

Atelier DIDIER

MUSHIN ROOM (無心 部屋)

TATAMI MAT FABRICATION  
2026

# *Mushin Room*

## 無心 部屋

After returning from a trip to Japan, I realized I needed a clean, quiet room at my studio to clear my mind and dream.

Tatami mats made in the USA are expensive and mats shipped from Japan are also expensive!

I thought about weaving my own goza (woven grass surface for tatami), but quickly realized it would take me a year to learn - and I would still be very bad at it.

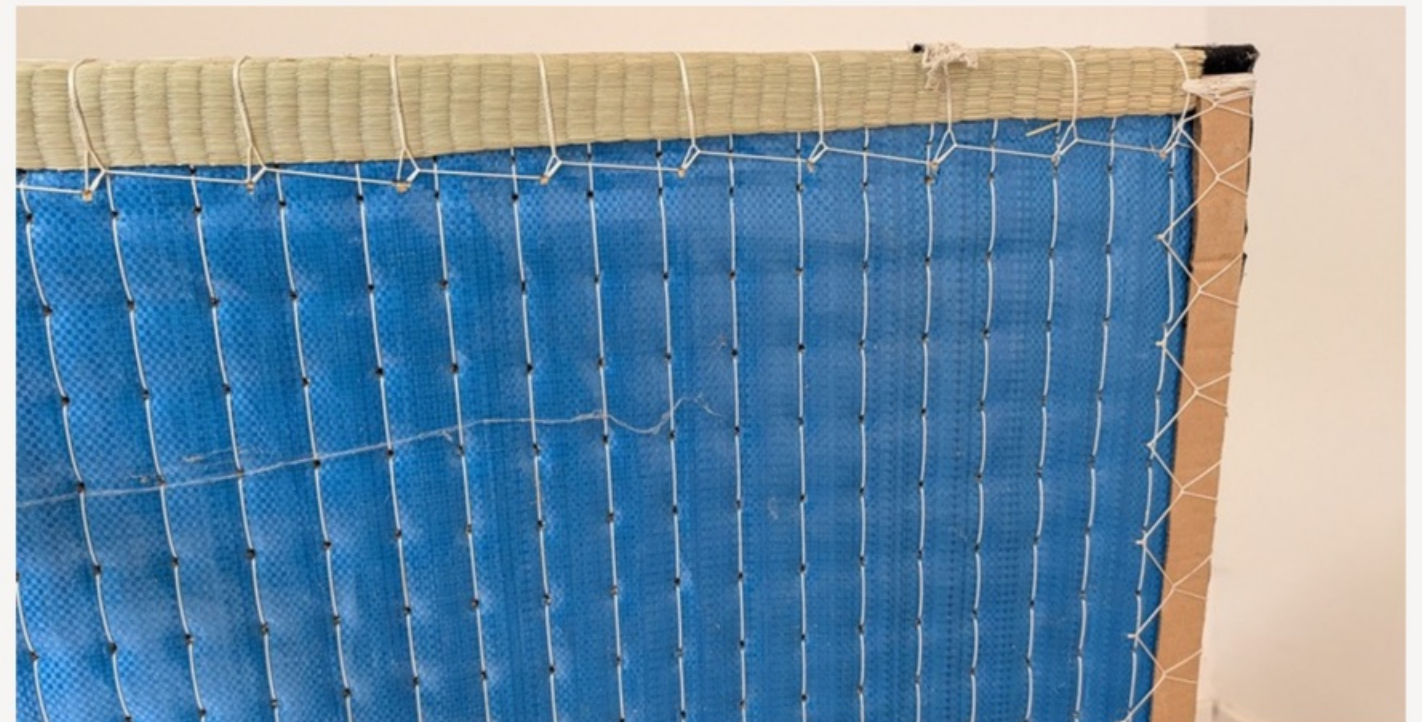
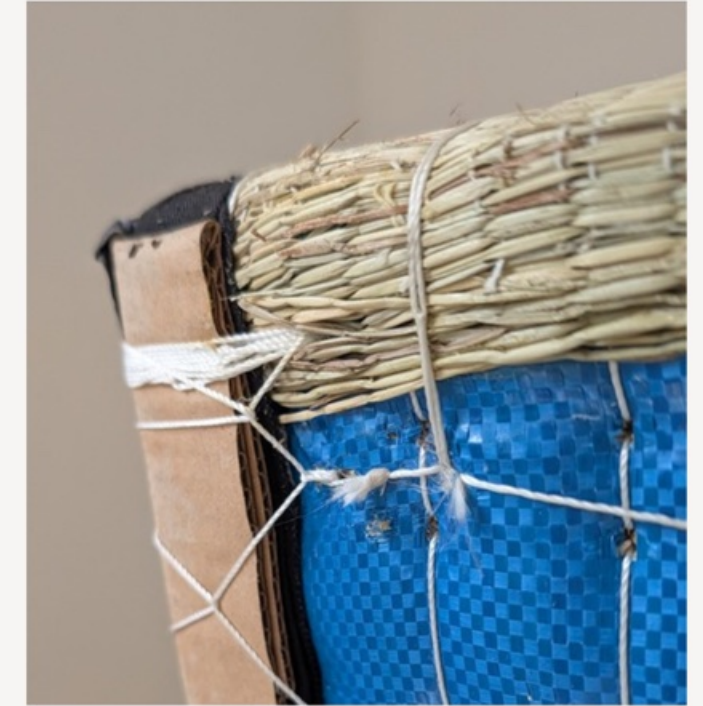
*Completed room*



# PROCESS



I had one mat leftover from a six tatami room at my home - I studied how this was made with layers of straw, cardboard, twine, and moisture barrier - I could make this myself with goza from Japan!



# MORITA TATAMI SHOP

BRINGING TATAMI MATS TO AN ISLAND OF DIGITAL DETOX  
ESTABLISHED IN 1933. DELIVERING FROM ARAKAWA WARD,  
TOKYO TO THE WORLD.

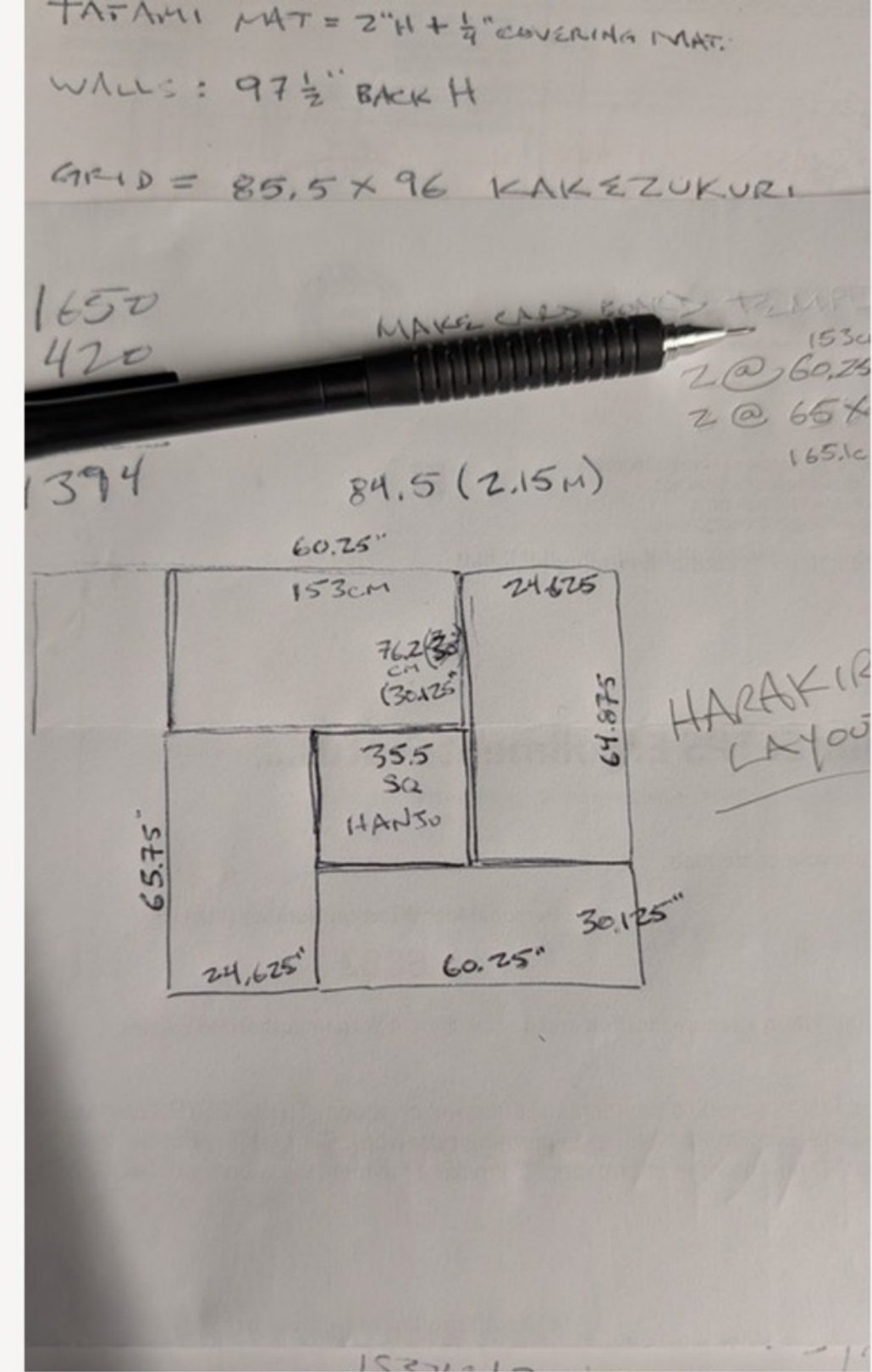
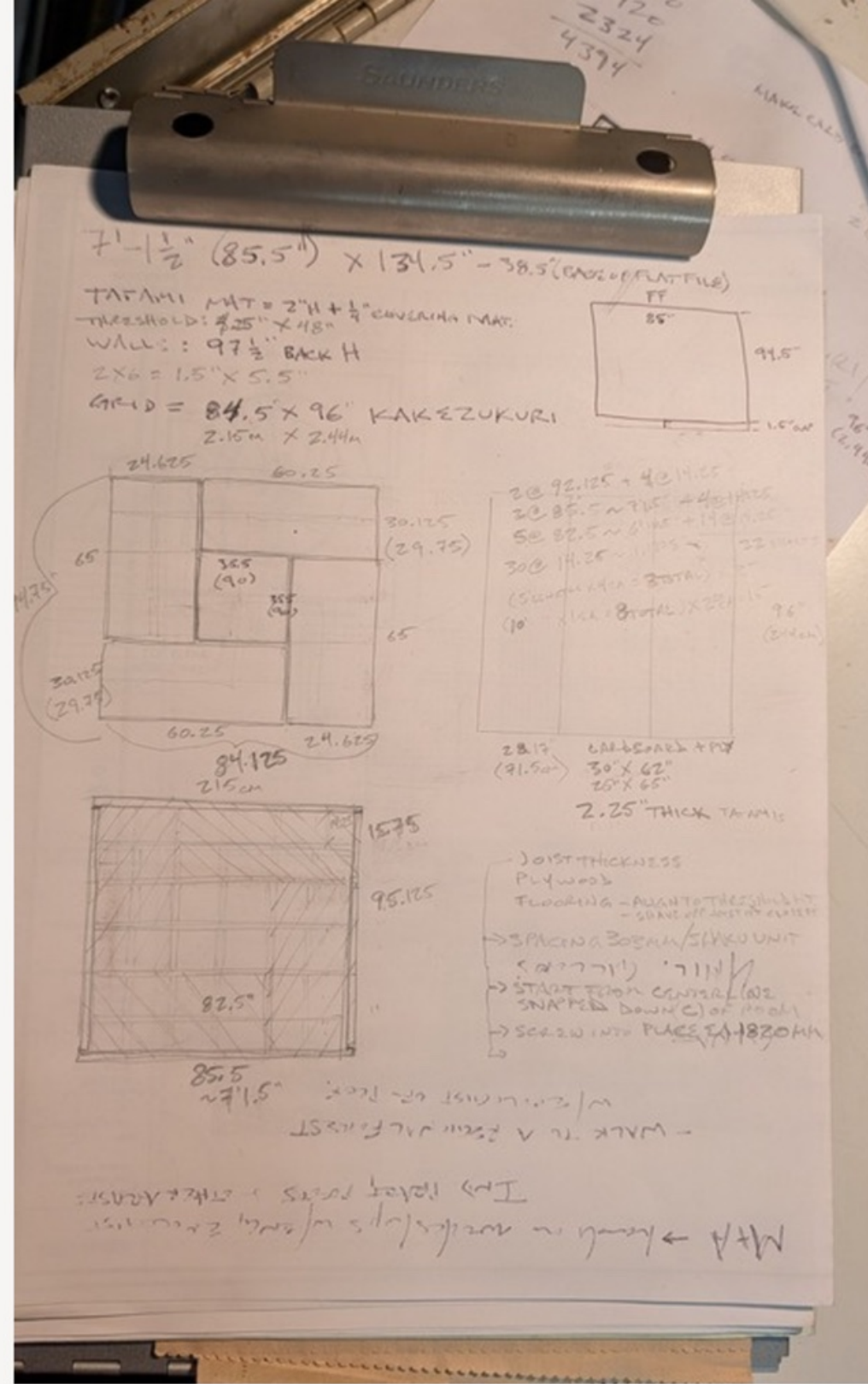
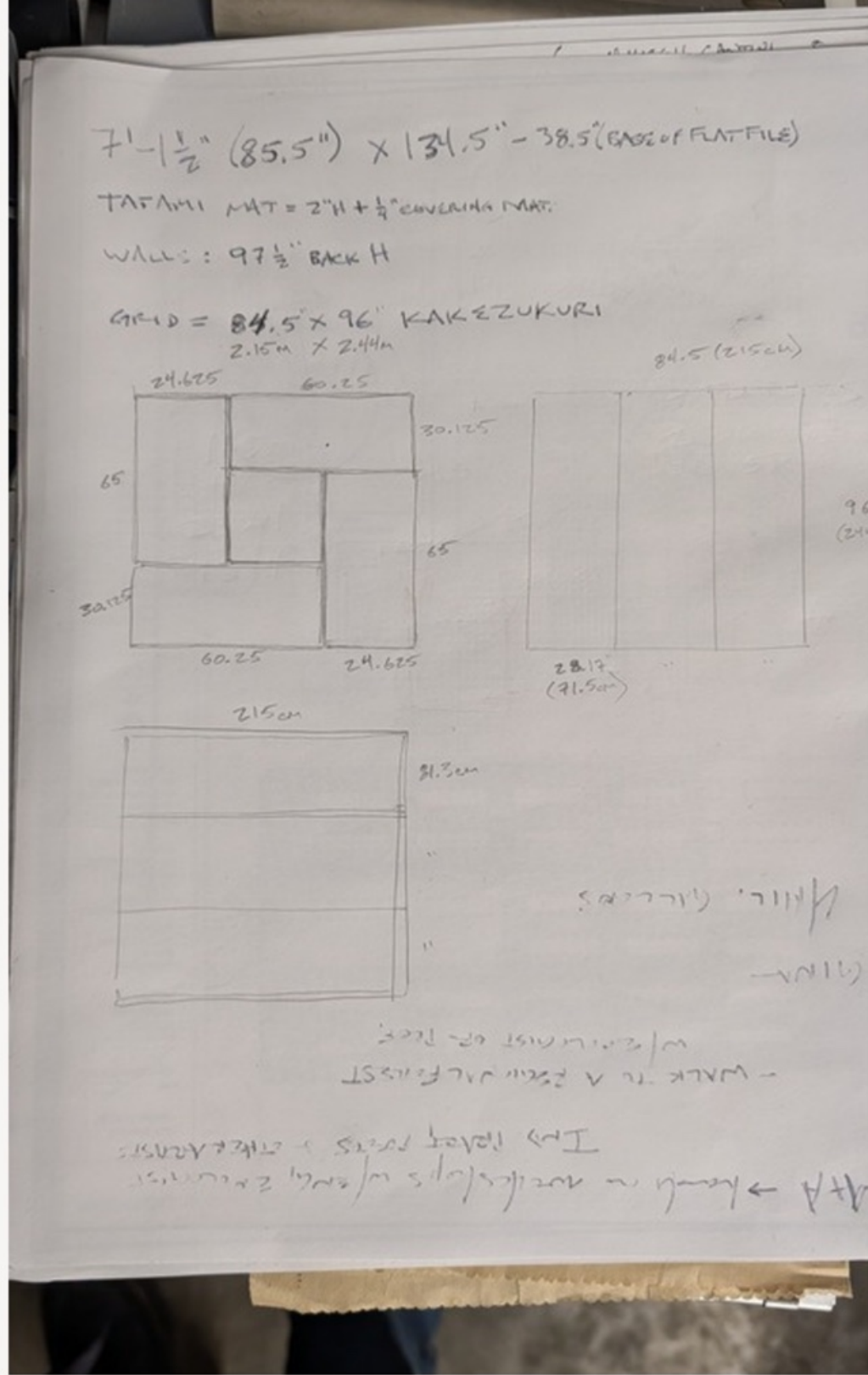
Morita Tatami Shop makes tatami mats in all sizes and surfaces, and will ship “tatami making kits” that include the specified goza and instructions.

There were many different kinds of goza and borders to choose from - I tried to compliment what I already had - from their organic options.

[HTTPS://WWW.TATAMI-MAT.NET/](https://www.tatami-mat.net/)



**A flawless aesthetic, approved by James Bond himself.**



I got to work on the optimal mat layout for the small space I had dedicated for my 2.4m x 2.1m “clean calm room”. Helpfully, the Morita website instructions pointed out that if you layout the “sprial pattern” in a clock-wise direction, that is bad luck - this layout is only used for harakiri - so I made sure the layout is counter-clockwise. I hope I got it right!

Note: In America as in Japan, the swastika is an ancient indigenous symbol - it is the pattern that the “big dipper” makes as seen from earth each year: a revolution around the north star. Wayfinding of utmost importance to nomadic people embedded in a sacred design.

# TATAMI KIT & SAMPLES

It was easy to order, Morita worked with me via email to make sure the custom sizes I needed would be accommodated.

The kit arrived very quickly - ahead of schedule - and included a selection of grasses, weaves and borders that they offer. I use these as trivets and dream of rooms where I can use these amazing borders and weaves!

SAMPLES OF GRASS TYPES AND BORDERS



# SUBFLOOR



There are concrete floors in my studio, to insulate and encourage airflow, I laid down a subfloor of 2 x 4s with a plywood surface.

Then I laid out the goza to verify the dimensions for the finished mats.



# BUILDING THE MATS

The instructions from Morita are very clear and practical, involving nothing more than plywood and perhaps a terrycloth cushioning layer under the goza - but I needed to match the 5cm thickness of the mat I already had - and I wanted the result to be lightweight, breathable, and biodegradable.

I arrived at a design layering 1/4" felt, 2 sets of 5/8" cardboard, one layer of 1/2" MDF, and 1/4" rubber carpet underlayment - using cardboard shipping edge-guards that I could screw down to hold and stiffen the layers.

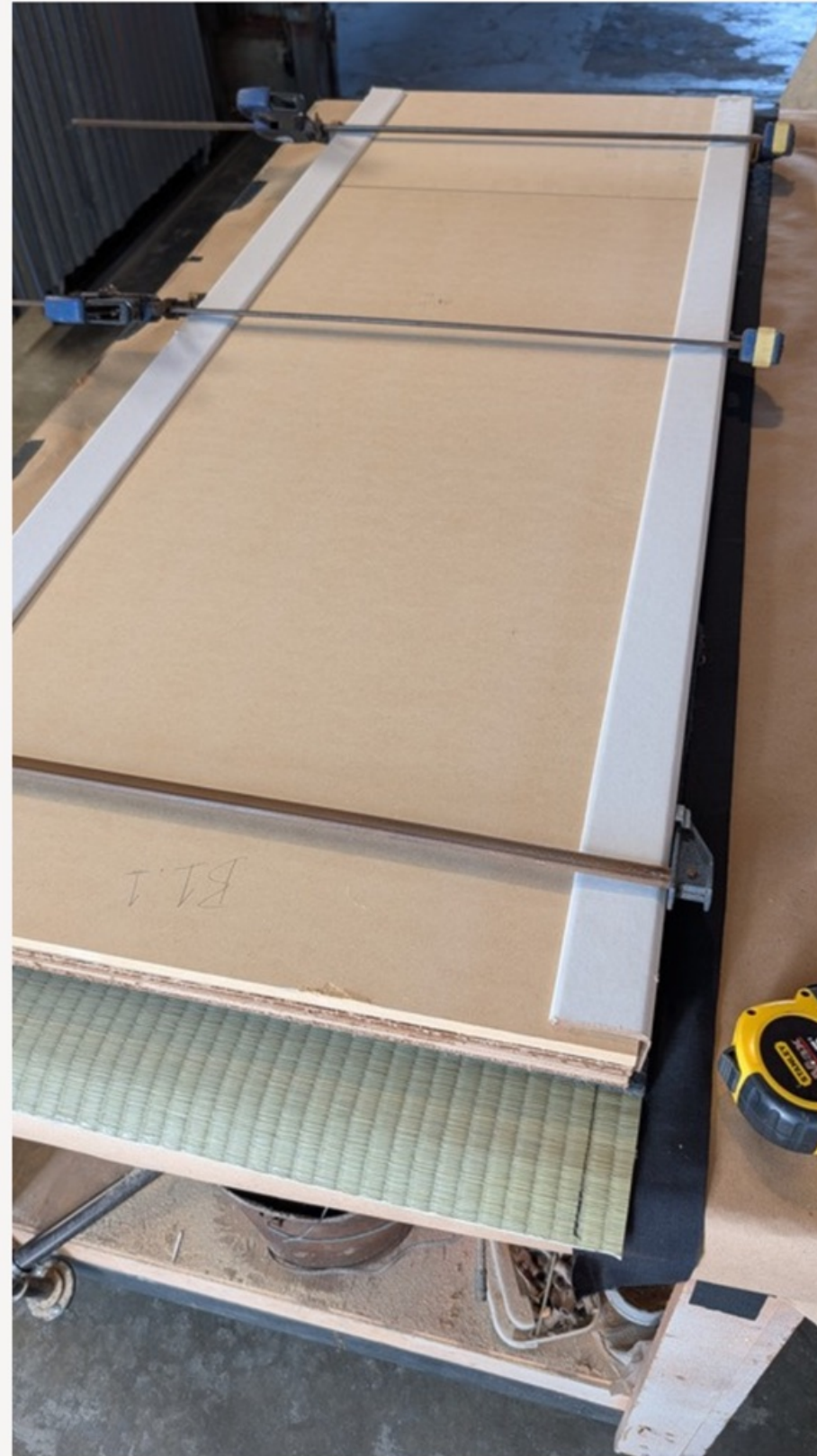


TOP: FELT LAYER TO CUSHION GOZA,  
BOTTOM: LAYERS WITH GOZA IN PLACE - LAID UPSIDE DOWN

# ASSEMBLY

Using clamps and help from my teenaged son, we assembled the layers with screws after spending many days cutting all the layers.

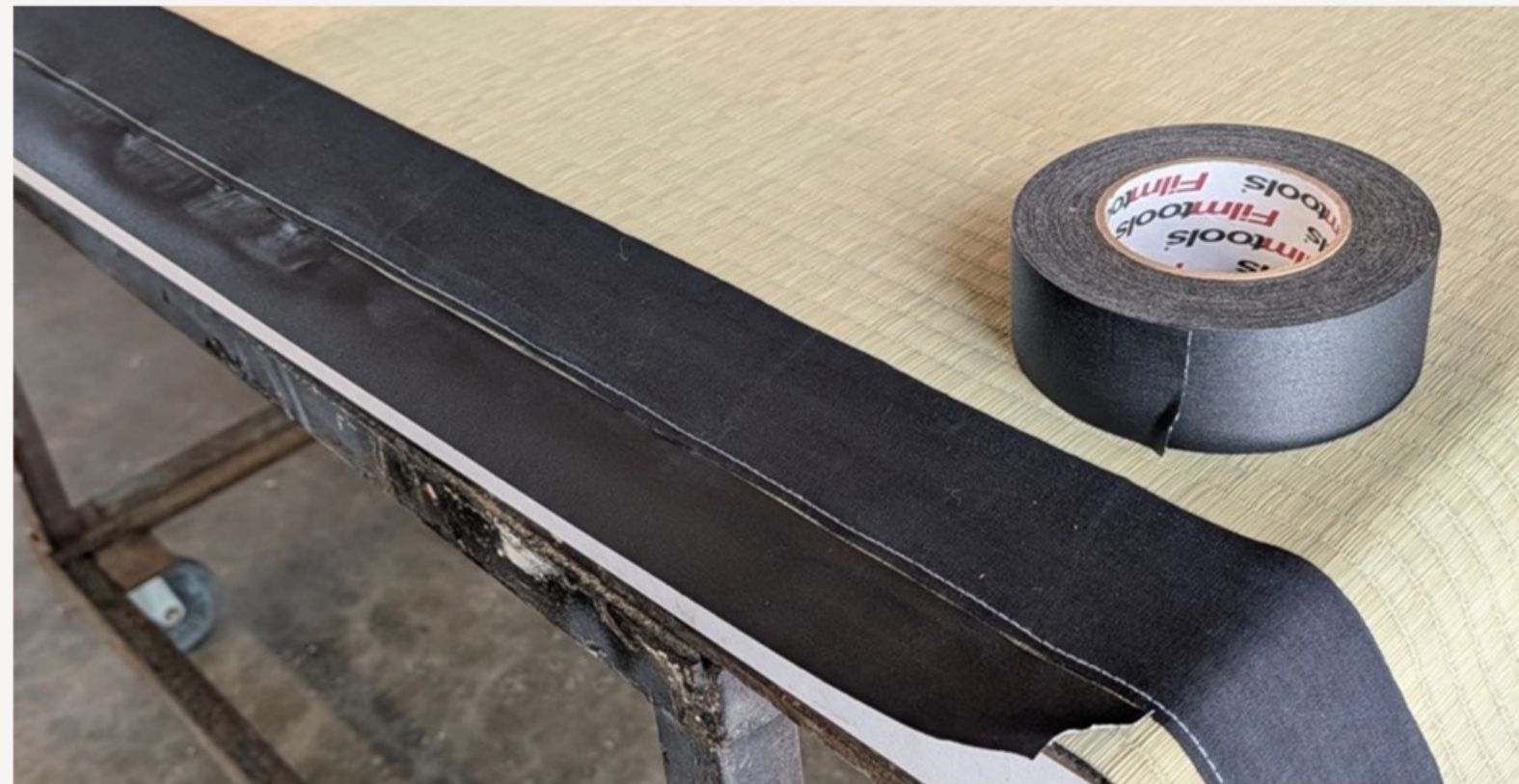
We were careful to countersink screws along the base where it rests on the floor - and kept the felt wide enough to cover the edge guards.



# ATTACHING THE GOZA

Carefully following the instructions, I stapled goza to the felt and cardboard. I added black gaffing tape over the staples under the edging so that the staples would not be visible through the border.

I avoided using plastic tarp as a moisture barrier - opting for biodegradable recycled rubber carpet underlayment for the base of the tatami - I stapled this on.



# ARRIGATO!

Thank you Morita Tatami Shop for helping me create a special place at my studio!

