New to making bobbin lace? Here is a list of supplies you will need, along with some expected/reasonable prices and where to buy them. You can expect an initial outlay of around $150-$200. Many guilds, ours included, offer beginner kits for use while you learn, but need them returned as you buy your own implements.

Specialty items from lace suppliers (list of some suppliers at end)

* **Pillow** – cookie pillow, covered, with a hard back; as big as you can manage (20” ); if you get a 16” or 18” pillow you will just have to spend the extra money on a bigger pillow sooner or later anyway. They don’t all come with a hard back; if that is the case, be sure to support the back while working, to prevent warping. 20”, covered, about $50-$55.
* **Pins** – nickel-plated steel, box of 500 should be plenty for a long time. I use something called “#110 Super-Fine Sharp Pins, size 20, 1-1/4” nickel-plated steel, extra-fine, .5mm shaft.” These are a bit finer (thinner) than the ones we purchased for teaching. $5/box is about right.
* **Bobbins** – Two dozen pairs (48 bobbins) at the least; you will probably be buying bobbins for years; you can never have too many. $15-25/dozen ($60-100 for these 48 bobbins) Many styles available. I teach using International Bobbins, which are kind of torpedo-shaped and easiest to use when doing sewings or adding beads. If working a pattern without sewings or beads, I prefer Continental Square Bobbins, as they don’t roll quite as much on the pillow. Spangled bobbins are another very popular and beautiful kind. See if you can try out someone else’s bobbins before buying. My preference is for bobbins with double heads; this gives you an indentation for the hitch that keeps your thread from unrolling.
* **Bobbin Holders** – these are used for “bobbin management,” when you have so many bobbins that they get in your way. Bobbin holders allow you to bundle and stack bobbins out of the way while you work on a section of lace. They look a bit like a tongue depressor with long rubber bands along the length. Two to four would be a good start, though more would be fine too. $5.50 each for the tongue-depressor kind, $3.50 each for the Aero knitting stitch holders like I use.
* **Pin Pusher/Puller** – you can buy these separately or as a combination tool. The puller may also be called a pin lifter. It looks like a miniature crowbar. The pusher should have a concave end, not a flat surface. $6 to $8 each, or combination tool $12.50. Some pin pullers are made of a wire loop rather than looking like a mini-crowbar; these have the benefit of being less likely to accidentally cut or snag your thread.
* **Pricker** – various ones available for sale. Least expensive ones are around $3 and consist of a needle inserted into a wooden handle. A Pin Vise is around $16. If you buy a pin vise, consider cutting a sharp needle in half rather than using the needle full length.
* Very fine **crochet hook and/or Lazy Susan** – the size of crochet hook needed for sewings cannot be bought just anywhere; buy one now. My own preference is the Lazy Susan, which is a bent needle stuck into a handle, with the eye **out** away from the handle. But some people get along fine for years with a crochet hook. Lazy Susan $8; #15 or #16 crochet hooks about $4.
* **Thread**! A feast is spread. $2.50 to $5.00/roll/spool
* *Bookmark sleeves, display cases* – look at what’s available. You may not want any, but you might. Bookmark sleeves are about $1 apiece.
* *Bobbin winder* – not everyone uses bobbin winders. They are most useful if you are making something huge (placemat? tablecloth?) and need to **fill** many, many bobbins. See if you can try one out before buying.
* *Giant tote bag or carry case* for your pillow – these can sell new for $60, so if you can find one for less, buy it!

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Other things you will need (or may need or want) that can be purchased at craft or sewing stores or even discount houses (not lace-specific):

* Sharp scissors used only for cutting thread
* Tweezers – I find them indispensable, but some people never use them
* Contact Paper, matte finish, clear – to cover prickings; a roll will last for many years; consider splitting a roll with a friend
* Magnet for picking up dropped pins
* **Pincushion** – try out if possible – not all pincushions will be satisfactory!
* Magnifying glass, either handheld or on a stand
* Full-spectrum light, either as a floor lamp or as a table-lamp; some are battery-powered and fold up. Be aware that lamps can cast shadows. Some lamps come combined with a magnifying glass.
* Flat-cutting scissors (curved blades) – for snipping extremely close to your lace. Premax and Dovo are two brands of these; Dovo even makes these for southpaws; expect to pay $50 or more. Fiskars makes some curved scissors for under $10 and calls them craft scissors. Gingher has some for about $20. (Okay, these are specialty items and will likely have to be purchased online.)
* Cover cloths
* Cute stuff (hedgehogs are the mascot of bobbin lace makers – go wild!)
* Ball-headed pins
* Divider pins (these are lace-specific)
* Electronic mini-clips – for grasping too-short threads; can be affixed to a handle or used as is.

Suppliers of lacemaking needs:

**Provo Enterprises**, owned by Maria Provencher, in California. Prices not on her website but she responds very promptly to emails and phone calls. She is the main vendor at Portland (Oregon) Lace Day, and has offered guild discounts when we were preparing to teach classes. [www.provolace.com](http://www.provolace.com), or 714-961-8698, [maria.provencher@gmail.com](mailto:maria.provencher@gmail.com)

**Van Sciver Bobbin Lace**, <http://www.vansciverbobbinlace.com/>, (607) 277-0498. Likely the most complete website for lace supplies. Located in New York state.

**Snow Goose**, <https://www.snowgooselace.com/>, 303-954-9841

There are others; these are the big ones.

**Portland Lace Day**, first or second Saturday in October every year: vendors, including Provo Enterprises, are on hand so you can see with your own eyes what you might want to purchase. If you go:

Bring a calculator; bring a checkbook; bring a credit card. Also be prepared to buy raffle tickets and lunch.

At lace day, hit the “free” table. Be greedy. Take stuff! It’s an opportunity to try out things without having to buy them, and you can always donate them to our guild’s raffle if you decide you don’t want them. Take magazines, no matter how old or what language they are in.

Get opinions of other lacemakers.

Books – lace books are a niche market. Expect to pay $30-$50 per book. Once they go out of print, they get **more** expensive, not less. So if you even *think* you might want a title, it’s best to just bite the bullet and buy it.