



# CREATE A BEAUTIFUL SINAMAY HEADBAND

This is a guide to help you get the best out of your headband hat blocks.

[WWW.HATBLOCKS.CO.UK](http://WWW.HATBLOCKS.CO.UK)



## **SOPHIE COOKE**

OF IMOGEN'S IMAGINATION

Based in her Sheffield studio, milliner Sophie uses traditional techniques to create beautiful handmade hats, fascinators, and hair accessories for all occasions. Her signature style is vintage-inspired, with a contemporary twist, and we're thankful for her generosity in sharing her knowledge with you to help you get the most out of your headband block.

[WWW.IMOGENSIMAGINATION.CO.UK](http://WWW.IMOGENSIMAGINATION.CO.UK)



## WHAT YOU'LL NEED

Sinamay (pre-stiffened)  
Cotton covered wire (hard)  
Blocking Pins and Clips  
Block Stand (optional)  
Clingfilm (Saran Wrap)

**Owen's Tip:** Use clips on the ends of the headband, to avoid damage over time, from repeated use of pins.

# 1 PREPARE BLOCK

Cover your block with your chosen barrier material. We suggest PVC-free cling film (saran wrap).



# 2 PREPARE MATERIAL

Cut a bias strip of sinamay large enough to fit around the block. Use 3 layers of pre-stiffened sinamay.

# 3 BLOCK MATERIAL

- a. Secure the centre points with pins.
- b. Using the bias, stretch the ends of the buckram over the ends of the block



## 4 BLOCKING

Secure the ends using clips.  
A block stand is handy but  
not essential.



## 5 FOLD THE SINAMAY OVER THE END OF THE BLOCK.

Use small tight folds and secure with a clip.

**Tip:** *This doesn't need to be perfect at this point, just enough to get a tight and flat fit to the block*



## 6 BLOCKING

Complete blocking to ensure a smooth finish overall, and leave to dry. Tip: Use *natural tension from the bias and clips*, rather than pins, towards the more delicate ends of the block.



*Sophie's Tip: I trimmed some excess at this point, just the "flappiest" bits. This made the next steps a bit easier!*



## 7 BLOCKING

Starting in the centre of the block, unpin and re-pin the excess so that the layers overlap.

### Tips:

- Ensure pins on the bottom layer are towards the outer edge of the block to retain tension.
- Using a diamond pattern, while pinning, will keep tension throughout each section you are working on.
- If trimming further excess, be mindful that the join will be formed by the overlap in the centre of the block.

## 9 BLOCKING

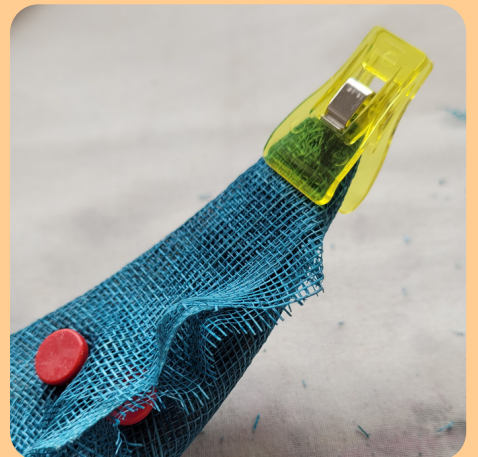
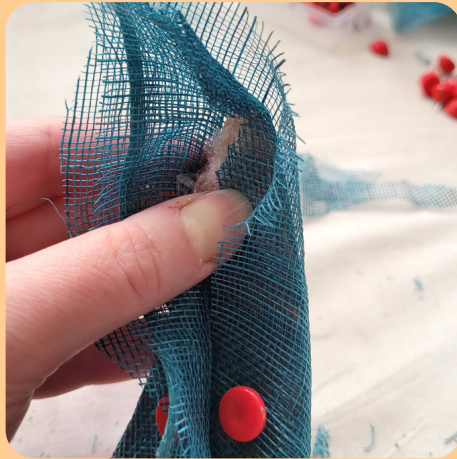
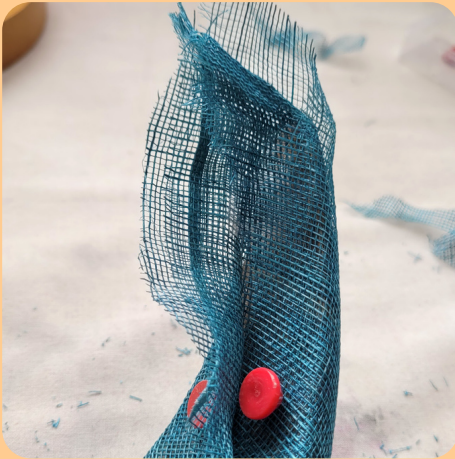
Continue the process towards the end of the block, using brief steam shots to keep the sinamay pliable, and to keep the tension tight.



## 10 SHAPING THE ENDS

- Lightly pin to keep the blocking tension secure.
- Loosen the outer layer of sinamay.
- Trim out any excess from the bottom two layers and re-fold tightly.
- Re-fold the outer layer over the bottom layers.
- Secure all folds using the overlap.
- Repeat on other end.

**Tip:** Use elastic bands to hold overlap in place rather than pins.



## 10

Repeat steps 6-10 on the other end of the headband.

**Tip:** Use elastic bands to hold overlap in place rather than pins.

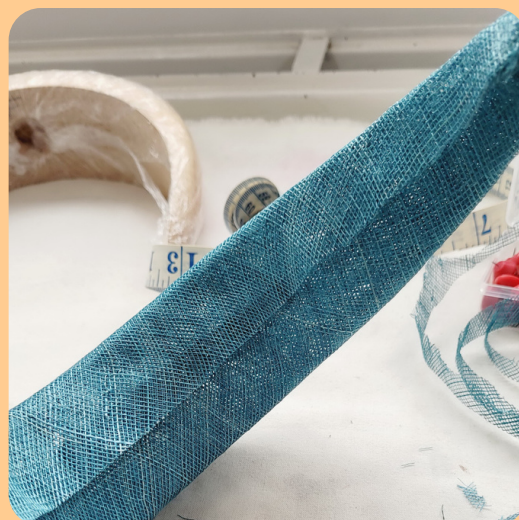


## 11 REMOVE FROM BLOCK

Mark the centre line, before removing it from the block.

Trim any excess from the overlap.

**Tips:** If trimming the bottom layer of the join, be careful not to take too much off. Sewing an overlap is much easier than sewing raw edges.





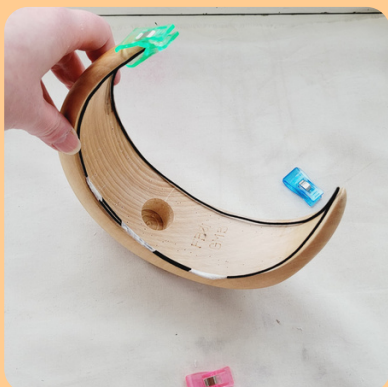
## 12

Prepare the wire for shaping / sizing.  
[1.2mm wire used here]

**Tip:** Don't forget to take the spring out of the wire before shaping.

If the shape distorts, you may lose the overlap in the centre of the headband.

Join the wire, (floristry tape / ferrules). Use a clip to secure the end, when checking the shape.



## 13 FITTING THE WIRE

Fit the wire to the block and hold in place with pins before sewing.

Use your preferred stitching method ensuring that the wire sits snugly into the edges of the shape.

The second image shows the centre pinned ready for sewing.

\*Consider whether you want to sew the join AFTER you have trimmed the headband.

Depending on your chosen trimming, it may be easier to attach this whilst you can still get your fingers/needle inside the headband.

Sew the overlap join. Sophie used a curved needle with double thread.

## 14 PREPARE AND FIT AN ELASTIC



Cut and knot the elastic to your required length. Stitch the elastic in place.

## 15 COVER THE JOIN

Make a bias strip of sinamay to cover the join.

Step 1: Before stretching the bias strip, use the headband to roughly mark the where the taper needs to start.

Step 2: Steam and press the centre without stretching.

Pin the strip to the headband and attach.

If using hot glue, be aware that this may make it difficult to access the elastic.

If the elastic needs replacing, you may wish to stitch the ends of your chosen covering.



# ALTERNATIVE MATERIALS & TIME SAVING TIPS

This technique could be used with other materials such as straw, felt, or buckram/thermoplastics.

You may wish to replace the bias strip that covers the join with either velvet or Petersham ribbon. Both will work well as alternatives to this method especially if you are working to a tight deadline or designing for a client with a limited budget.

**Reminder:** Consider whether you want to sew the join AFTER you have trimmed the headband. Depending on your chosen trimming, it may be easier to attach this whilst you can still get your fingers/needle inside the headband.

## Using heavy trimming or creating an asymmetric design?

Consider adding combs for extra security (see below).

