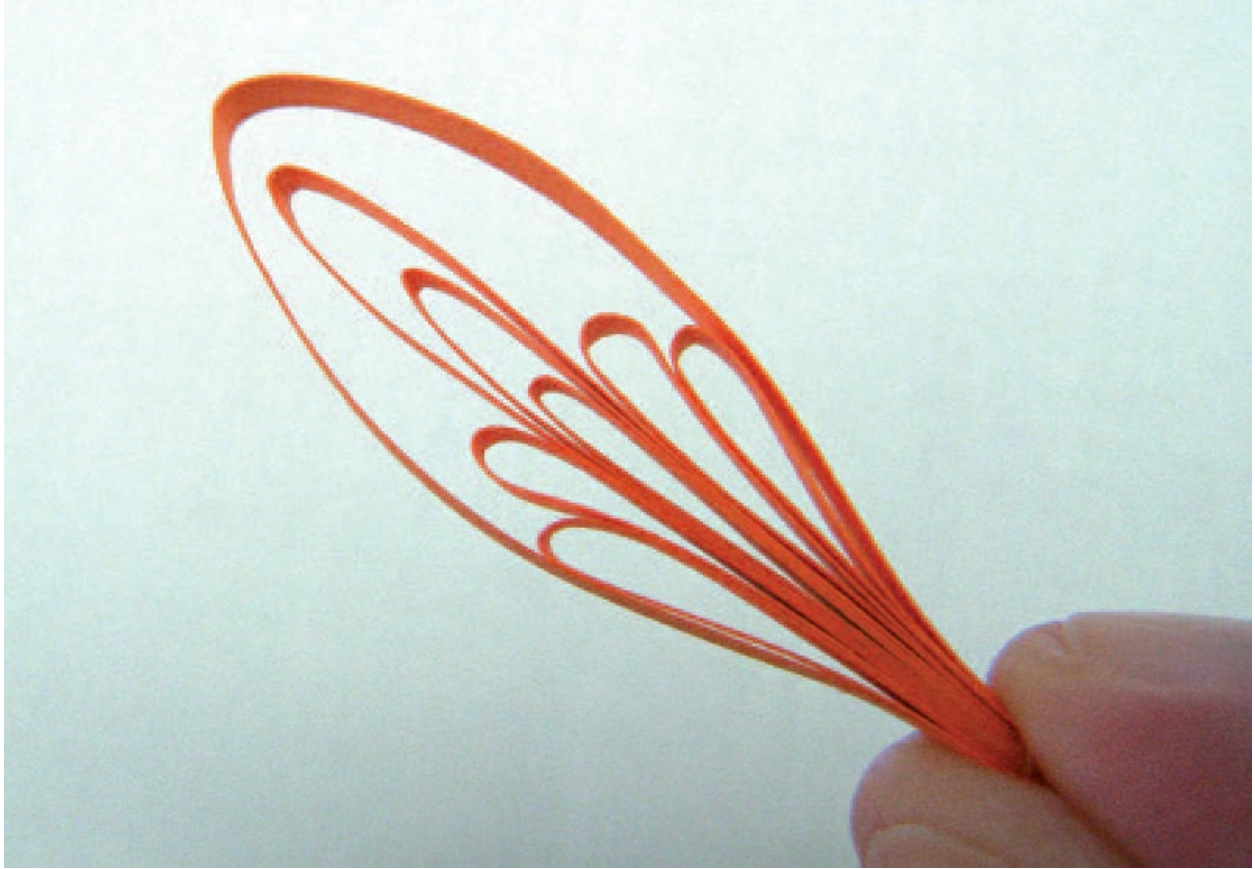
6. Now do the same thing on the other side. The technique you are now using is called alternate side looping, and the shape you are forming is called a husking.



**Step 7** You have now created an alternate side looped husking.

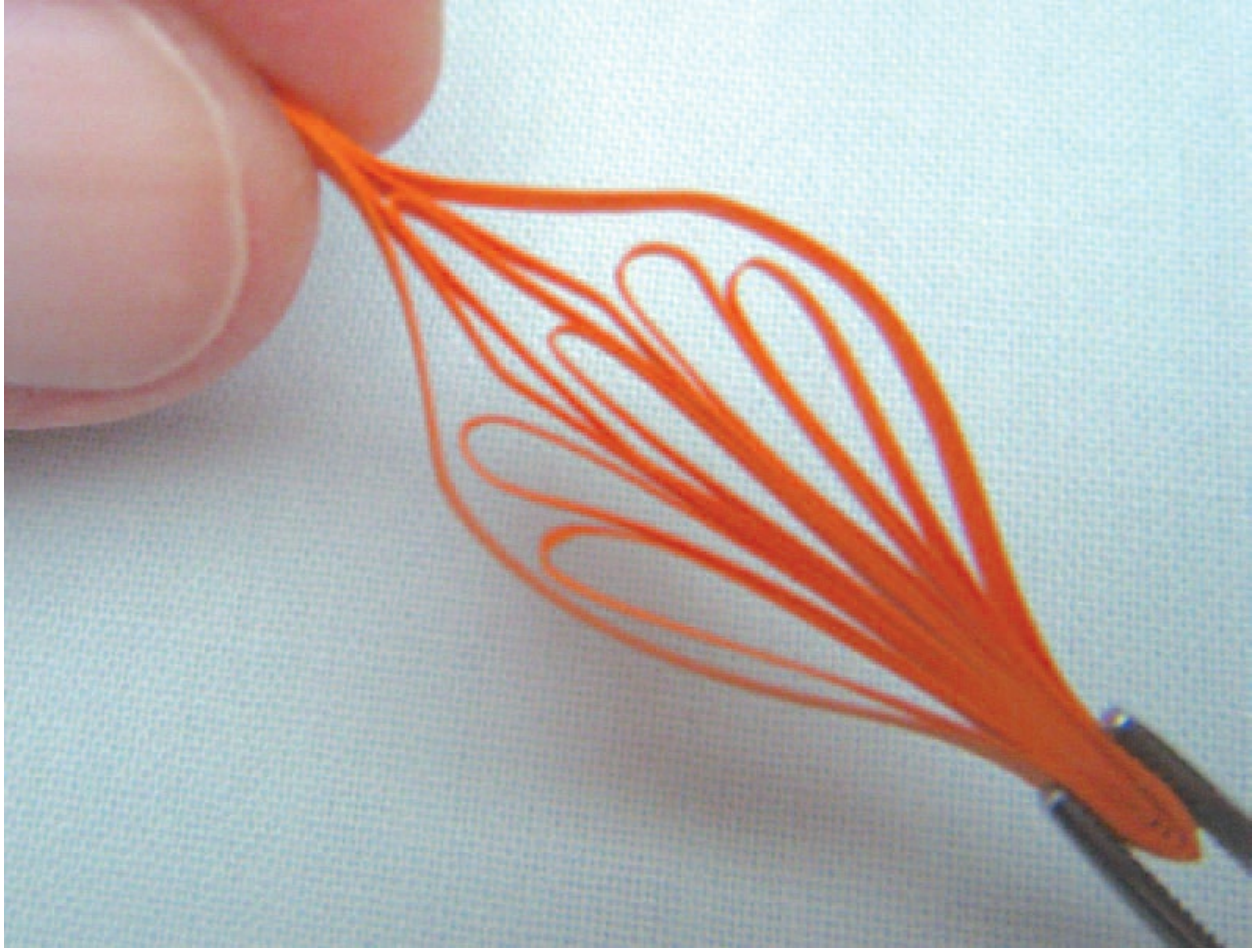
7. Create two further loops, one on one side and one on the other, this time a little lower than your first pair of side loops. Keep securing each loop with a dot of glue at the base.





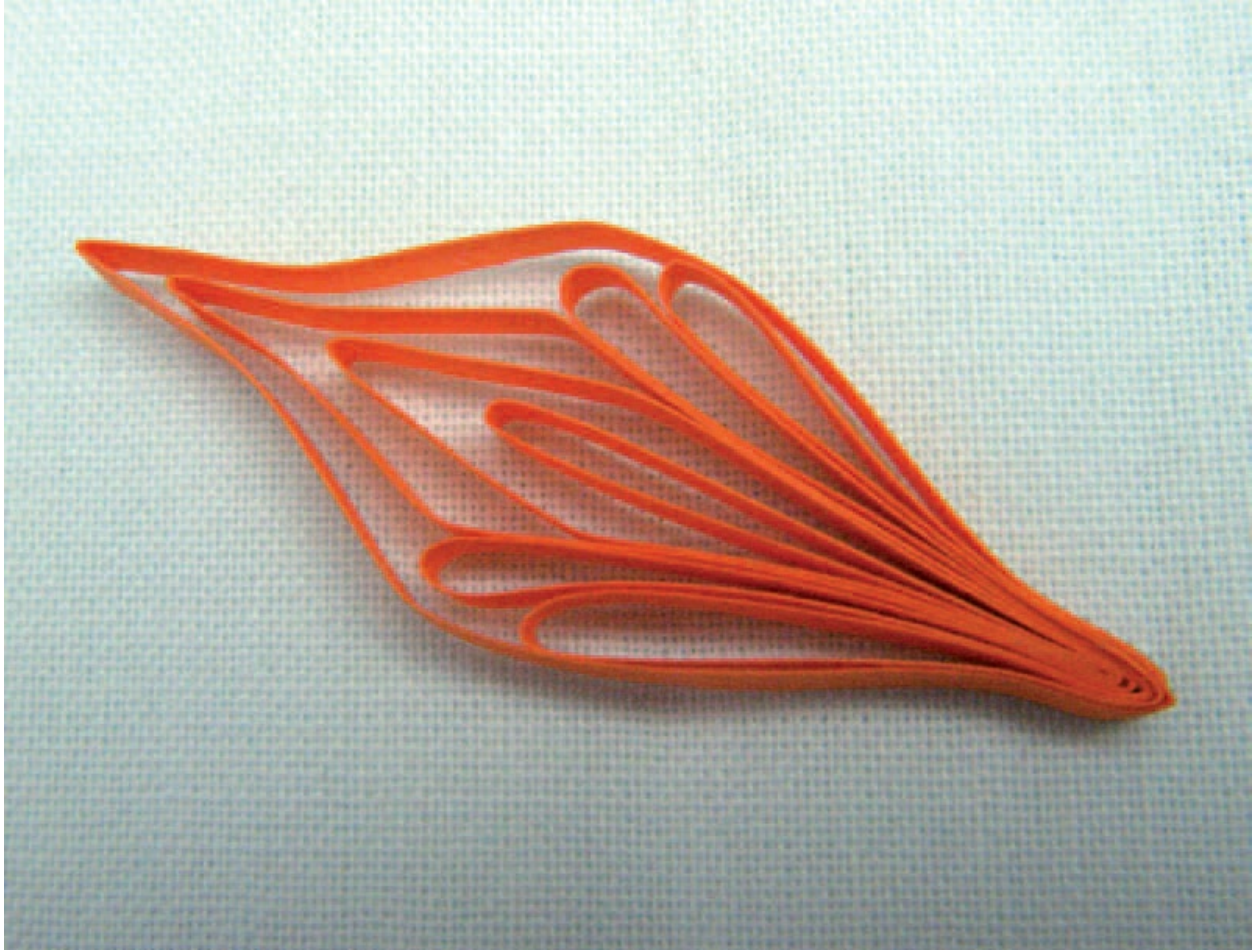
**Step 8 The final loop you have created is called an enclosing loop.**

8. Use the remaining free length of strip to make a final loop over the top of all your other loops. Tear the end of it where it meets the base, and secure it there with a final dot of glue.



**Step 9** As you pinch the shape, pinch down through the second and third loops of the central wheatear as well as the enclosing loop.

9. Pinch the top of the shape between your fingers and push it down gently towards the base.



**Step 10** The finished husking combines a central wheatear with alternate side looping and an enclosing loop, pinched into an attractive shape.

10. Look at the elegant shape of your finished husking and consider how several of these could perhaps be combined into a quilled design.

If you find it tricky to determine the position of the loops (and the size of the gaps between them) by eye, you may find a ruler helpful.

It should now be apparent just how easy it is to create attractive looped shapes using the methods just described. However, the difference between a run-of-the-mill looped shape and a really impressive one often lies in the gentle manipulation that is applied to the finished shape, so the importance of pinching, pressing or



sometimes simply opening up narrow loops with tweezers really cannot be over-emphasized.

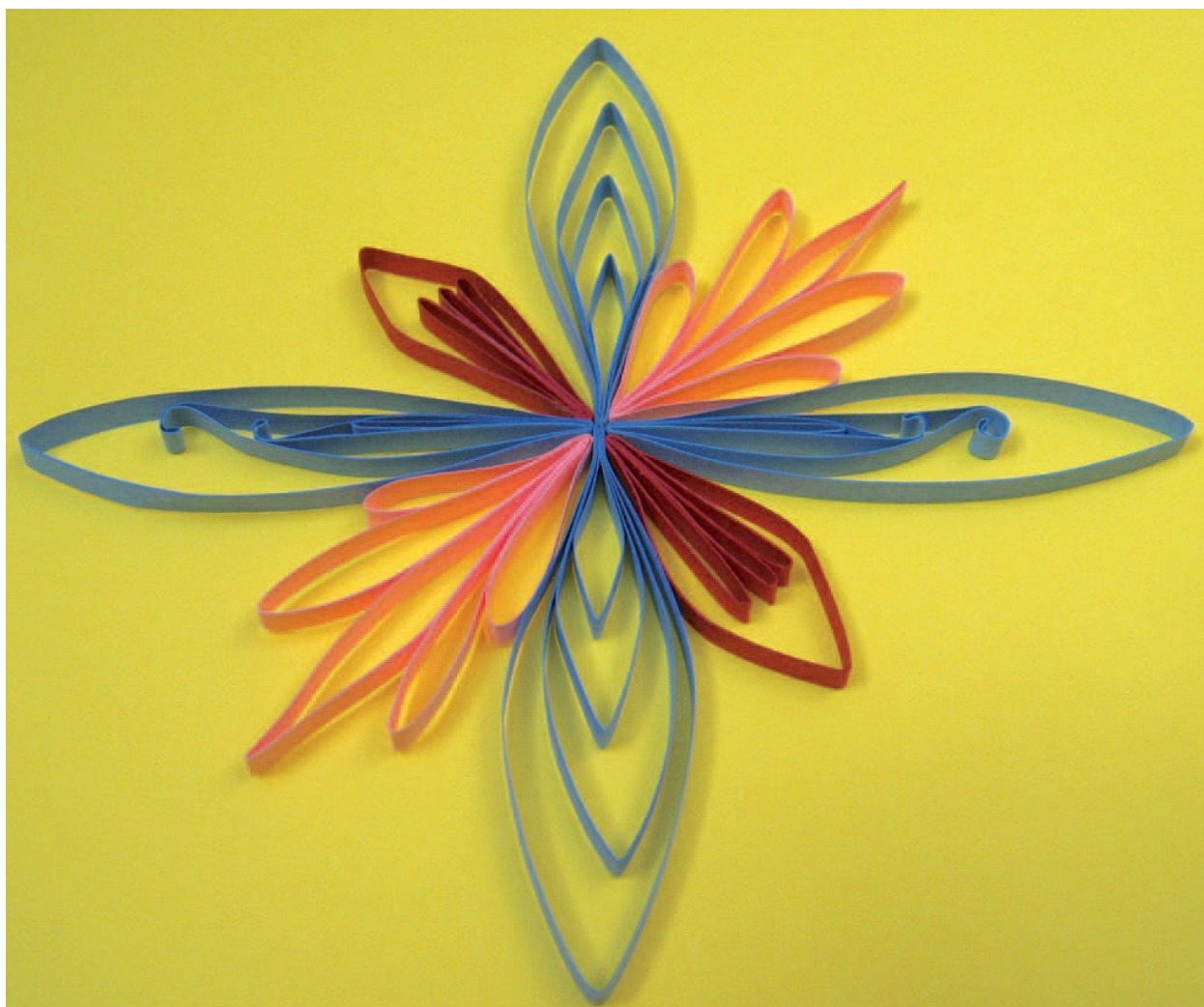
Interesting effects can also be accomplished by twisting the tips of loops – this can easily be done using a slotted quilling tool. Simply apply the tool so that the very tip of a loop lies between the prongs, and then twist the tool gently two or three times. Withdraw the tool carefully, supporting the loop as you do so by placing a finger over it. Doing this prevents your work getting caught in the tool and accidentally pulled out of shape.

## Looping around pins

---

When you create a looped shape using just your fingers, as described above, the loops you form will naturally tend to be quite loose, relaxed and rounded (until such time as you pinch them, if desired). To create straighter shapes with greater tension in the loops from the outset, you can adopt an alternative approach by wrapping your strips around pins which have been pushed into a work-board. (This could be a cork board, a stack of artists' mount board or perhaps even a rigid polystyrene/styrofoam block.)



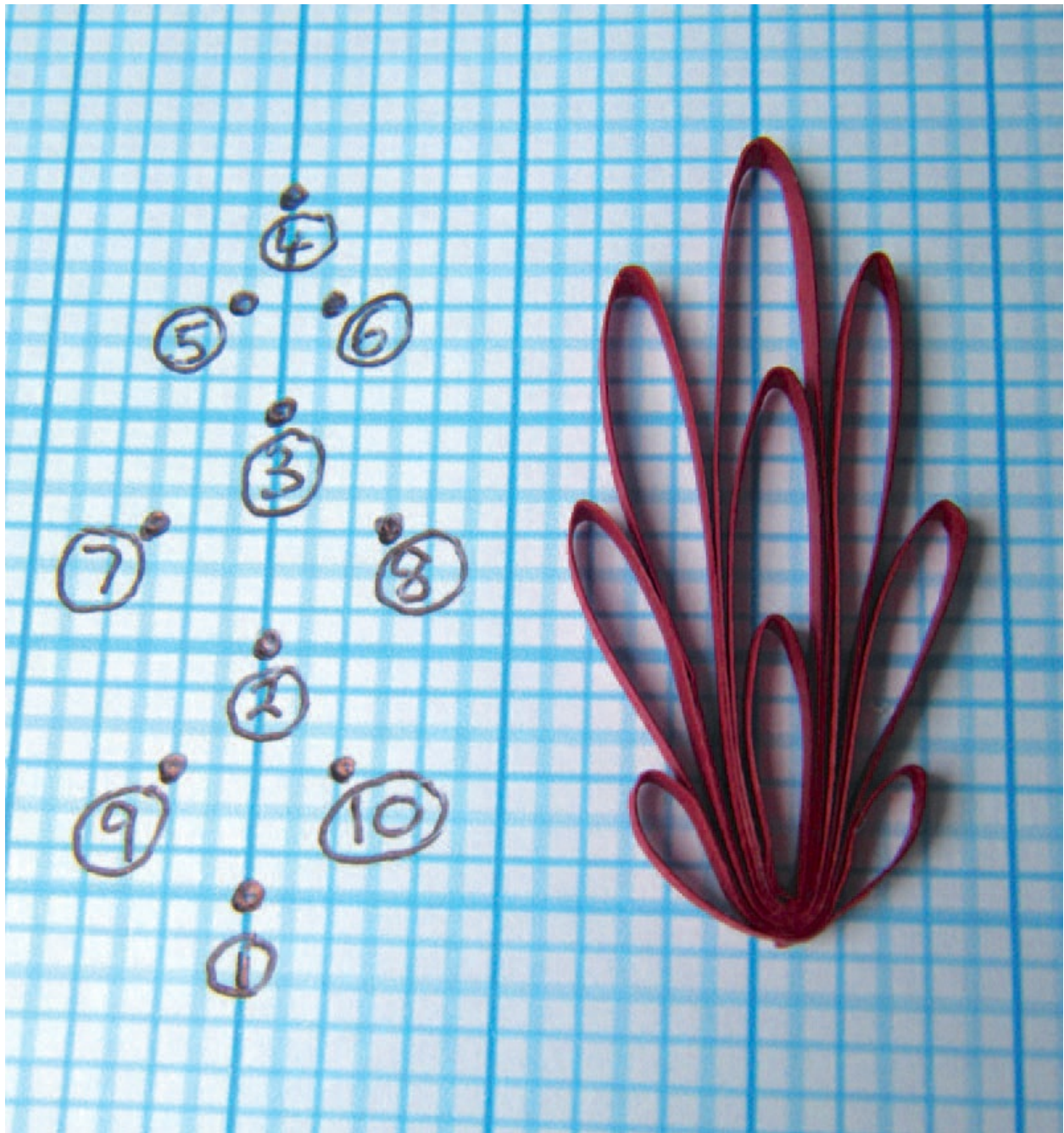


**Blue strips have been used to create four wheatears in this design. The loops of the wheatears were made at regular intervals using a ruler, so that each loop is 1cm (1/2in) higher than the one before. The ends of the two middle loops in the two wheatears on either side have been twisted with a slotted quilling tool. The pink and red huskings were all made using alternate side looping; the red ones both feature enclosing loops. All the shapes have been gently pinched and manipulated to enhance their appearance. This design shows just how versatile the different looping techniques can be!**

Using pins also makes it easy to create identical looped shapes conforming to a pre-determined pattern, by arranging the pins in fixed positions on your board. (This approach can be particularly useful when you want to make several matching shapes to represent flower petals, the points of snowflakes or mandala designs, where identical shapes will be placed together in a circle.)

These pinning arrangements are known as 'husking patterns', in which the pin positions at the end of each loop are indicated by a pencil mark on a piece of paper which is slipped beneath a protective sheet of cling-film on your board. If you create a husking pattern on graph paper, it is easy to ensure that the pin positions are evenly and symmetrically spaced.

It is customary to number the pin positions so that the order in which loops are created is clear. Pin number one is the base position where glue is applied after each loop is formed. If the centre of the shape is to be a wheatear formation, the sequence of loops rising vertically from the base pin needs to be created first, just as you did in the earlier step-by-step example when looping by hand.



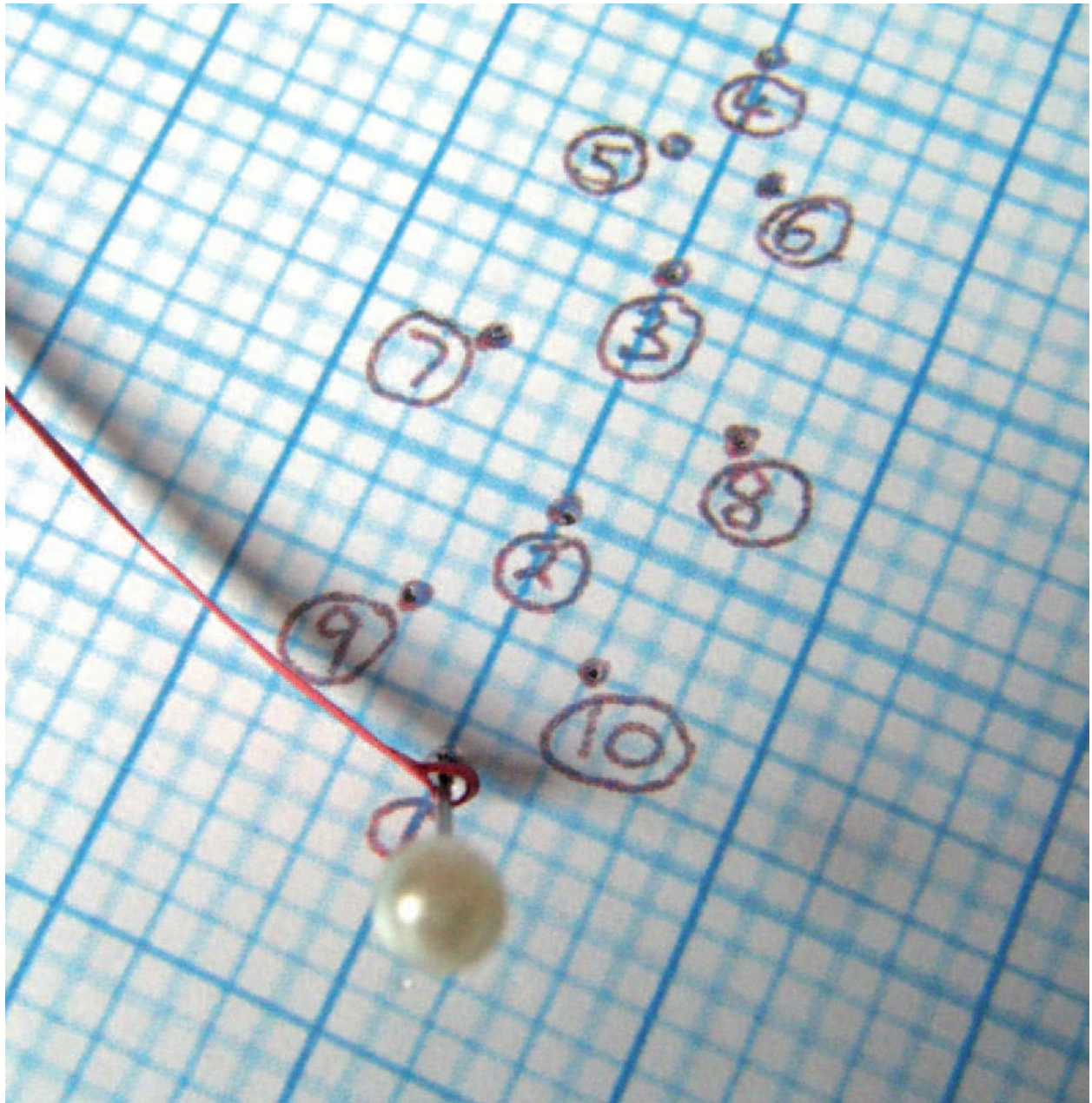
The husking pattern shown on the left of this picture comprises ten pin positions which have been marked by hand on graph paper. On the right is the looped quilled shape resulting from use of this pattern. Pin positions two, three and four define the position of the loops in the centre of the shape, which are formed by wrapping vertically around each of those pins and back around the base in sequence. Thereafter, the loops at pin positions five to ten are created in an alternate side looped fashion, wrapped sequentially from side to side.

To begin working with a husking pattern, first mark the numbered



pin positions on a piece of paper and place it on your work-board. Cover the pattern tightly with transparent cling-film.

Take a full length quilling strip and form a tiny loop at one end, securing it with glue. Insert a pin (ideally one with a round bead head) through the loop you have created and push it into the board at base position one. Angle the pin slightly towards you to create a firm anchor point.

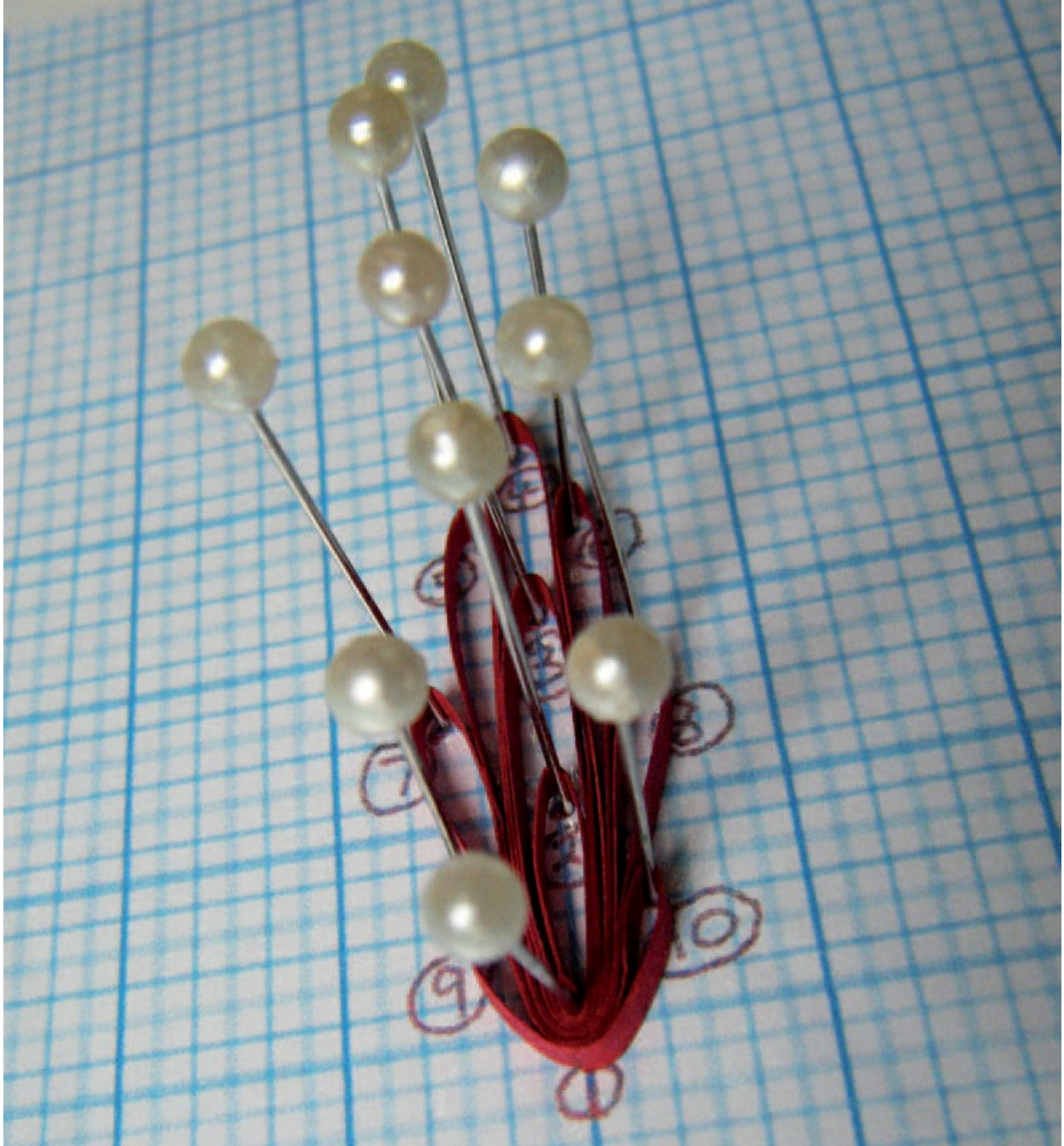




**A tiny loop should be formed to secure the strip to your first pin. Simply bend the tip of the strip, apply glue to the very end and close the loop by pressing it down. Make sure your loop is big enough to accommodate a pin.**

Insert another pin at position two and wrap the strip around it. Bring the strip back to the base position and apply a dot of glue. Then insert the next pin at position three, wrap the strip around it and once again apply dot of glue at the base. Continue in this manner, following the numbered sequence of your pin positions. After completing the final loop, you could then add an enclosing loop to encircle the whole shape, if desired. Now trim the remaining strip so that it ends beneath the base pin and secure it with a final dot of glue.

Leave the shape in position on the pins for a few minutes while the glue dries, then remove the pins carefully and lift your finished shape off the pattern. Because it has been assembled over cling-film, it should lift up easily. Using tweezers, gently flatten the initial loop you made for securing the shape onto pin one.



The completed looped shape rests in position on the pattern while the glue dries.

An identical shape can now be created, if you wish, by repeating the process using exactly the same pin positions.

## Looping on prongs

---

Having seen how pins can be used for wrapping strips around, it takes only a small leap of imagination to realize that a variety of everyday objects which have evenly spaced prongs could also be employed in a similar way. Many quillers utilize onion holders (as used in the kitchen for cutting onions into neat slices) to loop their strips around, while others have also discovered that combs and hairbrushes offer similar potential.

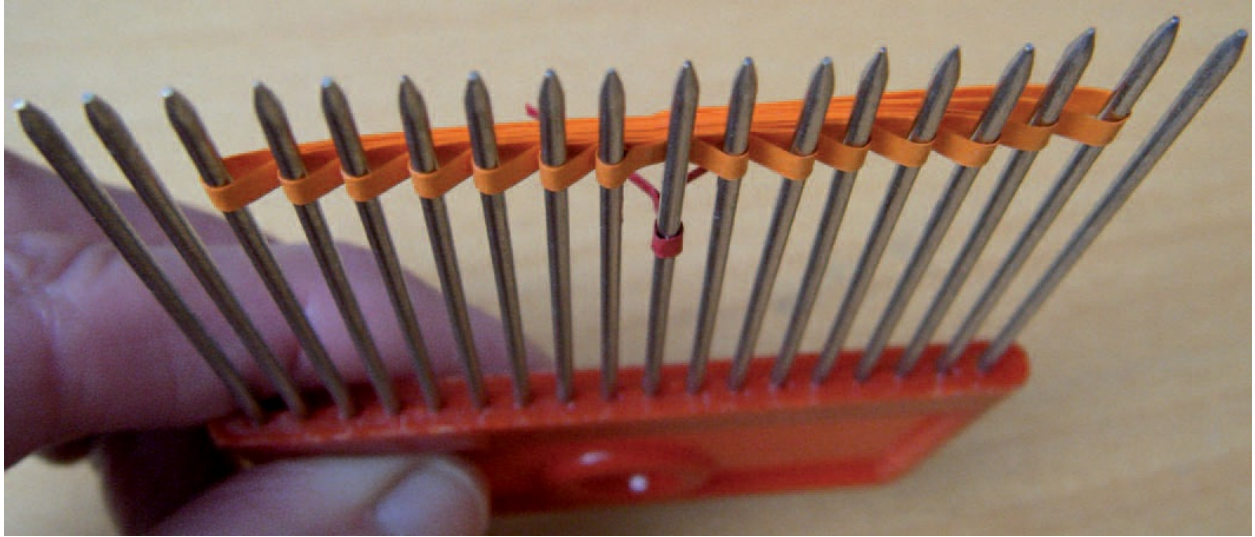
Combs are available in many different sizes, and may be selected for use in accordance with the gauge of the loops required for particular quilled designs. Those with chunky, widely spaced prongs allow for the formation of large loops. At the other end of the scale, pet combs and even nit combs (distasteful as the suggestion may sound) can be used to create very fine loops with the narrowest quilling strips.

The characteristic that all these items have in common is that their prongs are typically arranged in straight lines. This offers the potential for a variation of alternate side looping which is particularly well suited to the creation of quilled forms that resemble individual leaves and foliage.

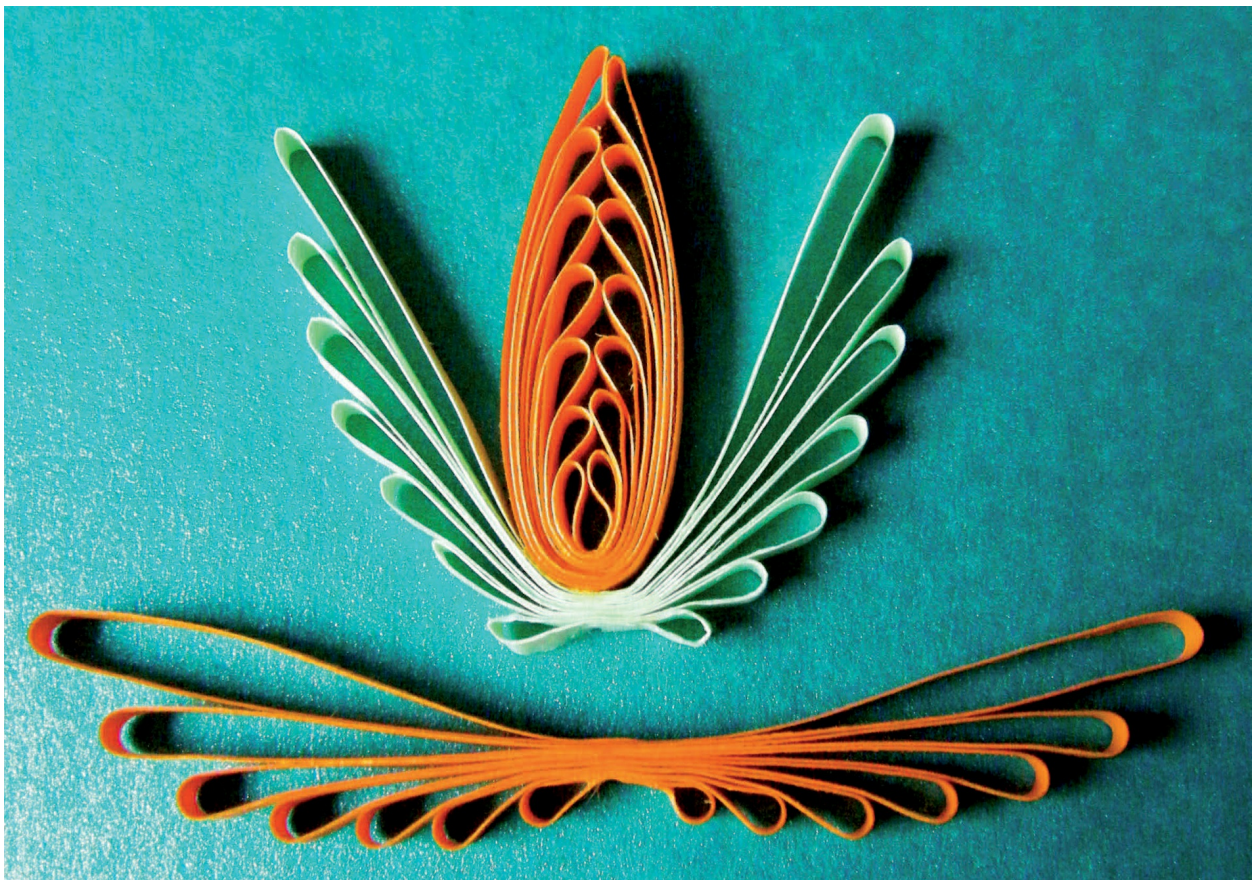
Alternate side looping on prongs can also be used to great effect when quilling designs which incorporate flower petals.

Typically consisting of eighteen prongs, an onion holder provides plenty of scope for exploring this particular aspect of looping. However, the following instructions can quite easily be adapted for use on an ordinary comb.





**Alternate side looping on an eighteen-prong onion holder. The central prong, number nine, is marked by a small loop of red paper.**



**A strip that has been alternate side looped on prongs can be folded with the loops either inside or outside to achieve different visual effects.**



To try alternate side looping on the prongs of an onion holder, first make a small loop at the end of a full-length quilling strip and secure it with a dot of glue. Thread the loop onto prong ten (the prong next to the central one), with the strip at the front. The prongs should be held vertically.

Pass the strip back through the gap between prongs nine and eight, and then forwards through the gap between prongs eight and seven. Put a tiny dot of glue on the strip just where it passes over prong nine to secure it.

Pass the strip back through the gap between prongs ten and eleven, and then forwards through the gap between prongs eleven and twelve. Put a dot of glue on the strip where it passes over prong nine, as before.

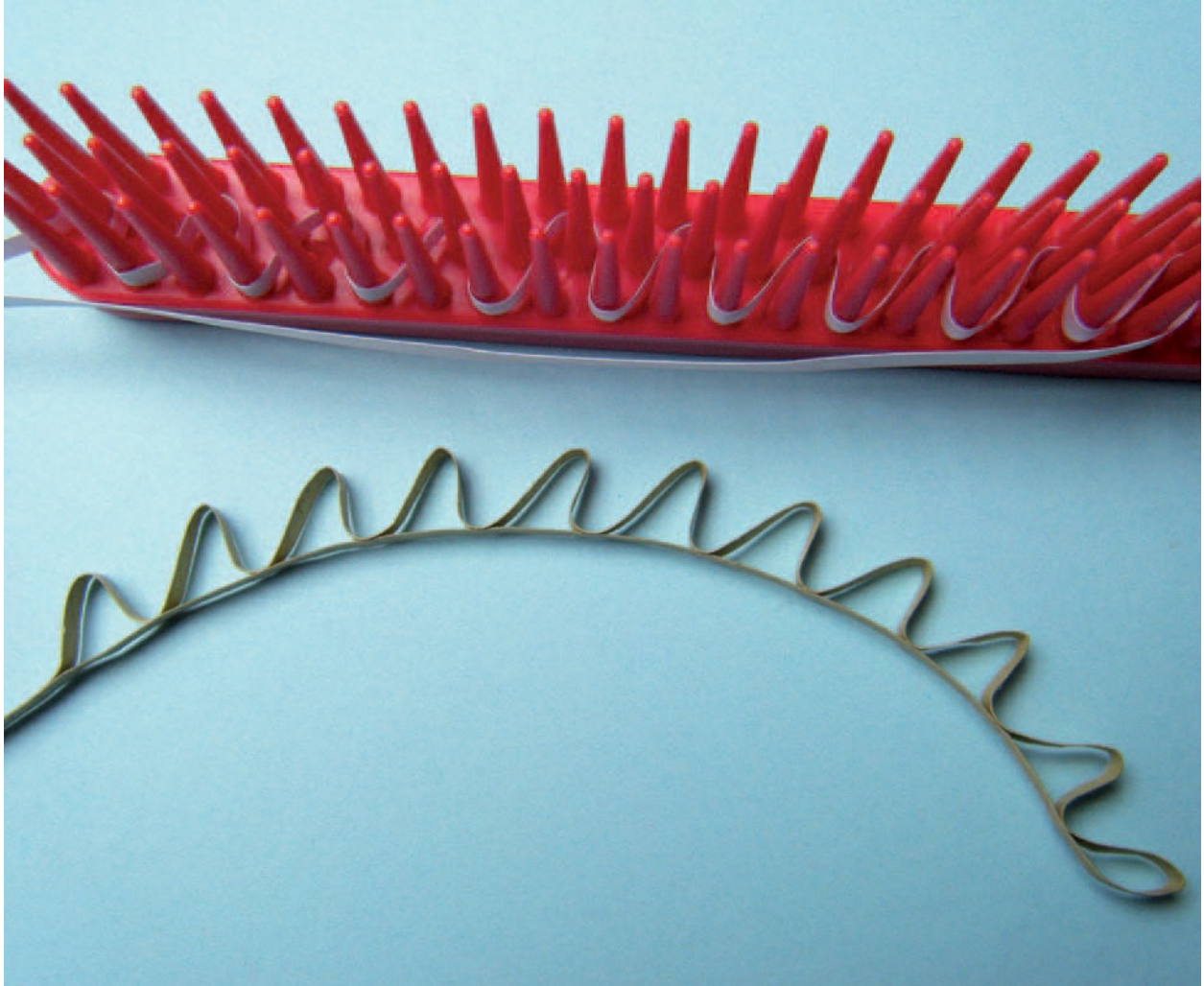
Pass the strip back through the gap between prongs seven and eight, and then forwards through the gap between prongs six and seven. Put a dot of glue on the strip where it passes over prong nine, as before.

Continue in the same way until you have a line of loops, equal in number on each side of the central prong. Tear off any remaining strip level with prong nine and secure it with a dot of glue.

Allow the glue to dry for a few minutes, then gently slide the row of loops off the prongs and consider different ways in which it might possibly be used.

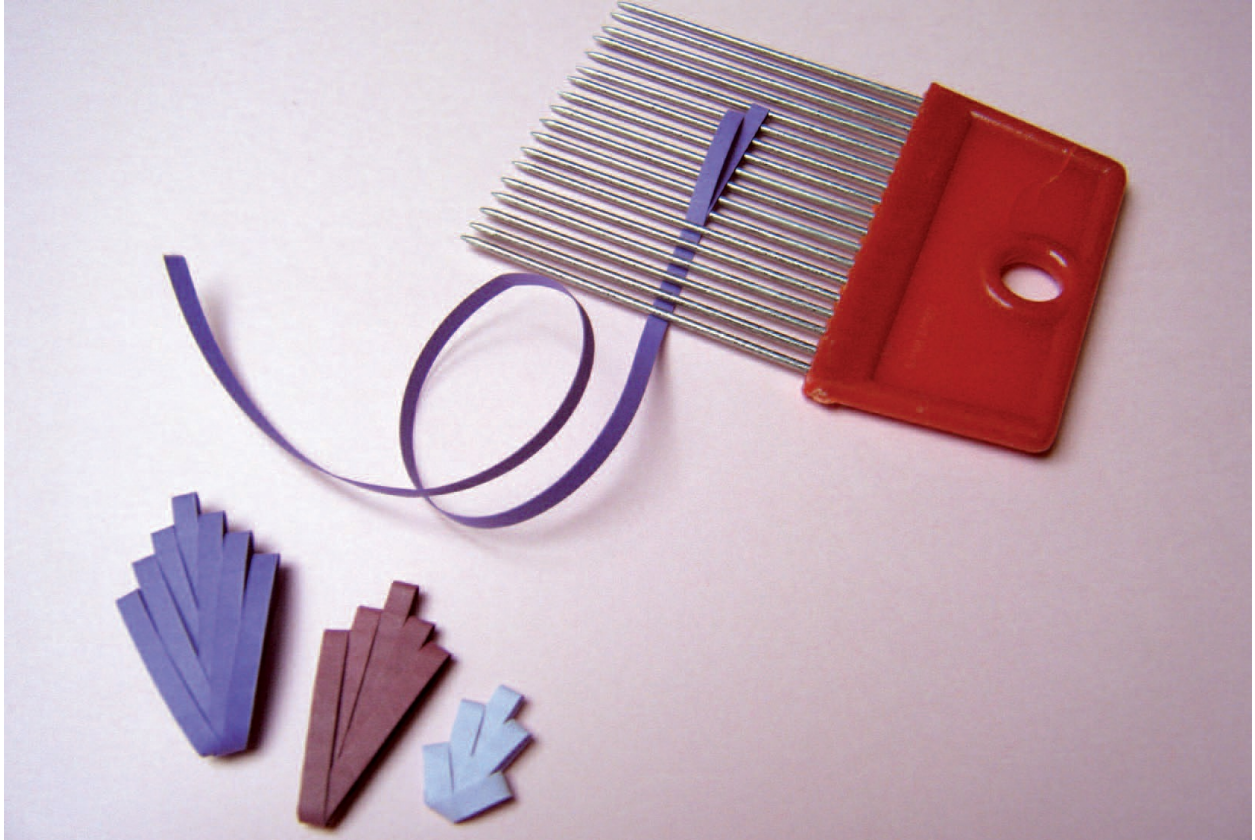


For each petal of this flower, a row of loops has been folded in half with the loops on the outside and then wrapped with an enclosing loop of contrasting colour. The other shapes used to make the flower are all described in [Chapter 3](#).



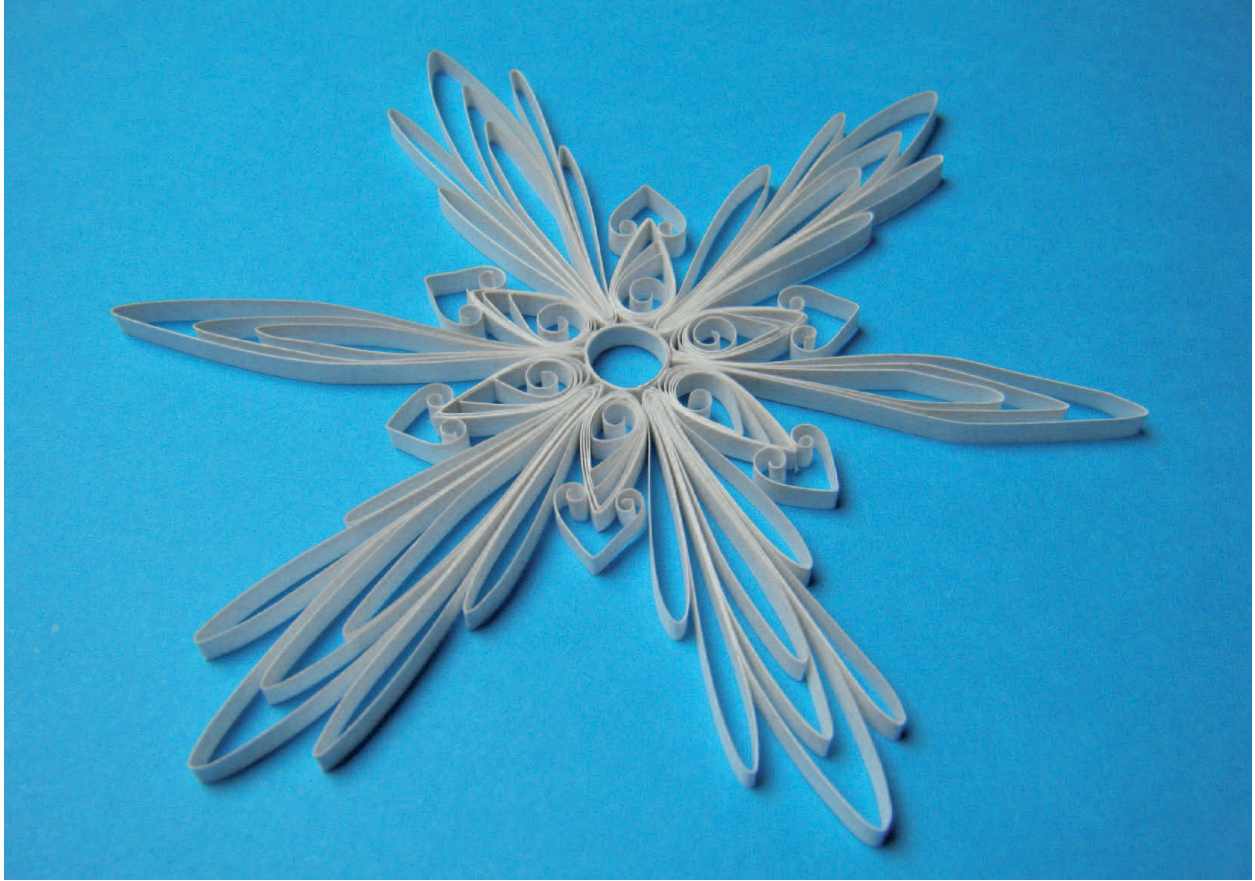
The row of loops in the green example shown here was made by threading a length of strip diagonally around two rows of prongs on the hairbrush above. A loose white strip has been threaded in position on the brush to indicate the loop formation. Before removing the strip from the brush, it is necessary to apply a dot of glue to the tips of all the loops and affix the the free end of the strip to them. Two such completed formations, glued back to back, bear a remarkable resemblance to what botanists call a 'pinnately compound' leaf; for quillers, this is a very useful way of depicting foliage.





**Spreuer shapes like these examples (bottom left) can easily be made on an onion holder. The prongs are held horizontally and a paper strip is secured at right angles around a group of them, with a dot of glue at the back. The space between the top and bottom of the loop will be the height of the finished spreuer. The free end of the strip is then passed around the next prong down from the top at a slight angle and secured with a dot of glue at the base. A matching diagonal loop is created around the same prong on the other side. This pattern is repeated, working down the prongs towards the base, creating a flat, symmetrical shape. When the desired number of loops has been made, any excess strip is cut away and the end glued down on the reverse side of the shape where it cannot be seen.**





**Looped shapes have been used to create the points of this snowflake. Between them are teardrops and open coil heart shapes made using spiral coil techniques. The method for creating the central ring in the middle will be described in [Chapter 5](#).**

Having mastered the onion holder technique, it is well worth experimenting to discover the different effects that can be achieved with other types of prong arrangements. A de-tangling hairbrush, for example, has rows of prongs offset from one another which allow soft, leaf-like rows of loops to be made.

Straight rows of prongs can also be used to create flat, leaf-like shapes called spreuers. This technique requires prongs of at least 2.5cm (1in) in length, as the loops are wrapped diagonally, alternating from side to side, with the prongs held horizontally.

Looped shapes need not be used in isolation – in fact, they work very well in combination with many of the spiral coil techniques you have already learned. Think about how wheatear or alternate side

looped pieces could be grouped together around a central closed loose spiral coil to form a flower, for example. Try inserting small open spiral coil shapes inside the loops of your huskings, or adding them to the outer edges.

Mix and match wheatears with alternate side looped shapes, or glue two wheatears side by side along their length. There are so many interesting combinations to try!

If you need design inspiration for shapes derived from looping techniques, you may well find it by observing leaves, flowers, mandalas and snowflakes. This, however, is just a starting point. On a more abstract level, don't overlook the textural patterns of things such as wood grain and the patterns made by frost on a pane of glass. Even the patterns seen on seashells, the wings of butterflies and moths, and birds' feathers may inspire you. Let creative imagination be your guide!

For advice about gluing looped shapes down onto a background, please refer to [Chapter 6](#).









**A selection of tight coil formations.**

## TIGHT COILS AND 3D MODELLING

In quilling, creativity is not confined to the spiralling and looping of strips. They can be tightly coiled, too, harnessing the inherent strength of paper and putting the power to make bold statements at your fingertips.

Quilling strips can be rolled up tightly into discs, or wound closely around all manner of different shaped objects. When coated with a film of glue, the robustness of the resulting pieces may astound you!

### Solid coils

---

Tight rolling introduces dense areas of colour to your work, complementing the lighter textural ‘brush strokes’ of delicate filigree.

A solid coil, sometimes referred to as a tight peg, is made by rolling up a strip of paper very tightly. The end of the strip is glued down immediately on completion of the rolling, without giving the coil any opportunity to unfurl.

It is easy to make a solid coil using a slotted quilling tool, simply by securing the end of the strip in the slot and winding tightly. There is a problem, however. The appearance of the resulting disc will be marred

by an all-too-obvious tag of paper lying right across a hole in the middle of the coil. Using a needle tool alleviates the problem of the tag, but there will still be a visible hole in the centre.



**Solid coils, made with short lengths of different colour strips, contrast beautifully with open filigree and looped shapes.**

From a strictly aesthetic point of view, a solid coil should, by definition, be solid – without any kind of hole in the middle. The only satisfactory way to achieve this is to roll it up by hand.

At first this recommendation may sound completely impractical. How can it possibly be done without a tool or a pre-formed spiral centre to roll the strip around? As with so many of the apparent challenges that may arise when learning to quill, however, the secret lies in effective strip conditioning.

Achieving a perfectly solid centre depends on the fibres at the end of the strip being broken down strongly enough to ensure that the very first turn of the rolling process closes tightly over itself. If even the smallest gap is present beneath the tip of your strip as you start to roll, it will always remain visible at the centre.



**The orange coil on the left was made with a slotted tool and clearly displays a tag in the centre. The blue coil was made with a needle tool, and has a neat round hole in the centre. The yellow coil on the right was pre-conditioned and hand-rolled to eliminate the central hole.**

When making a solid coil, begin with a strip which has been torn at both ends. This will not only help to eliminate a hole at the centre, but also ensure that the join is not visible when the far end of the strip is glued down. Decide which end to begin the coil and scratch the first 2–3cm ( $\frac{3}{4}$ –1in) hard with your thumbnail over and over again, concentrating particularly on the very tip, working on the wrong side of



the strip. Then roll the tip backwards and forwards repeatedly between dampened finger and thumb, pressing quite firmly. Doing this will eventually break down the fibres sufficiently for the slightly ragged end of the tip to turn tightly over itself without any underlying gap when you start to roll in earnest.

Re-moisten your finger and thumb, and then press down hard on the tiniest first fraction of the conditioned tip as you now begin to roll it for three or four turns, using a pushing motion. Check to see if any central hole is visible. If it is, simply unroll the strip and try again. If not, maintain a high degree of pressure and continue to roll the remaining strip very tightly. You could even apply a dot of glue to secure the tightly closed centre before continuing to roll.

As soon as you get to the end of the strip, apply a dot of glue to it on the inside and smooth it down. Do not let go of the coil until this is done.

If necessary, make sure that the finished disc lies flat by pressing it down on your table top or squeezing it laterally between tweezers.

Solid coils can be made as large as you like by adding extra strips. Simply glue the torn end of a new strip closely abutting the glued-down end of the strip you have just rolled, and then continue rolling in the same direction. In this way you can add different colours too, creating a distinctive 'bullseye' effect.

Do not be tempted to glue several strips together end-to-end before starting to roll a solid coil, as the places where the ends overlap will show, spoiling the overall shape and smoothness of your finished disc. (Note that this recommendation does not apply, however, if you plan on using the coil for 3D modelling, as described later in this chapter – for that purpose, there is a better way of feeding extra strips in to a coil, as will be explained in that context.)

The more strips you use to make a solid coil, you will soon start to notice how unstable the coil becomes: it is all too easy to destroy a

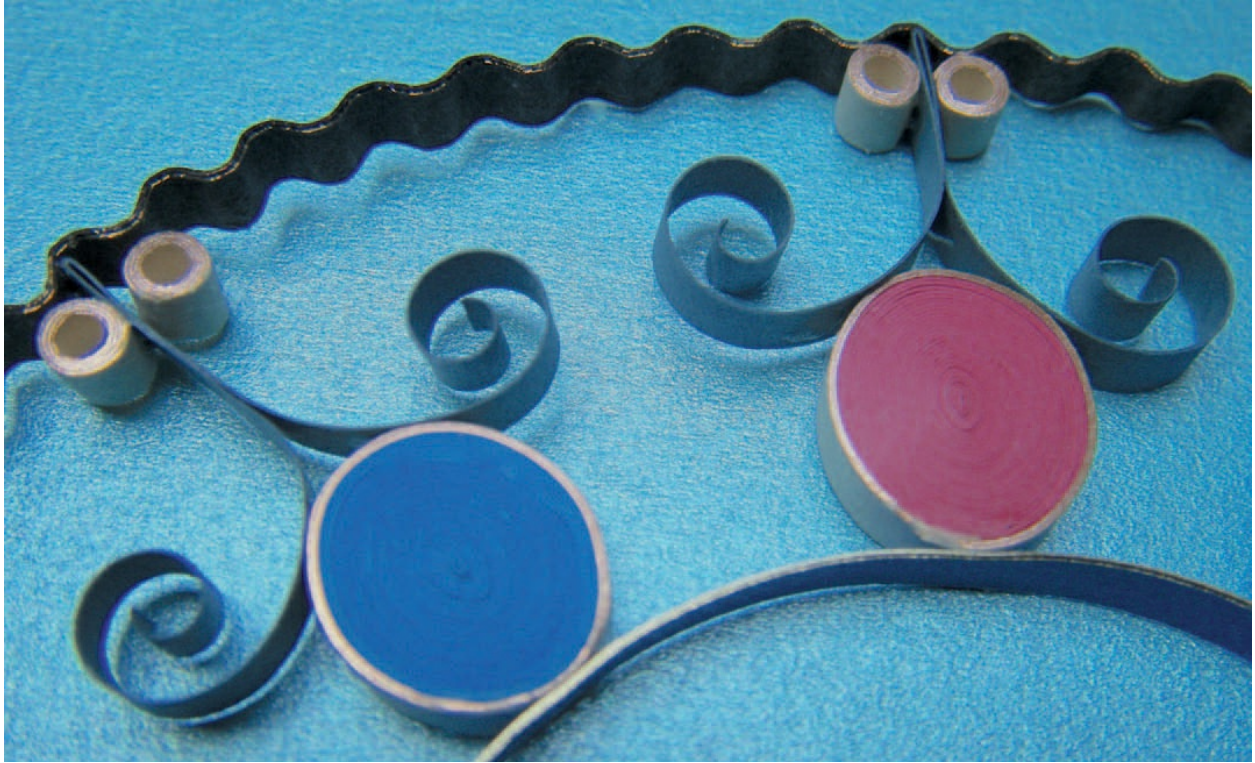
large disc by pushing the middle section out by accident. This is particularly true when working with 3 mm ( $\frac{1}{8}$ in) or even narrower strips. The ability to push solid coils into conical shapes by 'telescoping' them outwards from the centre is the basis for 3D modelling which will be considered later. For now, however, the focus is on creating flat solid coils which can be relied upon to stay that way! To stabilize your coils, it is recommended to coat them on one or both sides with a very thin layer of PVA glue, gently spread with a cocktail stick or cotton bud and then allowed to dry. Spreading the glue in this manner helps to seal the coil by seeping down between the tightly wound whorls, holding them firmly together so that your disc remains flat and strong.

Like closed loose coils, round solid coils can be pressed into oval or teardrop shapes and used in many different ways in a quilled design.

An oval-shaped solid coil can also be created by beginning to roll for a few turns as described above, securing the hole-less centre with a spot of glue, then squashing it as flat as possible between tweezers before continuing to fold and roll tightly along the length of the strip. Once the end of the strip has been glued down, you can squash the disc further and also squeeze the opposite ends of the oval in order to achieve the shape desired.



**Large solid coils can easily self-destruct unless you stabilize them with a thin layer of glue.**



Here, solid coils have been pressed into oval shapes, wrapped around with short lengths of gold-edged strip and then placed within open filigree antennae shapes for a border design. (Wrapping techniques are described in [Chapter 9](#).) Ring coils have been added in pairs at the base of the motifs.

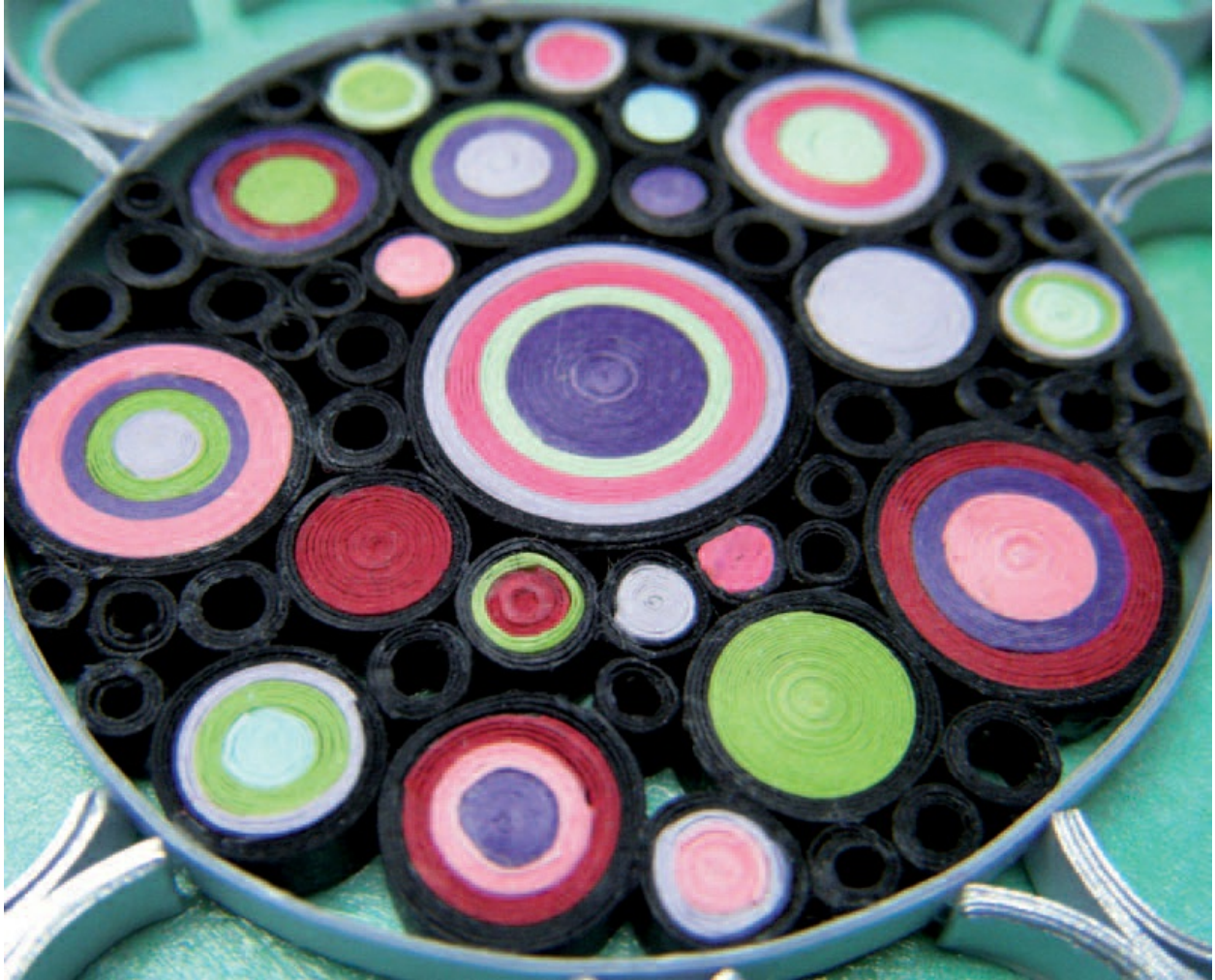
## Ring coils

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Unlike solid coils, ring coils feature a distinctive central hole which is fundamental to their open character.

Ring coils are created by tightly wrapping a quilling strip several times around an object such as a wooden dowel or other straight-sided item, so that the finished ring takes on the shape of the selected object. Typically they are round, but strips can also be wrapped around square or multi-sided objects, provided all the angles are convex. Round ring coils can sometimes be pinched and pressed into other shapes such as hearts and simple stars.





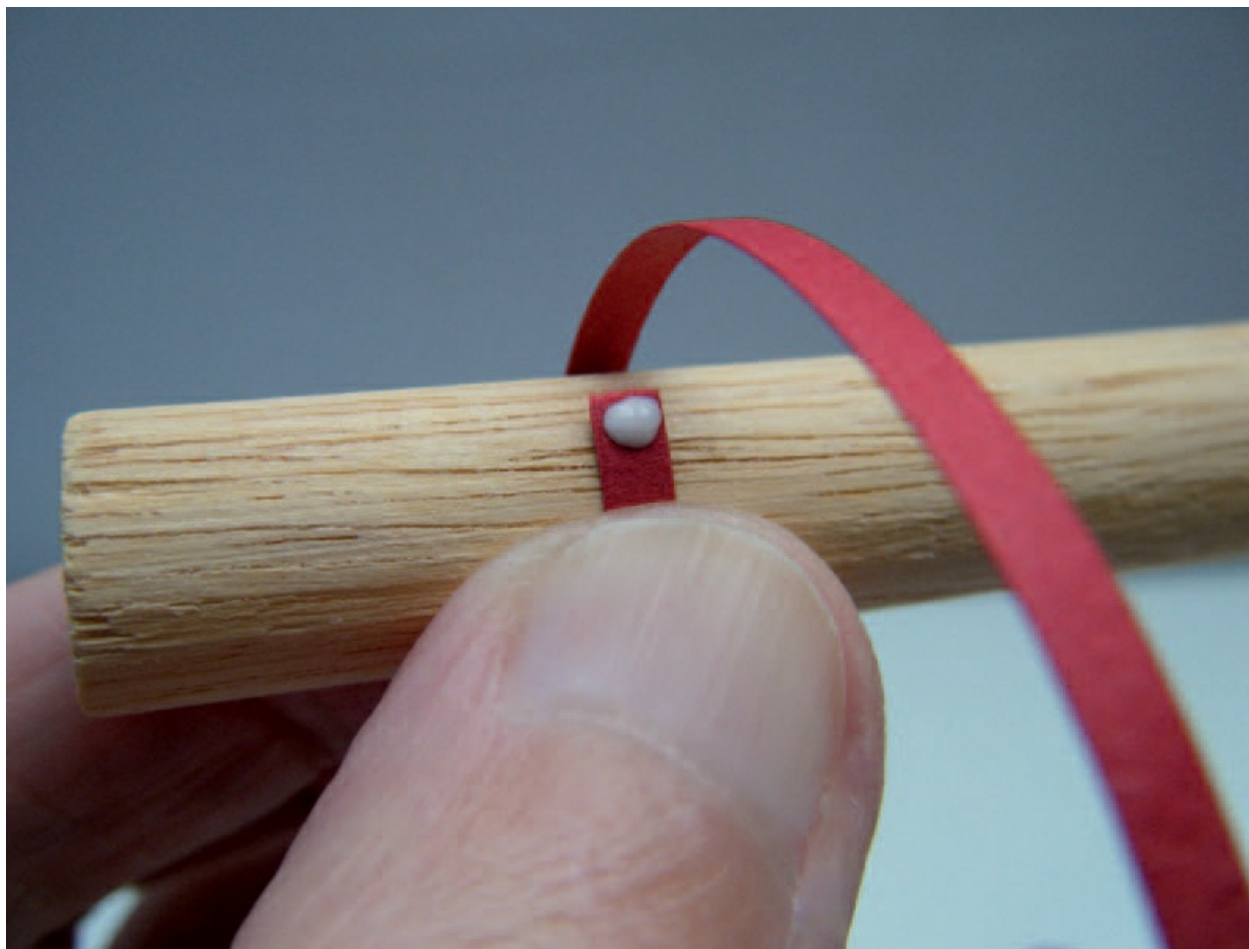
Solid coils mixed with small ring coils create an interesting lattice, set within a larger encircling ring.



**If you are lucky enough to be able to purchase a couronne (as used in embroidery and lace making), it is a very useful tool for producing ring coils with different diameters.**

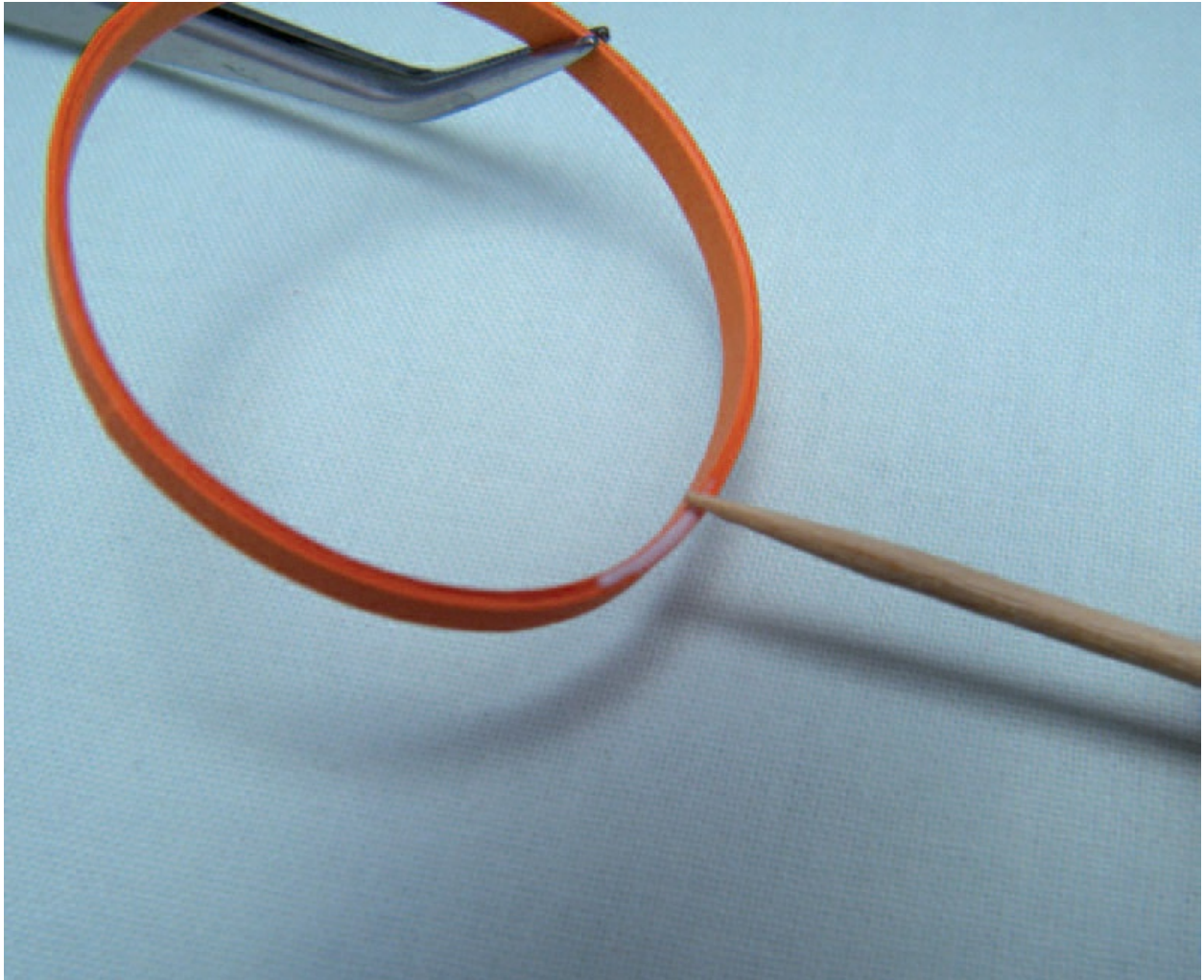
Large ring coils provide excellent borders for containing smaller shapes, while smaller ones can add interest to intricate, detailed designs.

To make a ring coil, begin with a strip which has been torn at both ends. Hold one end of the strip up against your chosen object or dowel (with the right side facing towards you) and apply a dot of glue close to its tip. Now wrap the free end of the strip closely around the dowel and press it into the glue so that an initial ring is formed. Continue to wrap the strip quite tightly over and over itself around the dowel until you reach the end. Apply a dot of glue to the tip of the strip end on the inside and press it down. Briefly allow the glue to dry, and then slide your ring coil gently off the dowel. (Obviously, this will not be possible if your dowel has any kind of lip, so always be sure to use a straight-sided one.)



**Begin your ring coil by applying a dot of glue to the strip end to secure it as you make the first turn around the dowel. Continue to wind the strip directly over this initial ring, taking care to keep the edges of the strip directly above one another.**





**Large rings can be stabilized by rubbing a little glue into the coiled strip edge all the way around on one side, using a cocktail stick. This is best achieved by applying glue along one small section at a time.**

A dot of glue at the beginning and end of the strip should be sufficient to hold the ring in shape. After removing the ring from the dowel, it can be further stabilized by applying a thin layer of glue to one or both edges with a cocktail stick. This helps to maintain the desired shape.

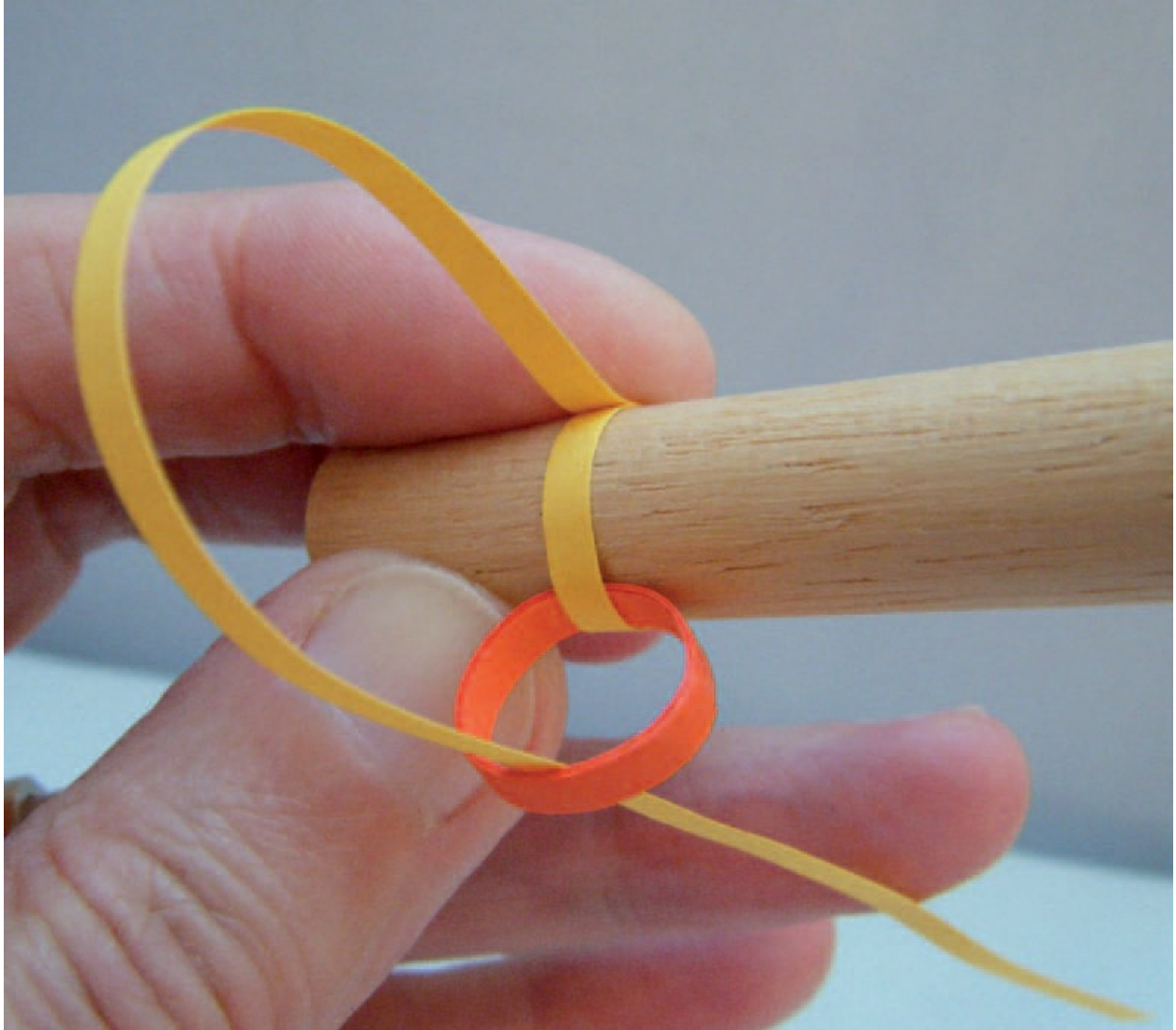
The only circumstance in which it is necessary to apply glue along the whole inside length of the strip as you wind is when you are ultimately planning to cut sections out of the finished ring – perhaps for making tracery patterns as described in [Chapter 7](#), for example.

Otherwise, simple stabilization of the edges will suffice.

If you wish to make a set of matching rings of identical thickness, it is advisable to determine the precise length of strip needed to complete each ring by prior measurement. Ideally, the final outer join for each ring should be sited exactly above the position of the first join on the inside. To work out the required strip length, wrap a strip around your dowel (without using any glue) the required number of times to achieve the thickness you want, tear it immediately above the position of the inner strip end (mark the dowel, or leave the inner end sticking out slightly so that you can easily see it) and then remove the coiled strip from the dowel to unroll and measure it.

This method of creating ring coils is suitable for use with straight-sided convex shapes – that is, ones whose corner angles all face outwards. Difficulties will be encountered with any shape that features inward-facing angles in addition to outward-facing ones, such as a complex star for example. If your desired shape has this characteristic and cannot be achieved by pinching/pressing a circular ring coil, it is better to use a different approach, as described in [Chapter 9](#), which deals with outlining techniques.

It is possible to create a series of ring coils which interlink with one another like the segments of a chain. To achieve this, create an initial ring coil as described above, hold it tightly next to your dowel and thread the free end of another strip through it as you create a second ring.



**Interlinking ring coils can be made using a dowel as shown here. The yellow strip has been threaded through the pre-made orange ring coil and secured around the dowel with a dot of glue at the point where the finger is shown pressing down on it at the top of the picture. The yellow strip can now be wound around the dowel repeatedly to form a second ring, passing through the orange ring each time.**



Interesting quilled jewellery designs can be created using interlinking ring coils. This unusual pendant features two interlinking multi-coloured rings, the larger of which has been filled with a decorative lattice of smaller rings and solid coils.

## 3D modelling using solid coils

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In quilling, the creative possibilities of 3D modelling arise from the ability to push out the centres of solid coils to form cones and gently curving cup shapes which can be used to form the component parts of imaginative paper sculptures.

As mentioned earlier, this is achieved by gently 'telescoping' the whorls of a coil within the limits of the strip width so that they remain at least partially in contact with one another. Push too hard and too far, and you will find yourself with an irreparably 'exploded' spring-like coil on your hands!

The wider the paper strip a solid coil is first made from, the easier it will be to push out its centre to form a sizeable, well-defined shape. For this reason, it is recommended to begin practising with strips at least 10mm ( $\frac{1}{2}$ in) wide. You can progress to using narrower strips as you become more adept with the technique.

While solid coil discs need to be stabilized by the application of glue in order to keep them flat, cones and cups must first be manipulated into the desired shapes before any glue is added.

## Cones

To create a cone, begin by making a solid coil using a single 10mm ( $\frac{1}{2}$ in) wide strip of about 45cm (18in) in length. Once you have finished rolling the coil and glued the strip end down, find a pointed object such as a pencil and use it to push gently at the centre of the coil so that it begins to protrude outwards. Once the point of the cone begins to extend, you will find you can adjust and lengthen the shape by squeezing and pressing on it gently from the inside with your fingers. Ideally, the whorls of the coil should be extended evenly. If your cone ends up extending further than you would wish, simply push the central point back in and start again.



**This spectacular model of a wizard was created by Jane Jenkins and is reproduced here with her kind permission. The body, hat and sleeves have been created using sharply pointed cone shapes, while the wizard's face and frog's head/body have been modelled using gently curving cups.**



**The solid coil on the left has been made by tightly rolling a strip of paper 10mm ( $\frac{1}{2}$ in) wide. After gently pushing out the middle of an identical coil with a pointed object, a cone shape is formed (centre). On the right, a thin layer of glue is spread on the inside of a finished cone to secure its shape.**

To create longer, larger cones with wider bases, you will need to begin with much larger solid coils. These will typically be made using multiple strips. If you glue down each additional new strip at the point where it joins the previous one (as described in the method for making flat solid coil discs), you will find that this action prevents you from pushing out a cone evenly. Instead, it is best to feed in each new strip into the coil about 10cm (4in) away from the end of the previous one as you roll, without using any glue to secure it. The overlap will be sufficient to hold the new strip in place, and there will be no fixed glue



points in the construction of the coil to hinder the 'telescoping' process.



Apart from their use in modelling, cone shapes also make interesting additions to abstract designs where they can be used to introduce texture and height.

Remember, too, that strips should always be inserted the same way round so that their right sides will be visible consistently in the pushed-out shape. A mix of right- and wrong-sided strips, even when rolled together using the same colour, will spoil the appearance of your finished cone.

Once a cone has been formed, it can now be stabilized by applying a thin layer of glue on the inside to ensure that it retains the length and shape required.



## Cups

A cup shape can be created from a solid coil in a similar way, except that a curved object (such as your thumb or finger tip) is used to push the middle out. Cup shapes can be made steep sided (like a thimble or bell) or shallow (like a saucer), depending on what you want to create. As you gently manipulate the coil, squeeze the pushed-out centre gently between your fingers to achieve an even, smooth finish. When you are happy with the shape, apply a thin layer of glue all over the inner concave side to secure it.

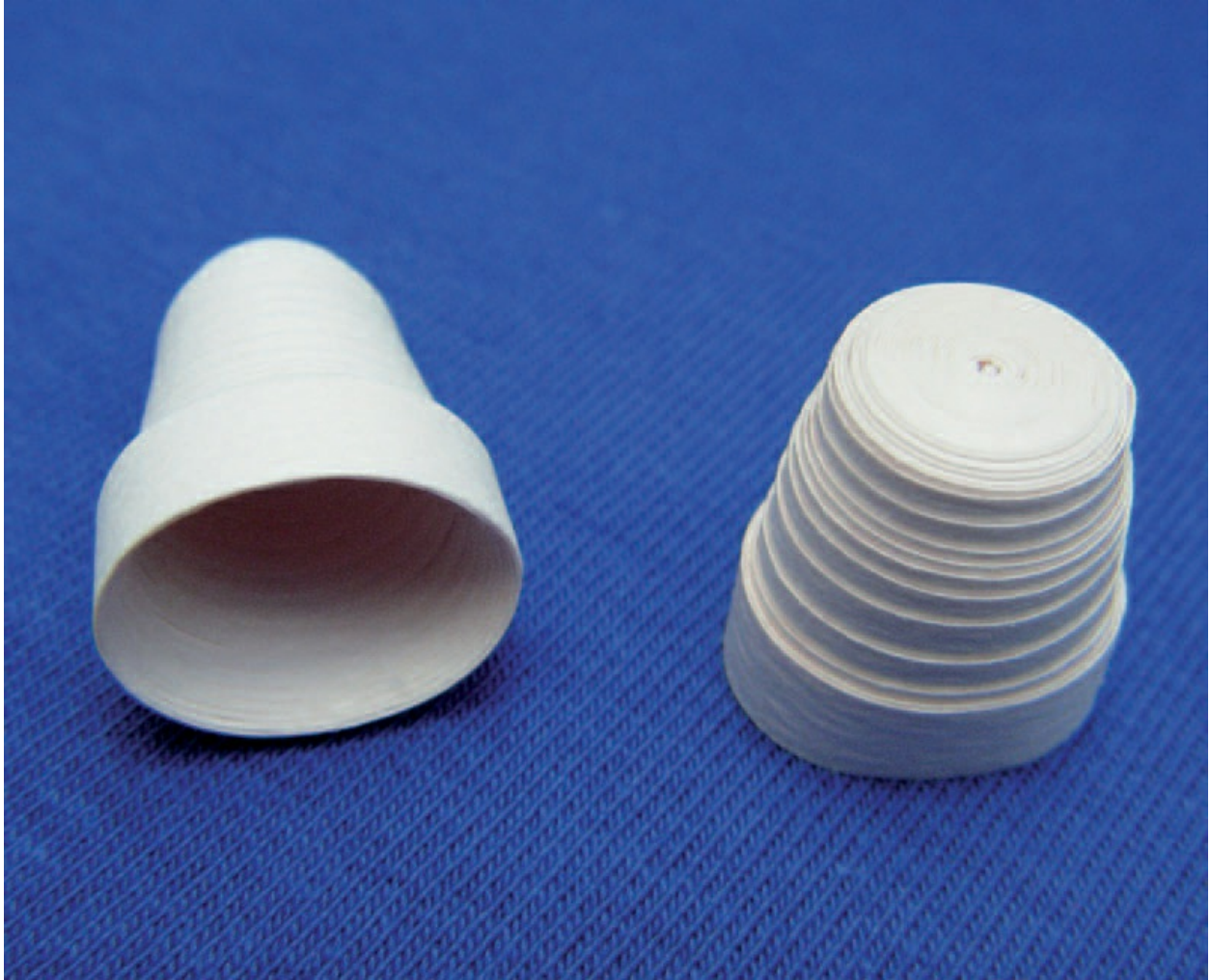


Smooth-edged cup shapes can be created in different sizes, depending on the number of strips used to make the original solid coil. When working with multiple strips, remember to introduce them by inserting and overlapping them, as described for making cones. The cup shape shown here at the bottom left was made using a combination of pink and red strips, rolled together.

## Assembling cups and cones

It only requires a little imagination to see how cup and cone shapes can be assembled together to form sculptures and 3D models. A large cone shape, for example, can easily be used to represent the body of a doll or the trunk of a tree, with smaller cones or cups attached to it suggesting limbs or branches. Two identical shallow cup shapes can be glued base-to-base to create a round globe. There are many different ways in which tight coil shapes can be put together and combined with other quilling techniques, if you take the opportunity to explore them.

When gluing one shape to another, apply the glue to just one of the surfaces and leave it for a few minutes to go tacky before attempting to fix it in place; this way, adhesion should be instant and the attachment process will not be thwarted by the force of gravity!



**A steep sided cup coil (left) resembles a bell. Flattening the tip transforms it into the shape of a plant pot (right). This can be achieved by tapping it gently on a table top.**





Cup shapes were used to create this whimsical model of an open sea shell with a 'black pearl' inside. Each cup has been gently pressed into an oval/teardrop shape before assembly.

For inspiration, refer back to the earlier picture of Jane Jenkins' wizard with accompanying animal figures. There is an infinite variety



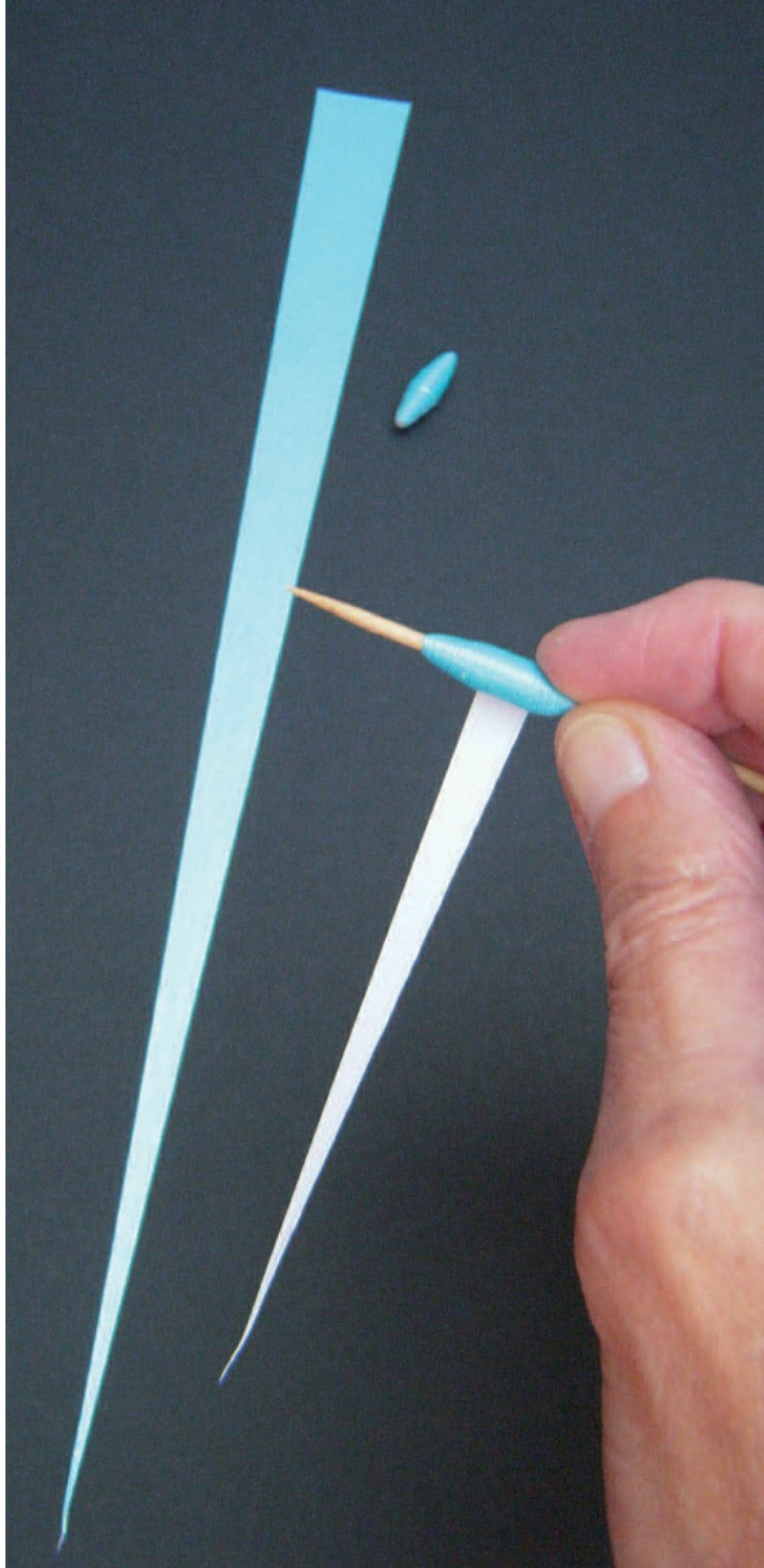
of living creatures whose forms can be interpreted in 3D quilling. Look, too, at the naturally occurring shapes of shells, corals, buds, fruits and vegetables. Consider shapes in the landscape, such as gently rolling hills and mountain peaks. Man-made artefacts such as ceramics, sculpture and architectural features may also serve to inspire, along with the shapes and colours used in costume.

## Beads

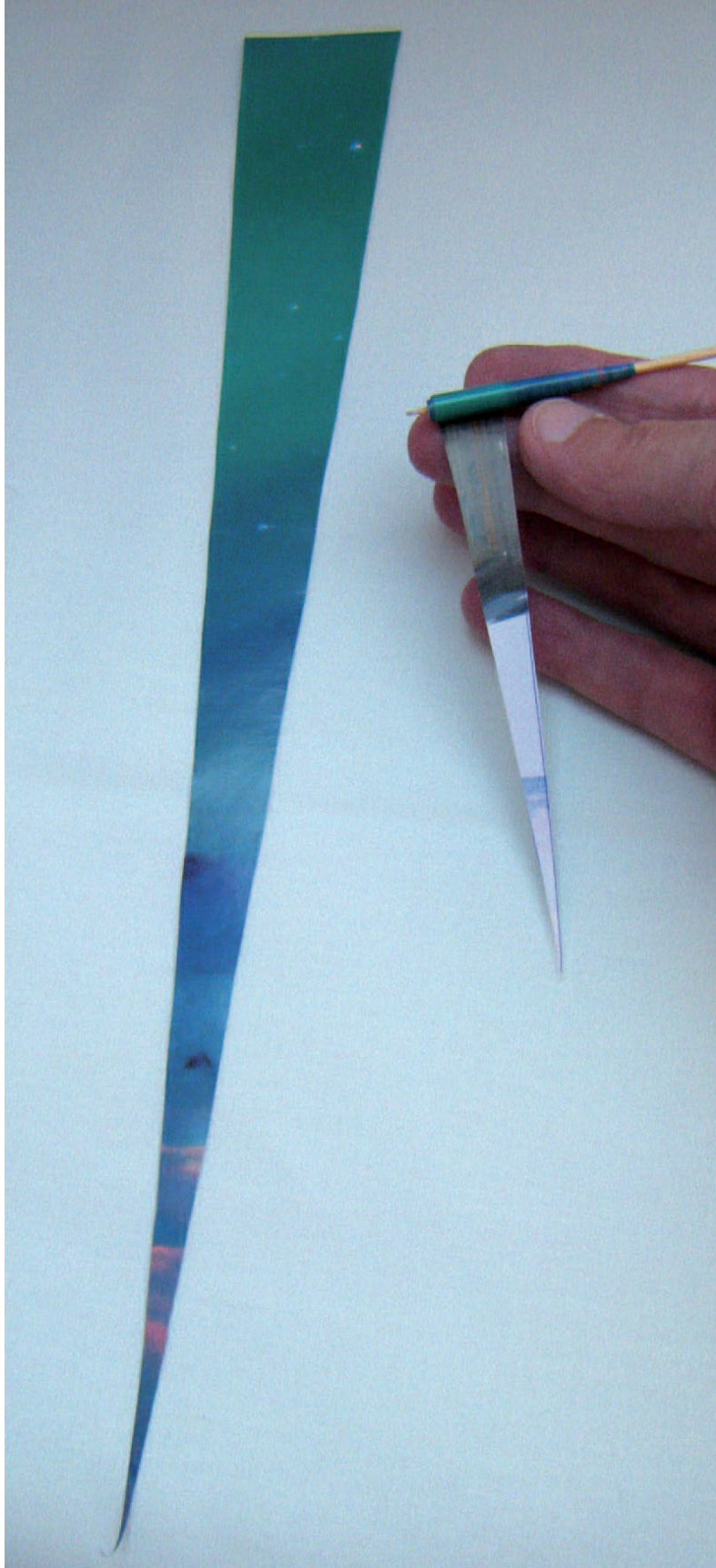
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No chapter on tight coils would be complete without a brief mention of paper beads. The extensive subject of paper bead jewellery is worthy of a separate book in its own right, but the rolling of beads from triangular strips of paper is recognized by the Quilling Guild as a legitimate quilling technique, sitting quite naturally alongside the creation of cups, cones and modelled paper artefacts.

As described earlier, the tight rolling of a parallel-sided quilling strip results in the creation of a solid coil or ring coil, which is cylindrical in nature. However, if you cut out a long narrow triangular shape from a sheet of paper and roll it tightly around a needle or cocktail stick from the narrowest side, you will end up with a serviceable paper bead. The shape of the finished bead – either conical or barrel-shaped – depends on the nature of the triangle used and the way that you choose to roll it.



The blue barrel-shaped bead in this example has been made from a triangle of paper whose narrow side measures 20mm ( $\frac{3}{4}$ in), and whose two equal long sides both measure 290mm (11in) in length. The triangle is held vertically and rolled tightly around a cocktail stick from the narrow side as shown, keeping the end point in line with the centre of the bead as it forms throughout the rolling process. When the whole length of the triangle has been rolled up, the end point is secured at the centre of the bead with a dot of glue, and the stick withdrawn. The length of the resulting bead is 20mm ( $\frac{3}{4}$ in), which equates to the width of the original triangle along its narrow side.





Interesting paper beads can be created by cutting long triangles from colourful magazine pages. Here, two long right-angle triangles have been cut out from a glossy magazine, one of which is being rolled on a cocktail stick into a conical bead. The triangles each have one long side which is slanted and one long side (adjoining the right angle) which is straight. By aligning the slanted edge of the triangle during the rolling process, the straight edge automatically telescopes outwards, forming a cone. The end point will be secured at its tip with a dot of glue when the roll is complete.

The making of a barrel-shaped bead (one which is thick in the middle and narrower at each end) requires the use of a paper strip cut into the shape of an isosceles triangle – that is, one which has two long sides of equal length. The triangle must be rolled up vertically from the short side, keeping the end point central at all times.

To make a conical bead, either a right-angle triangle or an isosceles triangle of paper may be used. Again, the nature of the triangle should be long and narrow, with the width of the narrowest side dictating the minimum length of the finished bead. The whole length of the triangle is rolled up around a cocktail stick from the narrowest side, but this time it is necessary to keep one long side of the triangle aligned at all times as you roll so that the opposite side gradually telescopes outwards at a slanted angle. After securing the end tip with a dot of glue, you can extend the length of the bead a little, if desired, by pulling gently at its pointed end.

Paper beads need to be secured by applying a thin layer of glue to the outside, in order to hold their shape. If the beads are going to be incorporated into jewellery, this can usefully be achieved using a combined glue/varnish product which provides a degree of water resistance when the item is being worn.





**Placement of a quilled shape with tweezers.**



# **AFFIXING YOUR QUILLING TO A BACKGROUND**

After making any of the spiral, looped or tight coil shapes described in earlier chapters, there will soon come a time when you want to arrange them together to form a design and affix this permanently to a background.

Typically, your chosen background will be paper or card, and for this purpose you can employ the same PVA glue that you have used in creating the shapes themselves.

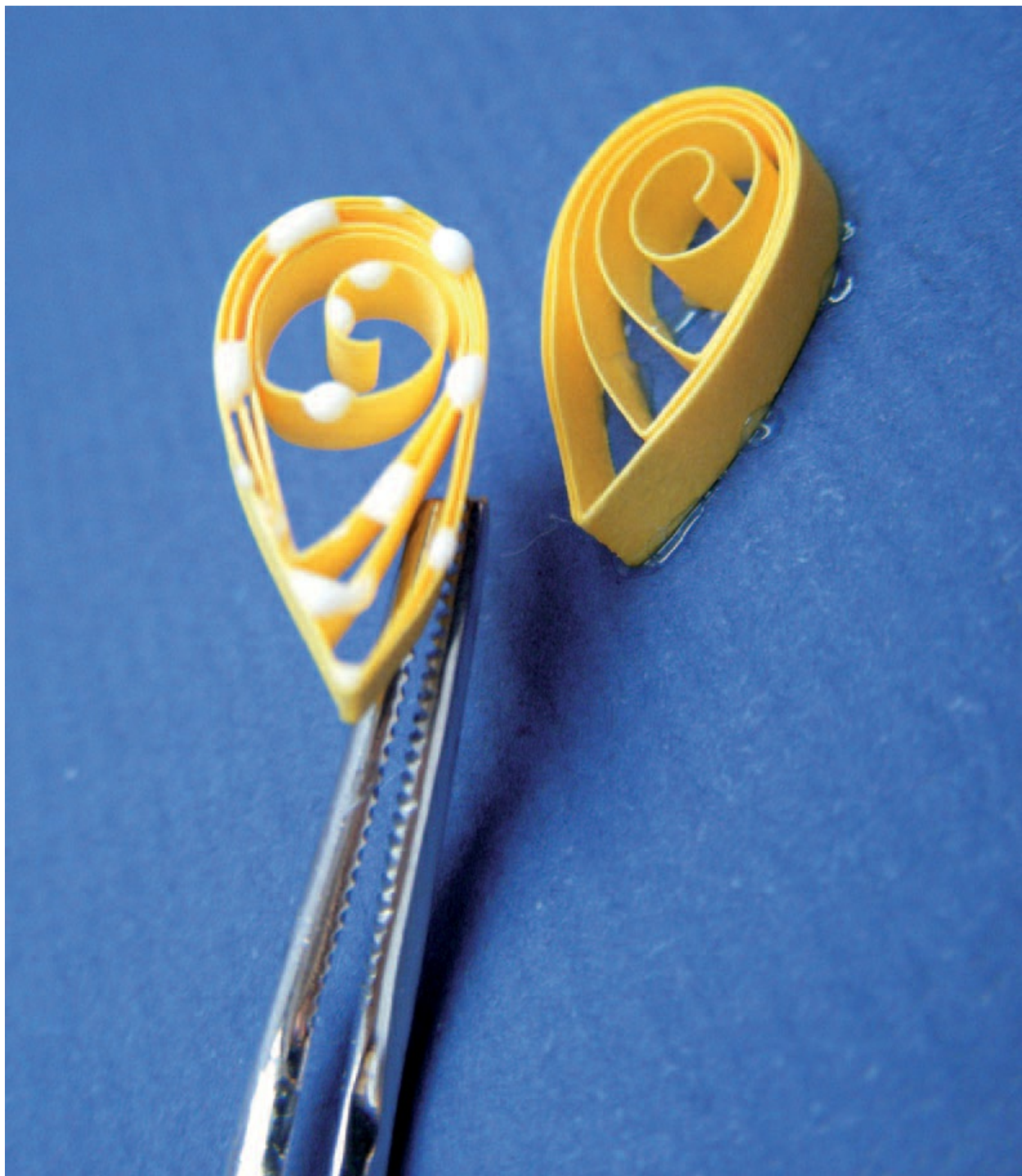
PVA glue is white when wet and transparent after drying, but this does not mean that it becomes totally invisible. Any residual blobs of glue will show up as shiny areas on your work – particularly when viewed under artificial light – and so it is always good practice to try and minimize their occurrence.

Tempting as it may seem to dispense a broad puddle of glue onto your background surface and place quilled pieces directly into it, the end result is likely to be unsightly – unless, of course, an obvious area of gloss around your quilling is intentional.

Quilled shapes are generally affixed to a background ‘on edge’ so that the pattern made by their whorls or loops can be seen when viewed from above. For this reason, the challenge is to apply glue across as much of the contacting edge area as possible, without

leaving visible blobs after the shape has been stuck down.

The best way to apply glue to a shape is to hold one side of it firmly with tweezers and dip it gently into a thin film of PVA, so that all areas of the contacting edge are coated but no glue attaches to its other parts. The film of glue needs to be thin so that none is accidentally pushed up the visible sides of the shape during the dipping process.



One way to apply glue to the contacting edge of a quilled shape is to pick it up with tweezers and dispense dots of glue directly on to it as shown here on the left. However, blobs of excess glue remain clearly visible after sticking down a shape in this way, even after the glue has dried (right).



**Here, a film of glue has been spread thinly across the cut-out transparent section of a window envelope. A quilled shape is held firmly with tweezers and different areas of it are dipped sequentially into the glue, just a little at a time. Curving the glued surface over your finger helps to ensure that no areas are missed.**

Some quillers favour spreading their glue onto a wipe-clean surface such as a plastic lid or tile. Others like to utilize a 'wet palette' whereby glue is spread over greaseproof kitchen paper which has been wrapped around a wet sponge and kept in an airtight container to prevent it drying out.

Another popular method is to cut out the transparent section of a window envelope and spread glue thinly across it with a cocktail stick. The 'window' can be curved gently over your finger whilst dipping a quilled shape, helping to bring glue into close contact with every part.

When dipping, begin very gently at first and just coat one small



section of your shape at a time, repeating the process until all of the contacting edges are satisfactorily covered. If you dunk the whole shape impatiently into the glue all in one go, it is more likely to become bogged down, and the risk of its delicate features becoming accidentally distorted is increased. Always remove the shape from the glue with a sideways motion rather than lifting it vertically upwards – this, again, helps to prevent distortion.

If the quilled shape you wish to dip into glue is extremely delicate (such as an open spiral coil), it is advisable to dilute the film of glue first by mixing it with a few drops of water. The thinner the glue, the less likely it is to pull a spiral out of shape by weighing down its inner whorls.

Sometimes, sections of a quilled shape will remain stubbornly free of glue, no matter how thorough the dipping process. This is often due to the fact that the shape is not 100% flat, and the centres of spirals may naturally tend to raise themselves upwards, away from the surface of the glue. If this happens, it may be necessary to apply a tiny spot of glue to the missed part afterwards using a needle or the tip of a cocktail stick. Be careful, however, not to introduce a large blob which will ooze out and remain visible.

As soon as the shape has been satisfactorily coated with glue, it can be lowered (still using the tweezers) into its final position on your chosen background. Press it down gently onto the background with your fingertip whilst withdrawing the tweezers, being careful not to move it sideways, which might cause the glue to smudge.

If, despite all your care, a few glue blobs are visible around your shape, do not panic! Often they can be removed quickly and efficiently with a pointed stick, or the tip of a plastic drinking straw which has been cut diagonally to form a nib.

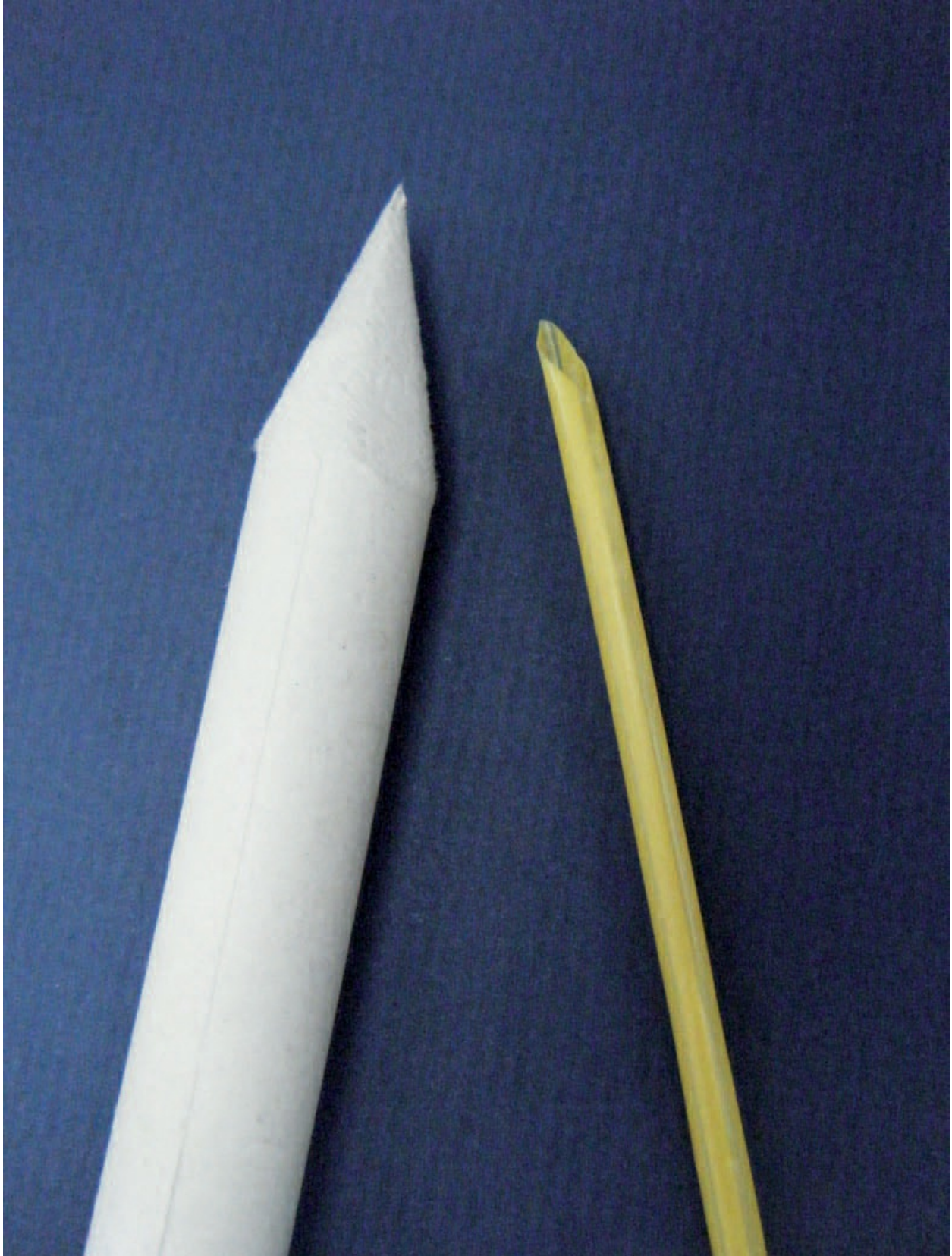
If a section of your shape does not stick down satisfactorily to the background, this is usually because insufficient glue has been applied

in one area, or it has dried out before you were ready to put the shape down. In this instance, it is often possible to introduce a little glue to the affected area by dispensing a tiny amount onto the corner of a thin piece of paper (which can be folded at a convenient angle if necessary) and then sliding this underneath the shape.

## Composite elements

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It is not always necessary to glue down individual shapes one at a time. Often, several shapes can be joined together to form composite elements of a design, which can then be affixed to a background in one action as a single cluster.



**An artist's blending stump (left) can be useful for removing accidental blobs of wet**

glue, as it is made from absorbent compacted paper fibre. A drinking straw with its end trimmed to form a pointed nib (right) can also be used to scoop up unwanted glue spots.

Composite quilled elements can be created by joining shapes together with a little glue along their contacting sides. Assembling pieces on a surface that can easily be rotated, such as a plate or an old CD covered in clear plastic cling-film, makes it easy to turn your work to a comfortable angle when inserting the next piece. (Paper picnic plates with a glossy surface are ideal for this purpose as the gloss prevents your quilled design becoming stuck accidentally to the plate during gluing.) Once all the quilled shapes are glued into place, it is necessary to wait just a few minutes for the glue to dry before picking up the entire composite piece with tweezers. Choose a sturdy part of the cluster – such as the long outer whorls of a teardrop shape – by which to grasp it. The piece can then be dipped into a thin film of glue as described above, and affixed to your background as a single unit.





The butterfly on the right hand side of this picture is in the process of being assembled on a glossy coated paper picnic plate. Glue has been dispensed along part of the side of the lower right hand wing shape (which is being held with tweezers), ready to be lowered into place alongside the upper wing which already been fixed in place. A completed butterfly (as shown on the left hand side of the picture) can be picked up as a single composite element, ready for dipping into a film of glue and affixing to a background.

The ability to work with a complete composite element in this way makes it easy to position the whole piece precisely where you want it on a background. If you are undecided about exactly where to place it, the composite can be moved around experimentally before being dipped in any glue, so that you can assess its position visually. Once you have determined its preferred position, you may wish to mark the background temporarily in some way to aid the final placement after glue has been applied. Rather than using pen or pencil marks which

may be difficult to erase from the background afterwards, it can be helpful to utilize small markers cut from the top sections of sticky repositionable office notes (the kind which are often used to mark pages in printed documents on a temporary basis). The adhesive used in pads of such notes is deliberately low-tack, enabling them to be removed easily without leaving any marks on a background.

When gluing quilled shapes together, always bear in mind the desirability of concealing joins wherever possible. If you are attaching a solid coil head to a butterfly's body, for example, position the head so that its join is concealed at the point of attachment, rather than being left visible at the side.

## Preserving your work

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In the context of gluing, a brief mention also needs to be made of considerations relating to the preservation of your quilling. The colour of paper strips will fade over time if regularly exposed to bright sunlight, while the structure of quilled shapes which are glued down on edge makes them naturally susceptible to accumulation of dust and exploration by insects. Placing quilled artwork behind glass does provide a degree of protection, and box-style frames are ideal for accommodating the depth of a quilled image that results from the width of the strips used. 3D models made using cups and cones will benefit from the application of clear, light-weight spray-on varnish, successively applied as several light coats.









Use of two-colour fringing, vortex coils and bandaging all contribute to the visual impact of this unusual design.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

One of the joys of quilling is that once you have mastered the basic techniques, you can start exploring ways of adapting them in imaginative and creative ways. Do not be afraid to experiment! Cutting, folding and twisting traditional shapes can yield spectacular results, while the combination of multiple strips within a single shape creates exciting opportunities to work with contrasting colours.

### Add impact to your spiral coils

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#### Using multiple colours in closed loose coils

There are two ways in which you can incorporate different colours into a closed loose coil (as introduced in [Chapter 3](#)).

The first of these is to glue together sequential strips of contrasting colours end-to-end using tiny dots of glue, before rolling and shaping in the usual way. Start the roll with a cut strip end to ensure a sharp spiral centre. The ends of all other strips can be torn.



**This teardrop (centre) was shaped from a closed loose coil formed by first joining a black quarter length strip and a pink quarter length strip together sequentially end-to-end as shown and then rolling it up from the black end.**

The second method is to glue strips of contrasting colours together at their tips (just at one end), so that they lie on top of one another, and then roll them both up together simultaneously. (This method of joining strips is often referred to as joining together 'in parallel'.) Again, remember to start the roll with cut strip ends (where the tips are

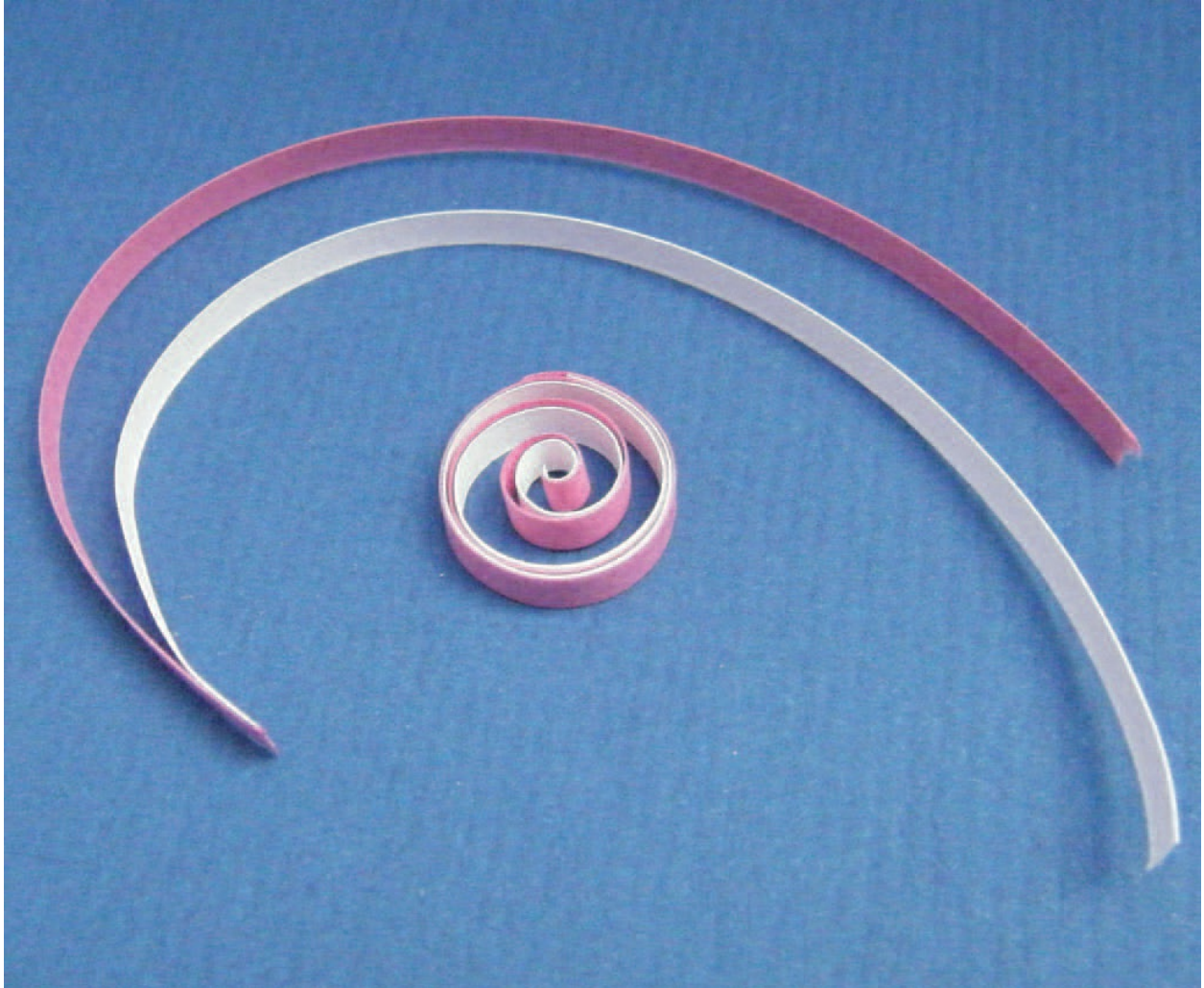
joined) to ensure that the resulting spiral has a neat centre.

## Multi-strip open scrolls

Using multiple strips in open scrollwork adds elegance and delicacy to a filigree design, whilst also allowing you to experiment with colour.

Select the strips you wish to use, and join them together at one end in parallel (as described above) with just a tiny dot of glue at their tips, all of which should be sharply cut ends. Dampen the ends slightly where they are joined, and roll all the strips together for a short distance, as you would when beginning to form the centre of a standard spiral coil. Next, separate the individual strips by pushing or pulling them as necessary with dampened fingers and thumb, so that even gaps are opened up between them. Grip the strips firmly to hold them in the required position whilst applying glue along the remaining length of the free ends to secure them all together. The stem of the scroll can be trimmed to the required length once the glue is dry.





**This two-tone closed loose coil was formed by first joining two quarter length strips of contrasting colours together in parallel at their tips as shown and then rolling them both up together with the lighter pink strip on the inside. When finishing this type of coil, it is necessary to cut the end of the inner strip a little shorter than the outer one just before gluing the two ends down, so that it is hidden.**



Here, quarter-length strips of black, red and grey have been used to create a multi-strip open scroll, as seen on the right. The scroll was started by joining the three strips together at their tips (bottom left) and then rolled a short way with the grey strip on the inside to form the beginning of a spiral centre (top of picture). The almost-finished scroll is shown being held on the right, after the individual strips have been separated and evenly spaced by gentle manipulation. All that now remains is to apply glue to the undersides of the black and red strips below the gripped position to secure the scroll, and then trim to the required length.



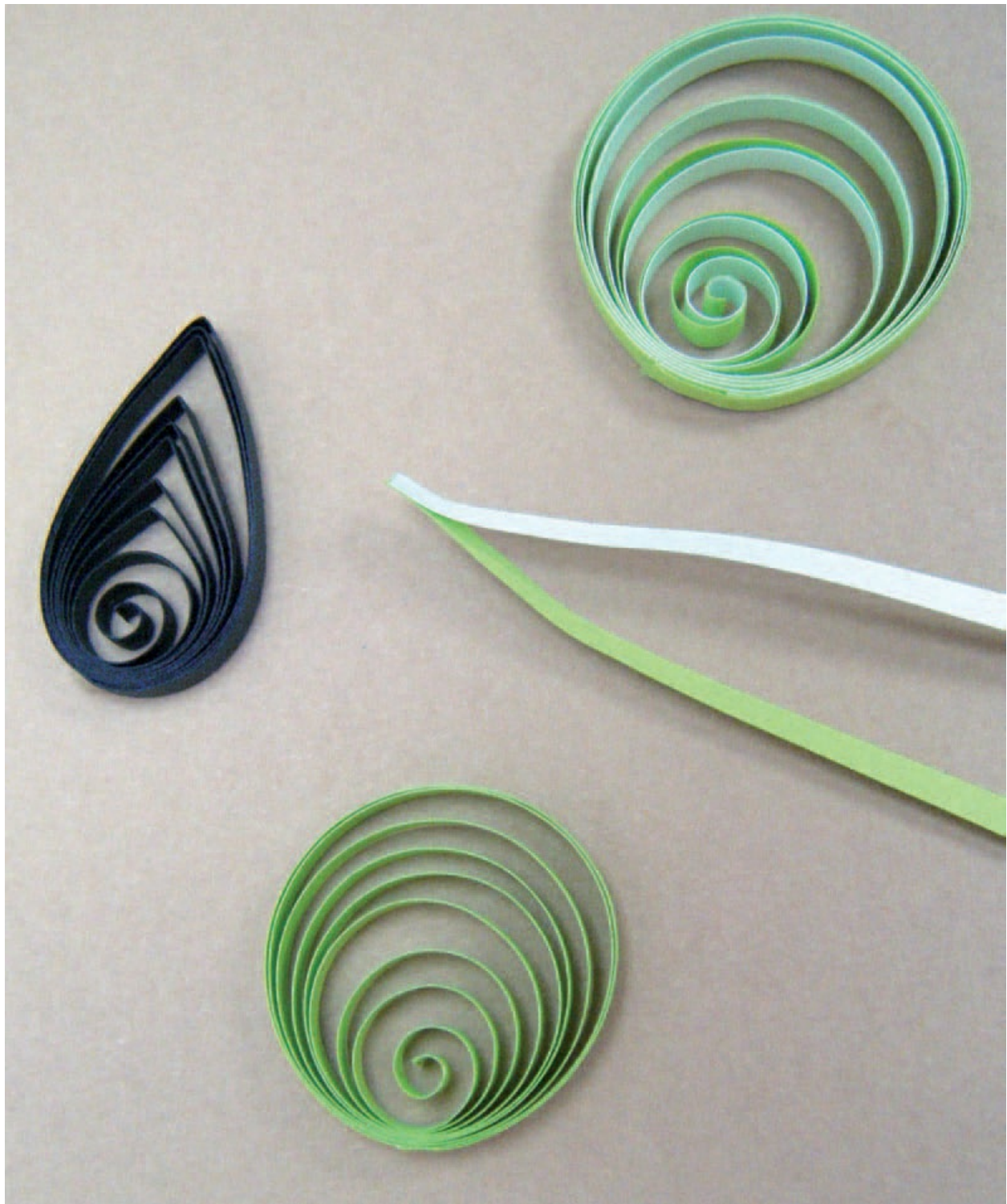
**Multi-strip open scrolls can be conjoined to create an almost calligraphic effect.**

## Eccentric coils

An eccentric coil can be created from a closed loose coil by pulling its centre to one side and securing it there with glue. Once the glue is dry, the coil can be utilized as a simple round shape or pinched into a teardrop which (unlike a conventional teardrop) is distinctly characterized by its vertical symmetry.

The best way to secure the coil centre in an eccentric position is to use a work-board with pins that will hold it in place while the glue (rubbed gently into the edges of the whorls which have been pulled together) is left to dry. Self-locking tweezers (which retain their grip without needing to be held) can also be used for this purpose.





A classic eccentric coil is shown here at the bottom, with a pinched teardrop version beside it on the left. At the top right of the picture is a two-tone eccentric coil, which has been rolled from two contrasting strips joined together in parallel by gluing at the tips of one end as shown. Three or even four contrasting strips can be rolled together in this way to produce colourful multi-strip variations.



Once the whorls of an eccentric coil have been firmly secured together on one side, the opportunity arises to cut through some of the outer ones on the opposite side – an option which opens up all kinds of creative possibilities!



After the whorls of an eccentric coil have been pulled together at one side, they must be secured in position while glue is applied to the area where they touch and allowed to dry. Here, this is being done with pins on a work-board. Once the glue is dry, the eccentric coil should be removed from the board and flipped over so that the glued area becomes the underside of the shape. This ensures that no glue is visible when the shape is incorporated into a design.



Three multi-strip eccentric coils have had their outer whorls cut through in this design, creating an interesting effect.





This design incorporates a yellow/orange multi-strip eccentric coil whose outer layers have been cut and then individually coiled at their ends. The inner un-cut whorls have been pinched to form a teardrop.

## Liven up your looping

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Multi-coloured huskings

Just as colourful spiral coils can be created using multiple strips, a similar approach can be applied to wheatears and alternate side looped huskings (introduced in [Chapter 4](#)). By joining several strips together in parallel at their tips (see *above* as described for spiral coils), it is then possible to create loops featuring impactful colour combinations.

## Cutting and twisting

When the loops of wheatears and alternate side looped huskings are firmly secured with glue at the base, interesting variations can also be produced by cutting through the tops of some of the loops, as already described for eccentric coils. Remember, too, the creative possibilities of twisting the ends of the loops, as previously described in [Chapter 4](#).

## Vortex coils

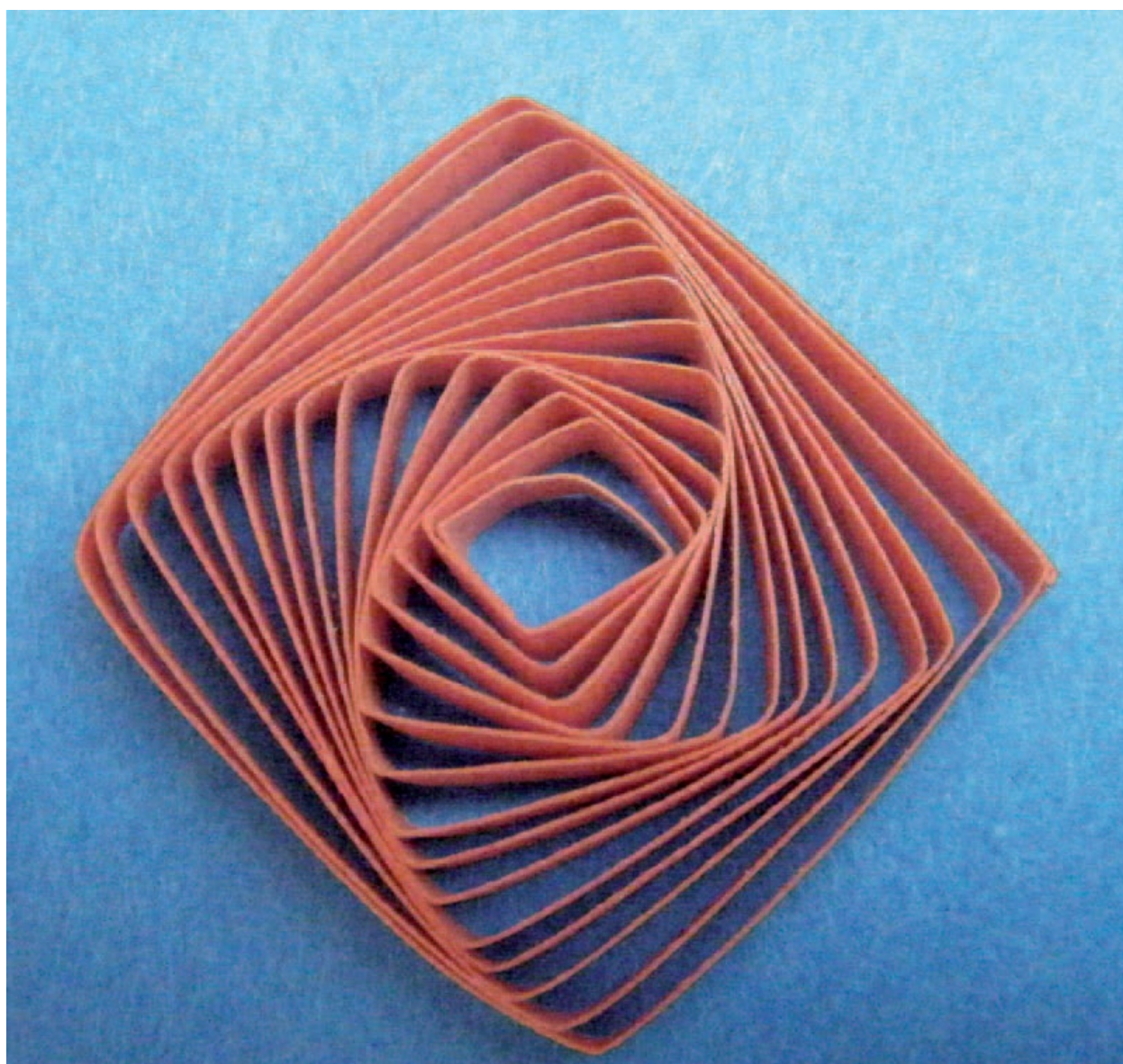
The vortex coil is a spectacular variation of a closed loose coil, typically created by pressing down with your fingers through the loops of an unglued wheatear formation. Much pioneering work on this technique has been done by the Australian quiller, Licia Politis, which she has generously shared with the Quilling Guild.

Classic vortex coils have a central hole from which angular inner layers radiate outwards in a distinctive vortex pattern, rather like water disappearing down a drainpipe! There is also an 'eccentric' variation in which the centre remains elongated along one side of the coil.





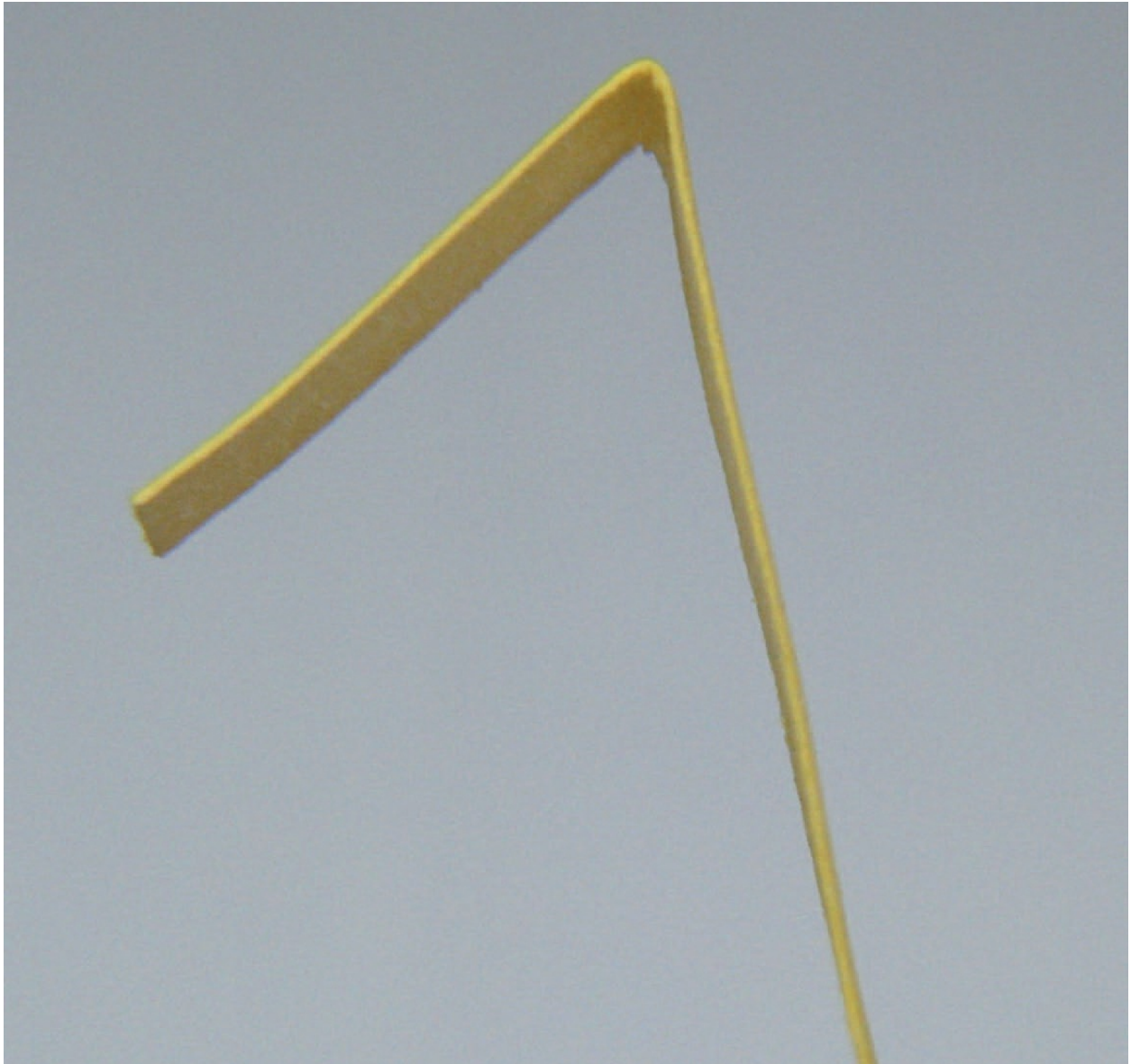
This colourful alternate side looped husking was created from a bunch of four strips (dark blue, yellow, red and light blue) joined together at their tips (just at one end), in parallel. Huskings of this kind are best made using the fingers, rather than pinning on a board, due to the necessary manipulation of the strips described below. The first (central) loop is initially created using all four strips together. Whilst holding this loop by its sides, the individual inner strips are then each pulled down a little way in turn, creating gaps between them. When the gaps between all four colours are equal, each individual strip is then folded around the base in turn and glued into position. Two further four-strip loops are then created in the same way using the alternate side looping technique, one to the left and one to the right of the central loop. In this example, a final outer loop was made using all four strips together.





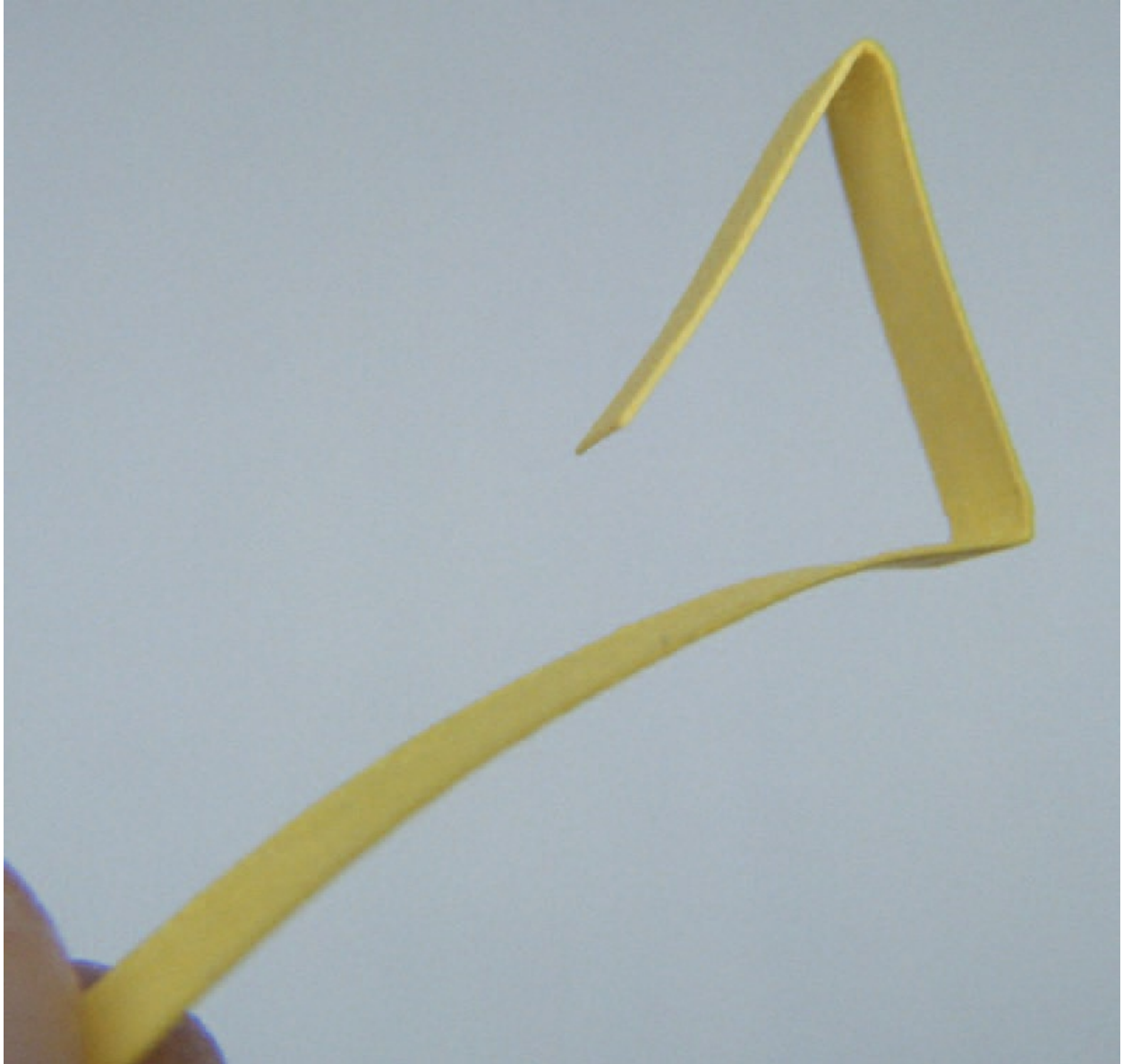
A classic vortex coil.

## Step by step: making a vortex coil



### Step 1

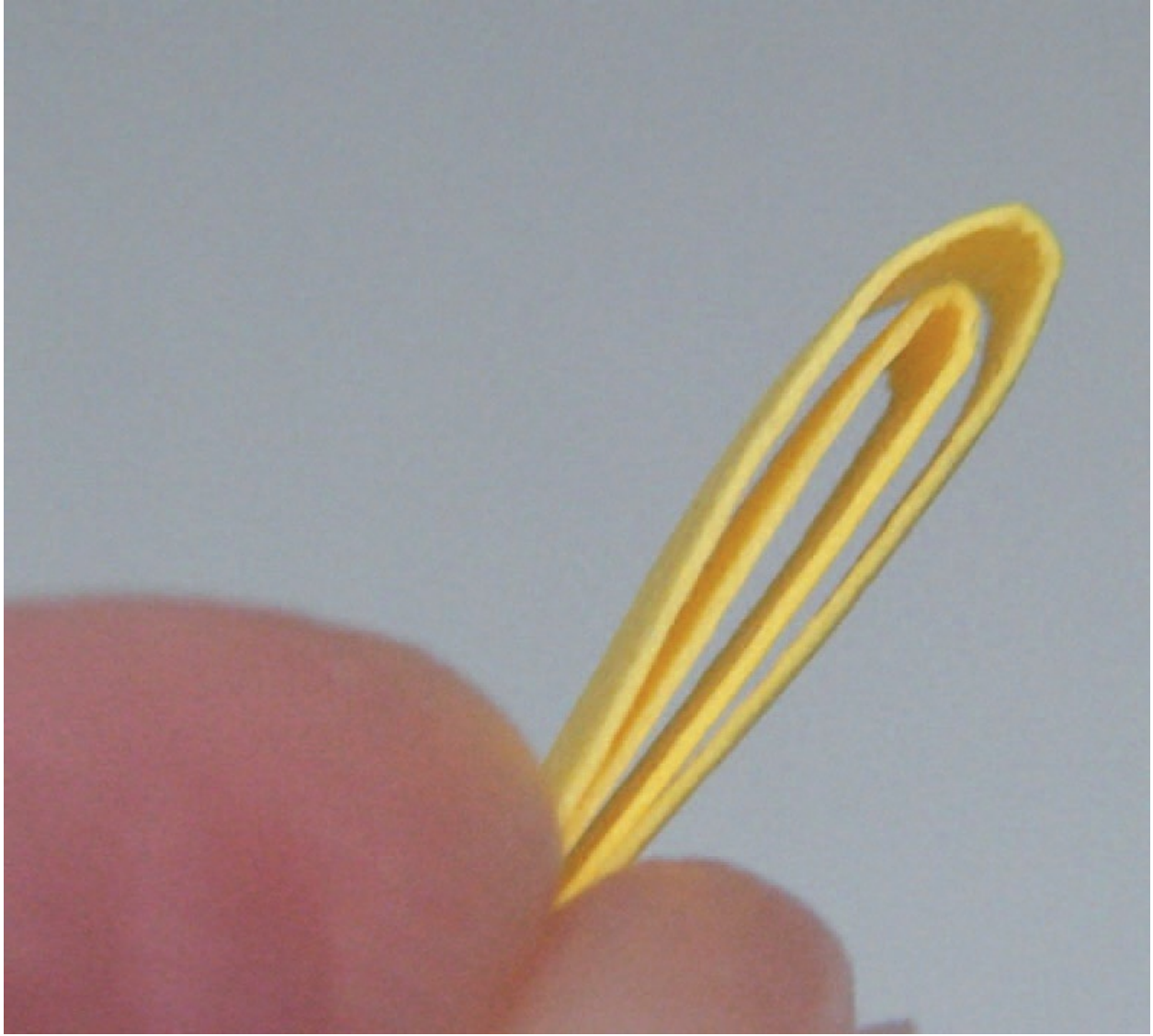
1. Fold over the end of a full-length quilling strip by about 5–10mm ( $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ in), bearing in mind that the longer the folded-over section is, the larger the central hole in your vortex coil will be.



**Step 2**

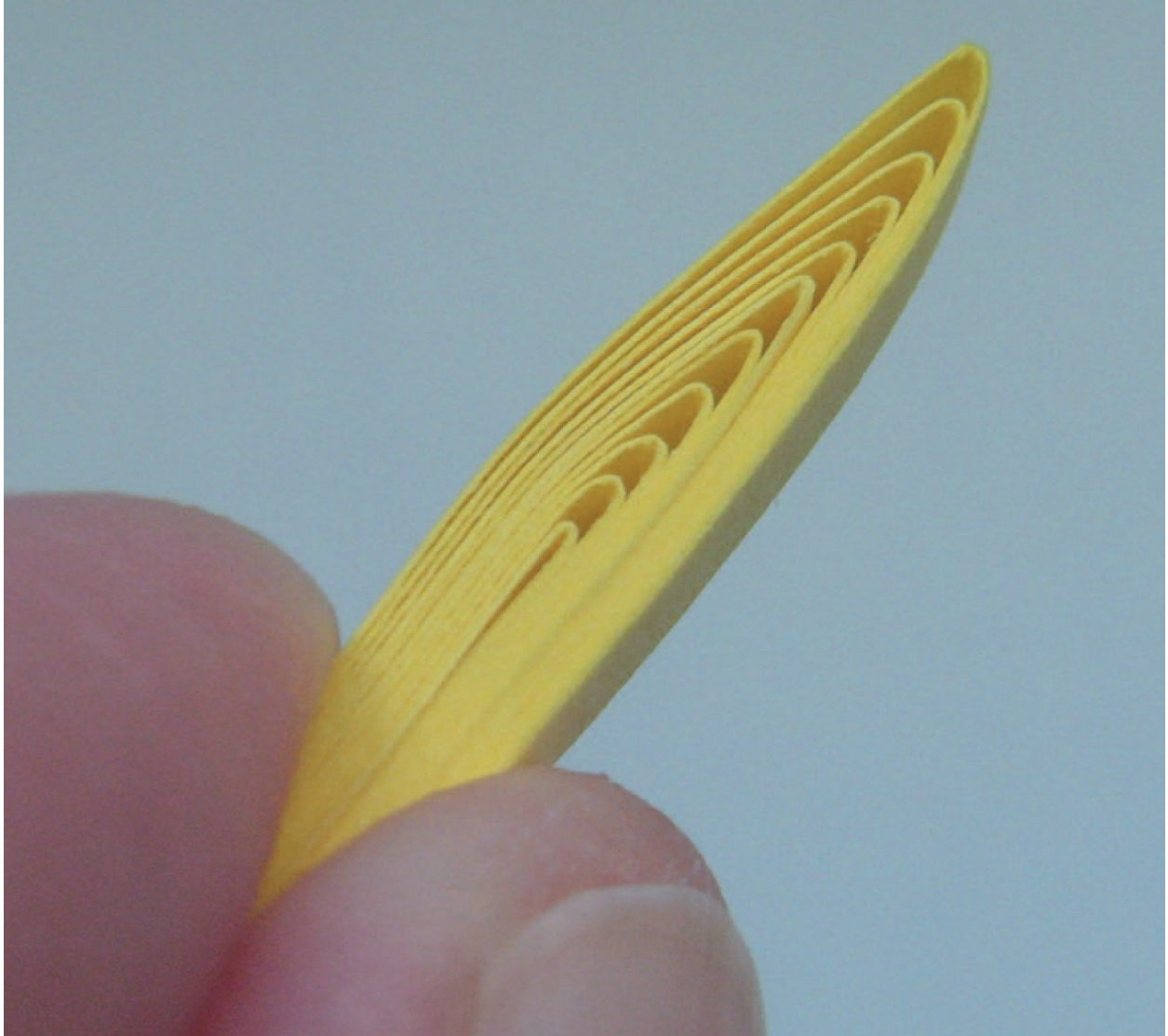
2. Make a second fold level with the end of the strip, but not touching it too tightly. Close up the folds to form your first loop.





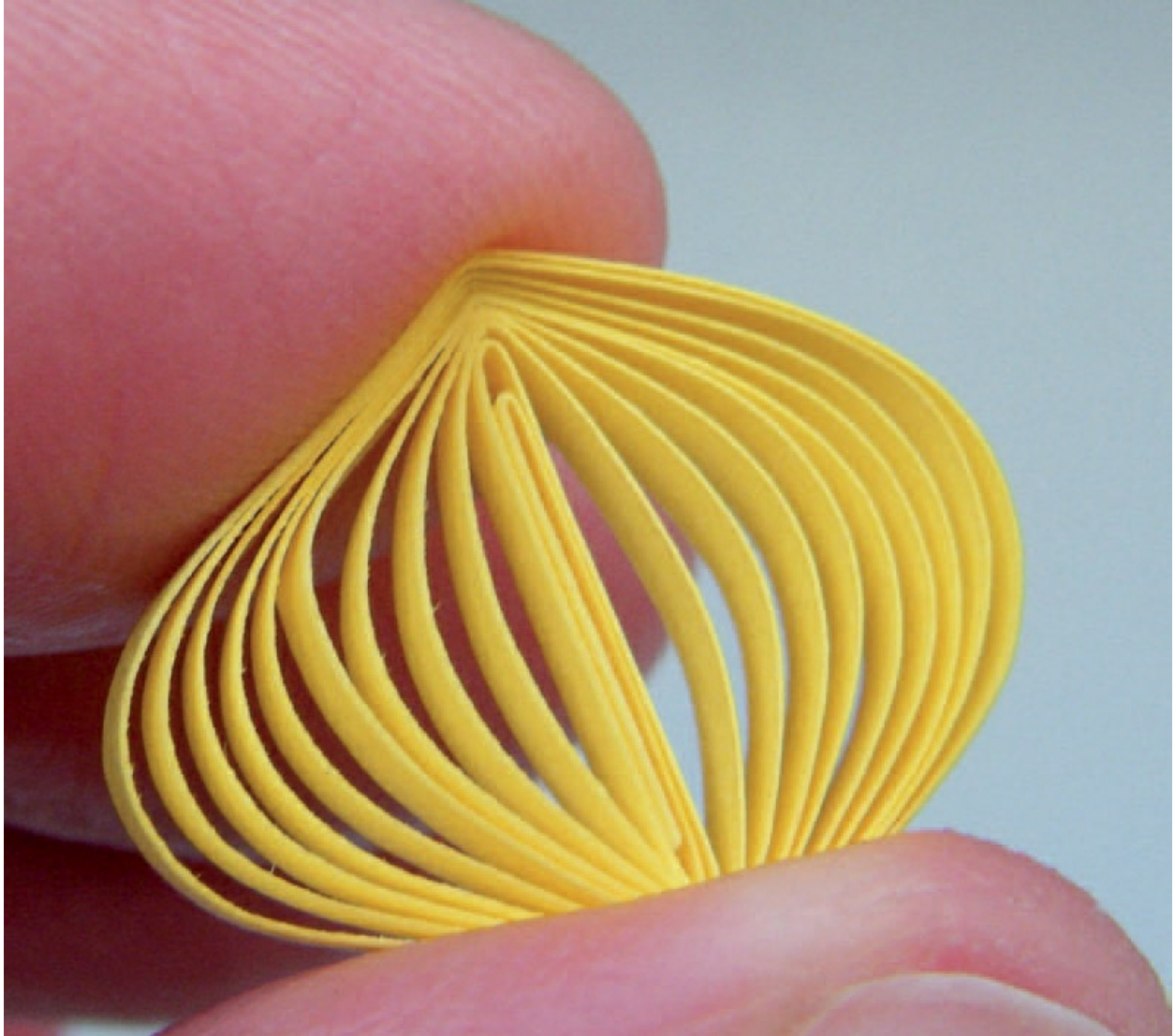
### Step 3

3. Continue making a wheatear in your fingers using the remaining length of the strip. Begin by creating a second loop whose top is spaced just a short distance apart from the top of the first loop. Carry on in this way, winding the strip quite tightly around the base at each turn without applying any glue just yet.



#### Step 4

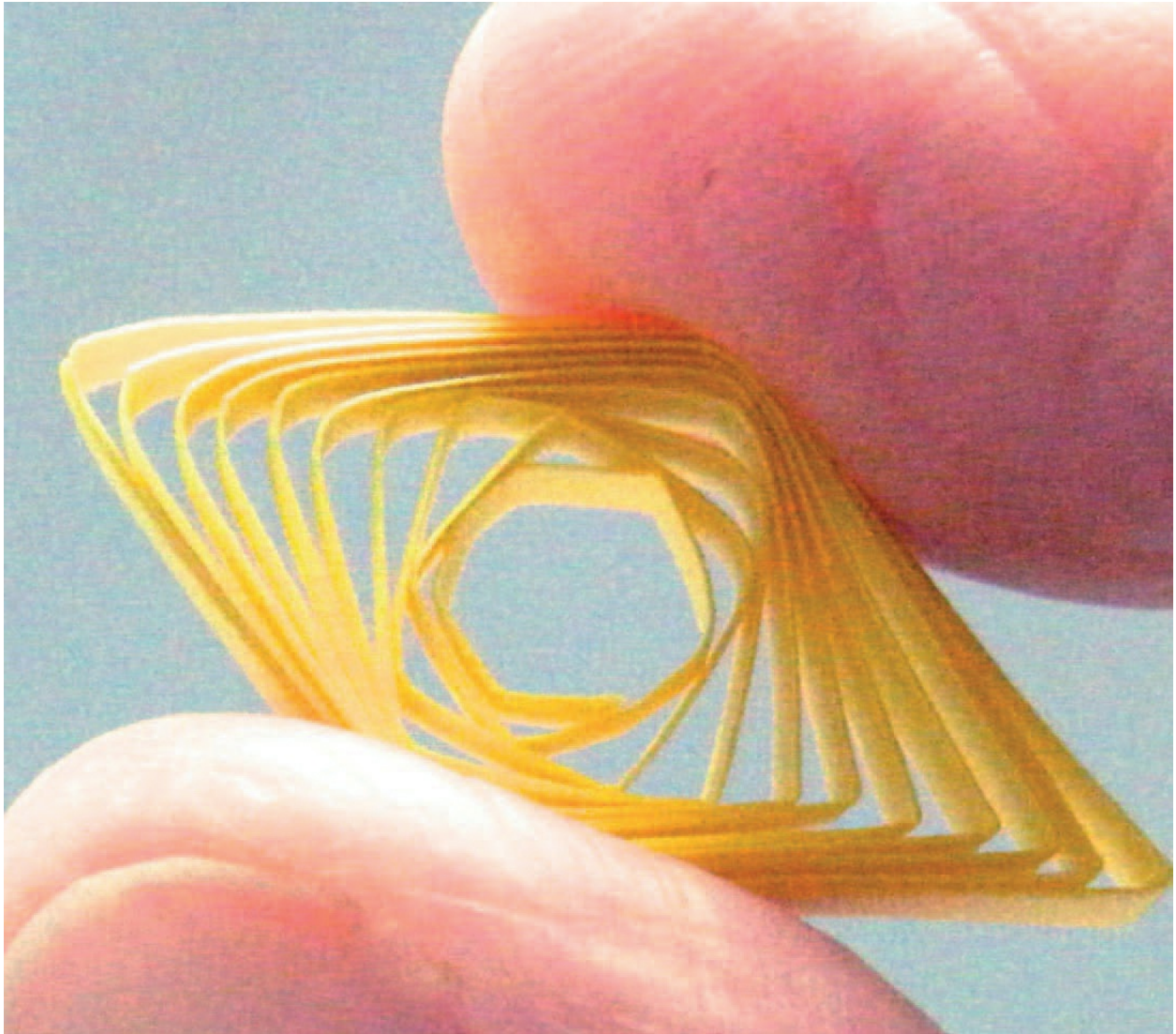
4. Continue winding and looping until you have a complete (unglued) wheatear with a thick base and regularly spaced loops a short distance apart. Whilst gripping the shape firmly, trim the end of the strip level with the base by tearing, and then finally glue it down at the base of the wheatear. Flatten the wheatear with your fingers.



**Step 5**

5. Hold the flattened wheatear vertically between your finger and thumb. Press down firmly through all the loops, so that you end up completely flattening it horizontally.



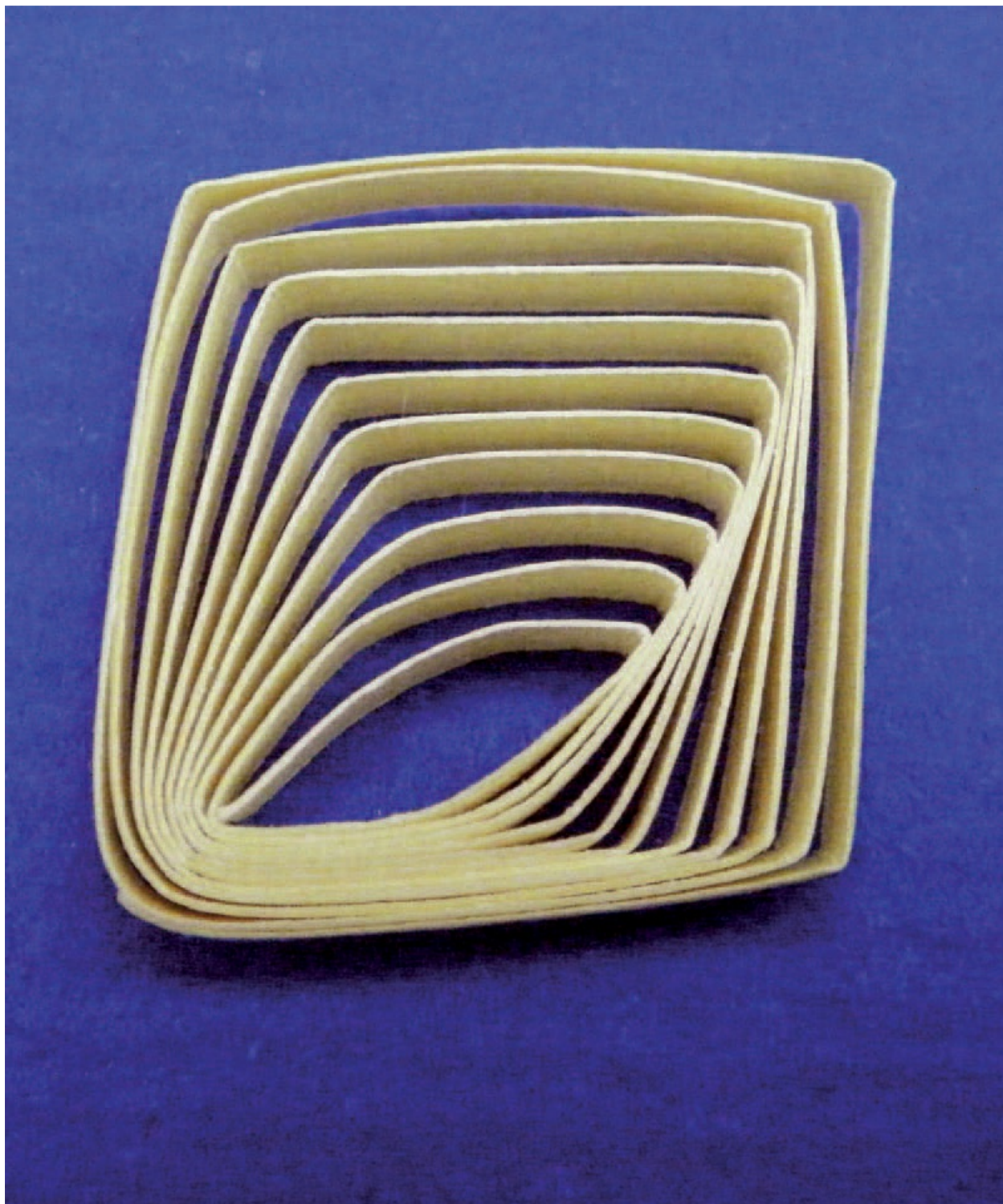


#### Step 6

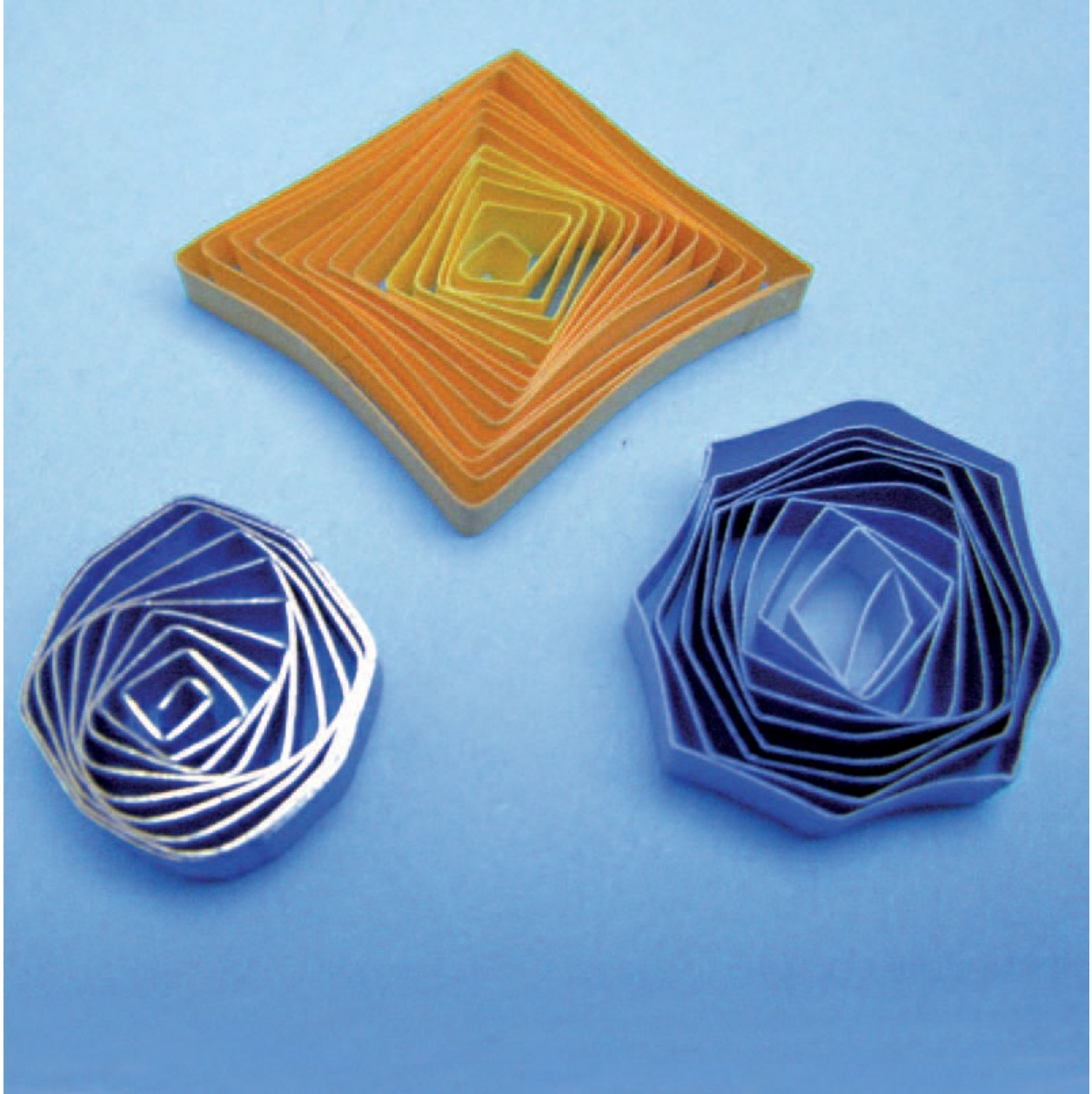
6. Release the coil and manipulate it in your fingers by pressing alternately on both pairs of opposite corners to achieve the desired appearance. The more you handle and press the shape, the more you will encourage the vortex pattern in the inner layers to form.

This is quite a challenging and advanced technique, so do not be discouraged if you find it difficult at first. Keep trying, and your vortex coils will surely improve with practice!





An eccentric vortex coil.



**Use of graduated colour and metallic edged strips can be particularly effective in vortex coils. The two coils at the bottom of this picture have had extra points pinched along their outside edges to enhance their shape.**

Classic vortex coils can be left square or gently pressed into eye shapes (retaining the inner vortex pattern) to resemble flower petals or leaves. If you wish, you can also pinch additional exterior points along their outer sides to create interesting polygonal shapes.

To make an eccentric vortex coil, stop short of applying any

pressure to the central loop at step 5. After manipulating the shape at step 6, pull all the inner layers on one side together with tweezers, secure with pins on a board, and apply glue to hold them in place, rubbing it in with a cocktail stick (as described earlier in this chapter for eccentric coils).

## Make loops from closed loose coil crescents

After first being pinched into an eye shape, a closed loose coil can easily be moulded to form a crescent as described in [Chapter 3](#). By exaggerating the curve of the crescent and gluing its two points together, it is possible to form a versatile looped shape which is characterized by the pattern of its inner whorls.





By gluing the points of a crescent together with the aid of pins on a work-board, it is possible to create interestingly patterned looped shapes like the one on the right. The pins must be left in place until the glue has dried.

### Pixie-hood looping

The pixie-hood technique was first recognized by the Quilling Guild in 2014 after being identified as a shape used in antique quilling. Much development work with pixie-hoods has been undertaken by the quilling author Jane Jenkins.





**In a tight pixie-hood, a loop is formed and the two sides of the strip are crossed over one another as shown, before being pulled closely together to create a point. The resulting shape clearly illustrates how the technique got its name! Glue is applied between the strips at the cross-over point. The two strip ends can then be trimmed as required.**



**A loose pixie-hood is formed in exactly the same way as the tight one, except that the two sides of the strip are not pulled so closely together, so that the loop remains more open.**

Pixie-hood looping involves looping a paper strip in a twisted fashion on its flat side rather than its edge, creating a hood-like shape that lends itself to many different creative applications.

There are two forms of the pixie-hood loop: tight and loose.

Tight and loose pixie-hoods vary in appearance depending on whether they are viewed from the front or the back, adding considerably to their versatility.

Pixie-hood shapes can readily be utilized in quilling to represent flower petals, leaves, stars and even butterfly wings. Their height and

curved shape add an extra dimension to more conventional designs in which pieces are laid flat on edge, and they work well in combination with other techniques.

A detailed description of all the different visual effects attainable with pixie-hood looping is beyond the scope of this book, but many of them will reveal themselves through creative experimentation. One particularly imaginative variation is, however, particularly worthy of note. This was developed by the Dutch quiller Janetta van Roekel.



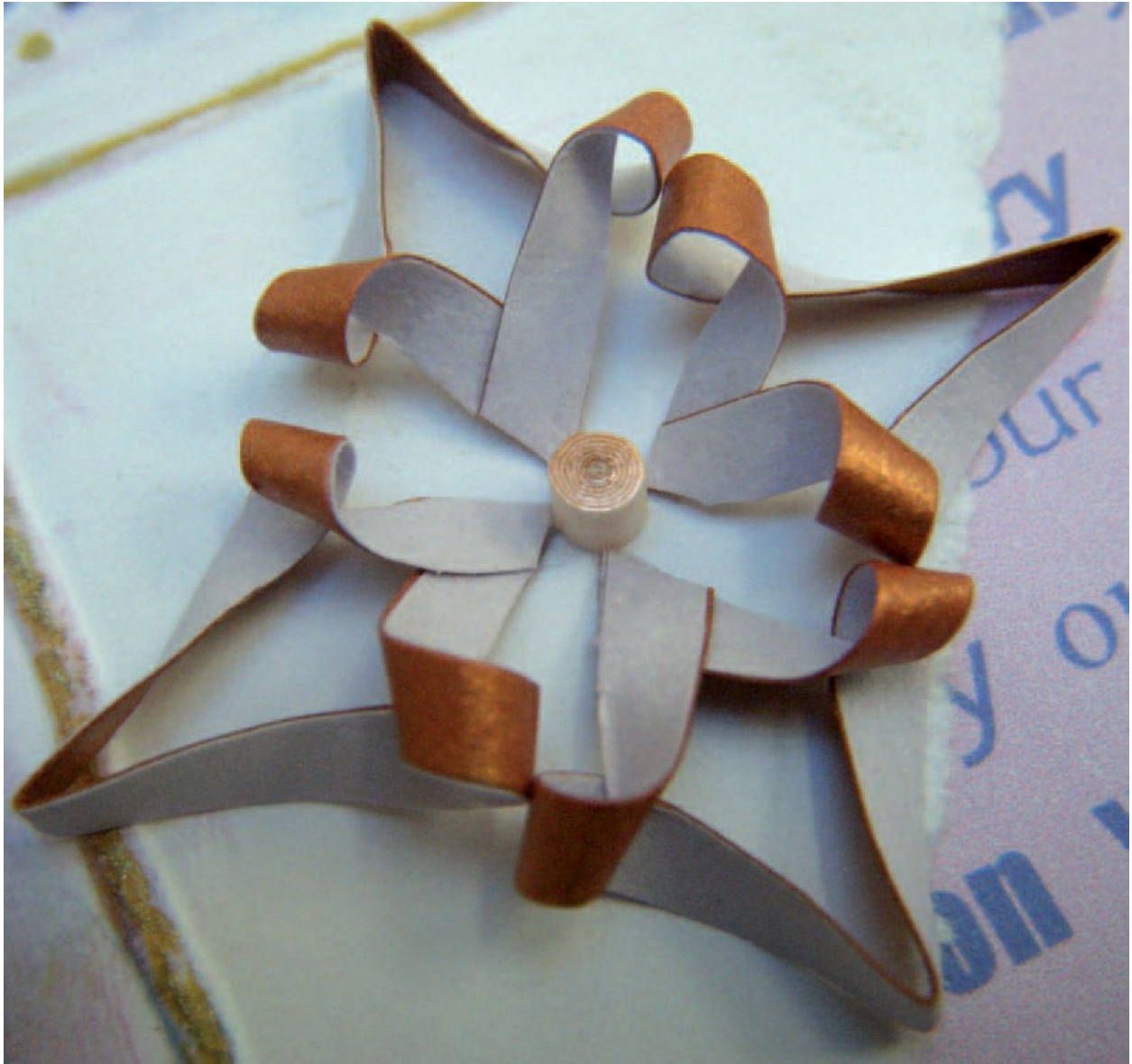
Here, loose and tight pixie-hoods are arranged to show the difference in their appearance when viewed from opposite sides. Their orientation within a design is a matter of personal choice.





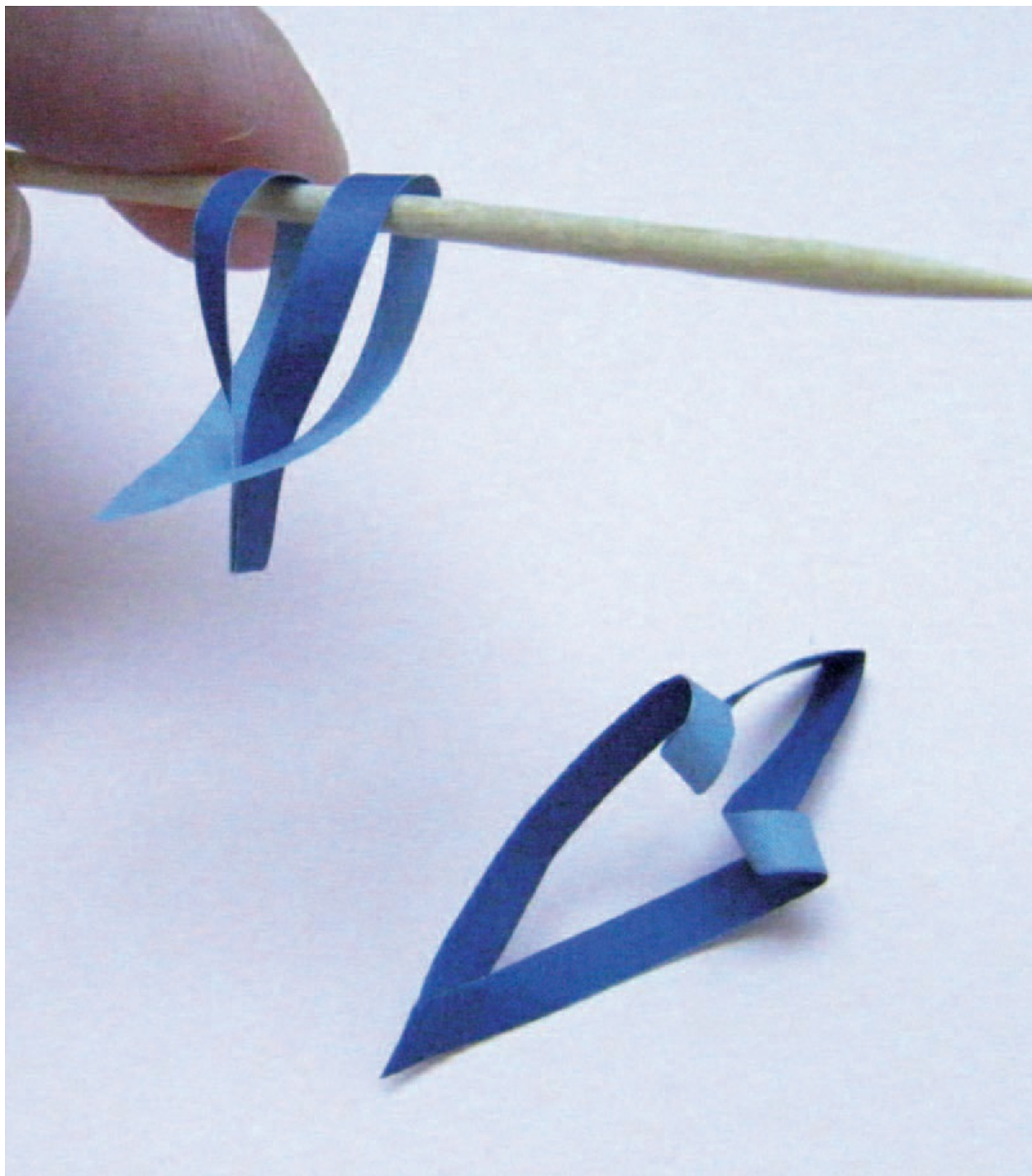
**In this flower-like design, red pixie-hoods have been created using 10mm ( $\frac{1}{2}$ in) strips, trimmed and glued together in a circular arrangement. Smaller yellow pixie-hoods made from 3mm ( $\frac{1}{8}$ in) strips have been positioned inside them with their opposite sides showing. Their trimmed ends are concealed beneath a purple solid coil.**

Janetta discovered that twists could be introduced to the sides of loose pixie-hoods by laying a cocktail stick (or straight piece of wire) across the middle of the looped shape, passing one end of the pixie-hood over the stick, then continuing to thread it through and under the opposite end. Twists are formed around the stick when the two threaded ends of the pixie-hood are pulled tight.



**These twisted pixie-hoods were made using narrow lilac and copper strips glued together back-to-back along their length and assembled in a star-like formation to illustrate Janetta van Roekel's technique. Gluing strips together in this way enables the creation of custom-made two-tone colour combinations which display an attractive contrast when twisted.**

Different effects are produced depending on whether the 'hood' part of the pixie-hood is left rounded or pinched, and whether the threading is done with the front or the back of the shape facing towards you.



The shape on the right was created from a loose pixie-hood whose 'hood' end was first pinched into a point. The pinched end was threaded around a stick and through/under the opposite end of the loop as shown on the left. The twists were formed after pulling the two ends tight around the stick in opposite directions, remaining in place after the stick was withdrawn. Try it!





Reproduced here by kind permission, this attractive design by Janetta van Roekel features an impressive array of petals and leaves created using the folded ring coil technique.

## Make more of tight coils

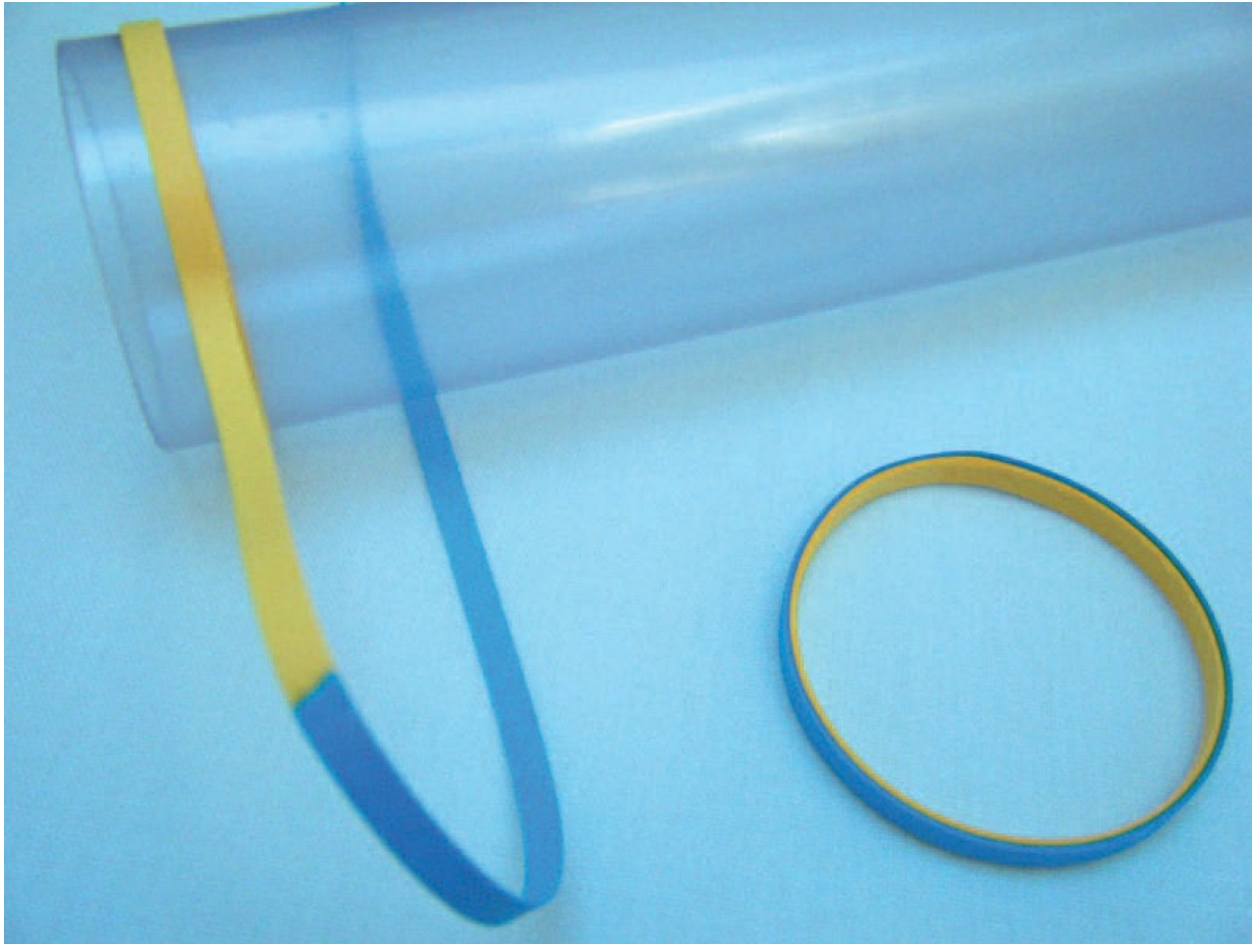
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### Folded ring coils

Janetta van Roekel has also developed an innovative method of folding ring coils to create shapes which are sturdy, colourful and very striking in appearance. This technique utilizes ring coils made from strips of contrasting colours which have been joined together end-to-end, then sequentially folded to create a stripy effect.

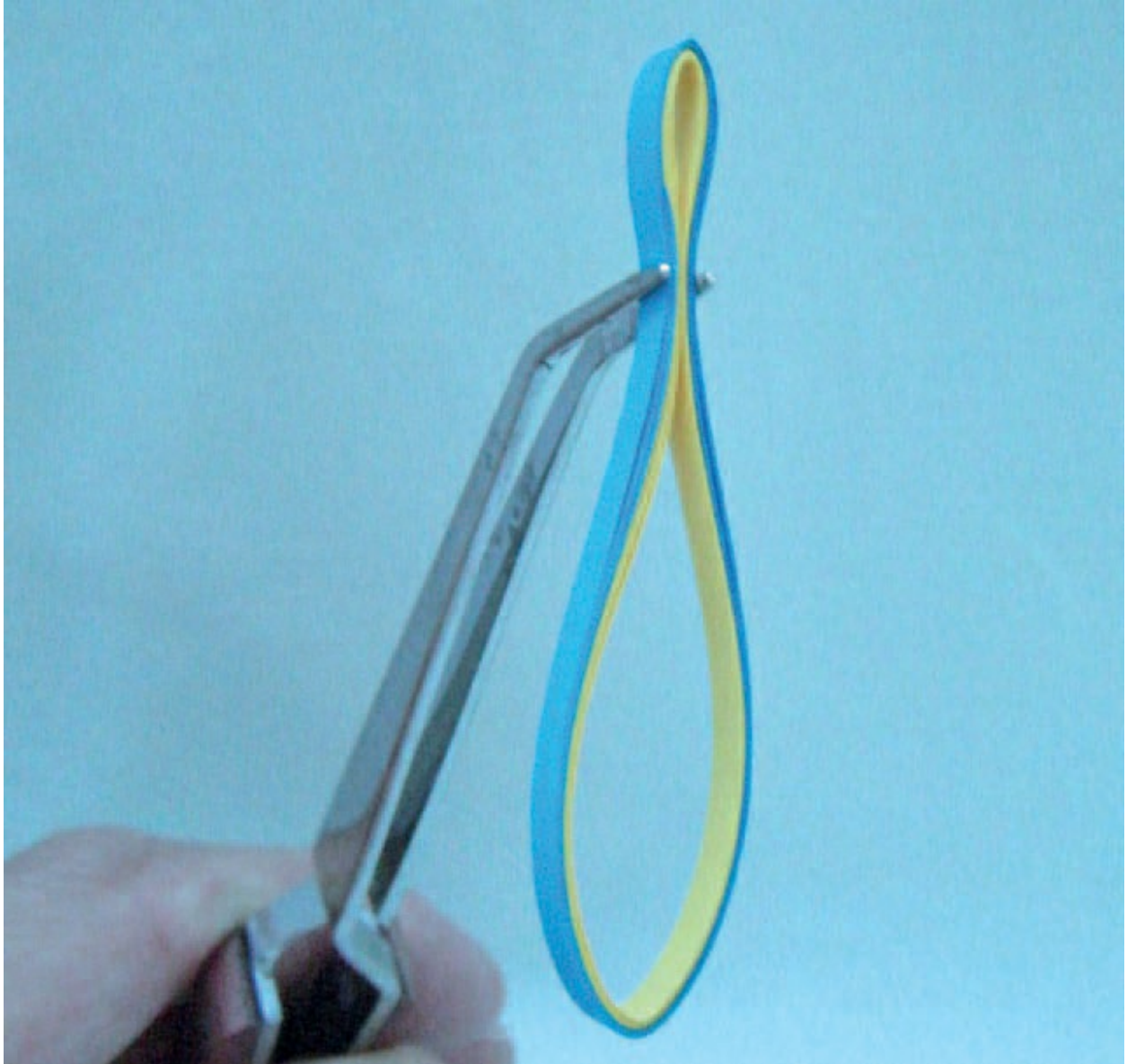


## Step by step: making a folded ring coil



**Step 1 – the ring coil on the right was created by joining yellow and blue strips end-to-end and winding them around a plastic tube as shown.**

1. Select two full length strips in different colours. Join the strips together end-to-end, keeping the overlap to a minimum. Use the resulting long two-colour strip to create a ring coil by winding it around a dowel, securing the ring with dots of glue at the beginning and the end.



**Step 2**

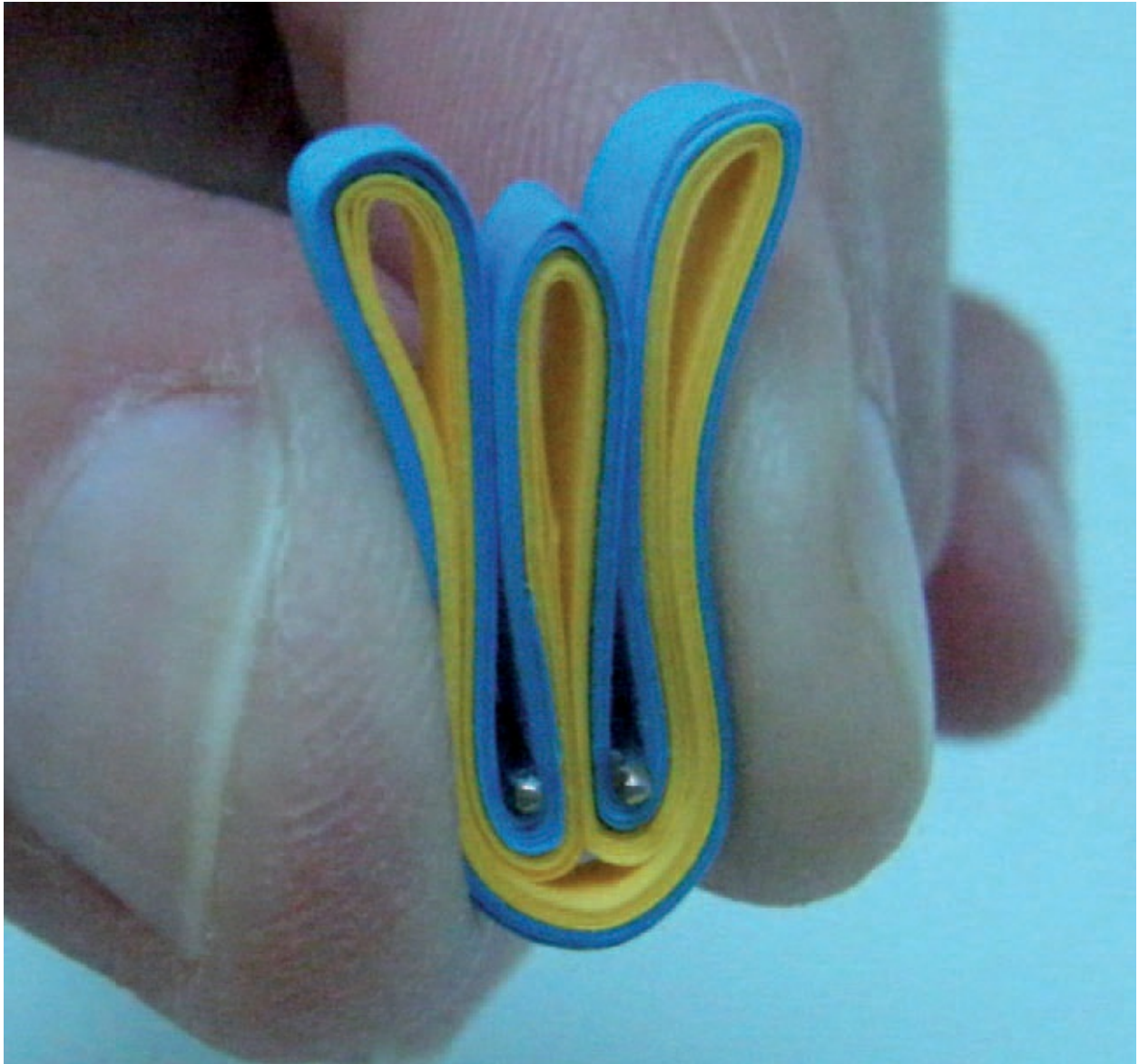
2. Gently flatten the ring and hold a small top section as shown using tweezers.



**Step 3**

3. Press down gently onto a flat surface to form three loops.

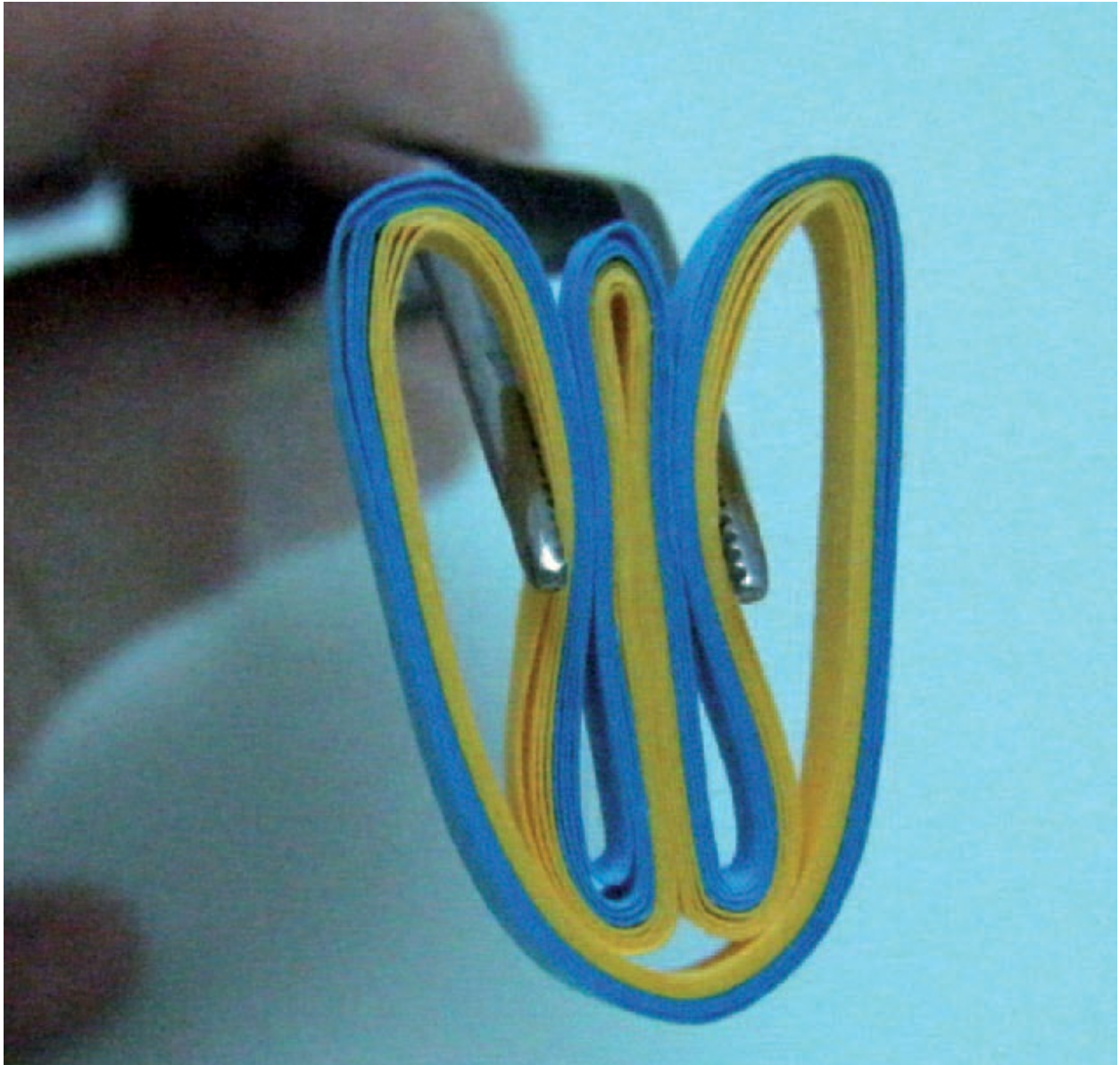




**Step 4**

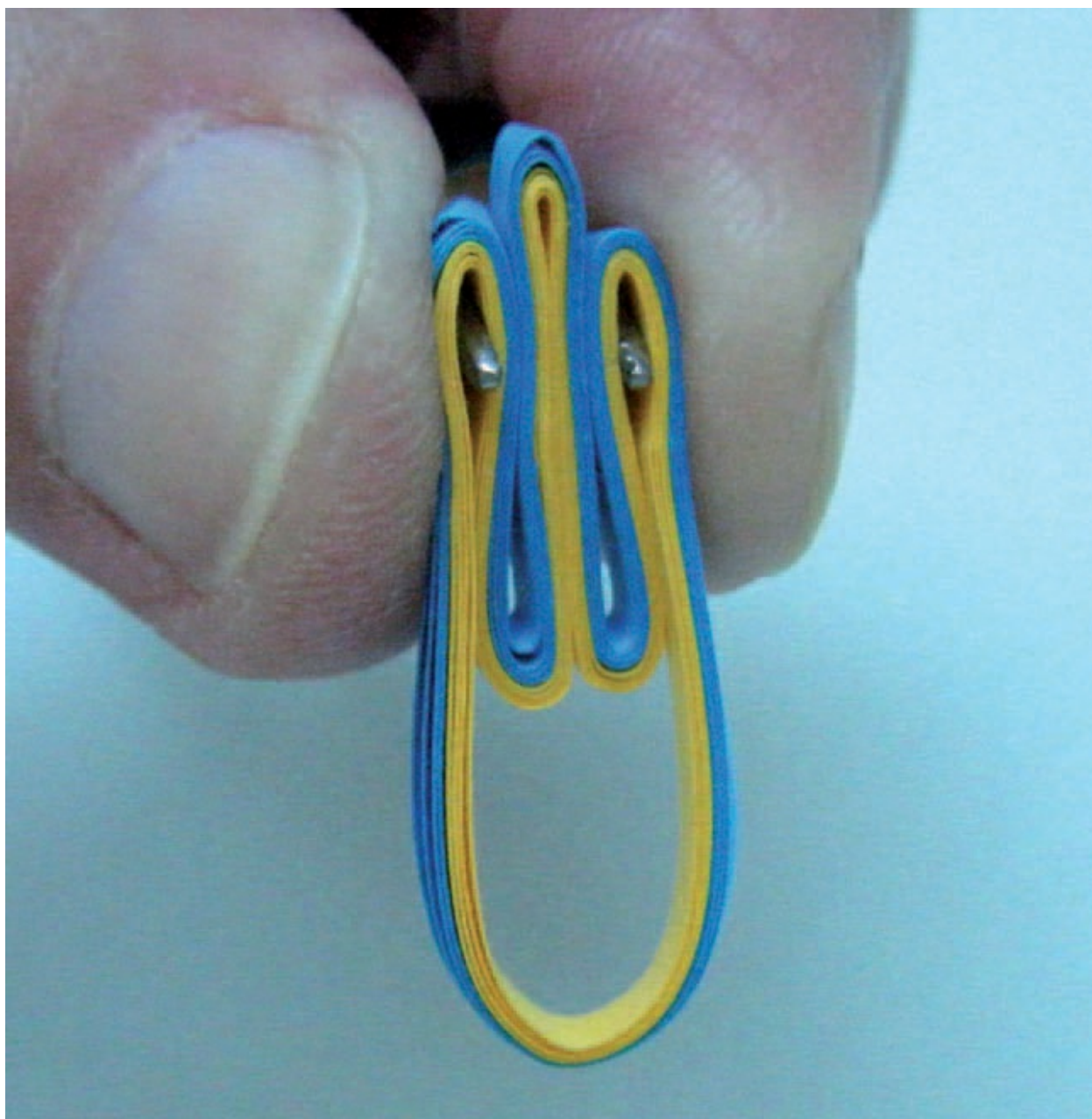
4. Fold the two longer side loops upwards so that they meet at the top.





**Step 5**

5. Hold the central section as shown and allow the sides of the outer loops to relax outwards.



**Step 6**

6. Pull the base of the ring downwards.



**Step 7**

7. Reposition the tweezers so that the whole top section is now gripped.





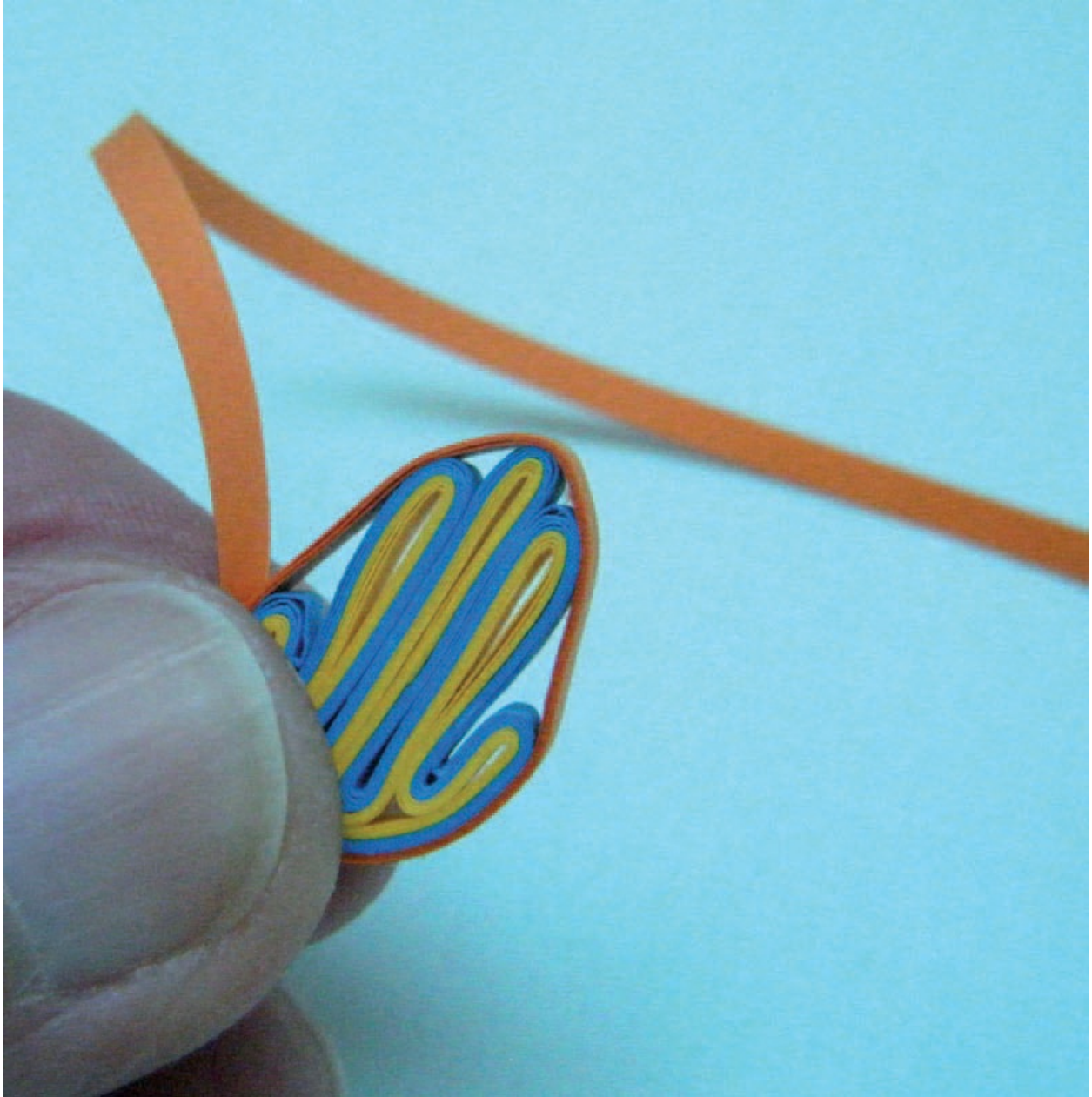
**Step 8**

8. Press the base section down again onto a flat surface.



**Step 9**

9. Fold the two newly formed side loops upwards.



**Step 10** The orange strip has been attached to the base of the shape with a small dot of glue before wrapping. Small dots of glue may also be inserted between the sides of the inner loops to help hold the shape together during the wrapping process.

10. Wrap the resulting shape several times around with a contrasting strip as shown, securing at the beginning and end with a dot of glue. Small dots of glue may also be inserted between the sides of the inner loops to help hold the shape together during the wrapping process.





**The finished folded ring coil.**

Different variations can be created by reducing the number of loops and/or pinching the end of the shape to mould it. The length of the initial central loop can also be adjusted by varying the position of the tweezers at Step 2.

If you allow all the loops to open out at Step 5 and wrap the shape quite loosely at this stage, you can create a more open form of the

folded ring coil which lends itself to even more creative possibilities. These include filling the open loops with closed loose coil teardrop shapes in contrasting colours – an idea which was first introduced to Quilling Guild members by Anne Straker. Alternatively, small huskings and even tiny open coil S scrolls could be inserted too. This offers great potential for the creation of composite quilled elements that add greatly to the interest and intricacy of a design.



**A selection of folded ring coil variations, all created with just three inner loops that have been allowed to open up before wrapping. In the two variations on the right, shapes derived from closed loose coils have been inserted into spaces within the**



shape, adding extra visual interest.

## Tracery

When ring coils were first introduced in [Chapter 5](#), it was noted that sections could be cut from them, *as long as glue has first been applied along the whole inside length of the strip* whilst each ring was being formed.

The ability to cut circular ring coils into arcs allows for the creation of quilled outlines whose curves echo the elegant geometrical patterns which can be observed in Gothic architectural tracery.

To create tracery patterns, a batch of ring coils must be created which have had sections of equal size cut out of them. When forming ring coils around a wooden dowel, it is helpful to make marks on the dowel where the cuts are to be made, so that the size of the cutaway sections is exactly the same for each ring. The position of these marks can be transferred to the ring coil by means of pencil dots. Ideally, the cutaway section should include the visible outer join of the ring coil.





**This pattern comprises a central quatrefoil shape formed from four ring coils from which equal sections have been cut away. This is bordered by arcs, each of which enclose groups of three cut ring coils, echoing the distinctive tracery shapes which can often be seen in Gothic-style stained glass windows.**

The precise size of the arcs created will be dictated by the initial circumference of the ring coil and the proportion of it which is cut away. A little experimentation may be necessary, depending on the size of dowel (or other circular object) that is used to create your rings.

Ideally, the cutaway section needs to be one-third (or less) of the ring's total circumference. This creates arcs which resemble small horse-shoes. When the cut tips of such arcs are glued together, a curved formation naturally results.

After grouping cut ring coils together to form tracery patterns, they

can be bordered with straight strips which – when glued at tangential points to the edges of the rings – will naturally curve to form enclosing arcs, opening up some of the cut rings further in the process. (Self-locking tweezers can be useful for holding each point of attachment in position while the glue dries, or you could instead secure them with pins on a work-board.) Ideally, the thickness of the straight strip that you use should be the same as that of the cut rings, so if your ring coils were originally created by wrapping three times around a dowel, use three strips glued on top of one another along their length to form the bordering arc.



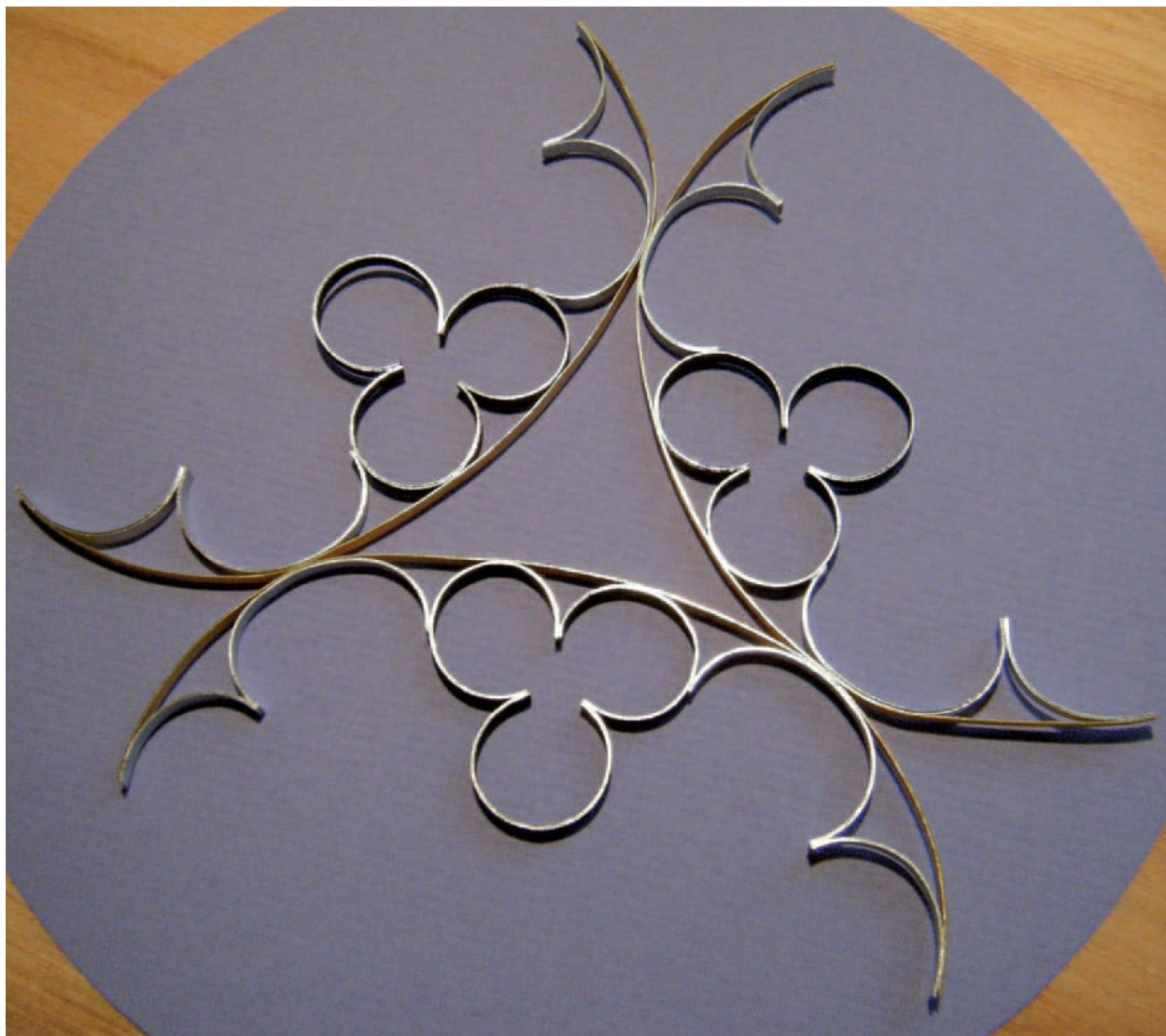
**If ring coils are cut in half to produce semi-circular arcs, they will line up horizontally when their cut tips are joined together. This should be avoided if you want to achieve a curved tracery formation, which can only be attained by cutting away one-third or less.**



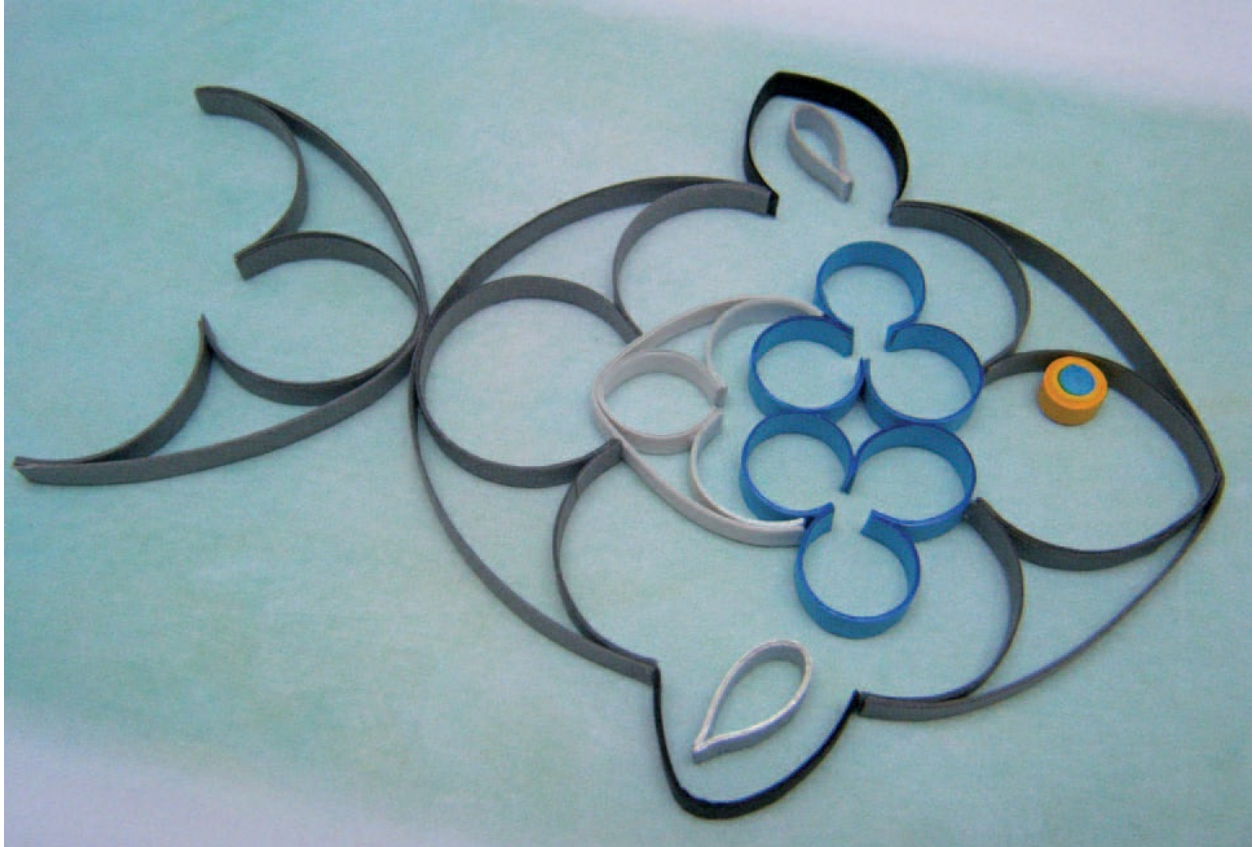


In this quilled collage, horseshoe-shaped cut ring coils have been used to create a cluster of gold tracery patterns within a silver trefoil shape. Because one-third of each ring coil was cut away, it has been possible to join them together in curved formations.





**Here, three separate curved tracery formations have been bordered by outer arcs and assembled together back to back. The ends of the bordering arc strips have been trimmed level with the tips of the opened-up rings beneath.**



With a little imagination, tracery patterns can be incorporated into all sorts of different designs.

## Fringing

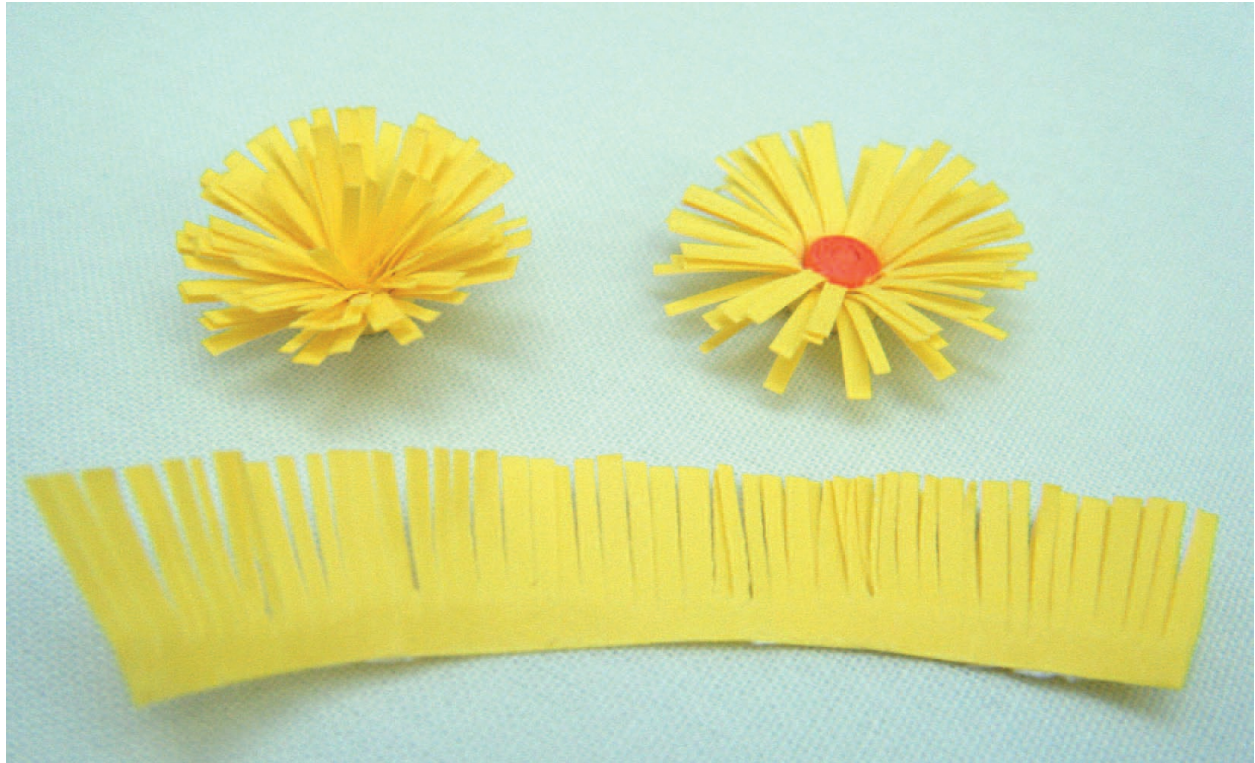
By making an evenly spaced row of cuts all along one edge of a paper strip before rolling it up into a tight coil, the cut segments can then be fanned out to create a fringed effect.

Fringing is a repetitive and some might say tedious process, but visually the results obtained from making the cuts by hand are far superior to die-cut or commercially fringed alternatives. Fringing by hand puts you in charge of the spacing between cuts, enabling you to produce wide or narrow fringes as required.

Creatively, the size, colour and style variations that can be achieved with fringing are almost infinite. When making quilled flowers, you can vary the length and width of your fringes, use pom-



poms as flower centres, combine fringed strips of varying widths and colours – once again, experimentation is key when it comes to achieving different effects.



In fringing, small sharp scissors are used to make deep, even cuts all along one edge of a strip, as shown at the base of this photo. Care must be taken not to cut all the way across the whole width of the strip, so it is easiest to work with strips which are at least 10mm ( $\frac{1}{2}$ in) wide. When the uncut base of the fringed strip is rolled up into a tight coil and secured with a dot of glue, the fringes can then be fanned out gently to create a pom-pom shape (top left). Alternatively, one end of the fringed strip can be glued to the side of a pre-made solid coil disc and then rolled tightly around it. After securing the end of the fringed strip with a dot of glue, the fringes can be fanned out to create the quilled representation of a flower (top right).

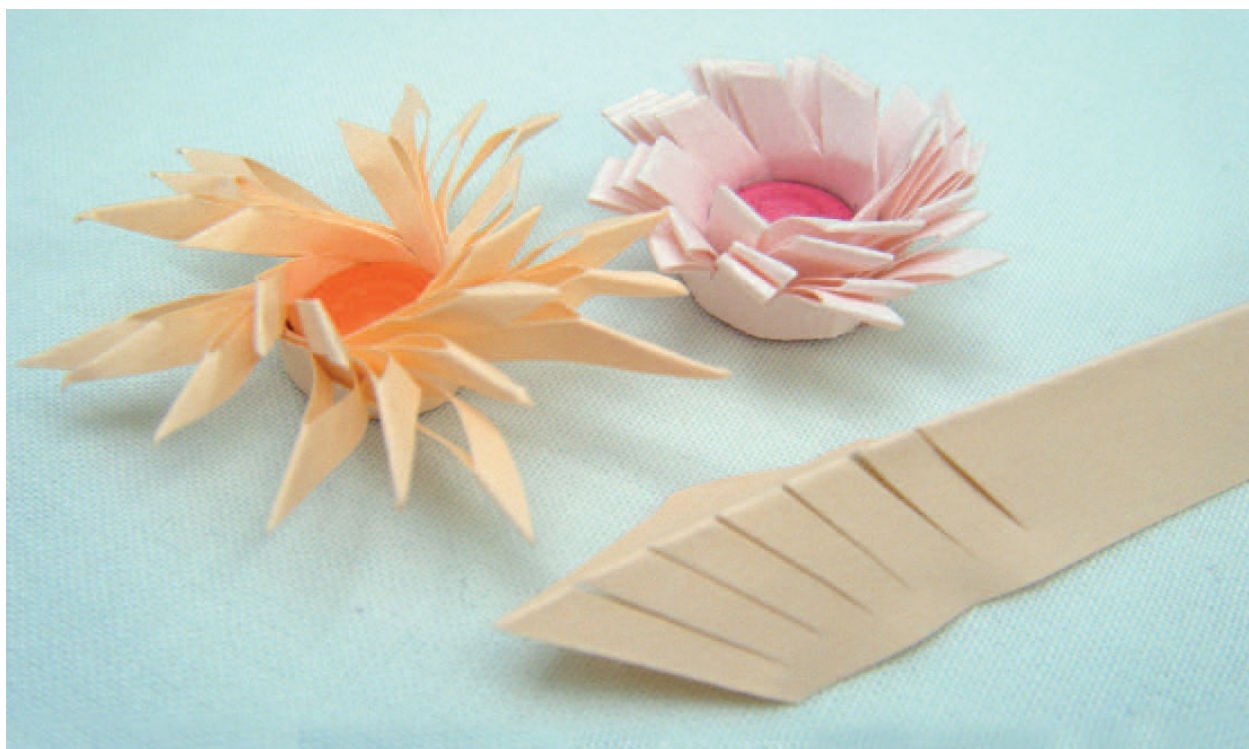




To speed up the fringing process, strips can be folded in half across their width, and then in half again, enabling you to cut through four layers at a time. Securing one edge of the folded strip in a clip (as shown) can also help you achieve consistency in the depth of your cuts. When opening out a folded strip that has been fringed in this way, remember to make additional cuts along the positions of the folds.



A few variations of fringed flowers.



Flowers like this can be created from a strip that has first been folded along its length before being fringed at a 45 degree angle along its folded edge. Keeping it folded, the fringed strip is then attached to the flower centre by its open edge and rolled around the centre in the same direction as the fringes are pointing.

## VARIATIONS WITH FRINGING

### ***Add colour***

Two or more fringed strips in different colours can be joined together either end-to-end or in parallel before rolling. You can also add colour to the tips of your fringes using felt pen.

### ***Add gradient***

Join two or more fringed strips of different widths together end-to-end, or try fringing a strip that has been cut diagonally along one side of its length (fringing along the sloping side). When rolled up from the narrow end, these methods will produce a shape which is concave in appearance once the fringes are fanned out.

### ***Add shape to fringe tips***

Cutting points, curves or indents into the tips of your fringes all create different effects.

### ***Add height***

Remember that tightly coiled fringed pom-poms are effectively solid coils which can be pushed up from the base into cone or cup shapes as described in [Chapter 5](#).

## Transform your straight strips

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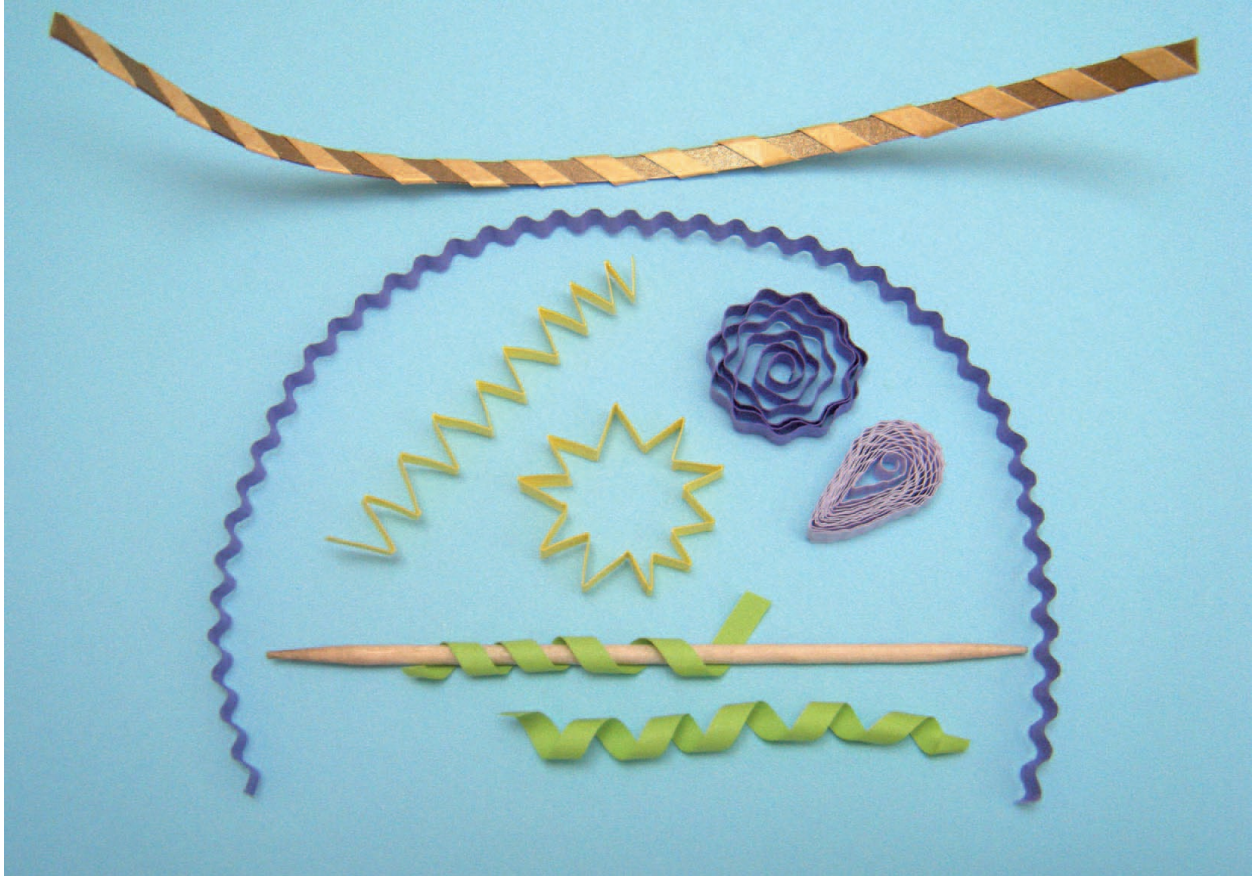
When removed from a commercial pack (or cut by hand), quilling strips are basically flat lengths of paper – but they need not stay that way! They can be folded into zig-zags, crimped between cog wheels, wound diagonally around wire or a stick to create spiral ‘tendrils’ and even bound together in stacks using a technique known as bandaging.

The cog wheel tools necessary for crimping strips were introduced in [Chapter 1](#). Crimped strips produce interesting effects when rolled loosely into spiral coils, and are easier to work with than strips that have been folded into zig-zags.

Like pixie-hoods, tendrils add curves and height to a design when used alongside other quilling shapes, and also have their uses in infilling (see [Chapter 10](#)).

Bandaging can be used to adorn ring coils and also to create sturdy borders ([Chapter 9](#)).

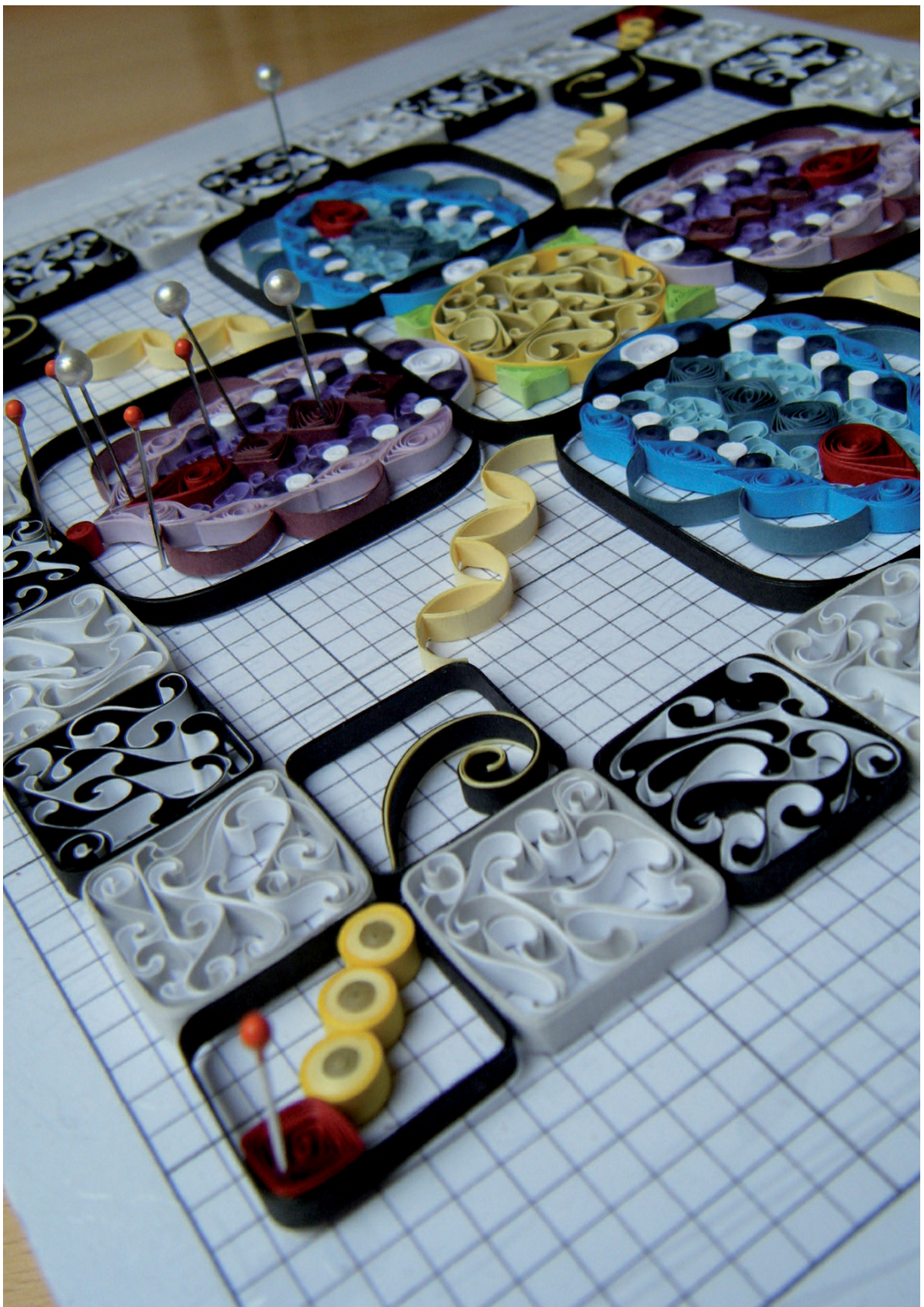
When used in combination, even just one or two of the ‘special effects’ described in this chapter have the potential to turn quilled designs into stunning examples of creativity.



The green spirals in this picture are 'tendrils', created by winding tightly around a cocktail stick as shown. The yellow strips have been folded by hand into zig-zags, while the purple strips have been crimped between cog wheels. The lilac teardrop shape was formed from a strip that had been crimped between narrower gauge cogs. At the top is a bandaged stack of three strips which have been diagonally bound together using a contrasting strip, secured in position with tiny dots of glue.







**Creating with pins on a work-board.**

# CREATING WITH PAPER STRIPS

Appreciation of the sheer variety of techniques that can be utilized in quilling is the key to realizing its full creative potential. The intricacy of quilled shapes is such that even repetitive use of a single technique may achieve significant visual impact – but the combination of several different techniques together undoubtedly takes it to new heights.

As you plan a project, it is always worth keeping a few basic practical principles in mind to aid your creativity. When making spirals, for example, the longer the strip you use, and the more tightly you roll, the greater the number of whorls that will be produced – and the more intricate your finished shape will be.

Remember, too, that shapes need not always be glued directly to a background. Instead, they can sometimes be layered on top of one another to achieve greater height and texture.

Whenever there are gaps in a shape, there is an opportunity to insert other shapes inside them – tiny S scrolls inside the loops of a husking, for example, or teardrop shapes within a folded ring coil as described in [Chapter 7](#).

## Evolving trends

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Over the centuries, various design conventions have become popular in quilling at different times, and new trends continue to evolve today.



**Layering of quilled pieces adds to the overall visual impact of quilled designs.**

When our eighteenth-century ancestors applied their quilling skills to the decoration of tea caddies and similar objects, they particularly



favoured the use of composite 'medallions' to create intricate border patterns – an approach that is still adopted by many modern quillers.

In the nineteenth century, 'ladies of leisure' in England could purchase quilling supplies in the form of a commercially produced kit, called 'Mosaicon'. The techniques they used to decorate boxes, frames and menu cards were first described in a book published by William Bemrose and Sons in 1882, accompanying the kit, which undoubtedly laid the foundations for the practice of modern quilling.



A row of medallions can be seen in this design, filling up a curved element in the centre of the picture. Each medallion comprises a green oval solid coil wrapped in gold, bordered by clusters of yellow closed loose coils and enclosed within a crimped outline. Small ring coils in alternating colours are used as spacers between each medallion.

Mosaicon work seems to have been particularly characterized by the use of shapes created using open ring coils which were pressed into teardrops, eye shapes, leaves and hearts, often with smaller shapes such as S scrolls inside them. Open scrollwork was also frequently utilized, as were wheatears and huskings.

Extensive use was made of metallic backgrounds, topped with quilling in various colours – especially black, green and violet – while gold, silver and metallic edged strips were often incorporated in designs which Bemrose described as having a ‘jewel-like’ appearance. The use of very narrow strips was encouraged to achieve maximum delicacy, while solid coils rolled from crimped strips also featured widely. Ready-crimped strips were, in fact, included in the kit. It is fascinating to see many of these design principles still being followed in modern work.

Interest in quilling had a resurgence in the latter half of the twentieth century, and with this came a growth in popularity of shapes derived from the closed loose coil. Over several decades, these shapes have come to be widely regarded as the main building blocks of quilling, sometimes almost to the exclusion of other techniques. Their long-standing dominance now seems to be waning, however, and the twenty-first century has seen a move towards a much more open and fluid style of quilling, particularly in the realms of commercial art.





Several of the design recommendations from Mosaicon have been adopted for this modern jewellery piece.



This example of 21st Century 'edgework' (created by the author) shows how gently curving lines may be used alongside solid coils and simple open spirals in a style which is rapidly gaining in popularity. In this instance, green and yellow shapes have been die-cut from card to form background areas, outlined using the method which will soon be described in [Chapter 9](#). Curved lines such as those used here for the decorative 'veins' are best made using strips cut from heavier than usual paper, or even card, making them robust enough to stand firmly when placed alone on edge. For this example, thickened strips were especially pre-made for this purpose by gluing two standard strips together along their length.

Where once the complex intricacy of pinched closed loose coils held sway, modern trends are now beginning to change in favour of very gently curving lines and open spirals with plenty of space between them, sometimes complemented by simple zig-zag lines, solid coils, cones or cups. Increasingly, designs are being seen in which shapes derived from closed loose coils are conspicuous by their absence, and this has fuelled controversy amongst quillers as to

whether the new minimalist style (sometimes referred to as ‘edgework’ or ‘shitateru’) is really quilling or not.

It is not within the remit of this book to argue the case one way or the other. However, the very existence of design trends within the art of quilling underlines the sheer breadth of possibilities that creating with paper strips presents.

As a paper art, quilling is also well suited for incorporation into collages and mixed media projects, complementing patterned/painted background papers, photographs and elements made using other techniques such as wirework or origami. Once again, the only limiting factor is your own imagination!

## Getting it together

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For those of a creative disposition, an understanding of the shapes that can be made using quilling usually leads quite naturally to a plethora of design ideas. The initial challenge, however, is to determine a way of translating the idea in your head in to an actual design that can be executed on a practical level.

Some quillers simply begin creating shapes, arranging and re-arranging them experimentally (without gluing them down!) until a clear sense of direction is achieved. Others prefer to work within hand-drawn or printed outlines, using their knowledge of quilling shapes to determine which one(s) can best be used to represent their form.

Those who like to pre-plan their work in a very meticulous way may spend time working out a detailed pattern, prescriptively annotated with anticipated strip lengths. If you do this, however, you must be prepared to revise your plans as the actual quilling work progresses, since the desired end result is seldom achieved exactly as originally anticipated! Nevertheless, keeping notes in the form of a pattern



(updated and corrected as necessary) can be useful in case you ever want to quill the same design again.

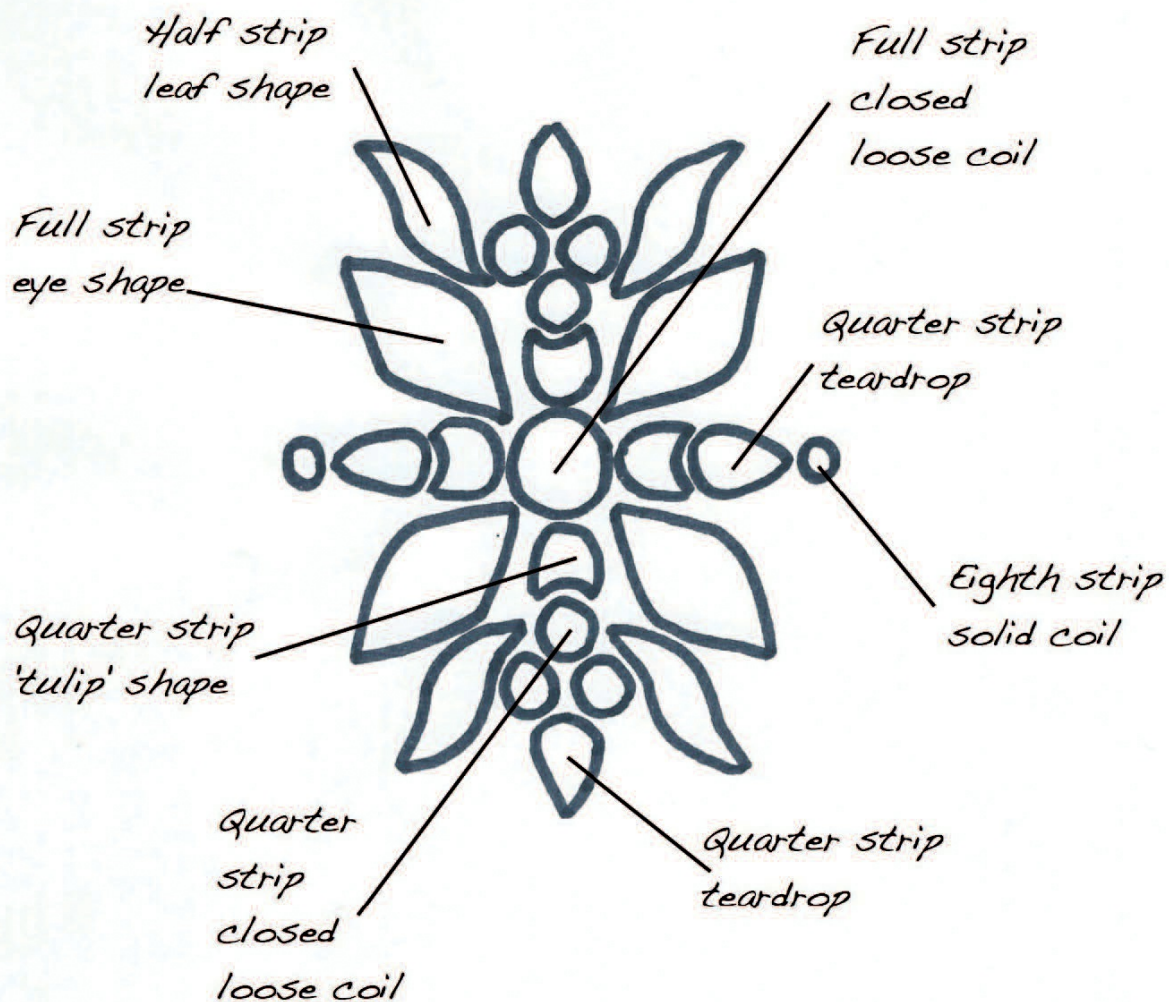
Unless you are planning to create a standalone 3D model, you will doubtless be planning to affix your design to a background as described in [Chapter 6](#).

If you do not feel confident to position quilled pieces entirely by eye, it will be necessary to mark the background in some way so that each element of your design can be glued down in exactly the right place.

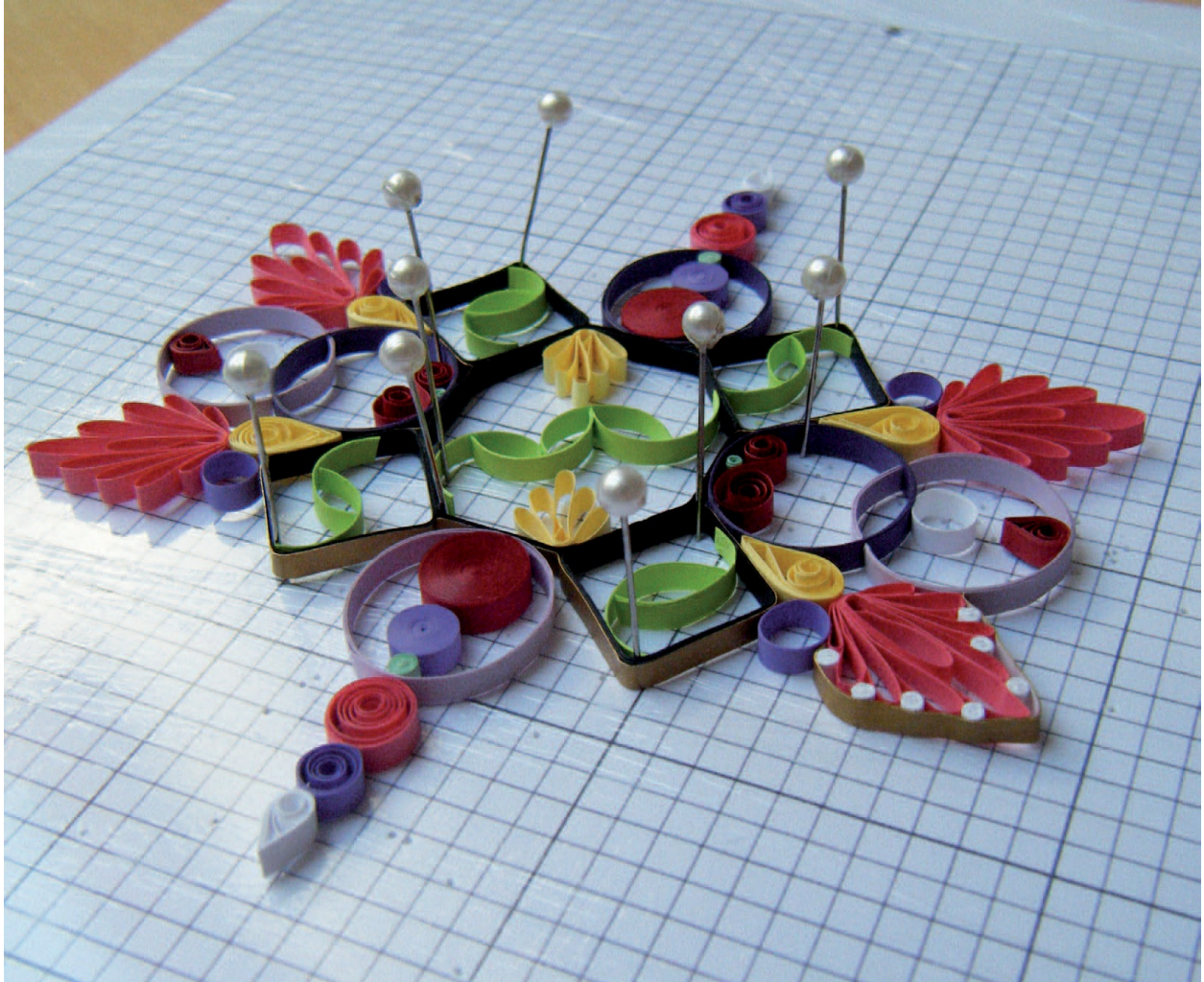
Making pencil marks directly onto the background is one possible option, but this is not recommended as any marks remaining visible can be almost impossible to erase after the quilling is in place.

If an outline drawing exists for your design, you could consider placing this beneath the background paper and on top of a light box so that it is clearly visible whilst you are gluing your quilled pieces down.

Alternatively, you could use an embossing tool to trace guide marks (or even the entire pattern outline) onto your background from above, working over a soft surface such as an embossing mat or sheet of foam-filled artists' mount board. In this arrangement, the mat (or mount board) is placed beneath the background paper which then has the pattern drawing laid above it. Pressure applied with the embossing tool (which could be any blunt pointed object such as the tip of a crochet hook) will leave subtle indentations on the background which are easy to see, yet sufficiently unobtrusive not to spoil the appearance of the finished quilled design following assembly.



Quilling patterns can be planned and recorded in a format like this one, which follows the protocol adopted by the Quilling Guild for the patterns included in its beginners' booklet and members' magazines. Outline shapes are sketched by hand and then annotated with brief descriptions including strip length, providing guidance for the quiller.



**Graph paper placed beneath the cling-film on a work-board can assist in maintaining symmetry during the assembly of a large composite design.**

Any of the above methods may prove useful when assembling a design in which individual quilled elements are to be placed separately from one another. If all the elements of a design are in contact with one another, however, an alternative option exists: to assemble the entire design as one single composite piece which can be affixed to a background all at once in its finished form.

The idea of making composite elements was first introduced in [Chapter 6](#), and involves joining shapes together using glue along their contacting sides. Quite large quilled designs can be assembled in this way, and are best constructed with the aid of pins on a workboard that



has been covered with clear plastic cling-film to prevent the quilling getting stuck to the board. A pattern outline or graph paper can be inserted beneath the cling-film to guide the assembly process. Polar graph paper (in which circles are divided up into 45 degree segments) can also be useful when assembling circular designs such as mandalas or snowflakes.

Because all the quilled shapes in a composite design are glued together at their sides, the finished design can be lifted from the board in one piece once the glue has dried. It can then be affixed quite easily to a background in a single operation. Rather than attempting to dip the entire reverse side of the design into a film of glue for this purpose, it is normally sufficient to apply glue selectively to appropriate areas such as the backs of solid coils or other dense shapes in positions where it will not show through when viewed from the front. As long as sufficient fixing points are selected across the whole breadth and depth of the design, it should be possible to attain secure adhesion. If some delicate areas of the design (such as spiral coil centres) do not lay flush against the background to your complete satisfaction, a little glue can be applied to the underside using the corner of a small piece of paper slid carefully underneath.



A quilled bird, created as a single composite piece, flies free after being lifted carefully from a workboard. Small dots of glue can now be applied to the reverse side of its eye and selected dense areas of the feathers, enabling it to be affixed securely to a background.

## Design sources

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Before leaving the overall topic of design and assembly in quilling,

some final words must be added concerning design sources for your projects. It is to be hoped that sufficient inspiration will be derived from the techniques presented in this book for creative ideas to begin flowing quite naturally.

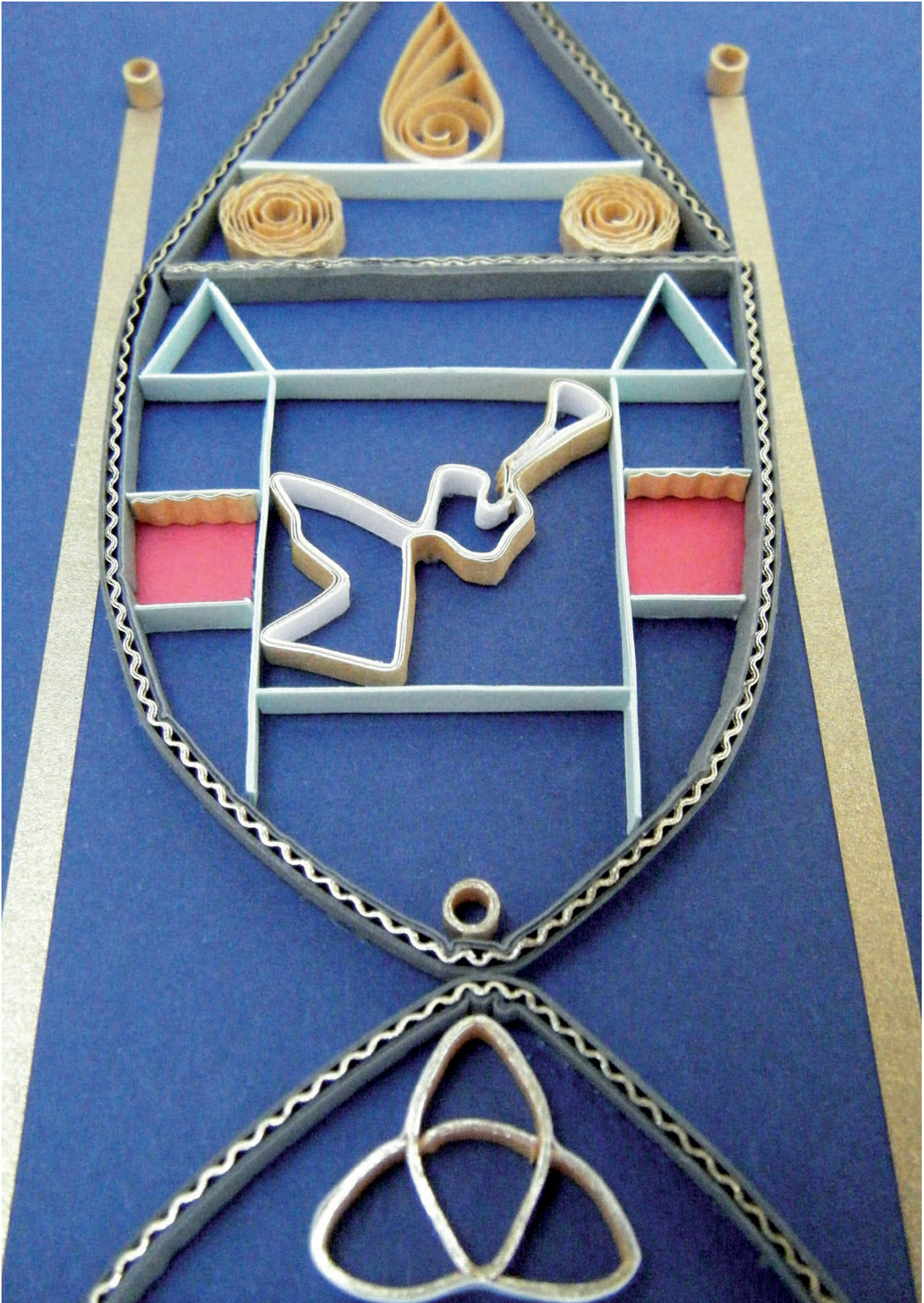
Knowledge of the shapes that can be created with paper strips, combined with mindful observation of the natural world, should enable even the most hesitant ‘designer’ to reproduce forms such as flowers or the patterns of butterfly wings in quilling.

There are, of course, times when outline drawings may be needed to provide the necessary basic structure for a design. If you are able, draw your own or generate one using computer software. Some quillers look to the internet to source such outlines, others make use of the line drawings published in colouring books, and of course there is a very wide range of crafting publications on the market in which quilling patterns are readily available.

It is very important, however, not to lose sight of the copyright considerations that may apply to such sources. A published quilling pattern, for example, may be accompanied by stipulations that it is for personal use only and must not, therefore, be used in any project that is intended to be sold for commercial gain. Copyright restrictions are likely to apply to most other graphic and photographic design sources in the public domain, and it is always advisable to seek the copyright owner’s permission before utilizing any element of their original work. Even if quilled work is not being produced commercially, appropriate design credits must always be given when displaying the work in public and also when sharing photos of it on social media or other websites. Don’t allow lack of confidence to drive you towards copying other people’s work – it is always so much better to originate your own.







**Quilling strips can be used to create borders and abstract shapes of many different kinds.**



# BORDERS

Quilling strips can be used to make all sorts of different borders for your work – not only in terms of framing designs, but also in the creation of distinctive outlines for individual shapes.

## Wrapping shapes

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The idea of ‘wrapping’ has already been introduced briefly in the context of enclosing loops for alternate side looped huskings ([Chapter 4](#)) and folded ring coils ([Chapter 7](#)). Shapes made from closed loose coils, looped shapes, solid coils, ring coils and even composite clusters of shapes can all be finished and enhanced by wrapping them around with a matching or contrasting colour.

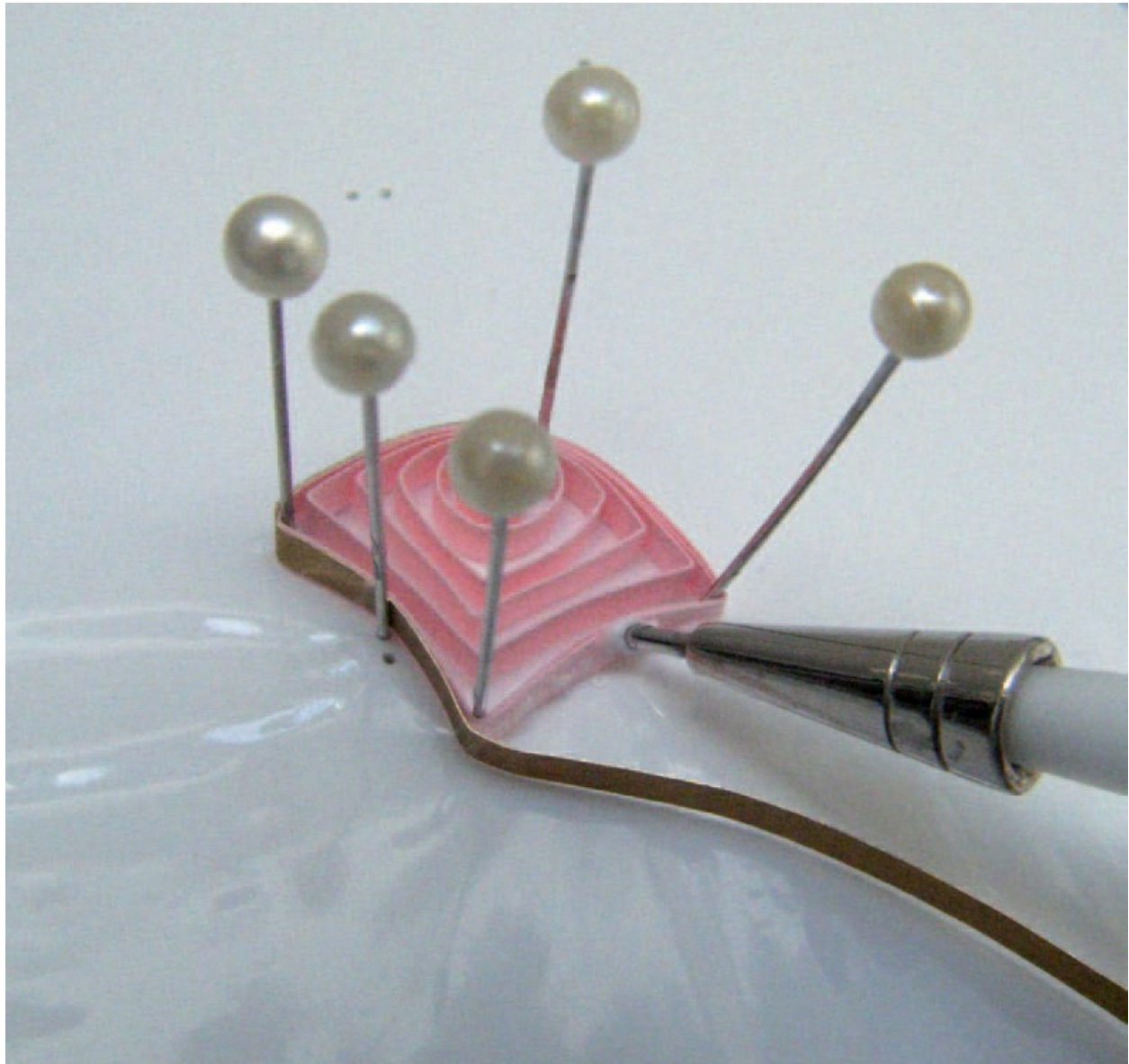
To wrap a shape, simply select a strip in your chosen colour, making sure that it is the same width as that which had originally been used to create the shape you are wrapping. Attach one end of it to the side of the shape with a dot of glue. As soon as the glue is dry, you can begin wrapping the strip closely around your shape, gently pinching to mould it around any sharp corners. It is best to wrap at least three times around for maximum visual impact.



The three quilled shapes at the top of this picture have all been wrapped three times around with a gold-edged pearlized strip. The quilled necklace ornament below them was created using composite clusters of shapes which have been individually wrapped in gold before being assembled together to create a single piece. Note the thin gold line which can be seen running around the clusters.

After wrapping, tear off the end of the wrapping strip at an appropriate point (ideally in a position where the join will not be visible in the finished design) and secure it with another dot of glue.

If the shape you are wrapping has inward-facing curves, glue will need to be applied around its sides in order to secure the strip in position. This is most easily accomplished using pins on a work-board.



The shape being wrapped here has inward-facing curves, and has therefore been pinned to a work-board to aid the wrapping process. Glue is applied along the sides of the shape as it is wrapped, with the gold strip being secured in position using



additional pins whilst the glue dries.

## Frame border edging

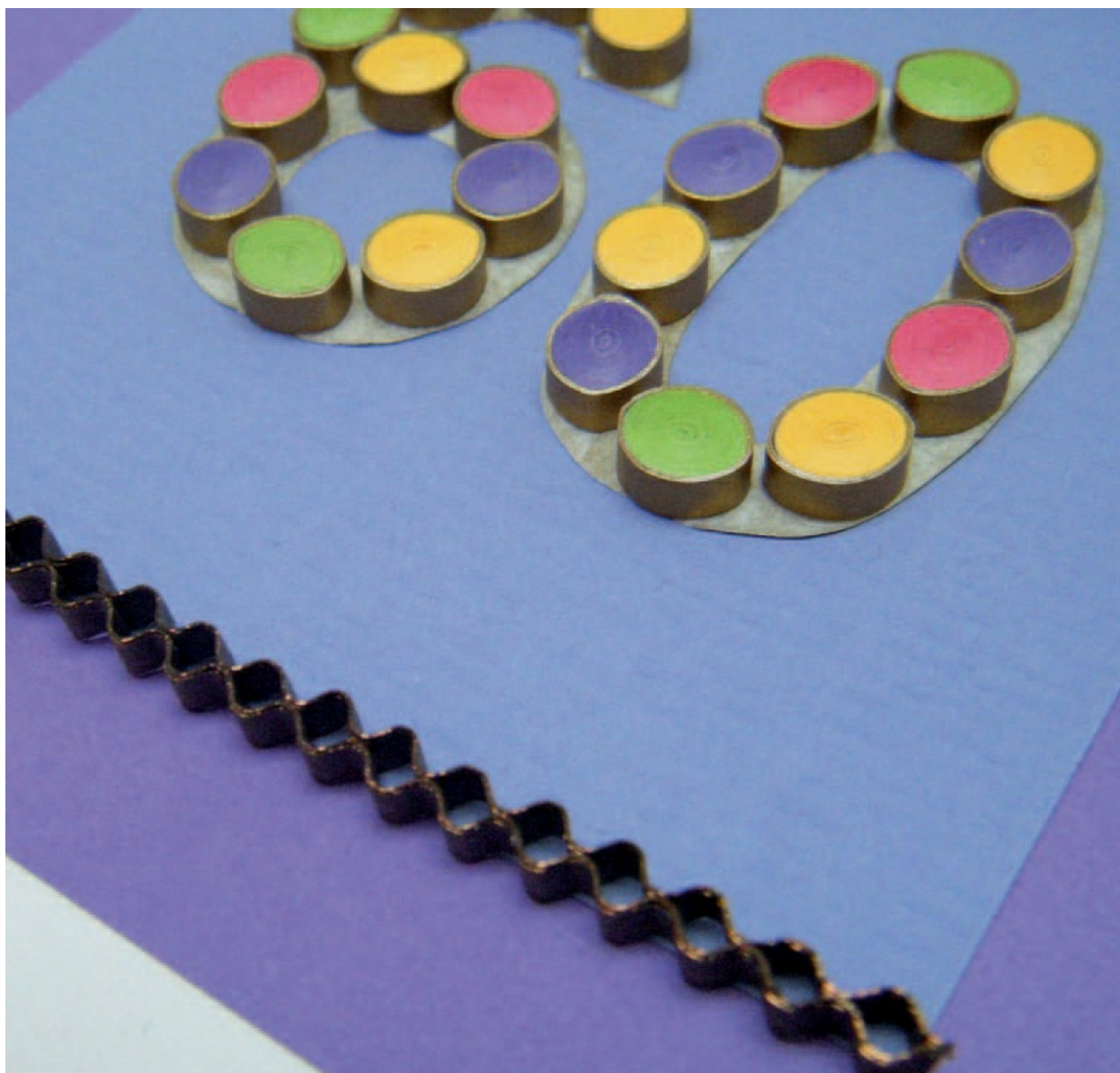
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There will be occasions when you wish to create borders using paper strips to frame or outline a quilled design. This is a task which may call for an enclosing square or rectangle, for example, or perhaps a more complex shape such as an arch which incorporates curves. Typically, all that is required for the border will be a single line of paper – but a single standard quilling strip, glued down on edge on its own (quite a tricky operation!), is likely to be too flimsy to serve this purpose well. Additionally, it is unlikely to be thick enough to achieve sufficient visual impact. A length of quilling strip can, of course, be glued down completely flat on one side (rather than on edge) in a straight line, but this does not work particularly well as a border since the quilled shapes it encloses will have greater depth. Also, strips glued down flat in this way do not readily accommodate curves.

The challenge, therefore, is to create a thicker strip of sufficient depth to provide a visually attractive border and which can easily be glued down on its edge.

Many quillers cut their own border strips from heavier sheets of card. Such strips are generally robust enough to stand securely on their own edges, and can be cut to any width required.

Another approach is to stick multiple quilling strips together, using glue along the entire length of their inner sides. (When doing this, care must be taken to keep the edges flush.) This results in much thicker and more substantial lines which can be moulded into curved or angular border sections if needed. Hereafter, such strips will be referred to as ‘thickened’.



**A pair of crimped strips, joined by means of dots of glue at their opposing 'peaks', makes an interesting lattice border. To create them, two brown bronze-edged strips were glued together along their whole length. The resulting thickened strip was then crimped and cut in half, and the two halves were subsequently joined together as shown to form a lattice. (Note also the oval solid coils used to decorate the numerals in the background, which have all been wrapped in gold.)**

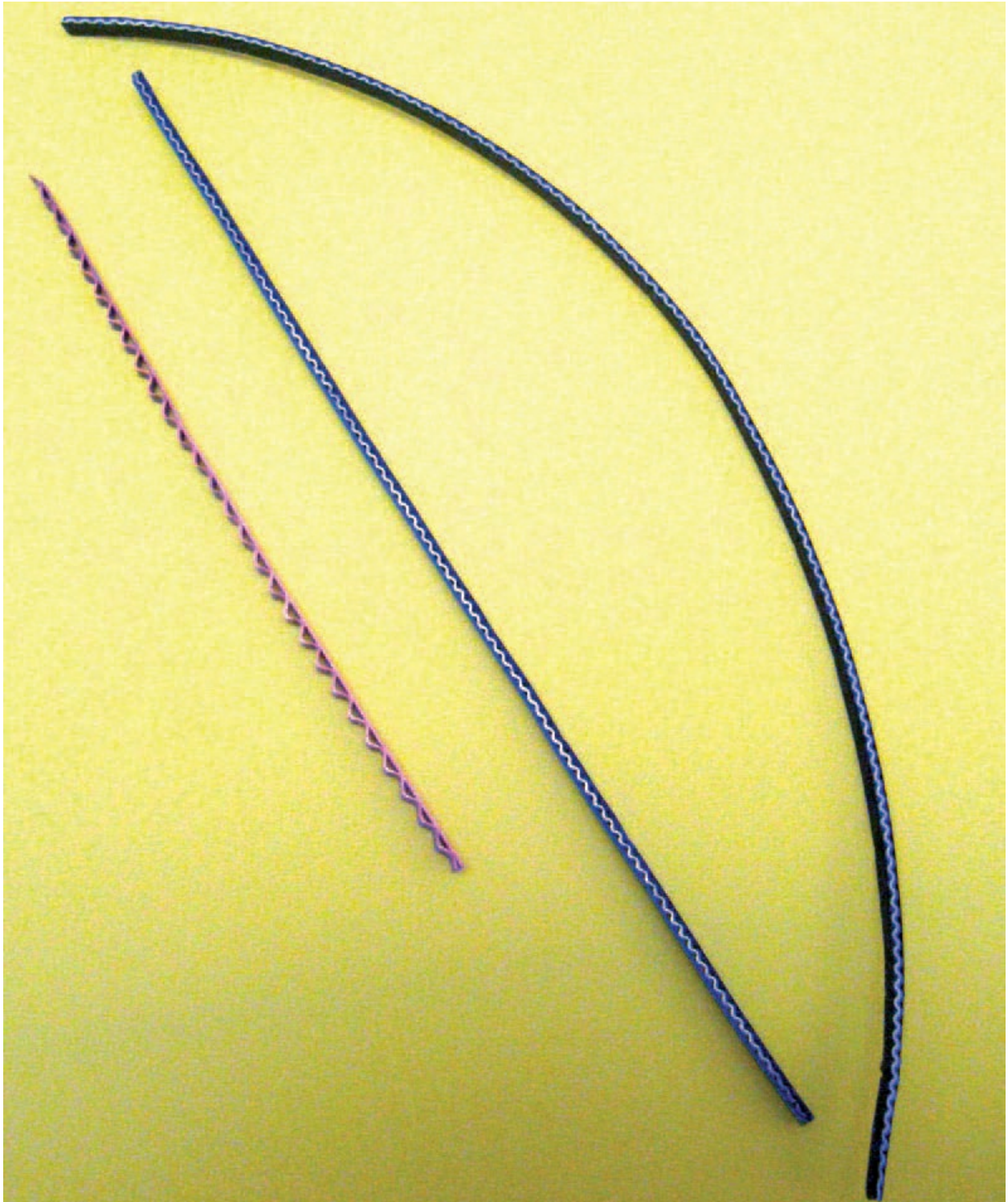
Two or three strips glued together in this way can also be run between the cogs of a ribbler or crimping tool, producing an attractive wavy effect.

Thickened crimped strips can additionally be incorporated into

even wider 'sandwiches' of glued-together straight strips, creating substantial and very attractive borders for quilled designs. During assembly, always apply glue to the adjoining straight strip section first, and press the crimped section very gently down into it so that the 'peaks' and 'troughs' of the crimping do not get flattened accidentally.

Remember to use at least three strips of any one colour together to create clearly visible 'stripes' in your border. The width of a single unthickened strip is generally insufficient to show up well in a multi-coloured 'sandwich' arrangement.





A selection of 'sandwich' strip borders. The copper coloured strip on the left comprises a crimped section glued to a thickened straight length made from two strips glued together. The central strip comprises two sets of three straight strips glued together, which have been positioned on either side of a contrasting crimped section. On the right is a similar but longer 'sandwich' strip which has been moulded into a curve.

Another popular way to create straight borders is to bind a stack of three or more strips together by bandaging, which involves wrapping a contrasting strip diagonally around it. This technique has already been mentioned briefly in [Chapter 7](#). To create a bandage, attach your contrasting strip to the base of the stack of strips at an angle, using a small dot of glue, and continue wrapping it around the length of the stack in a diagonal fashion, making sure that the wraps are evenly spaced. Gluing the strips in the stack together beforehand will prevent them from moving about during the wrapping process. Each wrap can be secured in position with a dot of glue, if you wish, and the last one must of course be glued down at the end on the underside. The depth of the bandaged line you create will depend on the number of strips in your stack.





Here, three gold strips were glued together to form a stack, and bandaged using a



toning shade. A narrower strip of blue paper was then used to bandage it again in the opposite direction, forming a criss-cross pattern. Finally, the bandaged strip was run through a crimper.

If only three or four strips are used, it may be possible to pass the bandaged strip through a crimper to produce an interesting, textured effect. Strip stacks can also be bandaged twice in opposite directions, creating a criss-cross pattern.

Having created your desired border line, it must now be glued down in the right position as part of your design. If you utilize a light box, or emboss the pattern outline onto your background as described in [Chapter 8](#), it may be possible to dispense a row of tiny glue spots exactly where the border is to be located, and lower the line directly into it.

If there are curves involved, it is best to stick the border down in small sections, just a little at a time, waiting for the glue to dry beneath each section before moving on.

Alternatively, glue can be applied directly to the bottom edge of the border line, either by dipping or – in the case of quite thick ‘sandwich’ arrangements – by applying small dots of glue all along its lower edge.

It may be necessary to hold down the border with your finger for a short time until the glue begins to dry, to ensure that it stays in the correct position. Watch out for any spots of glue that may squeeze out from beneath the border; these can be quickly whisked away with the tip of a cocktail stick so that they do not subsequently show.

## Letters and abstract shapes

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Creating the outline of a shape with quilling strips can be accomplished in several different ways. As already explained in [Chapter 5](#), circles, simple geometric shapes, hearts and stars can

quite easily be made using ring coil techniques, but more complex or abstract shapes can be a little more challenging.

If you are working with a pre-drawn pattern outline, the methods described earlier in this chapter (see Frame Border Edging) may assist you in accurately positioning curved or angled lengths of thickened strip directly onto a background with the aid of pre-embossed marks or a light box. Alternatively, outlines can be delineated through the careful placement of pins on a work-board, or by moulding your strip around shapes cut out from card.

## Cut-out shapes

If you decide to utilize a cardboard cut-out shape, bear in mind that the cut-out itself will eventually form an integral part of the background to your quilled design, as described below. Punches and die-cutters can provide a useful source of shapes to work with, although far greater flexibility is derived from drawing and cutting out shapes by hand.

Creating typographical quilled outlines for letters and numerals is particularly popular with quillers, and the source material for these can readily be obtained using word processing fonts on a computer. When printing an individual character or word onto card for use in quilling, however, always remember to flip the image so that it is printed out backwards. Cut around the printed outline and then – when the cut-out is turned over – you will have an unmarked, correctly oriented shape with which to work. The same applies for outline images that are photocopied or traced.

Cut-outs can either be affixed directly into position on a background, ready for a thickened edging strip to be glued around them, or edged as freestanding items.

If working with a cut-out which has not been stuck down onto a

background, it is best to edge it in small sections, just a little at a time, allowing the glue to dry on each newly edged section before proceeding with the next one. Apply a thin line of glue along the base of your edging strip, and press it gently against the outside edge of the cut-out. If necessary, a little extra reinforcing glue can be applied discreetly from the back of the shape, where it is less likely to show.



The letters for the word in this piece (the name of a Victorian park in Taunton, Somerset) were originally composed on a computer and printed out backwards on to white card. The outline of each letter was cut out by hand, turned over and then glued in position on to the green background. Thickened, crimped white strips were then glued around the edges of the letters, one small section at a time. After that, the rest of the piece was ornamented with quilling.

## Work-board shapes

If you prefer not to attach your quilling strip outline to a cut-out shape, the alternative is to create it on a work-board with the aid of pins. In this instance, the outline shape must first be drawn or printed onto paper and then placed on the board under clear plastic cling-film, as previously described for making huskings ([Chapter 4](#)). There is no need to print or draw the outline backwards in this instance.



The outline of the shape must be marked out with pins: one at each sharp corner, one at the end of each straight section and several closely grouped together to delineate the contours of any curves.

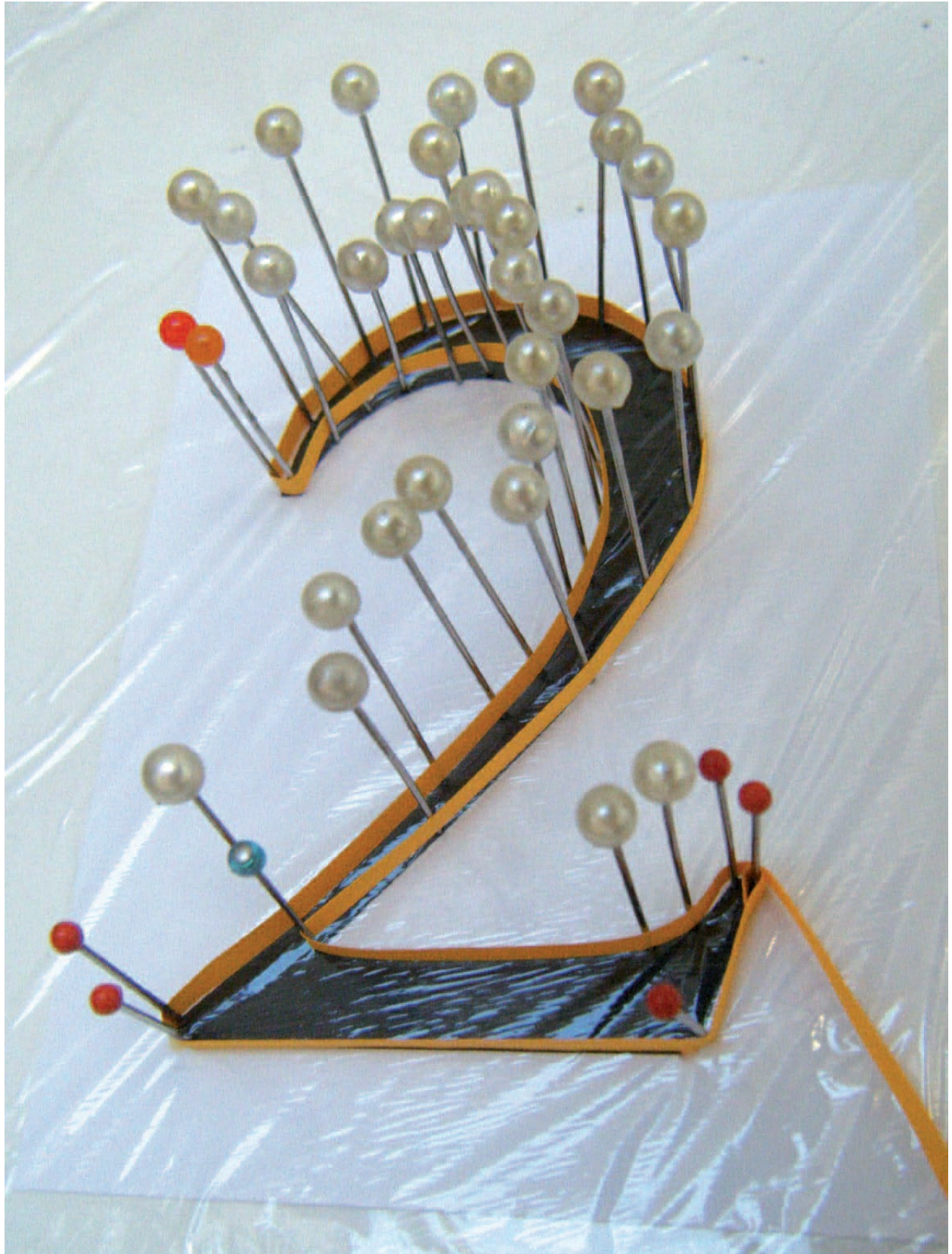
Creating the outline requires a thickened quilling strip to be wound around the pins. Begin by choosing a starting point (usually a sharp corner) where joins in the paper will be inconspicuous. As when making huskings on a board, a tiny loop should first be formed at the end of the strip, providing a means of securing it to your starting pin.



Here, thickened crimped edging is being applied to the outline of a bird cut out from

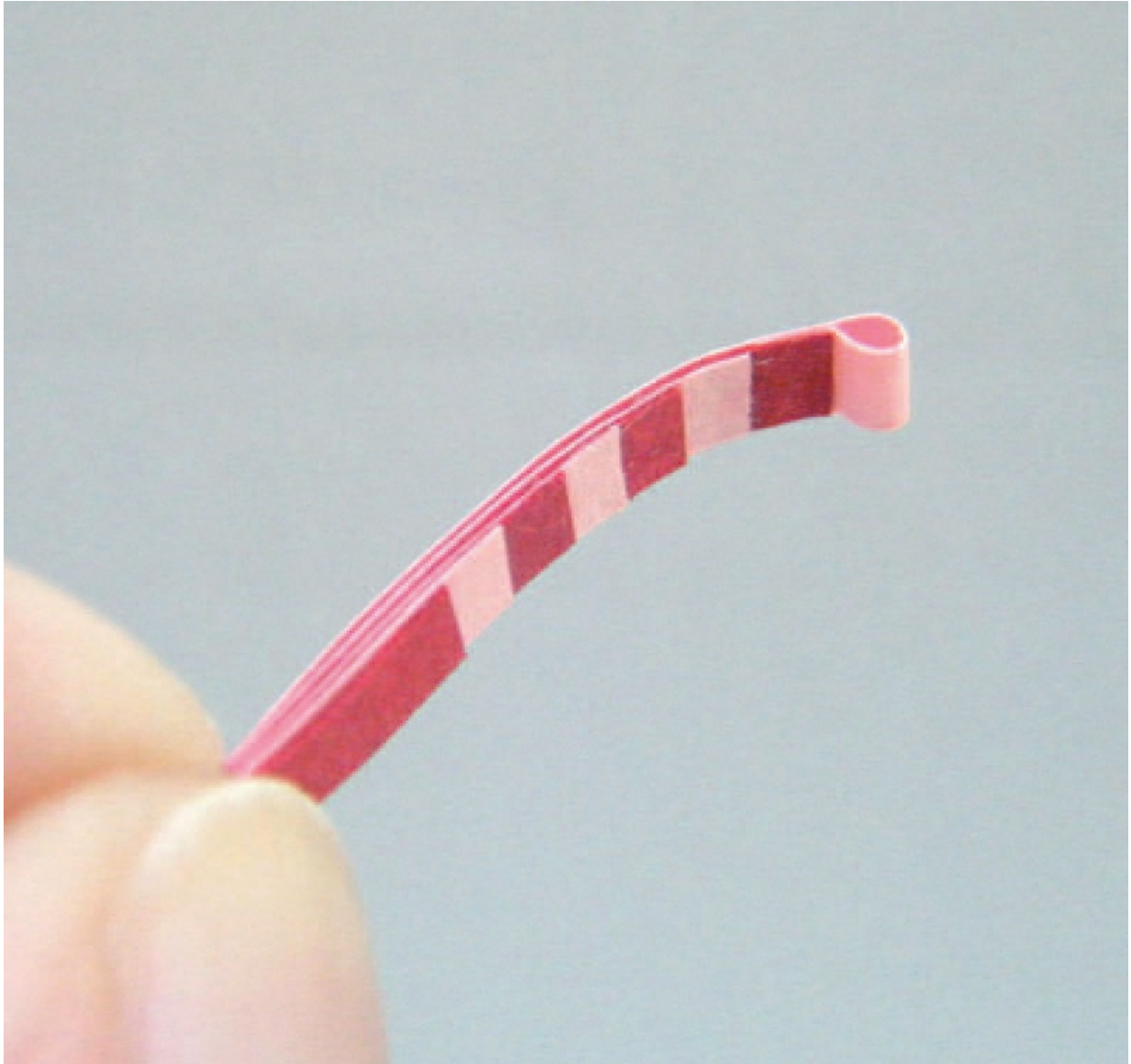
yellow cardboard. The bird shape was subsequently filled in with quilling and displayed on a wall as part of a montage.





After being placed under cling-film on a workboard, the printed shape of this figure 2

has been marked out with pins, ready for outlining with a yellow strip. A loop at one end of the strip has been secured with a pin at the starting point (bottom right), and the strip has then been wound around the pins. Care must be taken to ensure that the strip remains taut during winding. Note that the strip is passed around the outside of the red-headed pins which have been used to mark outward-facing corners. Conversely, the blue-headed pin marks an inward-facing corner, and so the strip has been passed around the inside of this. The same arrangement applies to the convex and concave areas of the curved section.



A multi-strip stack like this can be used to create an outline by winding around pins just once. Here, a securing loop has been made at the end of a pink strip, and further strips are then glued below it (just at their tips) in a graduated fashion. After getting back to the starting pin at the end of the winding process, the ends of all the strips

must be trimmed back and glued down in a similarly graduated way, so that the inner strips are all concealed by the outer one. This avoids creating an unsightly step-like join which would occur if all the strips in the stack were cut off level.

Pay close attention to the nature of your shape. When winding around outward-facing (convex) points and curves, the strip will need to go around the outside of the pins. However, inward-facing (concave) angles and contours require the strip to run behind the pins, on the inside, so that it is held in the correct position.

Having wound the strip once around all the pins and returned to the starting point again, it may be necessary to continue winding several times over in order to achieve the desired thickness for your outline. As described earlier in this chapter in the context of wrapping shapes, this can be accomplished by applying glue along the sides of the shape as it forms, adjusting and repositioning the pins as necessary. Squeeze the wrapped sides together with tweezers as you wind, wiping away any excess glue that may ooze out. When the outline is thick enough, trim the strip and glue it down opposite the starting pin.

As an alternative to this somewhat laborious process, it is possible to create a multi-strip outline in one single operation by making an initial loop in a single strip as described and then gluing further strips beneath it in a staggered fashion. After winding the resulting stack of strips once around the pins, it can be secured with glue at the starting point, having first trimmed back the inner strips beneath the outer one so that they do not show.

Having formed your outline in either of these two ways, it will almost certainly be necessary to stabilize it by rubbing a thin layer of glue all along the top edge and allowing this to dry before attempting to remove the shape from the pins. Even after stabilization, it is likely that the shape will relax and become slightly deformed when released from its pinned position. This can usually be corrected by means of a



little firm manipulation with your fingers, and controlled with tweezers as you glue it down onto a background.



The outlines for the lettering on this card were created using the stacked multi-strip method. Before being removed from the work-board, each outline was stabilized along the top edge with a thin layer of glue, and elements of the inner decoration were glued into position to help retain its shape.

If you are planning to incorporate quilled shapes inside the outline

as part of your design, it may be helpful to fix some of these in place (especially at the corners) whilst the outline is still pinned to the board. This can help considerably with ensuring that the outline retains its shape when unpinned.

Having removed your completed outline from the board, the initial loop which secured it to the starting pin can be gently flattened using tweezers.

Before leaving the overall subject of letters, numerals and other abstract shapes, it is worth remembering that outlining is not necessarily the only option for representing them with paper strips. As is so often the case with quilling, there are alternative ways of approaching the same task using different techniques.

If you refer back to [Chapter 3](#), for example, you will recall the conditioning process for strips which was described in the context of making open spiral coils. Such conditioning can also be used to form the shapes of letters.

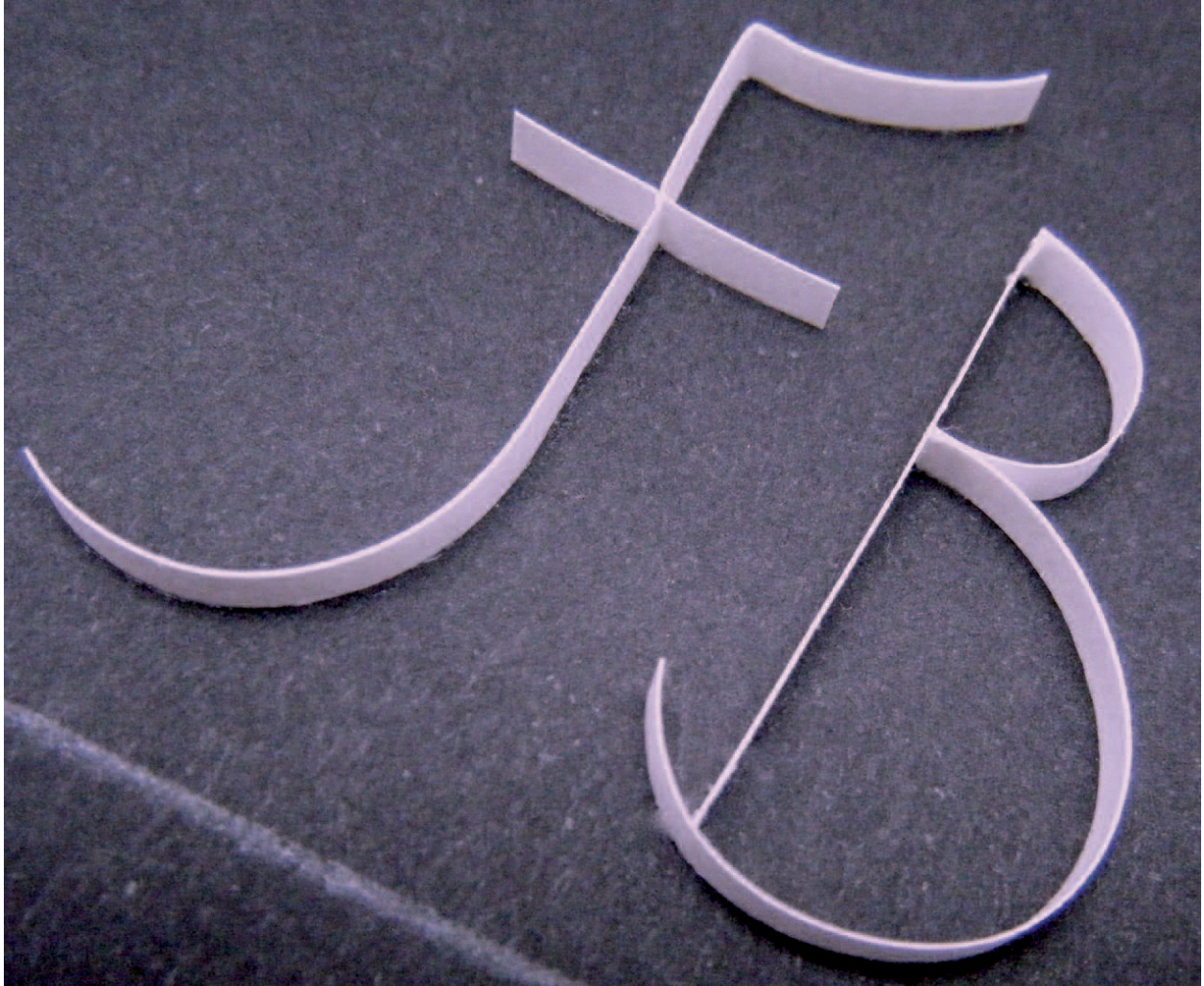
Multi-strip open scrolls (introduced in [Chapter 7](#)) offer another means of representing letters and numbers with a calligraphic flourish. In addition, of course, solid coils and closed loose coils can easily be grouped together to form the shapes of abstract figures. Never overlook the wide range of choice that different quilling techniques provide.

## Other outlining methods

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Another effective way of forming straight line borders is to use paper spills. These are simple to make by rolling up a square of paper quite tightly from one corner to the opposite corner and securing the finishing point in the centre with a dot of glue. After rolling, spills can be cut to the required length.



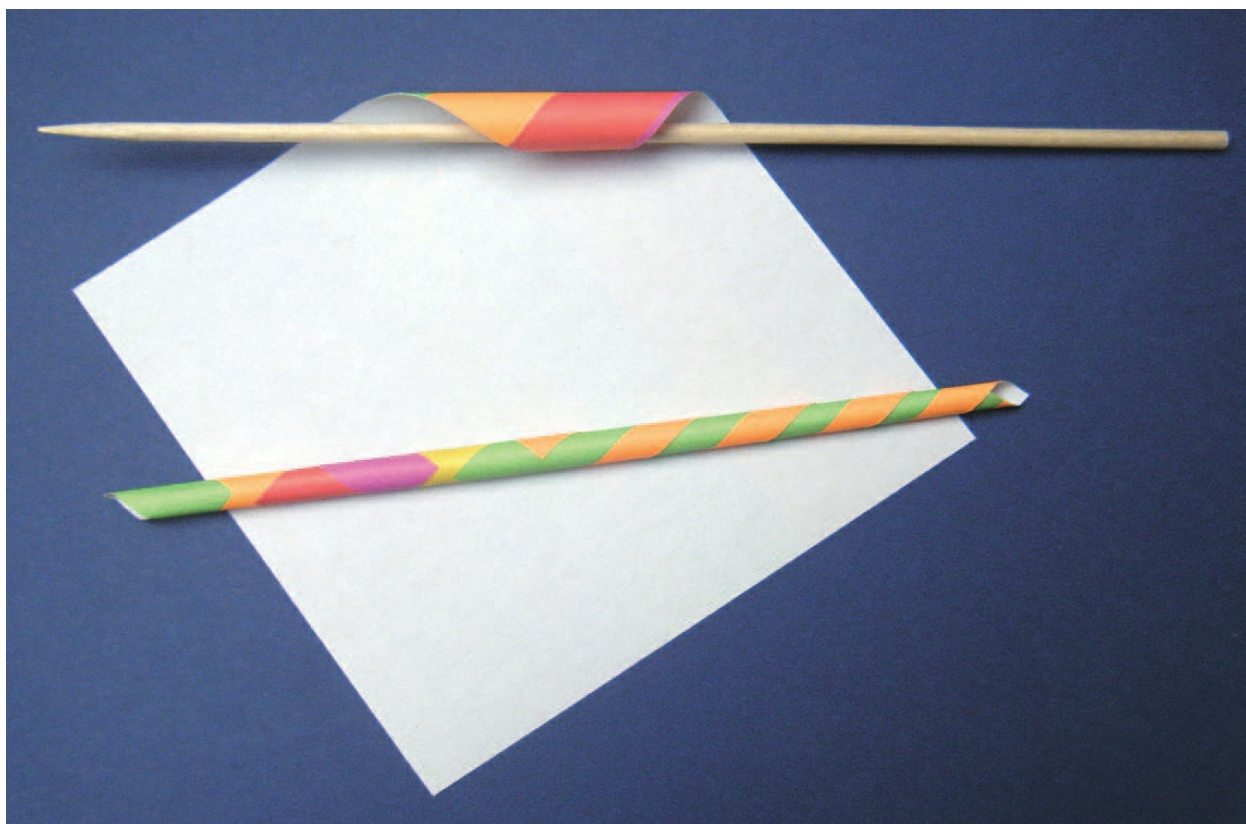


**Carefully conditioned single strips can be used to represent letters.**

Rows of solid coils or small ring coils can also be used to delineate borders.

As has already been seen, the main challenge with outlining and bordering is to produce strips which can not only be moulded but will also readily hold their shape. There are two further techniques, initially developed in the context of quilled 3D modelling, which might also prove useful in creating borders for your work.



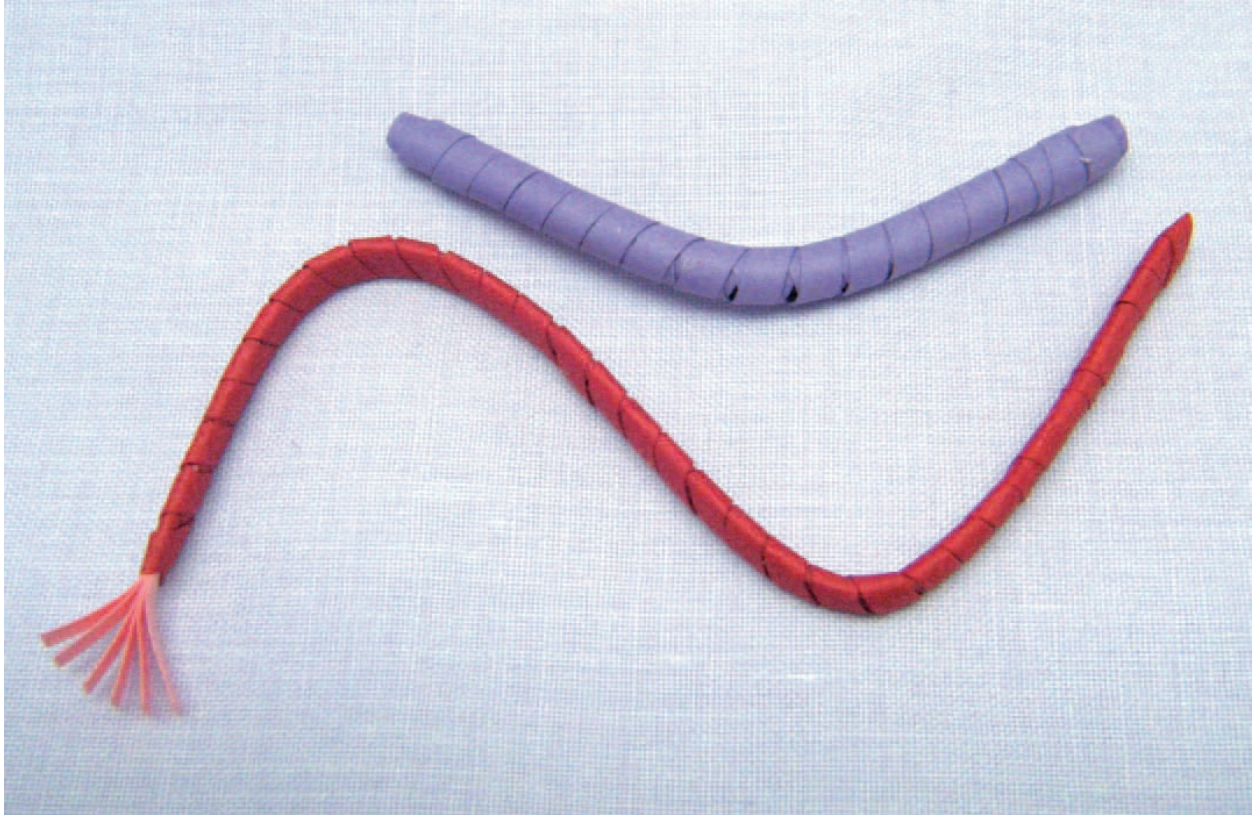


Spills can be used to make attractive straight borders, especially when rolled from squares of patterned paper.



The gold border for this quilled star is formed from tiny ring coils.





A length of purple tubing (above) and some red 'bendy bandaging'.

## Tubing

Genevieve Godden has pioneered a novel way of using paper strips to create flexible tubing, which can be gently curved into all sorts of abstract shapes. The basis for this is a tightly wound tendril (see [Chapter 7](#)), wrapped two or, better still, three times over itself on any diameter of dowel.

To make tubing, it is first necessary to secure the tip of a strip temporarily onto the end of a dowel, at an angle. This can be accomplished by using a clip such as a clothes peg, or even a small piece of sticky tape. If you are planning on making quite a lot of tubing, you could even cut a slot into a wooden dowel, through which the strip end can be threaded.

Starting a little way below the securing point, begin wrapping the



strip diagonally around the dowel to form a tightly wound spiral tendril, taking care not to overlap the strip, nor to leave any gaps. Maintain tension by holding the tendril between your fingers as it forms. Once the desired length of tube is reached, change direction and wind back over the whole length of the tendril in a similar way until you get back to the starting point. Doing this strengthens the tendril by wrapping it around with a second layer which has been wound the opposite way. When the starting point is reached again, change direction one more time and add a third wrapped layer. Secure the remaining free strip to the layer below at the end point, using a dot of glue. Now slide the tube gently off the dowel, and trim the ends neatly. The result is a surprisingly strong length of tube that can easily be flexed and curved. Once the tube is shaped as required, it can be stabilized by coating with glue or spraying with varnish.

When making long sections of tube, glue several strips end-to-end at their tips to ensure that there is a sufficiently long strip to complete the wrapping process.

You may find it helpful to secure the tubing as it forms by adding a dot of glue beneath the strip at each of the points where you change the direction of the wrap.

If utilizing a slot in your dowel to secure the strip, be sure to leave a long enough section of strip in the slot to allow you to remove the finished tube from the dowel without difficulty.

## ‘Bendy bandaging’

Jane Jenkins has developed the tubing technique a stage further with a flat variation of her own called ‘bendy bandaging’, which will hold its shape in almost any position you care to bend it.

Instead of a dowel, this technique utilizes a stack of six or more strips which are joined together at one end. This means that, when

working with commercially bought strips, there is initially no need to detach them from their original webbing.

The method works best with 5mm ( $\frac{1}{4}$ in) wide strips, although it can also be accomplished with narrower ones. Only two layers of wrapping are generally required.

To begin, a wrapping strip is attached at one end of the stack of strips at a 10 degree angle using a dot of glue.

Instead of making a tendril, the wrapping strip must be wound tightly around the stack by means of bandaging. As when making a tube, care must be taken not to overlap or leave gaps when wrapping. When the required length of the stack has been wrapped, change direction and continue bandaging it right back to the starting point. No glue is needed until you return to that point, when the wrapping strip should then be glued down on the opposite side to where you first secured the strip. The ends of the inner stack of strips can then be trimmed or fanned out as desired.

Outlines and borders, when used imaginatively, add character and beauty to any quilled design. There are many different options, as described in this chapter. Do take time to consider how you could employ them creatively.







**Infilling can be accomplished with almost any quilling technique.**

# INFILLING

After creating any kind of outline shape in quilling, it is likely that you are going to want to fill it in some way.

Almost all of the shapes already described in earlier chapters may be suitable for this purpose, along with a few others that will be introduced for the first time here. The challenge, as always, is to decide which technique (or combination of techniques) will be best to use in order to produce the desired visual effect.

Many modern quillers favour a 'mosaic' style of working, in which the entire area of a design is completely filled up with shapes that fit together like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. In such work, individual elements of the design image may be depicted using clusters of broadly similar shapes which have simply been quilled in the same colour, thereby perhaps placing greater emphasis on colour choice than the structural characteristics of the shapes themselves. Shapes derived from closed loose coils (curved teardrops, eye shapes and leaf shapes, for example) are particularly popular for this application as they readily fit closely alongside one another. In addition, they can easily be manipulated to occupy awkwardly shaped spaces.

When grouped together en masse, however, shapes of this nature cannot help but combine visually to appear simply as dense blocks of colour – an effect which can easily overshadow the beauty and delicacy of their individual structures.



To add variety to mosaic-style work, vortex coils may be used instead of, or even alongside shapes made from closed loose coils. Such work still tends to be quite dense, but there is at least some discernible variation in terms of the shapes' inner patterns.

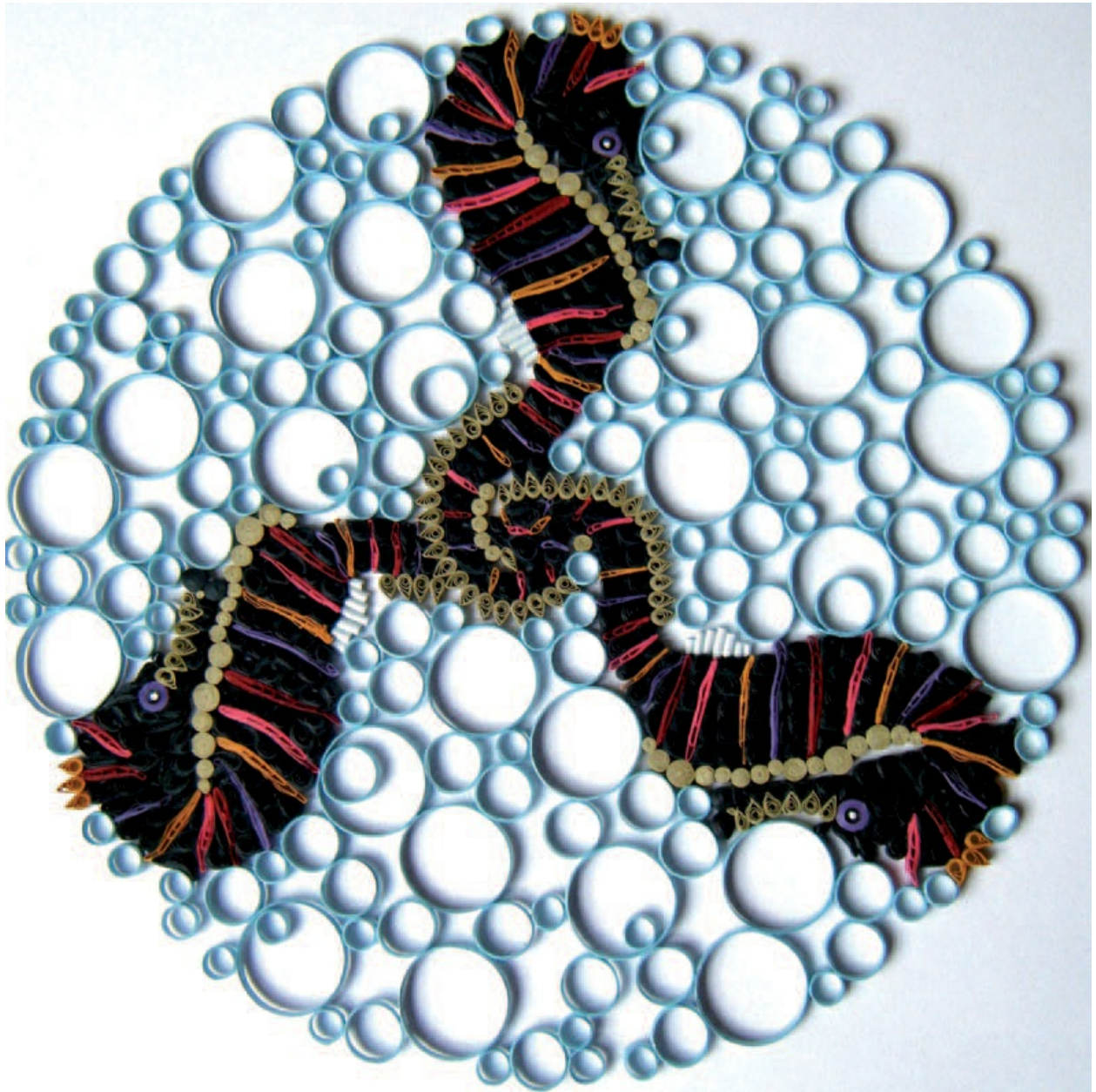


**The gold leaves and purple flower petals in this design are infilled with closely-packed shapes derived from closed loose coils and vortex coils, creating quite dense blocks of colour.**

The closed loose coil was for a long time regarded as the 'go-to' quilling technique for every purpose. Now that its dominance is beginning to wane, however, creative quillers are increasingly seeing the potential of alternative infilling options.

Simple curved lines, solid coils, ring coils, wheatears, zig-zag folded strips and open spiral filigree shapes can all be used for filling

up spaces to excellent effect, often projecting more of their individual character than densely packed shapes.



Here, ring coils of different sizes have been used to create an openwork lattice, framing the three seahorses with interlocking tails. Although densely infilled themselves, the seahorses have been quilled using several different types of shape to provide variety: solid coils, wheatears and vortex coils, along with closed loose coil teardrop shapes.





Paper tendrils have been glued down in parallel with spills made from magazine pages to infill this angled area. The tendrils were formed by wrapping 5mm (1/4in) strips diagonally around a thin length of wire. After withdrawing the wire, a little gentle pulling and manipulation of each tendril was required to achieve regularity in the spacing of the wraps.

At the other end of the techniques spectrum, even paper spills ([Chapter 9](#)) and tendrils ([Chapter 7](#)) can be trimmed to fit inside outlined areas and glued down together onto a background in parallel lines.



## QUILLED 3D VESSEL



One application in which the density of tightly-rolled shapes derived from closed loose coils can be a positive advantage is the modelling of quilled 3D vessels like this one. Here, teardrop and eye shapes were created using crimped strips whose whorls naturally remain quite closely bunched together after rolling and pinching. The sides of this vessel were built up around a conical glass tumbler (used as an interior mould) which had first been covered with cling-film. Each shape was glued in position alongside its neighbour, working in layered rows from the bottom. The base of the vessel (attaching to

the first row of shapes) is a solid coil, made to a slightly larger diameter than that of the glass tumbler, which was initially placed on top of it. Thanks to the cling-film, the tumbler could easily be withdrawn when all the rows of shapes were in position and the glue had dried.

## Sequential twists

---

One emerging trend in infilling is for the use of strips which have been sequentially twisted along their length with a slotted tool before being allowed to expand naturally within the confines of a quilled border. Popularly referred to as ‘beehive’, this technique offers great potential for filling up quite large areas quickly, whilst retaining a delicate, open, appearance.

The twists are most typically created in a regular, sequential fashion using a slotted quilling tool. To try this technique, first crease a full length quilling strip gently at 25mm (1in) intervals along its length and use the tool to roll a small curl at one end. Next, insert the tool at the position of the first crease (so that the strip lies between the prongs) and twist it towards the curl for two or three turns. Repeat this process by inserting the tool at each subsequent crease point, rolling forward until you come into contact with the previous twist you made. Finish by forming an S scroll at the other end of the strip.



**A slotted quilling tool is used to roll regular twists along the length of a strip.**

The twisted strip you have formed can be used to fill almost any outlined area of your design in an elegant, open manner. The twists can be arranged in a single line, or gently bunched together in a more random fashion. To hold them in place, dots of glue must be dispensed at selected anchor points where they come into contact



with the outline, and at any other position in the middle of the infilled area where a little support may appear necessary.



**A sequentially twisted strip (as seen in the foreground) has been inserted into the space between two simple loops (above) to form an elegant infill pattern within a retaining collar. Care must be taken to trim the twisted strip to an appropriate length for the application, and to support it in position with a few dots of glue along the sides of the enclosing outline.**

As an alternative to the regular twists described above, interesting effects can be created by twisting the strip in an entirely random way, by rolling it on opposite sides and varying the number of turns used to form each twist. You can also vary the distance between each twist.

The resulting twisted strip can look quite spectacular when packed into the confines of a small outlined area and allowed to relax, forming unique patterns which create what could be described as a marbled effect.



This randomly-twisted effect was created using strips in two contrasting colours which had first been joined together in parallel with a dot of glue at just one end. By varying the size, orientation and interval of the twists, a twisted strip is created which can be bunched up and then released inside an outline shape, such as the square shown in this example. Supporting dots of glue have been applied at various contact points along the inner sides of the outline and also in a few central places where the twists adjoin.

## Ogee shapes

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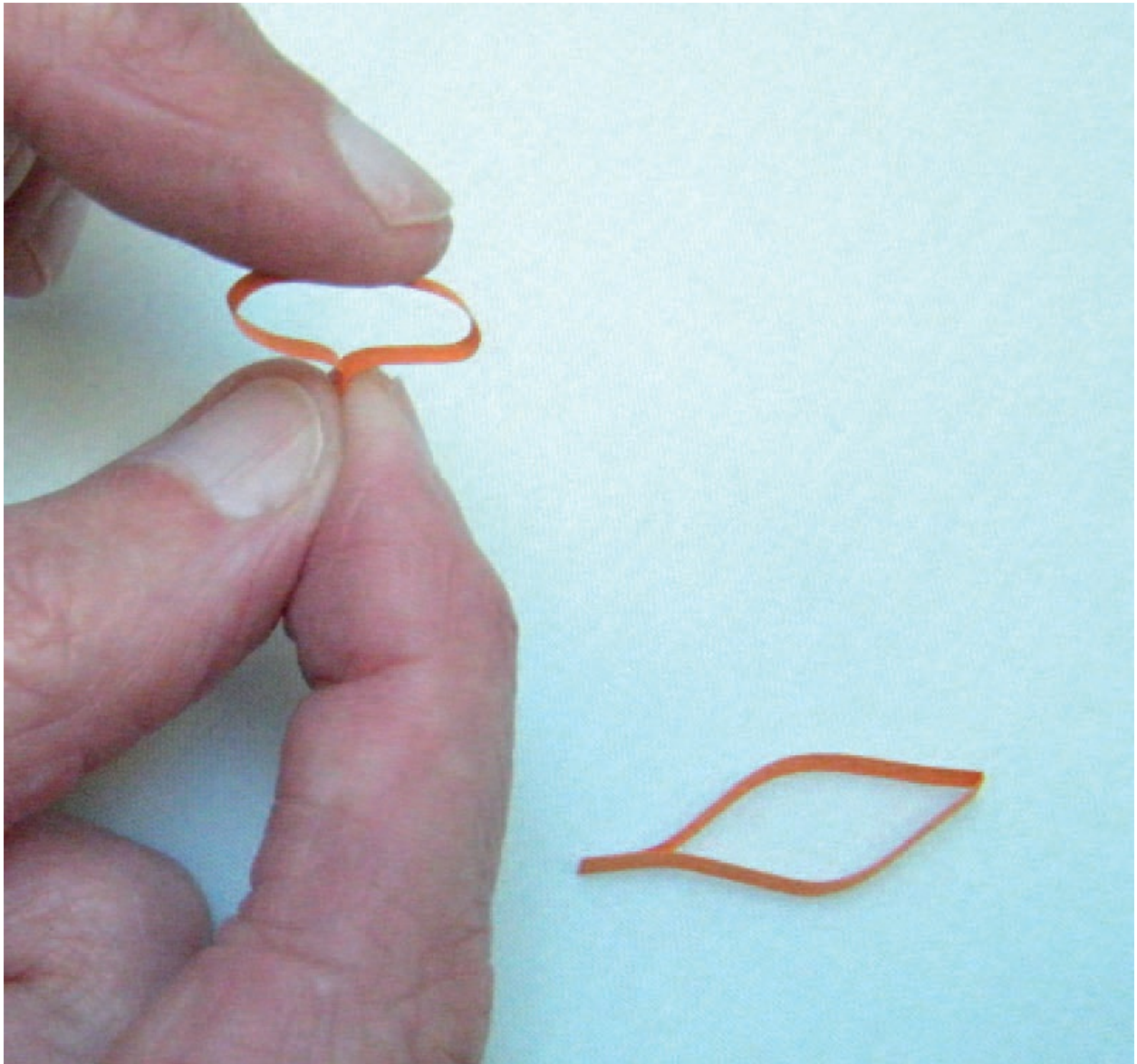
It was mentioned earlier that curved teardrops, eye shapes and leaf shapes are popular in the context of mosaic-style infilling because their curves nestle so readily together. When a more open style of infilling is required, however, loops of paper pressed into ogee shapes can prove themselves to be equally useful.

‘Ogee’ is an architectural term describing a pointed arch which has an S-shaped curve on both sides. This can readily be translated into quilling by taking a short strip measuring, say, 50mm (2in) long, folding it in half and conditioning it on either side of the fold as you would when making an open coil heart shape ([Chapter 3](#)). Glue the two ends together at their very tips, then gently press the fold in the paper all the way down towards the glued ends. Release the shape and manipulate it to form an ogee.





The tree branch on which this quilled woodpecker is perching has been constructed from several lengths of randomly-twisted strip, with the curls glued together along their sides at numerous anchor points.



The ogee on the right was formed by gently pressing down the fold in the paper towards the glued-together ends as shown (left), then releasing and manipulating it into a symmetrical, fluid shape.





Ogee shapes in two different sizes are being used here to infill the outline cut-out shape of a bird. Smaller ogees are nested inside larger ones, complemented also by the insertion of tiny alternate side looped huskings, illustrating their versatility.

## Tight pegs with tails

---

Brenda Rhodes has described yet another interesting infilling method, involving the use of small solid coils (sometimes referred to as tight pegs) from which a short length of strip is left unrolled.





**This design by Brenda Rhodes (reproduced here with her kind permission), shows monochrome tight coils with tails (made using hand-cut strips) being used to fill up spaces between the coloured flowers. The flowers themselves have been created using the same technique.**

A tailed peg is made by rolling a strip tightly along part of its length and adding a dot of glue at the point where you would like a 'tail' of your desired length to begin. The resulting tail can be left straight or gently curved in your fingers as required. Tailed pegs can be grouped together in pairs, threes and even larger multiples, positioned head-to-tail or in circular formations. Ideal for infilling, they can also be combined with other techniques, adding interest to a design. Other shapes can even be layered on top of them, in order to add depth.

By now it should be apparent that infilling can be achieved using a

very wide variety of different quilling techniques. All it takes is a little imagination to develop approaches of your own – a concept that of course applies throughout the whole subject of quilling.

In the handbook accompanying William Bemrose and Sons' nineteenth-century quilling kit, Mosaicon, the following statement is made:

... as there is no limit to the forms the paper can be readily converted into, the manipulator will soon invent other shapes and designs, often accidentally Kaleidoscopic, and so produce new and pleasing effects little expected.

These words surely hold as true today as they did in the 1880s, and it is in the spirit of just such belief that this book has been written.

Be inspired, and enjoy your quilling!

# FURTHER READING AND SUPPLIES

The Quilling Guild exists to encourage, support, preserve and publicize the art of quilling. Founded in 1983, the Quilling Guild is a non-profitmaking charity (UK registered number 1123927) whose trustees and workers are all volunteers. Membership is open to quillers of all skill levels from beginners to advanced practitioners across the world, and the Guild has grown to become an internationally recognized organization that has their interests at heart.

The Guild actively promotes quilling through social media, regional groups and public events, including a high-profile annual meeting and display held each September, plus larger-scale Quilling Festivals every five years. These events give members the opportunity to meet, display their work, share ideas and learn new techniques through demonstrations, as well as taking part in competitions. Guild members also receive an informative 32-page magazine which is published three times a year, along with access to an exclusive blog which has grown to become a comprehensive online resource for quillers. The Guild also supports its members through a range of specialist publications, and offers an internationally respected Accreditation scheme for those wishing to attain official recognition for their quilling skills.

More information can be found on the Guild's website at [www.quilling-guild.co.uk](http://www.quilling-guild.co.uk), which also includes a page listing quilling demonstrators and tutors.

The North American Quilling Guild:



[www.naqq.org](http://www.naqq.org)

Philippa Reid's website:

[www.learntoquill.weebly.com](http://www.learntoquill.weebly.com)

Philippa Reid's blog:

[www.quilliance.wordpress.com](http://www.quilliance.wordpress.com)

Jane Jenkins Quilling Books:

[www.janejenkinsquillingbooks.com](http://www.janejenkinsquillingbooks.com)

## Suppliers of quilling strips and tools

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JJ Quilling Design:

[www.jjquilling.co.uk](http://www.jjquilling.co.uk)

Elderberry Crafts:

[www.quilling-ascrollaway.co.uk](http://www.quilling-ascrollaway.co.uk)

Custom Quilling Supplies:

[www.customquillingbydenise.com](http://www.customquillingbydenise.com)

Quilling Supply Plus:

[www.quillingsupply.com](http://www.quillingsupply.com)

# INDEX

- abstract shapes
  - quilled outlines 92–96
- alternate side looping 34–39
- antennae 26
- bandaging 79, 91, 98–99
- barrel-shaped beads 51–3
- beads
  - barrel-shaped 52–53
  - conical 52–53
  - generally 51–53
- beehive twists 103–104
- bendy bandaging 98–99
- borders
  - gluing down 92
- C scroll 25
- cherries 26
- closed loose coils
  - crescent 29, 68
  - curved teardrop 29
  - dart 29
  - diamond 30
  - eye shape 29–30
  - generally 27–31, 61, 62, 101–102
  - heart 29
  - holly 31

- multicoloured [61](#), [62](#)
- rectangle [30](#)
- square [30](#)
- teardrop [29](#)
- triangle [29](#)
- combs [38](#)
- composite quilled elements [7–8](#), [57–58](#), [85–86](#)
- concealing joins [18–19](#), [28](#), [44](#), [49](#), [58](#)
- conditioning strips [17–18](#), [22](#), [25–26](#), [44](#)
- cones [48–50](#)
- conical beads [52–53](#)
- copyright [87](#)
- couronne [46](#)
- crimping [12](#), [79](#), [90](#), [91](#)
- cups [50](#)
- curved teardrop [29](#)
- cut coil eccentric coils [63–65](#)
- cut coil huskings [65](#)
- cut-out shapes [92–93](#)
- cutting tools [11–12](#)
  
- dart [29](#)
- diamond [30](#)
- dowels [12](#), [45–47](#), [98](#)
  
- eccentric coils
  - cut [63–65](#)
  - generally [63–5](#)
  - vortex [68](#)
- edgework [83](#)
- embossing [84–85](#)
- enclosing loops [35](#)



end-to-end joining [61](#)

eye shape [29–30](#)

frame border edging [90–91](#)

fringing [76–78](#)

glue

diluting [56](#)

dipping quilled shapes [55–57](#)

dispensing [10](#), [45](#), [46](#), [50](#), [55–57](#)

quality [9](#)

removing unwanted marks [57](#)

guide marks [58](#), [84–85](#)

hairbrush prongs [40](#)

heart shape [25–26](#), [29](#), [46](#)

history [7](#), [81–83](#), [107](#)

holly leaves [31](#)

husking patterns [36–37](#)

huskings

cut [65](#)

generally [34–39](#)

multicoloured [65](#)

joining strips

end-to-end [61](#)

in parallel [61,62](#)

joins

concealing [18–19](#), [28](#), [44](#), [49](#), [58](#)

letters

quilled outlines [92–96](#)

- light box [84](#)
- looped flower petals [36](#), [38–39](#)
- looped leaves [38](#)
- looping
  - by hand [33–35](#)
  - on pins [35–37](#)
  - on prongs [37–41](#)
- medallions [81–82](#)
- modelling [48–51](#)
- Mosaicon [81–82](#), [107](#)
- mosaic-style infilling [101](#)
- multi-strip open scrolls [61–63](#), [96](#)
- multi-strip outlines [93–96](#)
- needle tools [11](#), [21](#)
- ogee shapes [104](#), [106](#)
- onion holder [38–40](#)
- open coils
  - antennae [26](#)
  - C scroll [25](#)
  - cherries [26](#)
  - generall [22–27](#)
  - heart [25–26](#)
  - P scroll [27](#)
  - S scroll [25](#)
- outline drawings
  - embossing [84–85](#)
  - generally [84](#)
- P scroll [27](#)

patterns 84–85, 87  
pixie-hood looping 69–70  
positioning quilled shapes 58  
preservation 53, 59

quilled abstract shapes 92–96  
quilled letters 92–96  
quilled vessels 102  
quilling tools 10–11, 21

rectangle 30  
ring coils  
    folded 71–74  
    generally 45–47, 97, 101, 103  
    tracery 74–76

S scroll 25  
sandwich strip borders 90–92  
sequential twists  
    random 104  
    regular 103–104  
shitateru 83  
slotted tools 10–11, 21, 35, 103–104  
solid coils 43–45, 90, 97, 101  
spills, paper 96–97, 103  
spreuers 40  
square 30  
strips  
    commercial 9, 15  
    conditioning 17–18, 22, 25–26, 44  
    edge 15  
    hand cut 9



pearlized [15](#), [89](#)  
quality [9](#)  
right and wrong side [18](#)  
tearing/cutting [18–19](#)  
thickening [90–92](#)  
types [15](#)

teardrop [29](#)  
tendrils [79](#), [98](#), [103](#)  
thickening strips [90–92](#)  
tight peg  
    generally [43](#), [106–107](#)  
    with tail [106–107](#)  
tracery [74–76](#)  
triangle [29](#)  
tubing [98](#)  
tweezers [11](#)

varnish [53](#), [59](#)  
vortex coils [65–68](#)

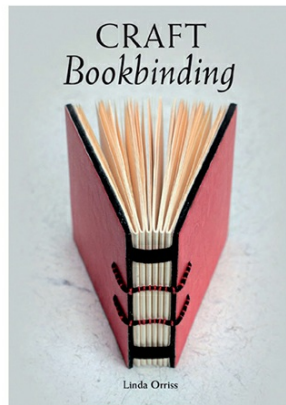
wet palette [56](#)  
wheatears [33–34](#)  
window envelopes for dipping [56](#)  
work-boards [12–13](#), [35–37](#), [57](#), [85–86](#), [89–90](#), [93–96](#)  
wrapping shapes [89](#)

zig-zagging [79](#), [101](#)

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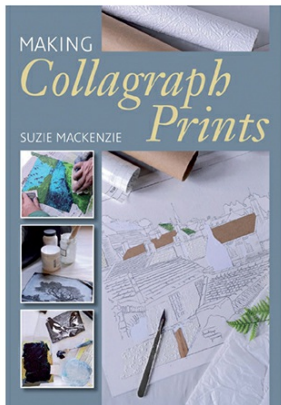
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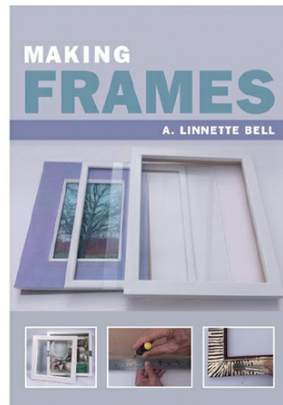
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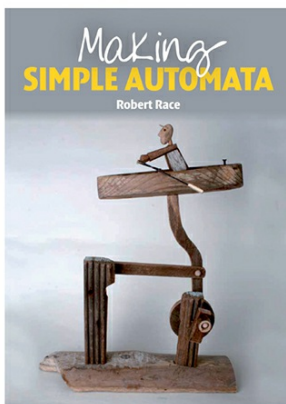
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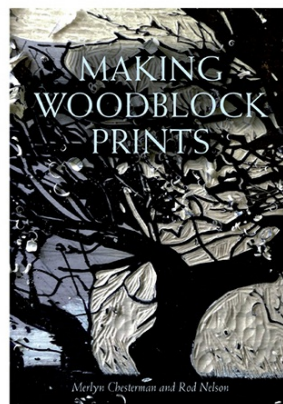
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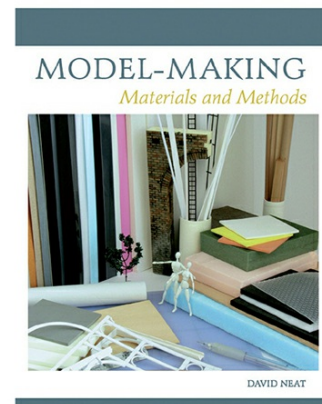
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