

CHARACTERISTICS OF MALTESE LACE

Maltese lace is worked in a number of pieces: (i) an insertion and/or a number of insertions and (ii) a border. These are either sewn together or sewn onto fabrics. The shapes of these lace pieces vary. Maltese lace can be worked in any geometric shape, such as a circle, semi-circle, oval, oblong, square, rectangle, trapezium, hexagon, octagon and also in irregular shapes. Even lengths and sizes vary. Each piece is worked on a design pattern on a vertical bolster pillow.

WORKING MALTESE LACE

Maltese lace is worked with thread, or in any other adequate material, which is chosen according to the designed pattern. The smaller and finer the design, the smaller the gauge. To work with thicker threads, the design needs to be much larger.

The laceworker decides which side will be the front or back of the lace, depending on the pairs-of-bobbins technique used when working the lace.

LACE RELATED TERMINOLOGY

An **insertion**, also known as a panel, is the length of a lace that is sewn either to another insertion and/or to a border. It has a narrow designed double-edged footside.

A **border** is the outer edging, which has a footside and a headside (the main designed edge). It can be wide, narrow or very fine narrow. It may be a straight piece with a corner according to the shape, or any other shape such as circular or scalloped, besides many others.

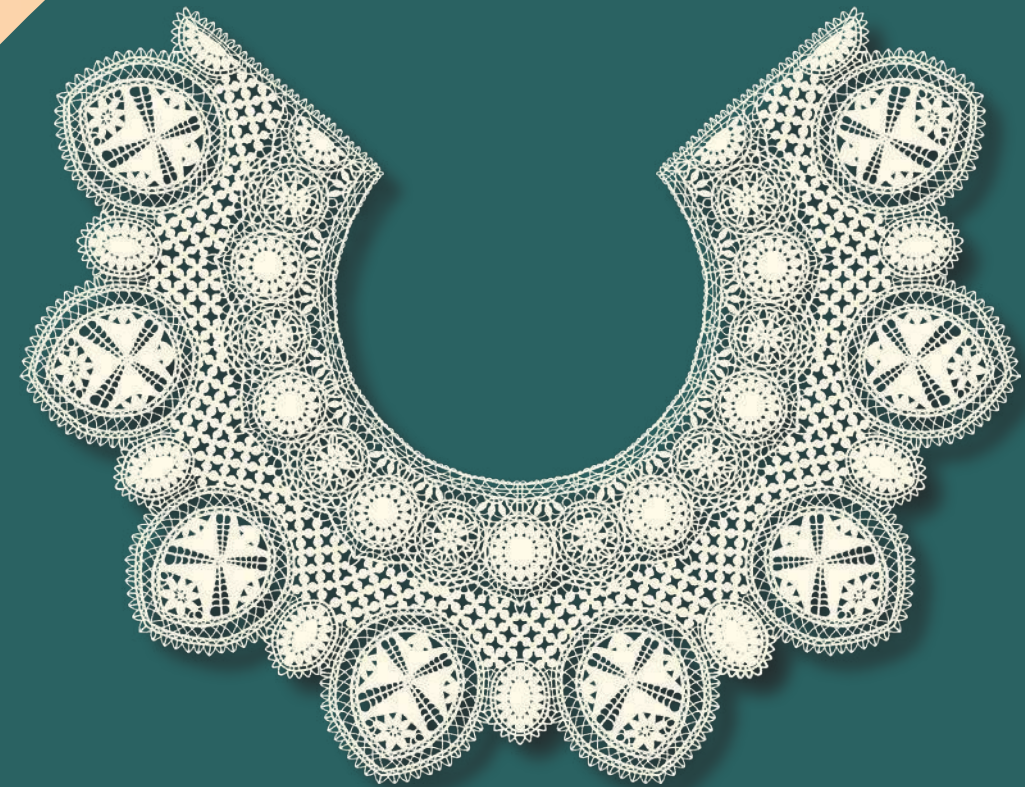
Both **insertions** and **borders** may include different geometrical designs such as lattice, motifs and grounds.

Footside is the reinforced edge which is either sewn to the fabric or to other sections of lace that also have a footside, or along the cloth stitch. It is also known as **straight edge**.

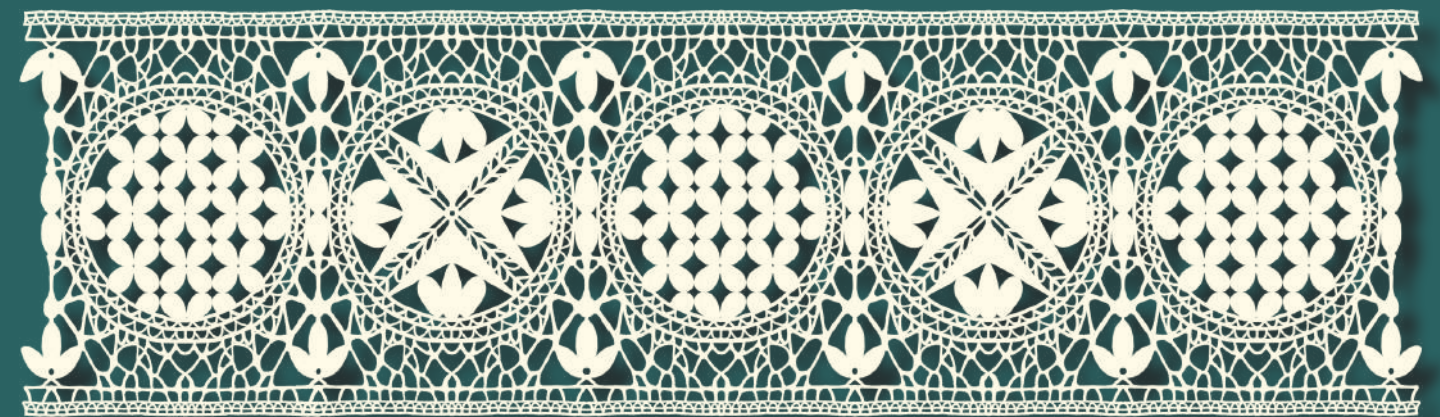
The **headside**, the main design, is the shaped or patterned outer edge side which can be straight, scalloped or in any other decorative shape, such as fan-shaped, plaited or twisted pairs of zigzags.

The **ground** is the mesh background of the lace, a filling worked with a repetitive stitch such as the net stitch ground and the tallies ground, besides others.

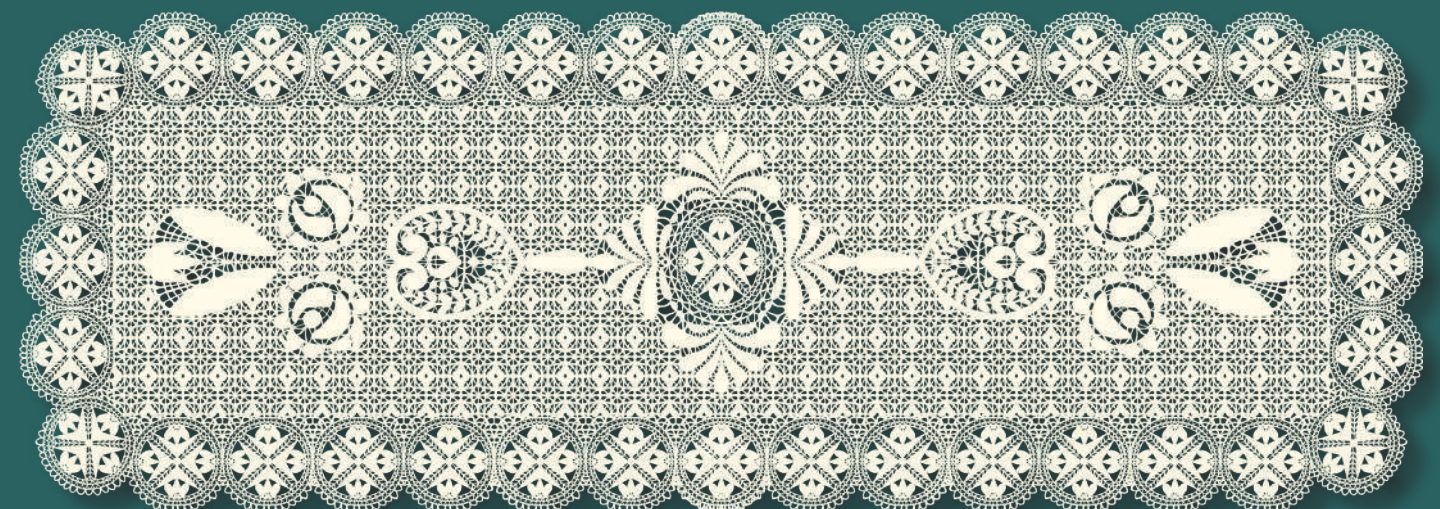
The **motif** design can be of any shape such as a circle, oval or a square, incorporating a design in itself, such as the Maltese cross motif, a star or sun motif.



Maltese Lace Collar



Maltese Lace Insertion



Maltese Lace Runner