

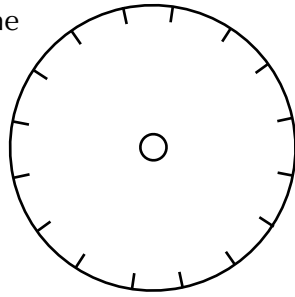
SIMPLE KUMIHIMO CORD

Kumihimo is a Japanese term for braids made on a loom. Most commonly made on a mara dai (round wooden loom), the simplest of these braids can also be made on a portable piece of cardboard. My friend Susan Mentis taught me how to make this braid one wonderful summer day that we spent on a dock in Muskoka.

DIRECTIONS:

1 Cut a circular piece of stiff cardboard, mat board or foam core approximately 4" in diameter.

2 Around the perimeter of the circle cut notches that are about 1/4" deep. Make about 16 notches around the circle. Make a hole in the centre.

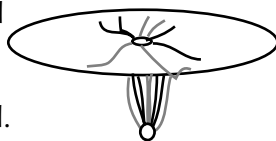


3 Cut 4 pieces of embroidery floss or other strong thread or fine cord. Each piece should measure about 4 times the length that you want your finished braid to be. It is easiest in the beginning to use 2 pieces of one colour and 2 pieces of a contrasting colour. The diagrams will show a two colour cord.

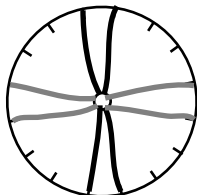
4 Group all of the threads together. Thread the floss through a bead or a button or tie a knot in the centre of the threads.



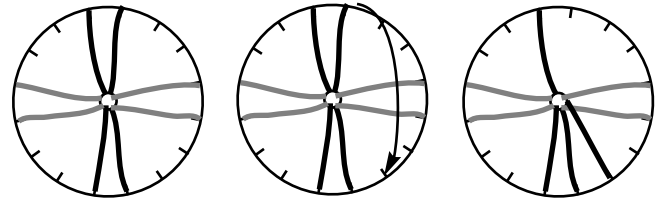
5 Thread all of the ends of the floss through the centre hole in the cardboard circle making sure that the bead stays on the opposite side of the card.



6 Pull the cords up so that the bead rests against the bottom of the circle. Following the diagram, place the individual cords into the notches.

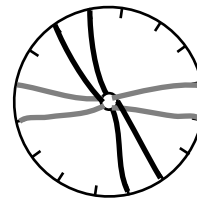
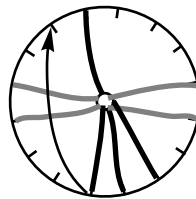


7 To make the braid you will be crossing the cords to the opposite side of the cardboard circle and rotating the card as you work. The diagram shows the notch rotation. Keep checking the braid as it comes out the other side of the cardboard circle. Use the bead to keep the tension even as you work the braid.



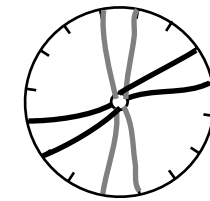
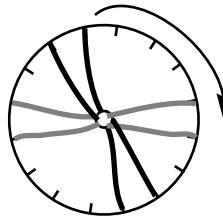
Step One:

Take one cord from the bottom to the top and one cord from the top to the bottom.



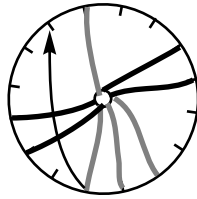
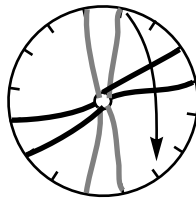
Step Two:

Rotate the cardboard circle a quarter turn to the right.

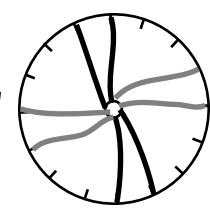
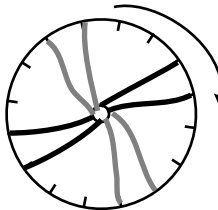


Step Three:

Take one cord of the other colour from the bottom to the top and one cord from the top to the bottom.



Rotate the card a quarter turn to the right.



Repeat steps till the cord is desired length.

8 When your braid is as long as you wish it to be, slip the cords out of the notches and down through the hole. Tie the end of the braid with an overhand knot or finish it off with a binding or a cap.