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Short Directions
by
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There are two categories of friendship bracelets:

Category 1 (bracelets No. 01 – 60 and 101 – 140):

These bracelets are made according to color, the rows are almost always knotted **diagonally**. The threads change their positions and usually all four knot types are used.

Category 2 (bracelets No. 61 – 100):

These bracelets are knotted **horizontally**, row after row, never diagonally! Only two different knots are used (the Right-Left- and the Left-Right-Knot), whereby the threads always retain their original position.

You will need embroidery floss, all strands of equal thickness. The bracelet should be 1" (2,5 cm) shorter than the circumference of the wrist, because you need a space for knotting the ends. The length of the bracelet depends on the thickness of the threads. For example, if your wrist measures 6" (15 cm), the bracelet should be about 5" (12 – 13 cm) long.

If you measure in inches, **4 inches equal about 10 cm**. (Exactly 1 inch = 2,54 cm)

60 cm = 24 inches	100 cm = 40 inches
70 cm = 28 inches	110 cm = 44 inches
80 cm = 32 inches	120 cm = 48 inches
90 cm = 36 inches	130 cm = 52 inches

First, you cut the appropriate number of threads, gather them all together, tie a knot at the upper end leaving a tail of **6" (15 cm)** for the braid you make in the end. Then you put a safety pin through the knot and fasten it to a cushion, which can be held between your knees. You can also fasten the knot to your jeans a little bit above your knee.

Then you arrange the threads in the exact order indicated on the knot-pattern like a fan on your lap. (**Another method** of starting a bracelet is explained at page 3 under "Tips".) Mostly, the lengths of the threads are different. You can choose an easier way by cutting all threads to the same length, meaning that all threads have then to be as long as the longest thread. You can also cut the longest thread or threads first, and afterwards cut the rest as long as the second longest thread. This is especially recommended for the Category 2 bracelets, because you won't need to pay attention to the lengths when threads have the same colors. The disadvantage is a bit more waste at the end.

Also, you will need a **blunt** embroidery needle to open knot mistakes. Pull a colored thread through the eye of the needle to keep from losing it. I keep this needle pinned to my cushion, because even after more than 10 years of knotting, I still have to make occasional corrections on each bracelet.

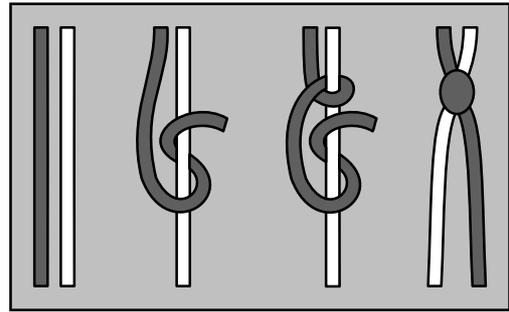
Each square represents a **double-knot**. There are right knots and left knots, and the following four possibilities result from this:

1.) Right-Right-Knot = RR

Here the white thread is the stationary thread and it is pulled taut with the left hand. With the right hand you wrap the black thread (knot-thread) around the white thread to the **right** side and tighten it. Then you wrap a second loop to the **right** and tighten it again.

The threads have changed their positions!

Symbol 

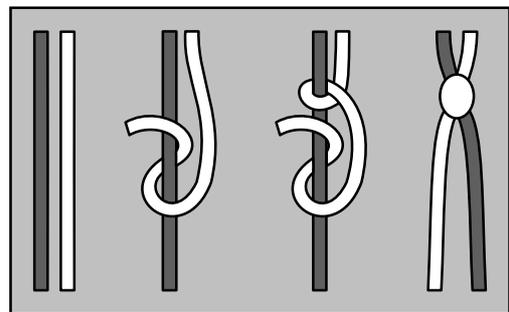


2.) Left-Left-Knot = LL

This time the black thread is the stationary thread and you pull it taut with the left hand. With the right hand you wrap the white thread (knot-thread) around the black thread to the **left** side and tighten it. Then you wrap a second loop to the **left** and tighten it again.

The threads have changed their positions!

Symbol 

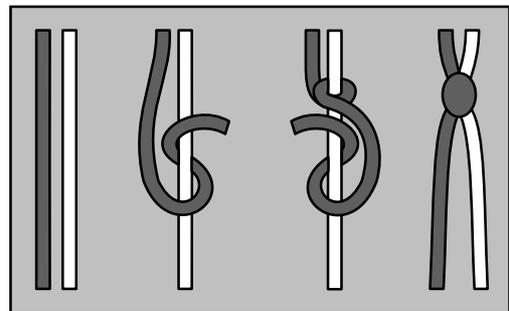


3.) Right-Left-Knot = RL

Here the white thread is the stationary thread again and you pull it taut with the left hand. With the right hand the black thread is first wrapped around the white thread to the **right** side and tightened, and then it's wrapped to the **left** side and tightened.

The threads stay in their positions!

Symbol 

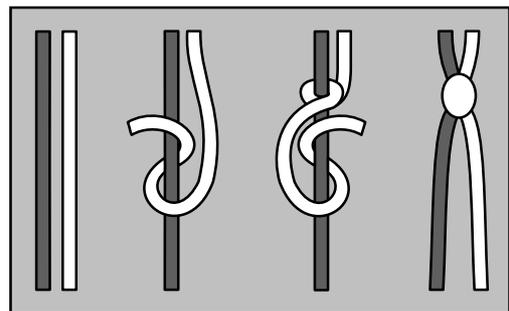


4.) Left-Right-Knot = LR

And this time, the black thread is the stationary thread again and you pull it taut with the left hand. With the right hand the white thread is first wrapped around the black thread to the **left** side and tightened, and then it's wrapped to the **right** side and tightened.

The threads stay in their positions!

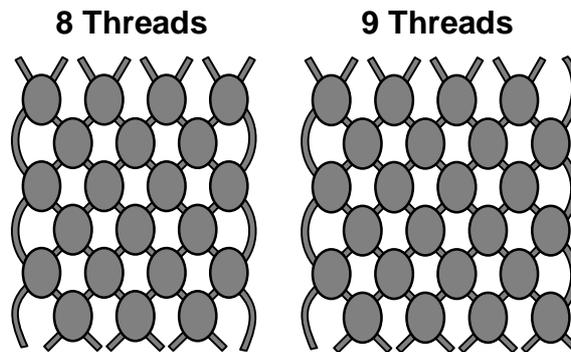
Symbol 



Tips

The first knot should be pulled very tight; the second knot, which forms the "visible dot", should be more loosely knotted. After tightening the second knot, pull the knot-thread slightly downward, so it's positioned in the same downward direction as the stationary thread.

This is the structure of the bracelets with an **even** and an **uneven** number of threads:



An easier method starting a bracelet is to tape the threads on a table with either a duct tape or a packaging tape. This is how you do it:

First you cut a piece of tape and stick it the other way round (the sticky side upwards) on a table by folding over a little bit at both ends, which you fasten on the table. Then you take the cut threads and stick them in the correct order very close to each other on the tape leaving 7" (18 cm) measured from the bottom end of the tape. Because you don't make an overhand knot you have to leave a bit more than with a knot. But attention, you have to stick the threads in **reversed order** on the tape!

Then you turn the tape around and fix it on the table or at the edge of the table, this way the threads are hanging downwards. After having knotted a bit (about 1 cm) I remove the tape, make an overhand knot and go on knotting by fixing it to my knotting cushion.

Lengths of Threads

The lengths of the threads are indicated on the knot-patterns. If you use thinner threads (DMC is a bit thinner than the threads I use) you should cut the threads a bit longer. I use cotton wool of different manufacturers:



These threads are mostly a bit too thick. I make them thinner by pulling out one or two single threads out of the whole strand.

Directions for how to make threads thinner see page 8

If a thread **runs short or rips off**, you can add a new thread. You cut a new thread and tape it with a piece of tape onto the backside of the bracelet. If the short thread is a **stationary thread**, you make one double-knot around the short **and** the new thread. Then you just go on knotting with the new thread.

If the short thread is a **knot-thread**, you just go on knotting with the new thread. Later on you should make a double knot (a right- and a left-knot) with the two short ends on the backside of the bracelet and maybe use a drop of superglue. Then you cut the two short ends on the backside to 1 - 2 mm.

Finishing the Bracelet

On top of page 1 there is a bracelet to be seen with the braids on each side.

Directions for how to finish the bracelet see page 9

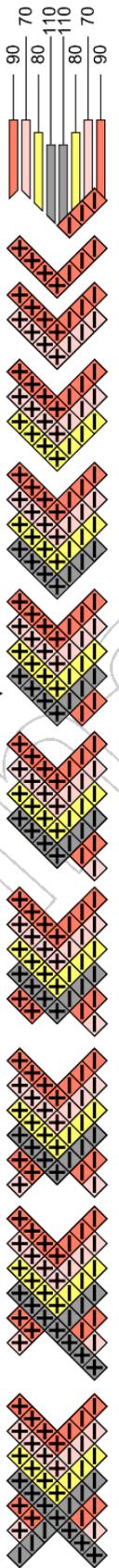
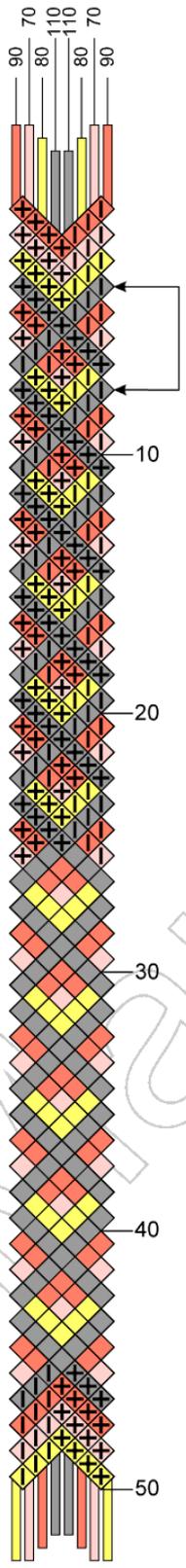
Bracelets of Category 1

The next picture shows a **Category-1 knot-pattern**. The entire bracelet pattern is depicted on the left, and to the right, there is a step-by-step-direction. Next to these are the beginning patterns of one or two more bracelets, whose different pattern arises just by arranging the threads in another way.

Bracelet # 3 was my very first bracelet. When my daughter came home from vacation more than 10 years ago wearing one, I was totally fascinated and asked: "WOW! How did you make that?" She showed me and I have been hopelessly hooked ever since.

Some of the threads are invisible stationary threads for the bracelet and never knot-threads, their colors are never seen. These threads have been designated as "**blind**". The color of these threads doesn't matter; to distinguish, I often chose gray at the knot-patterns. During the knotting process it's much easier if these threads are a color that is not used in the bracelet. But since you see this color in the two braids at the ends, you may want to choose a color that is also used in the bracelet.

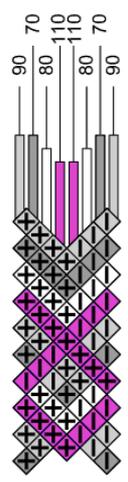
It's possible to alter the pattern sequence. Care must be taken, however, to always proceed from **top** to **bottom**. Knots can never be made from bottom to top!



8 Threads

- 2 x black 110 cm
- 2 x yellow 80 cm
- 2 x pink 70 cm
- 2 x red 90 cm

- ⊕ = RR
- ⊖ = LL
- = RL
- = LR



(continue at →)

Bracelets of Category 2

The bracelets of Category 2 consist of only Right-Left- and Left-Right-Knots. For these bracelets I made up different symbols, because the symbols above are not applicable. These symbols are:

Right-Left-Knot 

Left-Right-Knot 

Because these bracelets are knotted **horizontally**, row after row, step-by-step-directions are not necessary. I always put a ruler or piece of paper or cardboard on the knot-pattern and move it downwards, row by row.

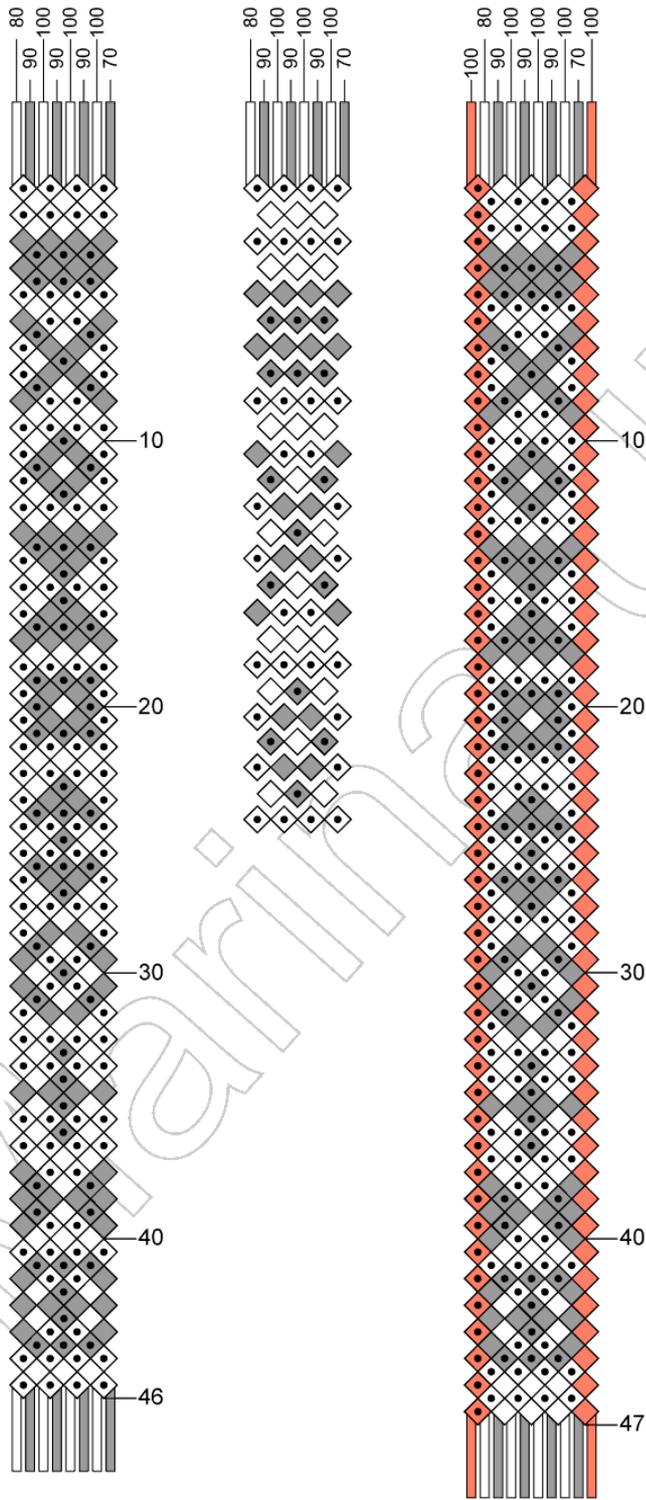
These bracelets are different from Category 1, in that with every knot you always have **two new** threads in your hands. With each knot you have the choice of a white or black thread, and you can decide whether the visible dot should be white or black. If you knot the rows diagonally (Category 1) you always move on by only **one** thread; if you knot the rows horizontally (Category 2) you always move on by **two** threads.

The threads always stay in their original positions. That's why the alternating order -- black, white, black, white -- may never change. If suddenly two black or two white threads show up side by side, a mistake has been made in the previous row. (Happens to me constantly!)

If the bracelet consists of an **even** amount of strings, there is always a "**complete row**" and a "**between row**". The "between row" consists of one knot less and the threads on the very right and very left side are **not** used.

If the bracelet consists of an **uneven** amount of threads, there will be the same amount of knots in every row. **Alternately**, the thread on the very right side is **not** used; in the following row, the thread on the very left side is **not** used.

For better illustration, I have shown on only the following knot-pattern the rows distanced from one another.



8 Threads

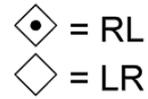
- 1 x white 80 cm
- 3 x white 100 cm
- 1 x black 70 cm
- 3 x black 90 cm

It looks better if you use a colored thread on both sides.

Then you need:

10 Threads

- 1 x white 80 cm
- 3 x white 100 cm
- 1 x black 70 cm
- 3 x black 90 cm
- 2 x red 100 cm



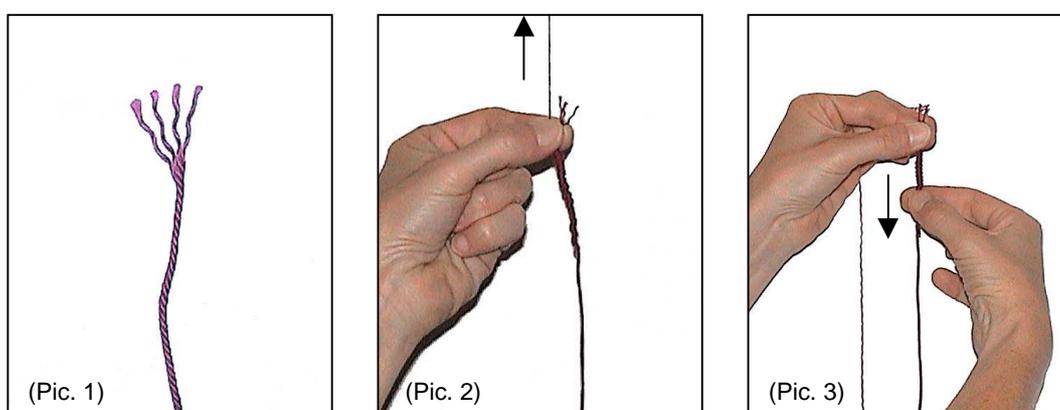
How to make threads thinner

You can make the threads thinner by pulling out one single thread of the whole strand. First you cut the threads to the right size.

Then you twirl open one end a little bit, for to see of how many single threads the strand consists (Pic. 1).

Then you pull one single thread upwards. This causes that the strand underneath thumb and forefinger gets pushed or twirled together (Pic. 2).

You have to be careful that the single thread doesn't rip. So you **alternately** push the twirled part a bit downwards and then pull the single thread upwards again until it slips out of the main strand (Pic. 3).



Then you take the twirled thread at each end in one hand and stretch it to it's full length. After that you slip over the thread with your fingers a few times so it gets smooth.

If you pull out more than one single thread, then always take one thread after another, and don't pull out two single threads at the same time.

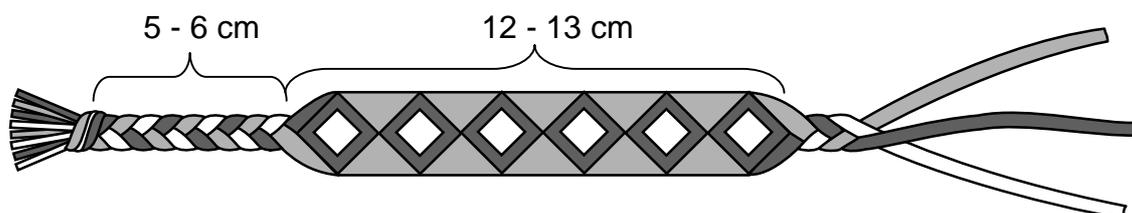
Finishing the bracelet

The length of the bracelet should be 1" (2,5 cm) shorter than the circumference of the wrist, because you need a space for knotting the ends. For example, if your wrist measures 6" (15 cm), the bracelet should be about 5" (12 – 13 cm) long. The length of the bracelet depends on the thickness of the threads or on the tightness of the knots. A lot of bracelets, depending on the pattern, can be made shorter or longer. For a man with a wrist of 7" or 8" (18 - 20 cm) the bracelet should be longer than indicated in the knot-patterns and you have to start with longer threads.

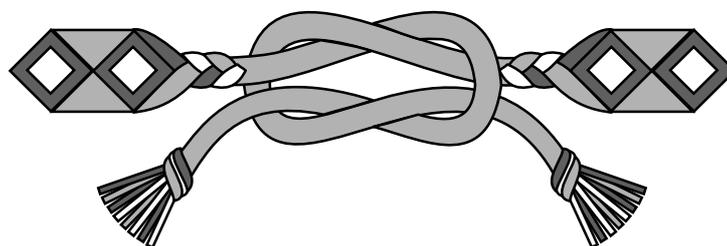
You open the initial knot at the upper end of the bracelet and arrange the threads. If you have started with this beginning, you can tighten each knot from the opposite side. This causes the threads arrange smoothly for braiding at the end. To do this, divide the threads at each end into three parts of possibly the same size and make a braid. The knots at the ends of the braids must be tightened really well, because if ever they open up, they cannot be knotted again. On wider bracelets you can make two braids at each end, although it makes tying them onto the wrist a bit inconvenient.



The distance from the end of the bracelet to the final knot should be 2½" (5 - 6 cm).



For knotting the bracelet at the wrist you should use a "reef" knot, which is a Right-Left- or Left-Right-Knot. The ends lie then comfortably **parallel** to the bracelet.



If you make a Right-Right- or Left-Left-Knot, the ends are not parallel to the bracelet but at an angle of 90°, which is somewhat annoying. Also, this type of knot unravels very easily by itself.

To tie a bracelet onto the wrist by oneself needs a bit of practice and the help of your teeth. If you have somebody to tie the bracelet onto your wrist, you're ahead of the game.