

BLANTON

ART WHERE YOU ARE STUDIO



Alexander Calder: Fiber Art



MATERIALS

- Wooden canvas board
- Colorful jute string (2mm thickness used)
- Quick-dry craft glue
- Damp rag
- Scissors
- Pencil

INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1: Draw

First, draw your design lightly with pencil onto the wood board. Simple and geometric works best. This project will take some patience, as it's a slow and thoughtful process to complete. I would suggest working on a small scale, especially for younger children. Using a thicker string will also help speed things up.

Step 2: Coil

Once you have your design sketched, the string is used to outline and fill in your design. Start by selecting a shape to begin with. You will squeeze a line of glue around the outline of the shape first, eventually working your way to the center of it. As you move around your drawn shape, press firmly on the string that is already down (helping keep it in place), before continuing to coil the string inside the rest of the shape. Cut the string as needed while you work. You will repeat this step for each one of your shapes until they are all filled in with string.

Tip: Your hands will get sticky and can accidentally pull the string out of place, so I suggest having a damp rag handy to help clean your fingers from time to time.

Step 3: Fill

Now that all your shapes are coiled with string, fill in the negative space left behind using just one color of string to a unified background for your shapes to float in. Start in the most center point of your design and work your way out to the border of your wood canvas board. You may have several starts and stops as you are filling in some uniquely-shaped spaces, so keep your scissors handy to trim along the way.

There you have it — your own Alexander Calder-inspired work of art! What will you title your work?

Share what you made and tag [@blantonmuseum](https://twitter.com/blantonmuseum) with [#ArtWhereYouAre](https://twitter.com/ArtWhereYouAre) and visit blantonmuseum.org/museumfromhome for more resources.

LEARN MORE

Read

- [Who Is Alexander Calder? | TATE](#)
- [Alexander Calder: Tapestries and their Gouaches | Wall Street International](#)
- [All Calder Tapestries Are Not Created Equal](#)

Watch

- [Restoration of Alexander Calder Tapestries | Western Washington University](#)
- [Alexander Calder: Modern from the Start | MoMA](#)
- [Alexander Calder Documentary](#)

Reflect

What interesting patterns did your coiling technique make? How did this add or takeaway from the existing shape or negative space you were filling in?

Which area of your artwork is most important? Why?

What verbs would you use to describe your artwork?