

## ABC in Flanders Lace

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ABC in Flanders Lace is a small book published in 1999. It is written in three languages, German, English, and Dutch, so English speakers will be able to read the instructions. The intent of this book is to let the reader design their own lettered Flanders lace, either in German or English.

The necessary letters, all in capitals, are diagramed. Most diagrams are black and white line sketches. A few of the diagrams are in color using the standard European lace conventions for the stitches. The Flanders ground specified is the standard modern ground that is used in many patterns. There are parts of patterns so the reader can construct a finished piece. There is a size reduction list to allow the reader to adjust the scale to allow different threads to be used. There is also a pattern with "BOBBINS" on it as well as instructions on how to make a bobbin bag to mount it on.

While the ideas presented are fairly simple, this is not a book for people who have recently started lace unless they have a good teacher to help them over some of the rough spots. The diagrams for starting the laces are very good. The ending diagrams are sufficient for an experienced lacemaker, but they might frustrate a beginner lacemaker since they do not have complete details for finishing. Note also that there are no detailed instructions for Flanders lace, only a few diagrams for the techniques.

As is typical in hand drawn diagrams, there can be some areas where the diagrams are a little confusing. For example, the diagram for the letter 'N' has a pair that disappears and then magically reappears nearby. The idea is to probably to have it follow the gimp, but less experienced lacemakers will need to ask a question.

If there is a complaint about this small book, it would be that the diagrams are intended to work across the letters, not in the vertical direction. Normally, working diagrams are worked top to bottom on the page, but on some of the pages, they are worked 90 degrees from that. Once the lacemaker realizes this, it is not really a problem.



This book certainly is a source for lettering lace in Flanders. If that were the only intent, it might have very limited interest. However, it can be a starting point for creating something interesting. The example shown here uses the diagrams from *ABC in Flanders Lace*, however the ground has been replaced by ground B1.6 from *Viele Gute Grunde (VGG)* by the same author. This will be part of a series of letters to explore other grounds from VGG as well. This book could be used to generate an alphabet sampler inspired by old embroidery samples. A collection of small square motifs could also be used for a set of building blocks similar to those that small children have used. There are also examples in the

book of how the letters might be used.

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