

Working With A Hank of Silk

1. Pick the hank up using one of the ties that are wound through it. Place your hand in the centre of the hank and make sure all the strands are running in the right direction. This is the most important part because if they aren't, you are going to end up with a huge mess.
2. If you have a swift, put the hank on the swift and carefully clip the ties and remove them. Clip the strand of silk that is tied together. Now you will have both ends of the silk.
3. If you don't have a swift, do the same as above over the back of a chair, stitching frame, or find something (like a spouse) that will hold the hank secure and not have it end up on the floor. You **must always** keep something in the centre of the hank, so all the threads don't combine into a big blob.
4. Choose one end of the silk and carefully unwind. You could wind it onto a ruler, or something a little stiff. If you have some foam core, cut a piece of that about 12 inches x 4 inches to wind onto. Wind off as much as you think you can handle, cut it off and either make it into a smaller skein or wind onto a thread holder. Use as you would any skein of thread.
5. For any of you who have a swift and a wool winder, you can use the winder to turn it into a ball of silk which will then be much easier to work with.
6. When you have wound off as much as you need. Wrap both ends around and through the centre of the silk or tie them back together. Either use the original ties or use a few cut pieces of your silk and tie the hank off so it still has the definite centre.



Since I wrote these instructions, I saw an idea that some customers are using.

They cut the hank once, straighten all the lengths and then put one end through a large binder ring, and tie off with a ribbon or some thread right under the ring. When they want thread they pull a few lengths out.

This technique is much simpler than winding into a ball, but having cut the hank like this to make up kits in the past, I can tell you that if you are not careful, you can end up with a tangled mess but keeping it well tied, is the definitely what you need to do.

A hint from Denise - loosely plait the amount of silk on the ring, it stops tangles but you can still pull threads easily.

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