TENSION

If you are new to lacemaking only use the notes that are applicable. Ignore any that don't make sense at the moment, they will useful later.

• Judge tension by look rather than 'feel'.
• Watch how the threads move as you ease them up and continue while their positions are improving.
• If a pricking is slightly inaccurate 'lean the pins over' to compensate, especially along the footside and curves of the fans.
• Keep a light tension on the threads while handling them, (this also helps to keep the hitch in place). Do not make the work tight.
• It is usually better to firm up before setting a pin than after.
• It is usually better to firm up before twisting than after.
• Cloth stitch passives can be eased into place just before putting them down, with their position along the previous row rather than the current one being adjusted.
• At the end of a cloth stitch row, take up the slack of the workers, first one then the other, and maintain a light tension on both. Place one hand flat on the passive bobbins to hold them in position and slide the workers up next to the previous pin before pinning.
• Firm up each stitch that follows a pin.
• Encourage cloth stitch passives to spread and fill the rows evenly. The passives in cloth stitch fans should follow curves rather than straight lines, therefore if you pull strongly when working the second half of a fan the threads will become straight and not fill the rows.
• When working cloth stitch and twist at the edge, firm up before making the final twist, then set the pin and make the twist. Also firm up the stitch that follows the pin.
• Half stitch always looks untidy while it is being worked. Firm up each stitch following a pin only.
• Rose ground with whole stitch and twist links — only firm up the stitches following the second, third and fourth pins.
• Torchon ground with two twists between the pins needs to be firmed up after every third stitch both ways, preferably before twisting
• After working the stitch about the pin at the footside, hold a tension on the edge pair and firm up the other two pairs, set up the pin, work the stitch covering the pin and firm up.
• Always watch the pairs as you firm up. Use the minimum tension; pairs should be in line with their positions immediately before the last pin.

• **NB** You can pull quite hard if you increase tension slowly rather than jerking which is likely to break the thread.