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PROJECT

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## HOW TO MAKE A SINGLE BANNER

(6-8 hours approx.)



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## HOW TO MAKE A BANNER

This toolkit is aimed at ages 14+. Adult supervision may be needed for children aged up to 16 years.

For a small banner to be carried by one person

42" (107cm) width x 50" (127m) height

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## GETTING STARTED: SUPPLIES

### YOU WILL NEED -

#### For the Banner:

- 1x piece of fabric 42" (107cm) x 50" (127cm) for front cloth
- 1x piece of fabric 42" (107cm) x 50" (127cm) for back cloth (in black or a dark colour)
- 1x piece of contrasting fabric for the border 52" (132cm) long x 28" (71cm) wide
- 1x piece of ribbon 42" (107cm) long
- Any other additional fabric for lettering and design elements
- Bondaweb<sup>1</sup> (as much of this as you will need to trace your design and lettering, allowing for error)
- Pencils (white and black)
- Scissors
- Pins
- Needles
- Thread
- A long tape measure / ruler
- A large table
- A sewing machine (if you don't have one, see if you can borrow one from a friend / your local sewing group)

- Greaseproof paper
- Iron and Ironing base (An old blanket rather than an ironing board may be easier for a banner)

#### For the Poles:

- 2x 18mm x 2400mm dowels carrying pole (the carrying pole will be cut in two to allow you to transport it)
- 1x (15mm in Wickes, 19mm in B&Q) poly tubing coupler/connector to connect the two halves of the carrying pole
- 1x 4mm quick repair link
- 2x 30mm screw eyes
- A small wood saw
- A craft knife
- Glue



You can get most banner supplies from fabric shops or local charity shops, markets and upcycling centers. You can buy dowels, poly tubing, quick repair links and screw eyes from Wickes, B&Q or your local hardware shop.

<sup>1</sup> Bondaweb is a white fusible adhesive paper that you can buy by the meter online or at your local fabric shop. Like sticky-back sellotape it uses adhesive

to stitch fabric to fabric, useful for lettering and adding an image to your banner. See p.12 for details on how to use it.

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***'Let us go then, and make banners as required, and let them all be beautiful.'***

*Mary Lowndes, Banner & Banner-Making 1909*

## **COSTS**

The total banner including fabric and poles may cost from £48.40, dependent on the shop and detail of design. See a suggested outline budget below:

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>ESTIMATED COST</b>
<b>POLES</b>	
Dowel 18x2400mm	£6.50
Dowel 18x2400mm	£6.50
Screw Eyes 40x8mm	£2.30
Quick Repair Links	£1.60
Coupler 15/19mm	£1.50
<b>Estimated Total Cost</b>	<b>£18.40</b>
<b>FABRIC &amp; RIBBON</b>	<b>£30.00</b>
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST</b>	<b>£ 48.40</b>

Some items may have different prices depending on where you buy them.

You can cut costs by upcycling old or used fabric. It will also add some history to your banner. For example, you could use some old clothes belonging to you or a loved one, a tablecloth or sheet.



Suffragettes making banners and pennants for the procession to Hyde Park, 23 July 1910 © The Women's Library @ LSE

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## THE BRIEF

Your PROCESSIONS banner should represent the lives, ideas, hopes and concerns of women today. It should be bold, beautiful and uniquely yours. Whatever you put on it should be heartfelt. Onlookers will only have a short time to see its message, so make it simple, punchy and clear.

Please make sure that you:

1. Incorporate the colours green, white and violet into your banner somewhere. You can choose any shades of these colours and can do anything from the PROCESSIONS logo  stitched in the corner – to the whole thing being made from these colours.
2. Back your banner in black or very dark material. This is so that we will be able to pick them out in photos.

Everything else is up to you!



Banner © Thalia Campbell, at The Peace Museum

## *'The act of sewing is a process of emotional repair'*

*Louise Bourgeois*

### GET INSPIRED!

#### THEMES

**CONNECTIONS:** You could make your banner with a group or a friend of a different generation, culture, belief, faith or sexual orientation.

**HEROINES:** Living or dead. You can make a banner with the name of a personal or community heroine or the names of female trailblazers, from [Mary Wollstonecraft](#) to [Reni Eddo-Lodge](#) and [Nimco Ali](#).

**REPRESENTATION:** Who do you represent at PROCESSIONS? Perhaps it is your industry, your town, your faith, your team or your community.

#### TECHNIQUES

You might consider the following ideas to add detail to your banner:

- Embroidery – by hand or machine
- Use thin cord or ribbon to emphasize outlines
- Use fabric paint, fabric felt tips or fabric wax crayons
- Use iron on transfer paper to transfer an image onto fabric. Instructions come with the paper.
- Though expensive you could get your whole banner digitally printed!
- Create light and dark contrasts on your banner with net for light areas and solid fabric for the dark. This will give the effect of your image 'floating.' Use at least 3 layers of net, just for strength.
- Use buttons, hooks and eyes and other and embellishments to spell out words
- Be imaginative, you could hang a dress from poles and cover it in the embroidered signatures of your community!



Clockwise from top left: Chimamanda Ngozy Adich © [Jess de Wahls](#); Banner for the film, PRIDE © [Anna 'Banner' Thomas](#); Arrested © [Eleanor Edwardes](#), photo by Rowan Poole

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***‘A banner is a thing to float in the wind, to flicker in the breeze, to flirt its colours for your pleasure, to half show and half conceal a device you long to unravel...Choose purple and gold for ambitions, red for courage, green for long cherished hopes.’***

*Mary Lowndes, suffragette, from ‘Banner & Banner-Making’, 1909*

## RESEARCH<sup>2</sup>

Search online for: “political textiles”, “feminist textiles”, “textile art”, “suffragette banners”, “women’s textiles.”

## HISTORY

[Suffrage Stories: An Army of Banners](#) by Elizabeth Crawford  
[Kate Frye’s Suffrage Diary](#), Banner bearer for the 13 June 1908 Procession  
[Greenham Common](#) and [Thalia Campbell](#)

## PROJECTS

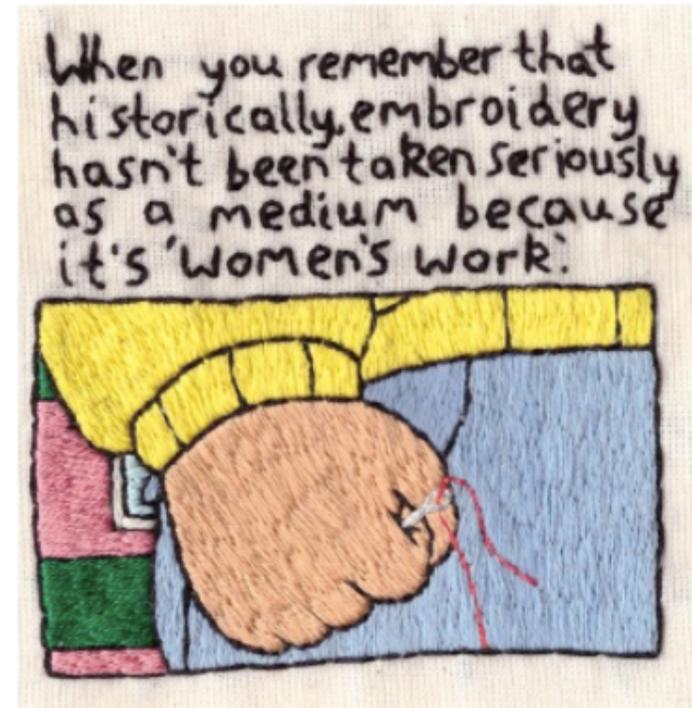
[Craftivist Collective](#) by Sarah Corbett  
[The Craftivism Manifesto](#) by Betsy Greer  
[Common Threads Project](#)  
[Great Tapestry of Scotland](#)

## COLLECTIONS

[The Women’s Library Suffrage Collection](#), The Women’s Library at LSE  
[Suffragette Collection](#), Museum of London  
[People’s History Museum](#), Manchester

## EXHIBITIONS (current and past)

[The Suffragettes](#), Museum of London  
[Cut Cloth Exhibition](#), The Portico Library  
[Entangled: Threads & Making](#), Turner Contemporary



Arthur Meme © [Hannah Hill “hanecdote”](#)

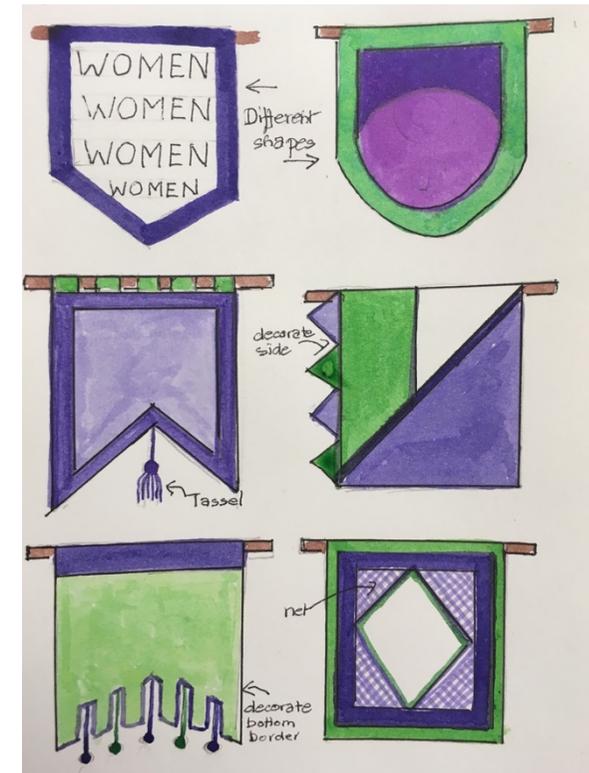
<sup>2</sup> The links on this page contain third party content

## DESIGN YOUR BANNER

### SHAPE

While the top of your banner should be straight you can choose a different shape for the bottom: curved, pointed, fringed or following the shape of your image.

You can add shape to your sides or have a shape 'floating' on net.



The banner should have its weight distributed evenly to avoid pull. If you have something heavier on one side it will become lopsided. If you are tying tassels or ribbons to your poles, make sure they are of equal weight on each side.

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## WORDS

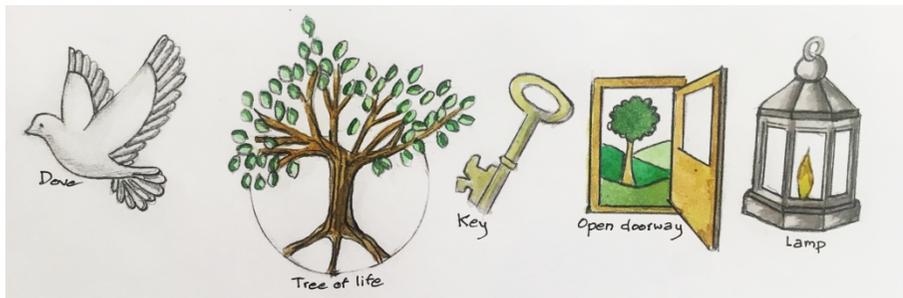
You may want to include words on your banner. As banners are seen quickly on procession your main message should be at the top. Consider:

- Just one word – WOMEN; FREEDOM; COMMUNITY; CHANGE
- Someone's name – a heroine, your mother or daughter, neighbour, friend
- A place name – your home or somewhere you want to represent
- An occupation – if your banner represents a group of workers, volunteers, activists
- A phrase – you can use a contemporary phrase or slogan, or be inspired by suffragette mottos including: '*Deeds Not Words*'; '*Delay of Justice an Injustice*'; '*Right the Wrongs*'

You might have one word on your banner or the whole of your banner might be a quotation. Handwriting makes it personal so you could include the signatures of your group, or the reproduced signature of a past heroine writ large in fabric paint or appliqué<sup>3</sup>.

### TIPS

- Don't crowd your letters. They need space to be read at distance
- Use the largest font you can
- Consider a style of lettering or font that suits the personality of your banner
- Write signatures in pencil and go over with embroidery thread or fabric pens.



### IMAGE

The image should help people to understand your message quickly. It might be -

A symbol: a dove, a tree of life, a key, an open doorway, a lamp

Something from your life: a handprint, family, signatures of friends

A historical image: a heroine of the past, a moment in women's history

A popular image: brands re-imagined, well known figures

<sup>3</sup> Appliqué is where a small piece of fabric is stitched or sewn onto a larger piece of fabric. Appliqués are made with fabric, ribbons, beads, sequins or other materials. The appliqué material should be applied tightly either by hand or with a sewing machine.

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## COLOURS

The “Green, White, Violet” of the Suffragette colours stood for “Give Women Votes”. Using these colours was a new technique in branding and was hugely successful. It is often seen as the precedent for the use of political party colours we’re familiar with today.



The Hammersmith Women’s Social and Political Union (WSPU) banner, C.1910-1912.  
© The Museum of London

## Colour symbolism

Black	power, mystery, triumph
Blue	loyalty, intelligence, trust
Brown	earth, stability, endurance
Dark Blue	integrity, knowledge
Green	hope, renewal
Grey	security, intelligence
Lavender	femininity, grace
Orange	enthusiasm, creativity
Pink	love, caring
Violet	dignity, power, ambition
Red	courage, passion, determination
White	purity, light, peace
Yellow	joy

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## MAKE YOUR BANNER

A Step by Step guide

MINIMUM ESTIMATED TIME: 6-8 hours

### Share your work!

Document the making of your banner and share your images online using the handle @Processions2018 and #PROCESSIONS2018. If you can, please tag @ArtichokeTrust and @1418NOW. Thanks!

### STEP 1: Prepare your Fabric

(45 mins)

1. Cut a piece of fabric 42" (107cm) x 50" (127cm) for front cloth. Iron.
2. Cut a piece of fabric 42" (107cm) x 50" (127cm) for back cloth (in black or a dark colour). Iron.
3. Draw a line 2 ½ "(6cm) in from each edge of your front and back cloths in black pencil (for light fabrics) or white pencil (for dark fabrics).

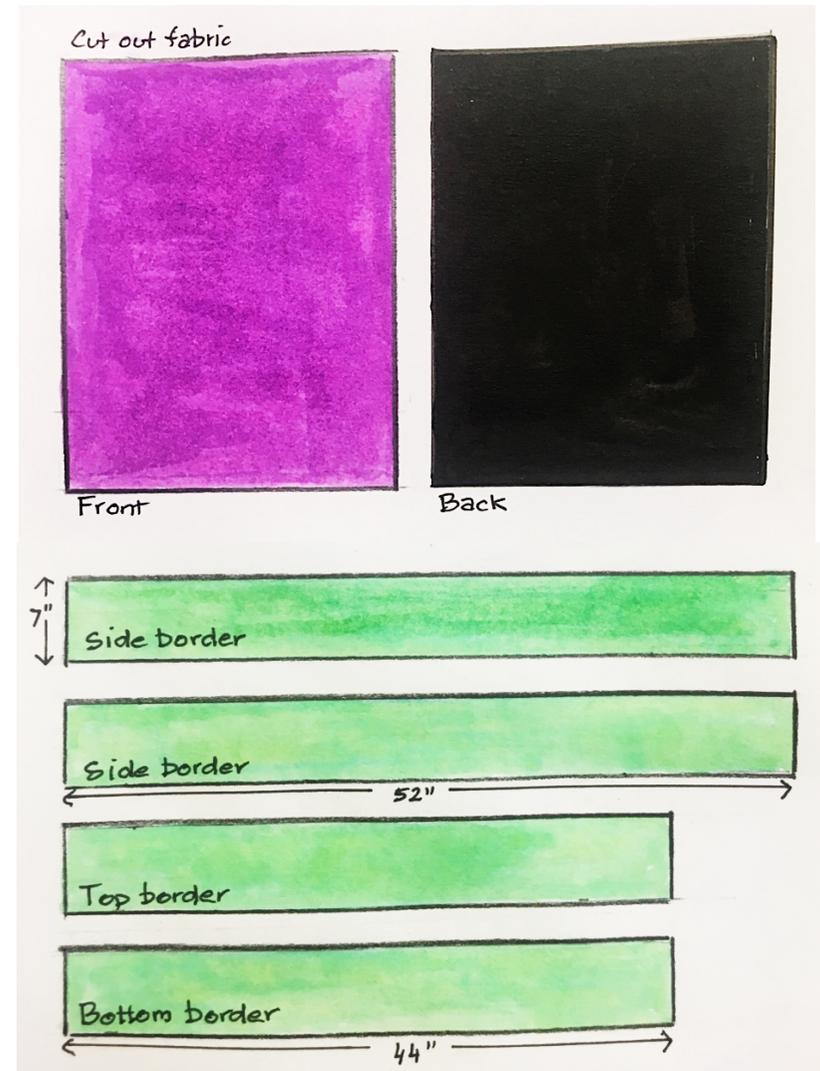
### TIP

Beware if the edges of your material aren't straight. Make sure you draw and cut out the banner shape precisely. Make sure your inner rectangle measures 37" (94cm) x 45" (114cm).

### STEP 2: Prepare your Border Pieces

(30 mins)

1. Cut one piece of contrasting fabric for the border 52" (132cm) long x 28" (71cm) wide. Then cut this piece lengthways into four pieces each 7" (18.5cm) wide.
2. Cut 2 of the lengths to measure 44" (112 cm).



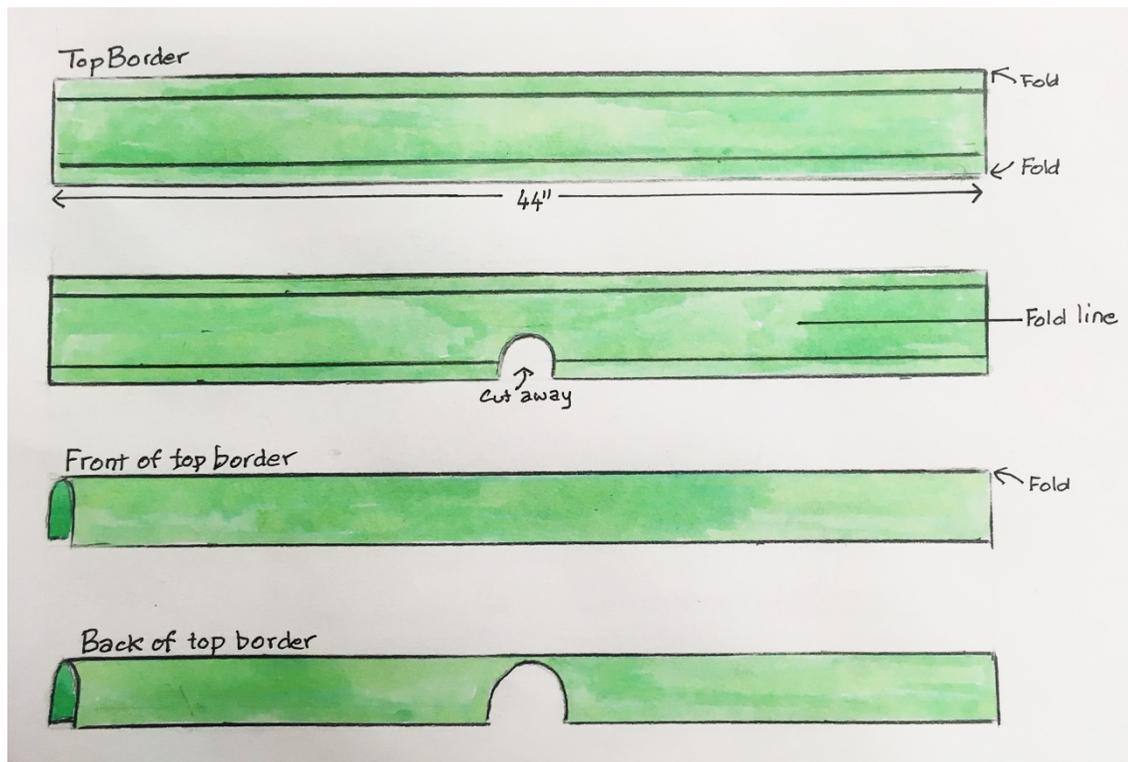
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**STEP 3: Make Your Borders**

(1 hour)

1. Take each of your lengths of fabric and draw a line  $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.3cm) in from each raw edge, fold down on the line and press down with the iron.
2. Take one of your 44" lengths of fabric and on just one side, at the center, draw a semi-circle. The top of the semi-circle should reach the middle of the width. Stitch around it with a zig zag stitch. Cut away the semi-circle. (This will allow space for the screw eye on your pole).
3. Fold all your borders in half along their lengths. Press or iron flat.
4. Your borders are done.



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**STEP 4: Make the Front**

(1.5 hours +)

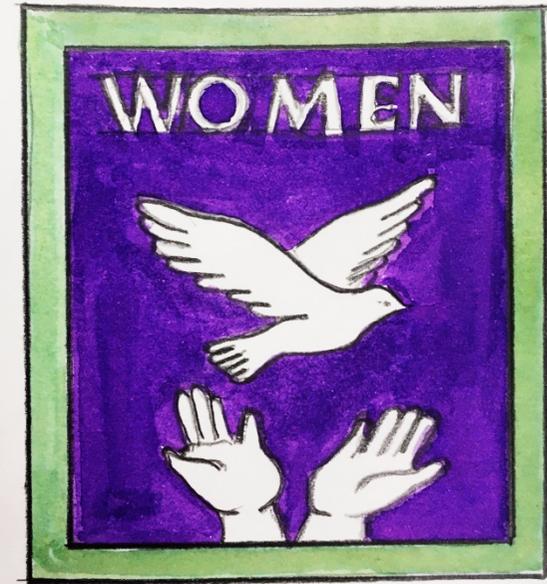
1. Trace out each letter or image with a black biro (not inked pen) on the rough side of bondaweb.
2. Cut around the bondaweb tracings.
3. Place the tracings, rough side down, on the back of your chosen fabric.
4. Using a hot, dry iron press each tracing down until it sticks to the fabric (there is no need to slide the iron backwards and forwards. Just press).

**TIP**

Test your fabric and iron heat first. Nylons, silk, voiles and other fabrics might melt and so for these you need to put a greaseproof paper between the iron and the bondaweb or use a lower iron heat.

5. The bondaweb is now stuck to your fabric. Cut around the letters and images.
6. Peel off the bondaweb paper.
7. Arrange your letters and image on your front cloth.
8. Using a hot dry iron press them down on your front cloth. (You can use greaseproof paper between the iron and the fabric to make sure you don't melt or mark the fabric).
9. With some fabrics, like cotton on cotton, you might not need to sew your appliqué down but with others you will have to sew it down. This could be in a matching or contrasting colour. Use a close zig zag stitch on the sewing machine. A black outline can make your image.
10. Add any details to your banner by hand or on the machine.
11. Add any other adornments: beads, sequins etc.

Design



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**STEP 5: Assemble the Front and Back**

(30 mins)

1. On a table place the front cloth on the back cloth. Iron flat and smooth down until there are no puckers. Pin together. Keep your banner flat on the table as you work. Don't pick it up in your hands.

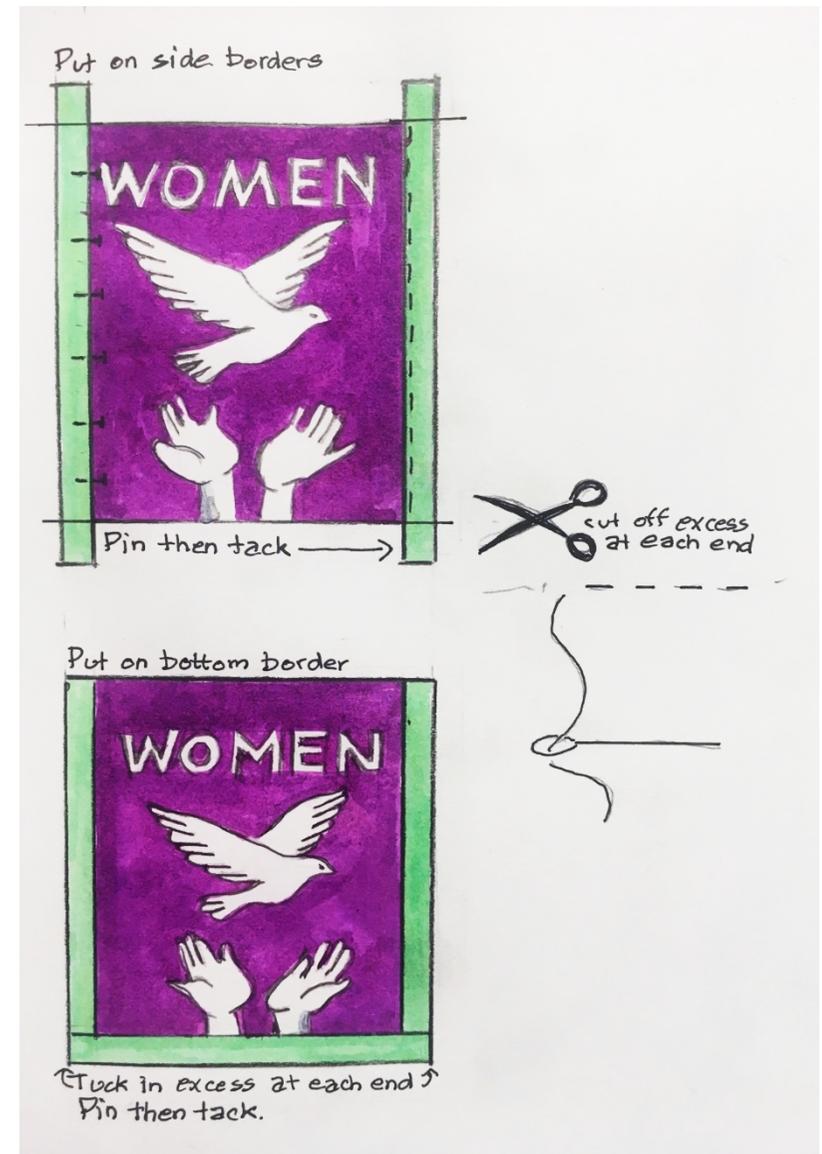
**TIP**

Make sure the pins go in the opposite direction to the line of stitching – this will allow you to machine sew over them without breaking your needle.

**STEP 6: Assemble the Borders**

(1.5 hours)

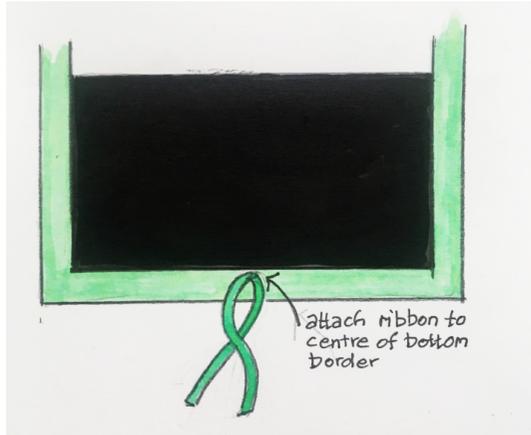
1. Put on the side borders. Slip one side of the banner inside the open length of one of your 52" (132cm) borders until it meets your drawn line, with one half of the border on the front and the other half on the back. Cut off any excess at top and bottom. Pin and tack down. Do the same for the other side. Remove pins.
2. Put on your bottom border. Slip the bottom of your banner into the open length of your bottom border until it meets your drawn line. Turn in the excess at both ends. Pin and tack down. Remove pins.
3. Place your top border along the width of your banner to check its length before you pin it to the banner. Make sure the semi-circle you have cut out sits on the back of the banner. Slip the banner into the open length of top border to meet your drawn line. Turn in the excess on each end of the border. Pin and tack down (these stay open at each end so you can slide a pole through). Remove pins.



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4. With a straight stitch, machine sew the border fabric down. Make sure you leave the ends open at the top of your banner to slide the pole through.
5. Stitch a narrow ribbon 20" long (50cm) very firmly to the center back of your banner just at the top of your bottom border. This will be tied to your central pole to stabilize your banner.



6. Iron the banner using greaseproof paper between the iron and the banner to make sure you don't mark or melt it.
7. You now have your banner! To store, roll up loosely on a cardboard tube.

**TIP**

You can make your borders as wide or as narrow as you like and you do not need to have side or bottom borders at all although you will have to have a top border or top sleeves to put your pole through.

**TIP**

Sign and date your banner! This can be on a square of fabric stitched to the back. Many suffrage banners were lost or remain unattributed.

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## MAKE YOUR POLES

You will be using a knife and saw for this so please keep out of the way of children and handle all tools with care.

TOTAL ESTIMATED TIME: 45 mins

### STEP 1: For the top pole

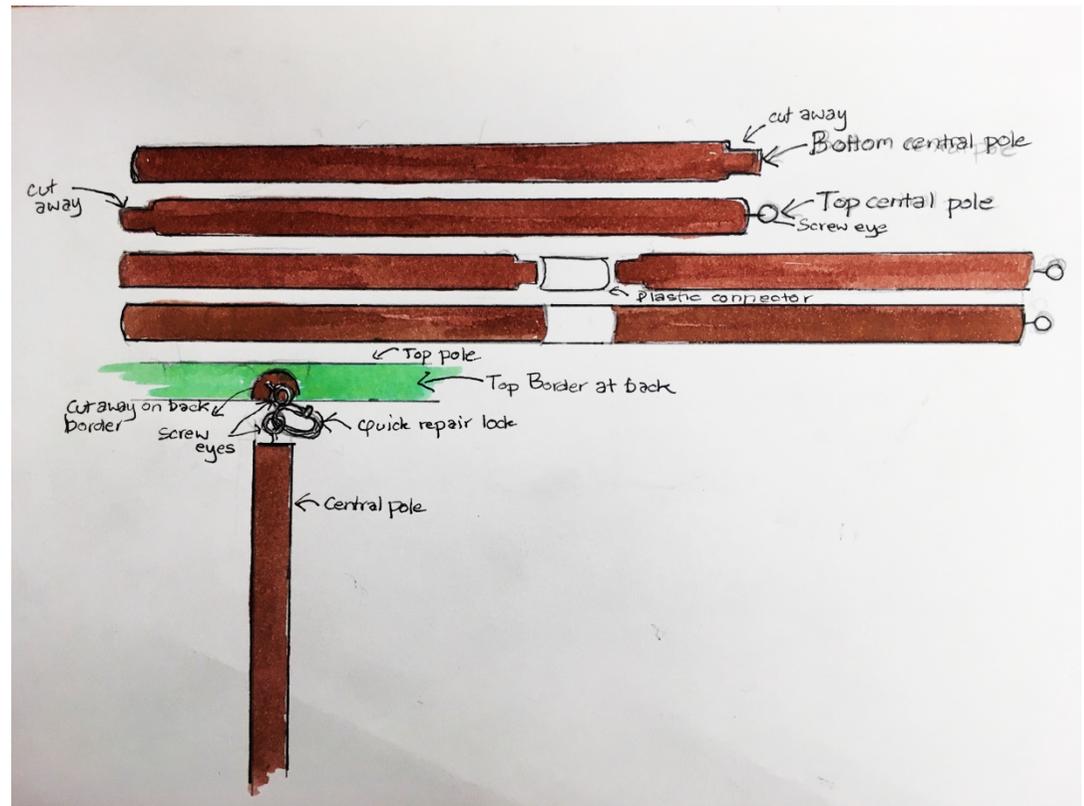
(15 mins)

1. Cut your top pole 2" longer than your banner width
2. Mark the exact center with a dot
3. On the dot insert a screw eye

### STEP 2: For the carrying pole

(15 mins)

1. Cut your 94" (2400mm) dowel pole in half (to make it easier to transport) with your saw.
2. You need to cut away some wood from one end of each pole so that they will fit into the connector. Draw a line around the circumference of each pole 1 1/2" (4cm) from one end. With a craft knife (always cutting away from yourself) carefully trim away the wood at each marked end up to your drawn line until each pole fits tightly into the connector. Work slowly, testing the fit as you trim. You do not want them to be loose.
3. Put glue onto the trimmed end of one pole. Insert the connector to its half-way point. This will be your bottom carrying pole.
4. On the uncut end of your other pole screw in a screw eye in the middle of the circle. This will be your top carrying pole.



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**STEP 3: Assemble your carrying pole**

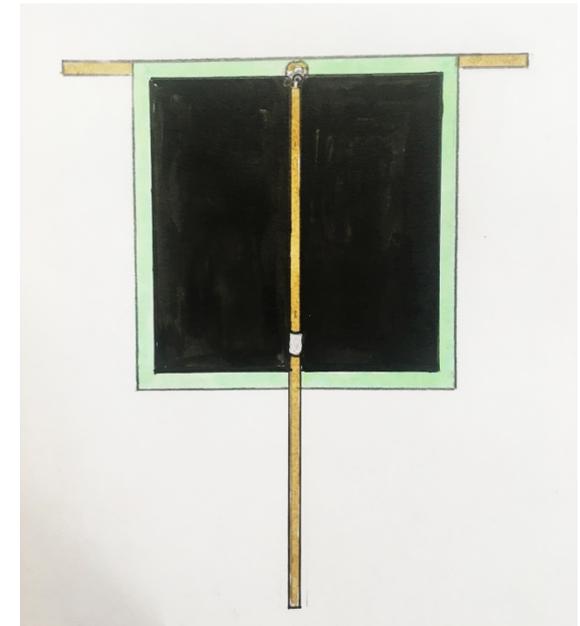
(15 mins)

1. Push the trimmed end of your top pole into the connector on your bottom carrying pole.
2. Thread your banner through the top pole
3. Join screw eye to screw eye with the quick repair lock.
4. Tie the ribbon at the bottom of your banner to your carrying pole.

**Carrying your banner**

If you are part of a group, you might think how you will show you are together. You could carry flags, pennants or decorated poles which echo the colours or themes of the banner.

You might want a pouch for your banner pole. The pouch can be attached to your belt and the end of the pole put in the pouch to help balance it on your hip and take some of the weight. This could just be a belt with a cord and a small pouch attached at the end. If the banner carriers are of different heights, then the length of the cord needs to be adjusted so the banner is held at the same height by each carrier.

**TIP**

Bring safety pins, string, an extra quick repair link and screw eyes and a reel of electrical tape. That way, if anything happens to your banner or poles you can repair it on the spot.

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## PENNANTS, FLAGS AND DECORATED POLES

Pennants<sup>4</sup> and flags add colour, movement and energy to a procession. They can have a word, image, quotation or a name on them and can be a useful way to identify a group. Make pennants and flags in one layer of cloth in the lightest of materials because they should float in the wind.

### MAKE A PENNANT

(15 mins)

Use an 18mm pole.

Take a square of fabric. Cut out a triangle of whatever size you like.

Create a side channel on the straight edge 3" (7.5 cm) wide, by folding the straight edge over. Sew down the edge. Then sew across its top, leaving the bottom edge of the side channel open for the pole to slide inside.

The pennant should be secure, but you can glue the base of the material to where it meets the pole if you think it needs further support.

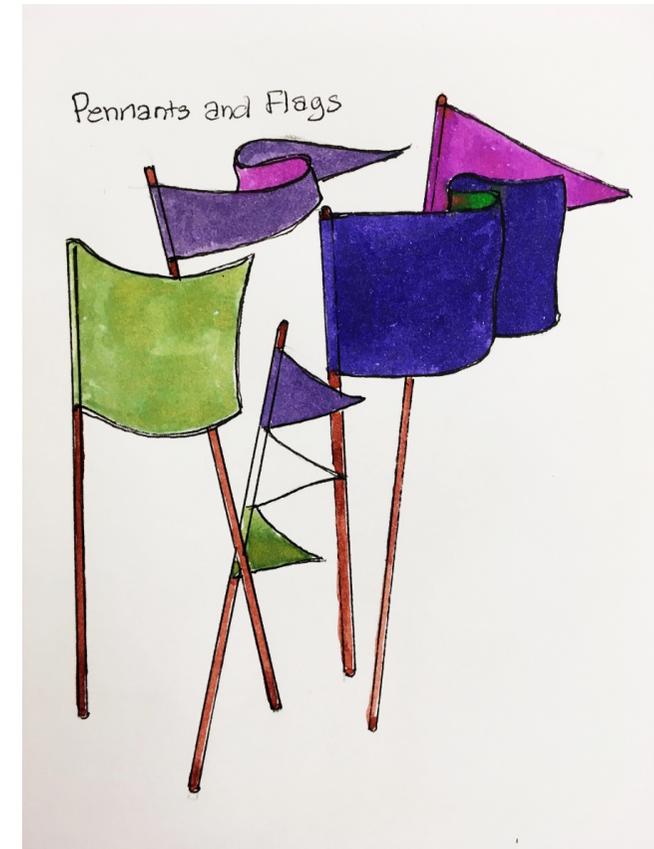
### MAKE A FLAG

(20 mins)

Use an 18mm pole.

Cut a square or rectangle of fabric to a size of your choice. Remember the bigger it is the harder it will be to carry and wave.

Create a side channel on the straight edge 3" (7.5 cm) wide, by folding the straight edge over. Sew down the edge. Then sew across its top, leaving the bottom edge of the side channel open for the pole to slide inside. The flag should be secure, but you can glue the base of the material to where it meets the pole if you think it needs further support.



<sup>4</sup> A pennant is a triangle of cloth that is longer than it is tall, and which tapers to a point. It has a side channel to slip a pole into, closed at the top.

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## MAKE A DECORATED POLE

(30 mins)

This can be a pole which has some floating ribbons tied at the top.

Suffrage campaigners also tied objects / emblems to poles to represent their group, for example a pair of tankards for barmaid. You could use: a pair of trainers to symbolize sportswomen; a bunch of carrots - gardeners; a clutch of medals - charity runners. They can be fun and are easy to make. Just get your pole and notch it, then tie and glue streamers to it. Attach objects to streamers securely so they don't fall off.

See Mary Lowndes designs on the [vads.ac.uk](http://vads.ac.uk) online site for inspiration.



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## CREDITS

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Edited by	–	Artichoke

## WITH THANKS TO

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