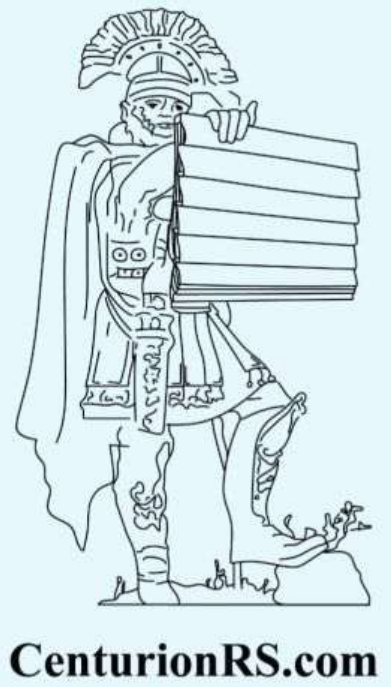

Hobbled Roman Shade Instructions

www.CenturionRS.com

Supplies Needed –

2-, 3-, or 4-cord Widget kit (Sample shade in video series uses 3-cord)

Face Fabric (2x's the finished length), Lining Fabric, Wood Mount Board (Common Stock Pine), Flat Steel Weight Bar (3/4" x 1/8"), white Duct Tape, 4" Iron-on Buckram

Tools Needed to Fabricate: Scissors, Long Ruler, Pencil, Iron, Needle/Thread, White Glue, White Duct Tape, Hand-held or pneumatic Stapler & Staples, Phillips Head Screwdriver, Awl, Metal Blade Hand Saw (or power tool), Wood Hand Saw (or power tool)

- ✓ Test your fabric first to know if it is suitable for iron heat or steam setting.
- ✓ Consider print for pattern match.
- ✓ If there is more than one shade per room, match the pattern on all shades as best as possible.

These 8 steps correspond to the YouTube series on our Centurion Roman Shade Channel (https://www.youtube.com/@CenturionRS/playlists) for "Make Your Own Hobbled Shade" published March, 2026. Each daily video matches each step in the instructions printed here. If you need a visual for a particular step, please refer to the YouTube video for that step. It is recommended that you watch the entire series before making your shade so that you are familiar with the steps. You will need to adjust the dimensions if you are making a shade for a specific size window.

Centurion Playlists

Step 1 – How Many Lift Cords Does My Shade Require?

- Widget kits can be ordered in 2–, 3–, or 4–cord kits.
- It is generally recommended that there be a lift cord every 10" of width for a basic flat shade.
- You should test your fabrics to see how many lift cords you need.
- If you add ribs (advanced fabrication method) you may be able to go much wider between lift cords.

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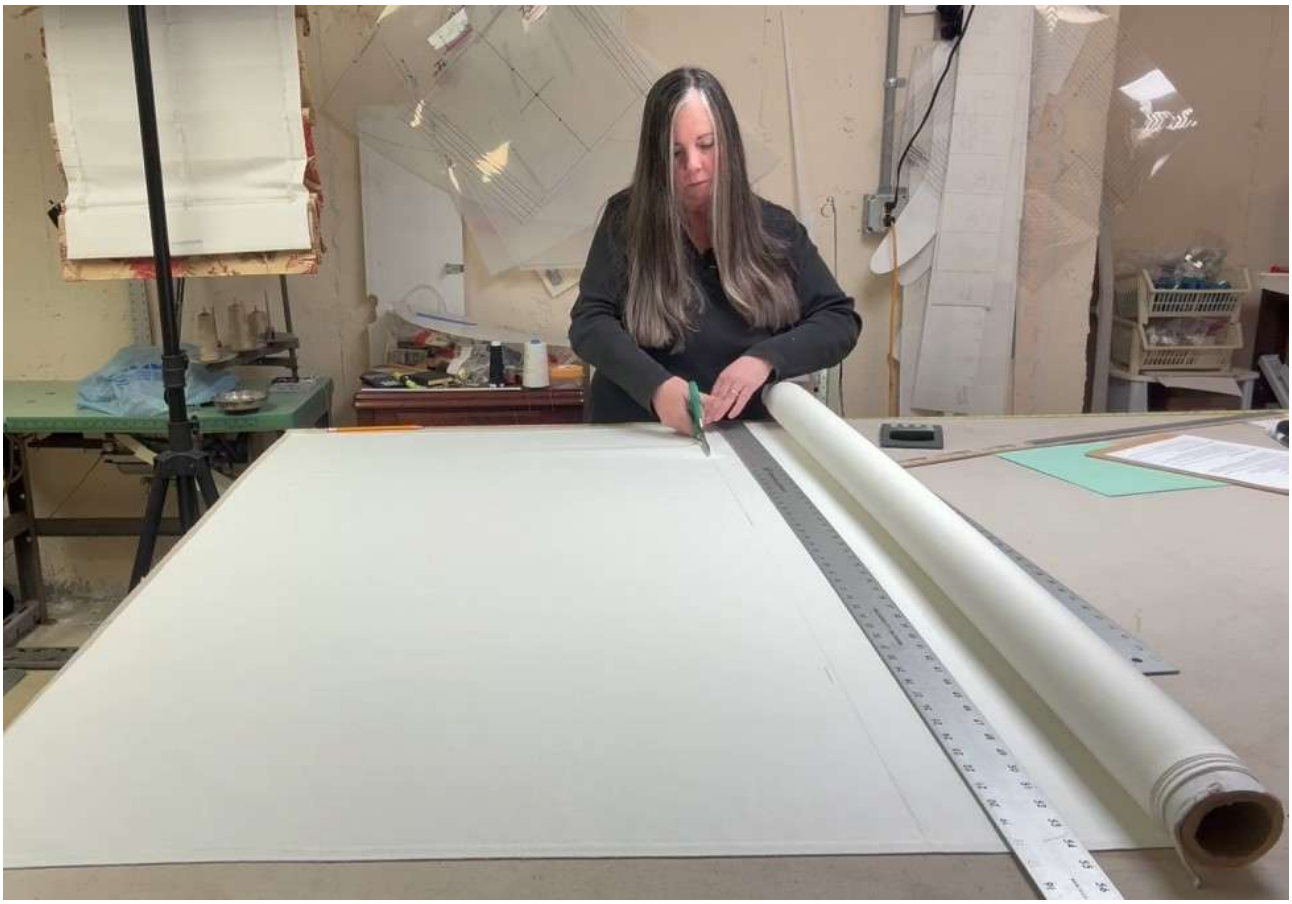
- Fabric weight is generally irrelevant, but the rigidity of the fabric and the look (straight or relaxed) of the shade design both have a bearing on the number of cords.

Step 2 – Cutting the Lining Fabric

For this shade we start by cutting the lining fabric because this is the base of the shade.

- Cut Width = Finished width + 6” Hems – 1” (inset from actual face fabric)
- Cut Length = Exact Length + 8” (4” double hem)



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Step 3 – Pressing the Lining & turning up the hem

- Press side hems; 3” for a 1.5” double hem on each side
- Turn up the bottom hem 8” for a 4” double hem
- Press the Skirtex hem stiffener to flatten out any creases from shipping
- Cut Skirtex ½” narrower than the width of the lining with the side hems pressed
- Cut the weight bar -1 ½” less than the finished width and cover with white tape
- Place both the Skirtex and weight bar in the lining hem
- Whip stitch to close the top of the hem and the sides of the hem section only. (Do not stitch the side hems)
- Install the “clear Hem Grip” by sliding it from the center upward over the ¾” x 1/8” weight bar. Make sure the steel weight bar is at the bottom of the hem flat and horizontal. Be careful not to stretch the fabric while inserting the plastic grip. **Do not pry open the hem grip as it will create stress cracks in the plastic that can break over time.**

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Step 4 – Calculating tack points

- Use a piece of regular (non-iron-on) buckram the exact length of the shade to mark out hem lines and calculate tack points
- From the bottom, draw a line 2” up to indicate the finished length of the lining fabric which is inset 2”.
- Draw a line 4” up from that line to indicate the 4” double hem
- With the remaining length, take that measurement and divide by an even number where the answer is between closest to 8” or less. This number is the distance you will use between tack points.
- Mark for tack points at intervals going up to the top of the shade; including the top of the shade.
- Use the template to mark the tack points with a pencil dot on both sides of the lining. Leave the wrong side up.

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Step 5 – Pressing Buckram strips to Lining

- Cut iron-on buckram strips ½” narrower than the finished lining width. One for each tack point above the bottom hem and include one for the top of the shade.
- On the wrong side of the lining, press to secure iron-on buckram below each set of tack points moving up the shade, with the last piece of buckram placed along the top where the shade mounts to the board.

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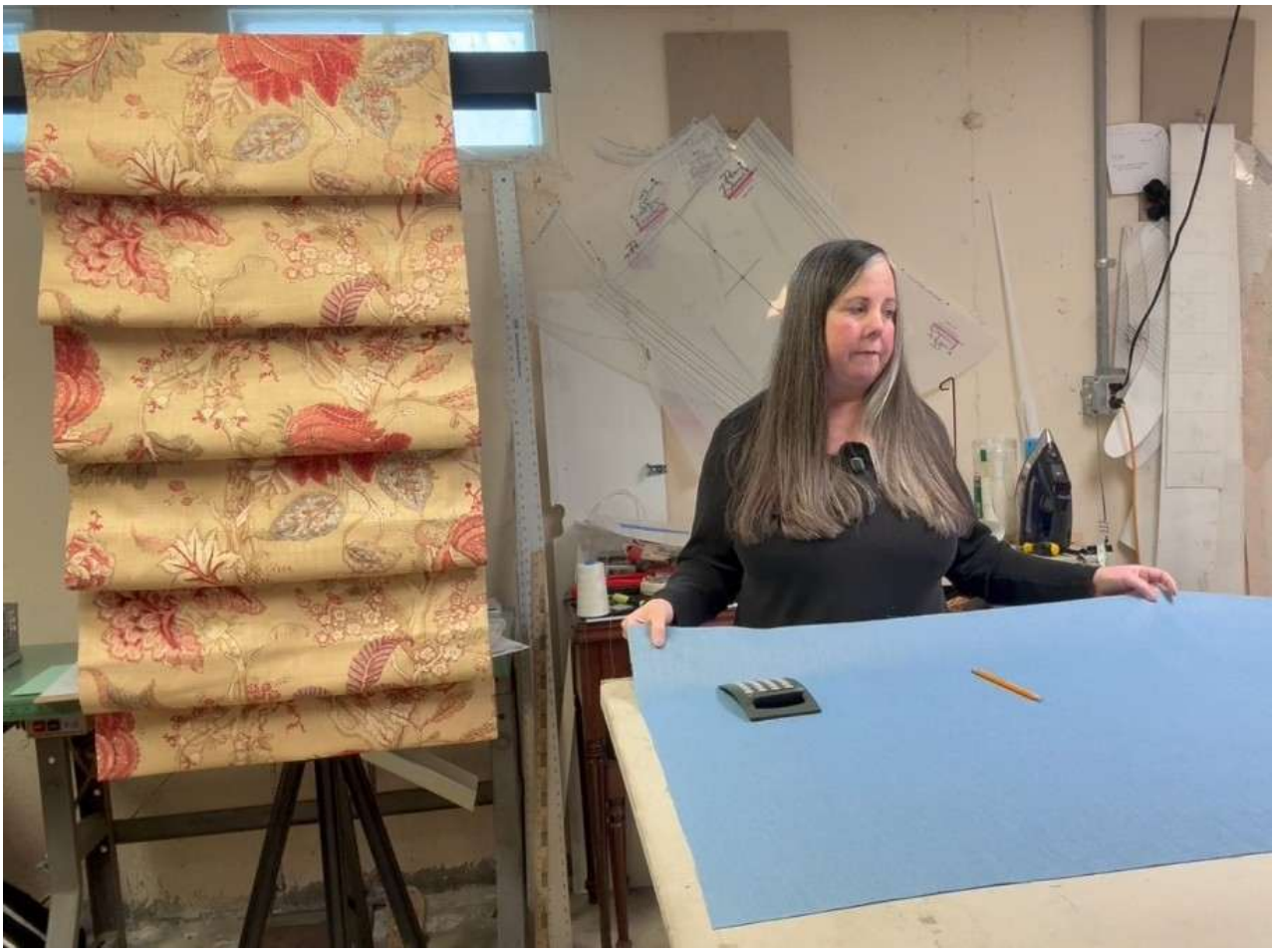
Step 6 – Cutting the Face Fabric

- Consider print and pattern placement before cutting the Face Fabric
- Cut Face Fabric using the following formula
    - Cut Width = Finished Width + 8” (4” each side hem)
    - Cut Length = (# of hobbled sections x 12”) + 4” hem face + 6” (to wrap the board at top) + 8” (6” hem)



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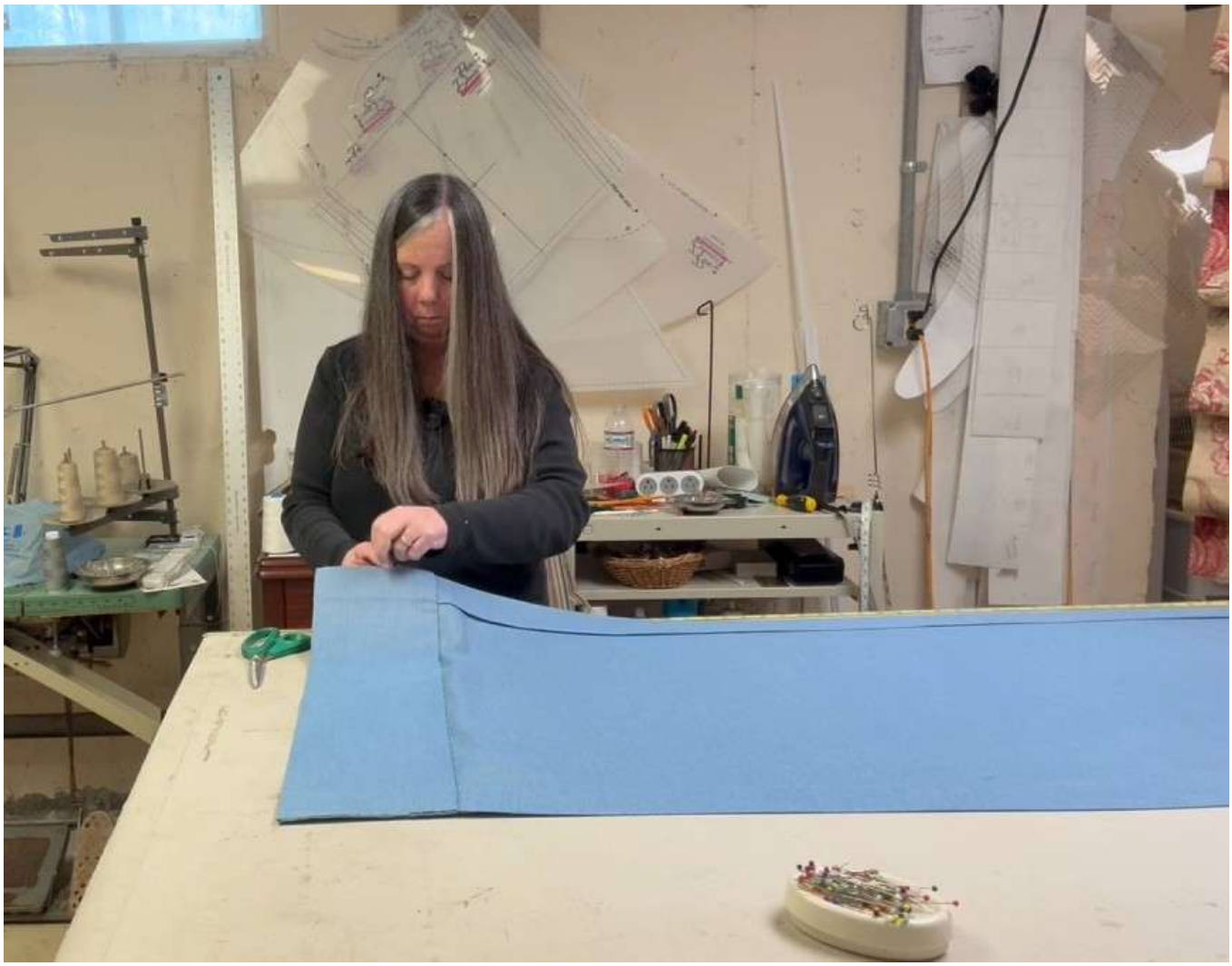
Step 7 – Pressing Hems for the Face Fabric Layer

- Lay cut face fabric, wrong side up on worktable
- Press side hem in 4” (2” double hem”) on each side
- Press up 8” from bottom, turn under 2” to have a 6” finished hem
- Optional – Apply banding trim before moving on to the next step
- Optional – insert Skirtex, rib, or buckram, or a 6” strip of flannel interlining
- Whip stitch the top edge of the hem and hem sides, only. *Do not stitch the side hems.*
- Mark the tack points on the wrong side of the face fabric. Beginning from the top of the hem and going up the shade at 12” intervals, for each lift cord. The outermost lift cords will be marked along the side hems. The width between lift cords should correspond to the marking on the lining, the vertical spacing is different and that difference will create the hobble look.



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Step 8 – Apply Decorative Banding or Trim

- Determine if you want to apply self-made banding or trim before moving on to the next step
- Attach banding to the face fabric by using glue, tape adhesive or stitching

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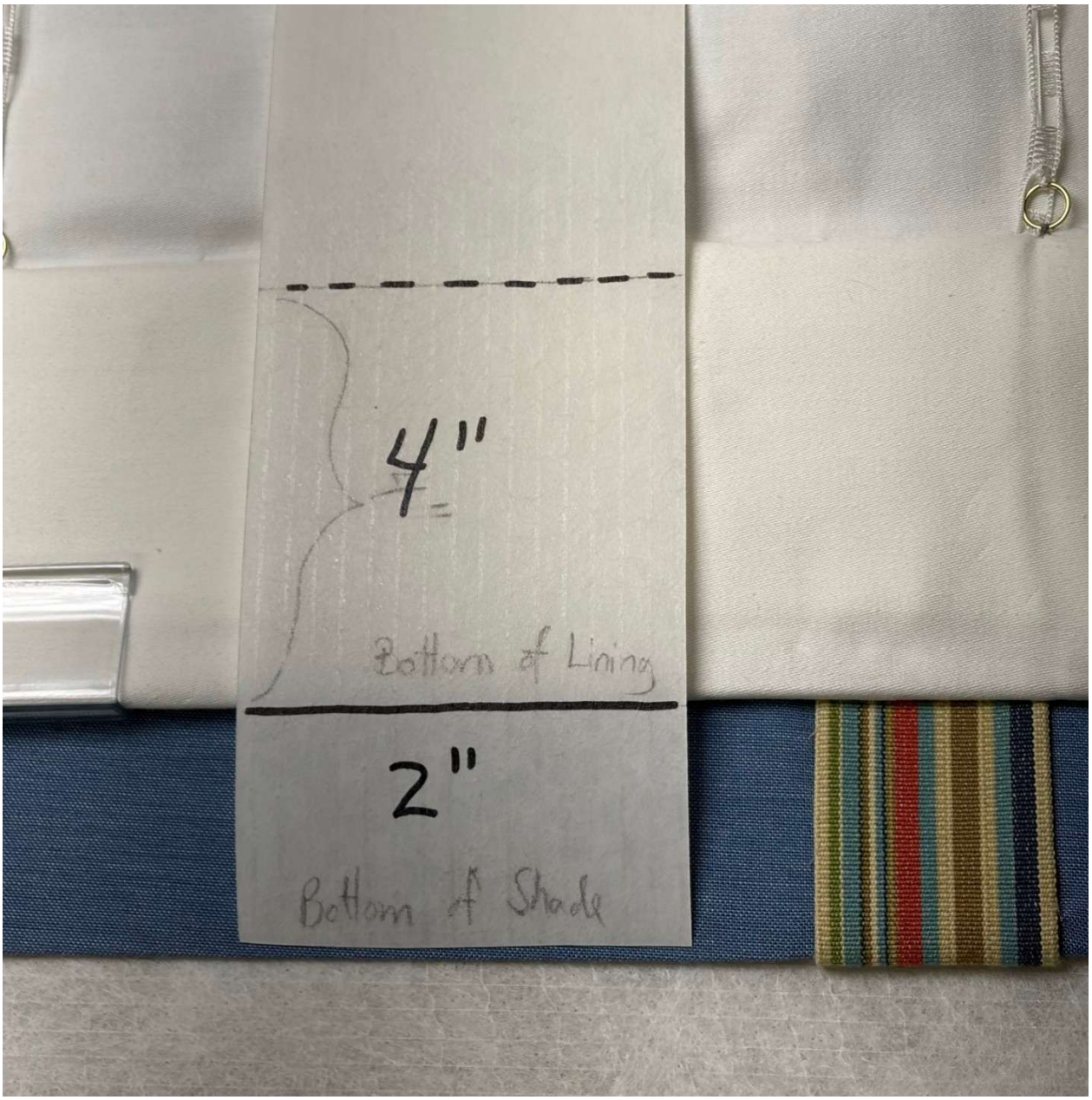
Step 9 – Combine Lining and Face Fabric Layer & Sew the Tack Points and Bottom Brass Ring

- Place the wrong sides together, the face fabric and the lining layer, with the lining layer on top
- Line up the sewn bottom hem line of each layer. The lining layer should finish 2” above the face fabric bottom edge.



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- Cut ladder tape to the length of the lining layer for the number of lift cords on the Widget being used
- Starting at the top of the hem, sew on the brass ring and ladder tape at each lift row
- Align the tack points from the bottom hem moving upward, adjusting the layers as you move up vertically to sew the tacks. Tack all the points in each horizontal row before moving up to the higher tack points. You will be tacking through all fabric layers at the top of the iron-on buckram strip.
- Moving up vertically on the lift cord, hand tack the ladder tape up from the last tack. Continue tacking moving up vertically toward the top of the shade.
- Optional - Place a small dot of glue on each hand tack. Allow it to dry completely. For a blackout shade, you may also want to use a “quick dry correction fluid” as this will cover any pin holes or light leaks caused by the stitch.

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Step 10 – Side Hem Tacking

- Hand tack with a needle and thread, tack the lining and face fabric at the bottom of the buckram strip along each side hem.

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Step 11 - Attach Shade to Wood Mounting Board

- Press top edge and place pins on the front side for placement.
- Staple a small square of fabric to the end of the board.
- Align the shade to the board from the top, front edge and staple in a few places to secure.
- Unfold the board toward yourself and wrap the remainder of the fabric covering the board and tuck 1” under and staple on the narrow inside edge. Trim away any bulk from side hems to eliminate bulk.

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Step 12 - Installing The Screw Eyes

- On the underside of the wood mount board, insert the screw eyes in the middle of the underside of the mount board, in line with each ladder tape row.
- Use an Awl to pierce the fabric and wood, insert the screw eye by hand and use a flat head screw driver (or similar tool) as a lever and turn until secure and perpendicular position.
- Repeat for each screw eye.

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Step 13 - Installing The Widget

- Remove the rubber bands and uncoil the cords from around the outside of the Widget.
- Mount the Widget with 2 screws going into the designated, most outboard holes. (***CAUTION****: Only tighten mounting screws until Widget is gently attached to the mounting board…over-tightening will prevent the cords from reeling/unreeling. You should be able to slightly rock the Widget back and forth on the mounting board.*)
- The Widget should be placed as close to center as possible.
- The Widget should be placed so that the cords go out in both directions. The stickers should be visible.

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Step 14 – Threading the Ladder Tape & Knot Off At Bottom Rings

- **Helpful tip – Clamp the mount board to the table so that you can get similar cord lengths.**
- Thread the cords through each screw eye on the mounting board.
- Use the plastic needle to individually thread each ladder tape. Go in and out in a serpentine manner, going over and under the solid ladder sections.
- Start by counting 3 solid sections of ladder above the closest tack point to the top of the shade. Continue threading the cord down the length of each ladder tape. Alternate the cord so that it "weaves in-and-out" of the ladder tape so that it is integrated. Go through the brass ring at the bottom and cut off excess leaving about 8".
- **Tie off each cord at the brass ring using a double Hitch knot. Refer to tutorials if you need a visual diagram of this knot. We have a diagram in our reference FAQ's and Blog posts.**
- Tuck in the excess 8" into the bottom hem between the whip stitches of the bottom hem.

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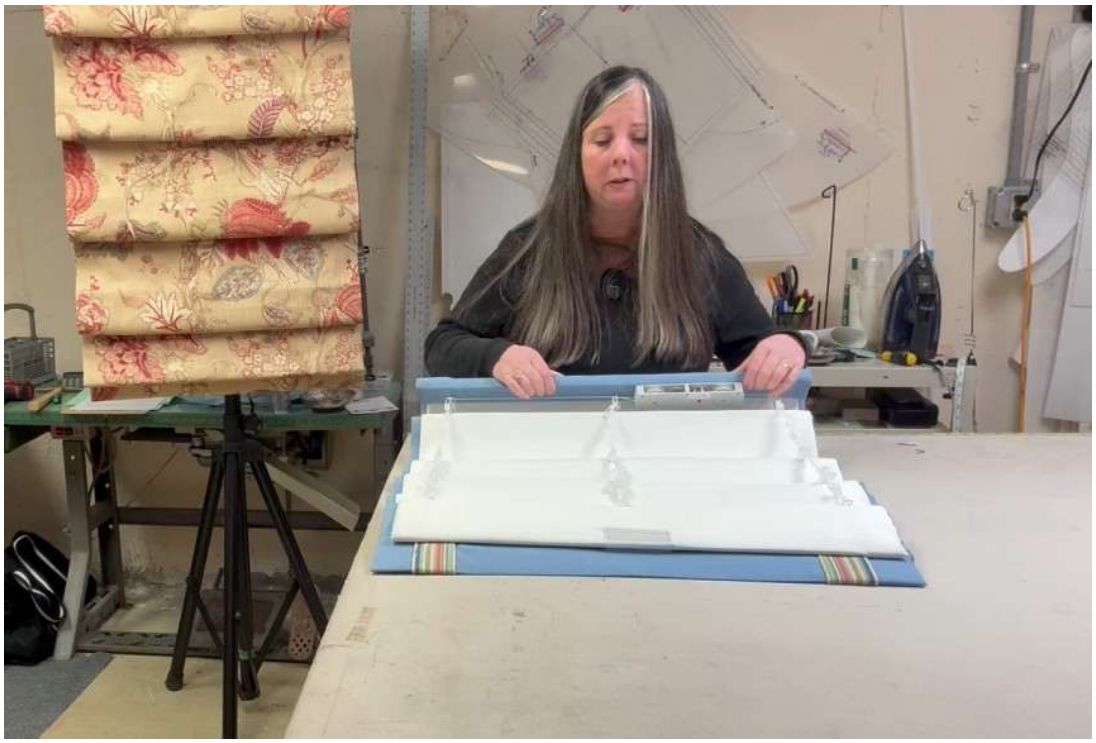
Step 15 – Pulling the Pin & Test Shade

- Once all the cords are threaded and knotted at the bottom (double check this step is complete), you can remove the pin under the sticker which will release the tension device. Save the pin…it must be re-inserted to take the tension off the Widget for any adjustments. Your shade will now retract with your assistance to make sure the folds are not interfering.



IMPORTANT: The pin must ALWAYS be re-inserted before untying any cords at the hem!

- With your shade laying in front of you, facing the right side up, use your hands to adjust and hand smooth the folds. **Because this style includes a loose hobble to the face fabric, do not press the shade.**
- Now you can test the shade by raising and lowering. You can mount or clamp the shade to a stand to test. Be careful when mounting to test or installing that none of the cords are pinched during this process. Improper installation of the shade may affect your shade raising and lowering properly, especially if one or more cords are inadvertently pinched.

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The Hobbled Shade series can be found on the Centurion Roman Shade YouTube page at https://www.youtube.com/@CenturionRS (or scan QR code).

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