

Millinery Skill Sets:

Many can be combined. Some are short courses and others take much more time.

Wire frames/covering—Create the ‘bones’ of a hat with wire and learn several ways to cover (or NOT cover) the frame. Learn about different gauges of wire and when to use them.

Feather mounts (including floating feathers)—Cutting techniques (approx 5) for different feathers and ways to combine them for mounts to attach to hats. Also, how to create ‘floating feathers’ that hover over a hat/headpiece.

Feather flowers—Flowers made from goose feathers that have been trimmed into interesting shapes/edges.

Silk flowers—Use traditional flower making tools to create French-method flowers such as a rose, orchid or carnation, plus others.

Sewn braid—Create hat shapes using straw braids. Sewn against hat blocks for shape.

Braid on buckram—Use straw braids on a buckram frame. Includes several ‘weave’ techniques for visual interest.

Fosshape—Create hat shape (to be covered in fabric) using this heat-shapable thermoplastic. Properties that can be translated into other wearable pieces and props.

Blocking straw—Learn all the steps in blocking a large brimmed hat, including measuring your head for fit, adding a proper head size band, adding wire to brim edge, and ways of personalizing the finished product (embellishments, hatbands, etc.)

Blocking felt—Learn how straw and felt are different in the blocking process and how to use steam to create shapes against traditional hat blocks.

Twist and shout straw/felt—Using a straw or felt hat body, learn how to wire and shape abstract but beautiful lines in a perching hat.

Freeform felt—Hand built hats full of pleating, swirls and twists for a unique look. Completely different than ‘Twist and Shout’.

Cockades (including nautilus)—Pleat, twist, turn ribbon to create simple-to-complex pieces for use on hats or garments, traditionally used on military uniforms. The nautilus cockade is a much sought-after technique to learn.

Hatbands (including origami hatbands)—Whether for men’s or women’s hats, there are many ways to produce simple-to-complex hatbands. Some are pleated, some are folded, some are draped, but all will sit beautifully against the crown, a skill unto itself.

Puggaree hatband—A crisp pleated hatband known for its use on Australian military hats but now appropriated for fashion hats for men and women. The beauty in this headband is the ‘point’ at the end. Learn how that’s done.

Blocking sinamay—Unlike millinery hat bodies in straw, sinamay (and its uppity cousin pinokpak) comes in yardage. Learn how to block and finish any number of hat shapes using sinamay.

Freeform sinamay—Freeforming straw yardage is different than with other straw bodies. Learn what creates shape, line and balance.

Sinamay embellishments—Many ways to use sinamay off-cuts to create sweet to funky embellishment for hats or garments.

Floating veil brim—A much sought-after way of using Russian veiling, vintage veiling, Merry Widow veiling to create an open-work brim.

Jinsin/Silk Abaca/Paris Cloth—Straw yardage which has a very different way of being manipulated due to the warp and weft being of different strength/material. Learn to control these millinery straws for avant-garde shapes for hats, even hatbands.

Bias edges/petersham edges—Learn to add bias edges to hats, which is different to adding bias edges on garments. Petersham (specialty ribbon) edges also have some tricks to make a crisp finish to the edge of a brim.

Linings x 3—There are basically 3 ways to make linings for hats. Learn to make these and why one style might be better than another. And why you might really need a lining in some hats.

Manipulating veiling—Learn the tricks to taming veiling! Whether you are making a 'birdcage' veil, attaching lengths of veiling to a hat, or blocking veiling, understand how to use veiling properly and beautifully without the dreaded veil bulge.

Covering buckram frames—Many hat shapes are commercially available in buckram. Learn not only how to cover in fabric, but many surface design techniques for the fabric itself—pleating, ruching, gathering, burning, etc.

Custom buckram frames—While buckram frames in many shapes are readily available, learn to create your own shapes. Included are how to block buckram, cut shapes, wire and bind edges and cover in fabric.

Hatblocks—Learn to carve your own hat block out of easily obtained and easily cut material. Also learn a bit about hat block shapes, hat block makers, and tips on blocking.

Dyeing straws—Learn 3 different ways of 'coloring' a number of different straws—sinamay, raffia, parisial.

Bias sinamay brims—Big, beautiful open-work brims are demystified. Learn to control this straw yardage in solid weave or windowpane sinamay.

Blocking leather—Leather is a lovely material to use in millinery. The secrets of getting smooth shapes will be revealed. Also included are wiring and lining techniques.

Leather flowers—Simple leather flowers can be made from leather scraps without the use of flower making tools. Learn several flower shapes in this class.

Silk organza flowers/dyeing (not traditional flower making)—Using the natural properties of organza, you will make several stunning flowers without tools and a very easy, non-messy way of dyeing them for added interest.

Fabric swirls—Using wire and fabric, learn the trick behind making sweeping spires for hats or costumes.

Wired rhinestone vines—If you are using rhinestone montees in your work, learn a few tricks for keeping them in line for easy attachment to hats and garments. Several ways to use this method will be demonstrated.

Lace hats/embellishments—Stiffened lace hats were the rage in the late '50s—early '60s, and are now back in vogue. Using appropriate stiffeners and wiring techniques, you'll create a beautiful full hat or embellishment for another hat/headpiece. Great for bridal!

Turbans—Learn not only different substrates but ways to drape a turban.

Felt and straw embellishments—Using off-cuts, create many, many different embellishments for hats and garments.