

Heat Setting

Heat setting fabrics can be a useful way to create 3dimensions and add structure to textile pieces. Some fabrics will retain a permanent or semi-permanent shape through the process of heat setting and others will naturally want to drop and lose the shape and structure that has been applied. Setting fabrics through heat is usual through steam but can also be achieved using a dry heat. Setting takes places as the fibres are heated, depending on the type of fibre and its construction method it may melt, shrink or expand enabling the fibres to change and form a new structure.

A useful company to look at is **Ciment**.

Method

1. You will need to create a 3D form to support your fabric. How you make the form will depend on what shapes you hope to achieve.
2. Wrap your fabric around your form or place it between two forms if you are creating folds.
3. Secure your fabric through binding. Use the most suitable method for your form, this could be clamps, clips, stitching or through tying. **NB. Any binding that you use will become hot to the touch in the steamer or may melt and fall away.**
4. Steam for 20mins to set the fabric to the form.
5. Remove from steamer and allow to cool, **NB. Remember to handle the form with heatproof gloves at this point as it will be hot to the touch.**
6. Allow the form to cool.

The fabric will be set into its final form at this point. Depending on the fabric it may need a little help retaining its shape, spray starch will stiffen fabric slightly without effecting the overall appearance of the fibres, it may be better to spray and dry before removing the bindings.

The set fabric will not withstand washing, so you must ensure that all printing or dyeing is completed before you start the process.