



Prairie

Project by Janice Parsons

Desert Lavender Sample by Janice Parsons

What started as a simple, strap leather design with just a handful of embellishments morphed into an explosion of beads, cords and sliders. No two ways about it, *Prairie* is a keeper. The base is great quality flat leather from Spain. We started with a magnetic clasp that will fit two pieces of 2x5 flat leather side-by-side. To that we added plain and fancy sliders and macramé with beads.

It became clear to each of us making a sample that there were no rules to design; each of us would wrap it around our wrists throughout the process to see where there should be breaks in the leather and the placement of the knots with beads. So, it's a living, breathing process that relies on designing as you go. Don't be shy...just have fun!

The first sample began with just a scattering of two styles of slider: Home Run and Surrounded and the Book of Kells Clasp. This has turned out to be my favorite and I wear it all the time. It wraps twice and used only 1 meter of leather. The total length is 13-1/2 inches.



The second sample just exploded with "stuff"; everyone at the office just fell head over heels and couldn't wait to make one. This one used almost 2 meters of leather and wraps 4 times.

In the third prototype, I thought, "why not add beads like Brittany Ketcham did so brilliantly in 'In the Garden'?" Now, we're talking some serious fun!





Let's begin with what you need. Lots and lots of scotch tape! Plus, strap leather (2 meters), 3-4 colors of Regular C-Lon, Superlon or Tuff Cord #3. 1-2 colors of 8/0 seed beads, an assortment of sliders*, box clasp, Zap glue, paper clip, plastic bag, flush cutters, chain nose pliers, thread burner, handytape or measuring tape.

*Have more than you "need". To bead creative, you want to design and embellish as you go. If you have more than you need, you have options. Some of the sliders are wide enough (10mm width) to fit both pieces of strap leather through.

I also recommend a table you can scotch tape your project to. Even a kitchen counter will work. Anything that won't be damaged by scotch taping it repeatedly.

First let's do the math....

1. Measure your wrist. Measure the length of your clasp.
2. Your wrap will fit loosely around your wrist. You don't need a perfect measurement now, just get an idea encircling your wrist with the plain leather. How many times do you want it to wrap?
3. Your wrist size x number of wraps = _____ minus the length of your clasp.
4. Multiply that number x 2 = total length of leather.





Cut the leather straight across using flush cutters or very sharp scissors. If you're not sure how many wraps you want to do, cut the full 2 meter length in half. Turn the leather and clasp over. We are going to do everything from the wrong side up.



Put a plastic bag on your table to protect the surface from glue. Run a small line of glue along the top and back of the leather just at the end. Fit it inside the clasp to one side.

Open the paper clip (or a tooth pick) to wipe off the excess glue. Give it a few minutes to dry. Test that it's secure. If not, carefully repeat.





Scotch tape your clasp to the table surface, front side down. This will be the first of many bits of tape you use during the course of this project.

A.



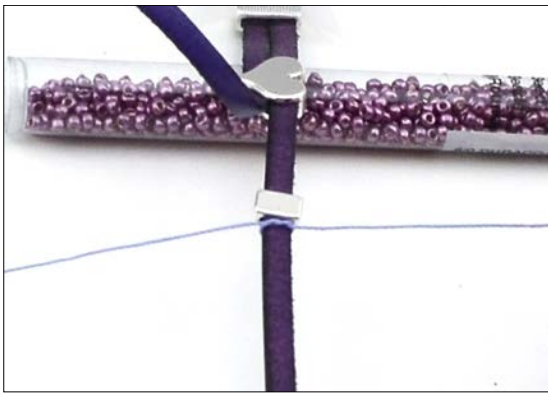
B.



When you're ready to start your macramé, add a slider first. I like to use something under the leather to lift it away from the table so I can macramé.

I also tape the leather down on the opposite end to create the tension I need, similar to a macramé board.

- A. You can start with a wide slider that holds both leathers side by side or
- B. any combination of elements but staggered. The slider(s) should rest about an inch or more away from the clasp.



Cut a length of cord 36-40 inches in length. Find the middle of it and place that under the leather near the slider.

Tie an overhand knot just to keep it in place. Get as close as you can to the slider but it doesn't have to be up against just yet.



Review our Skill Builder: [How to Macramé a Square Knot](#), if you are new to the technique.

Quick Review: First part of the stitch is make a loop on the right on top of the leather.



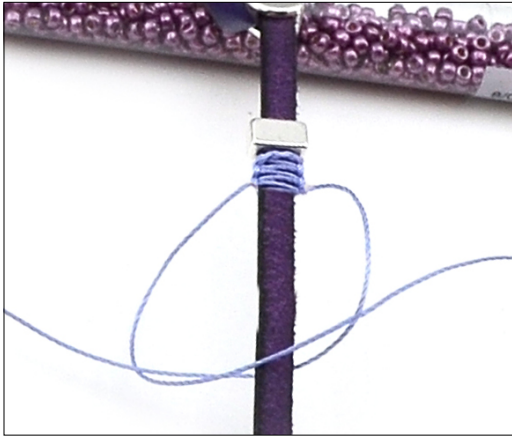
Your left cord rests on top of the right cord. The tweezers aren't necessary. They were only used to make the stitch shape more recognizable.

Bring your left cord under the leather and through the loop. Gently tighten the knot down.

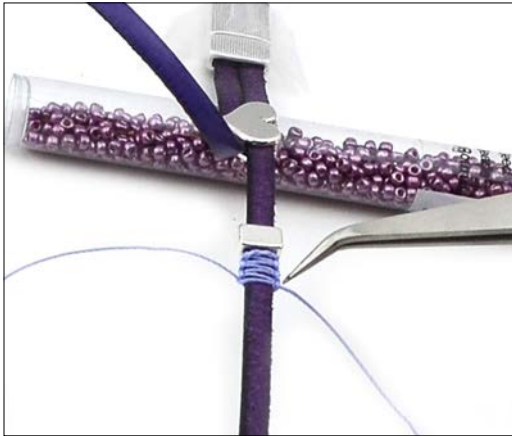
Move the knot up close to the slider.



The second half of the knot is a loop on the left. Bring the cord over the leather. The right cord is on top of the left cord.



Bring the right cord under the leather and through the loop. Gently tighten the knot.



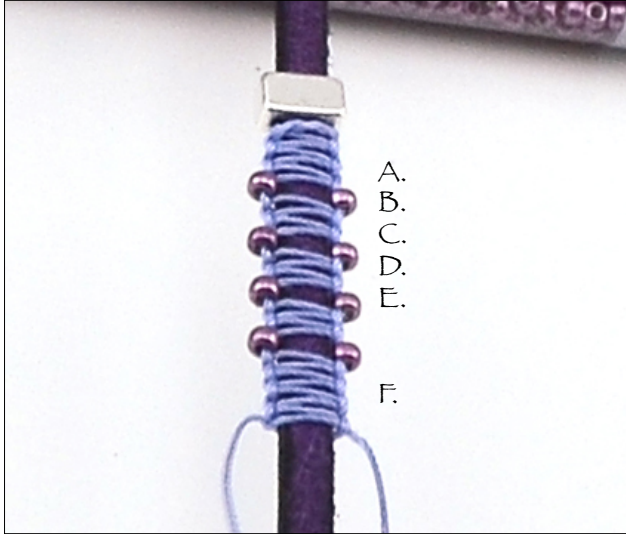
Repeat the square knot about 4 times. If you forget which side to do next, look for the loop facing up. That's the side you want to make your next loop on.



Once you have 4 full knots done, you can start adding a seed bead to each cord.



Make your macramé knots normally. The difference is there will be a bead.



In this pattern, I did:

- A. 4 full square knots
- B. Add a bead on each side and 2 full square knots.
- C. Add a bead on each side and 2 full square knots.
- D. Add a bead on each side and 2 full square knots.
- E. Add a bead on each side and 2 full square knots.
- F. 2 final full square knots



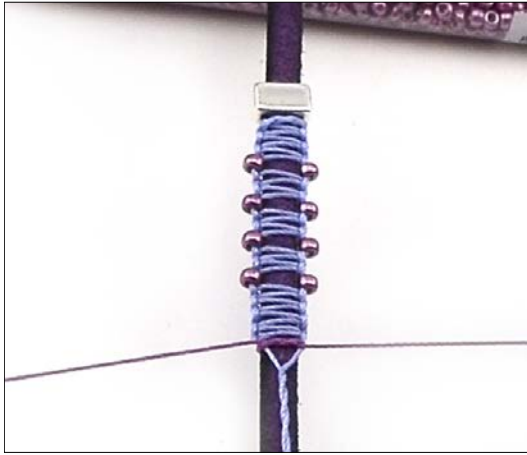
Tape a piece of scotch tape over the tails of your cord to bring them together.



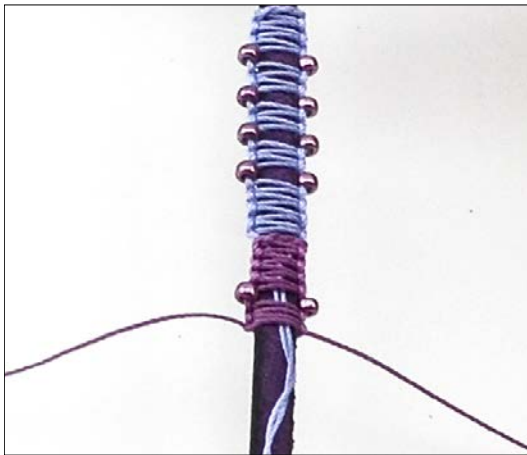
Begin twisting the tails of the cord until you have them looking more like one.



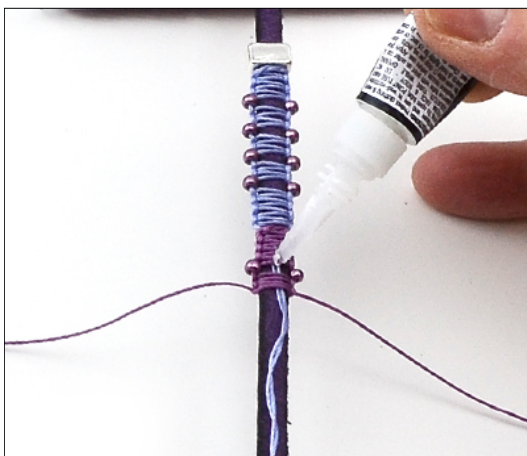
Take another piece of tape and tape the twisted cord securely to the back side of the leather. It doesn't have to look pretty!



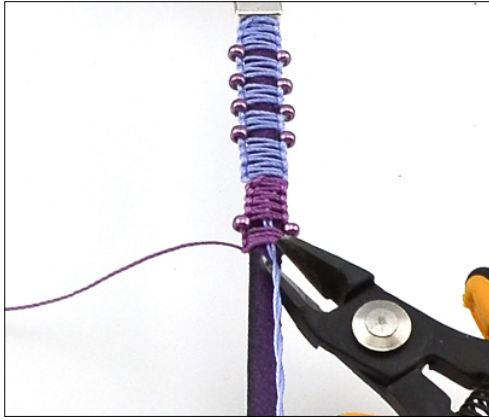
Cut a new length of a different color of cord 36-40 inches in length. Find the middle and place that under the leather just over where you ended your knots from the first color. Tie an overhand knot around the ends of the previous color.



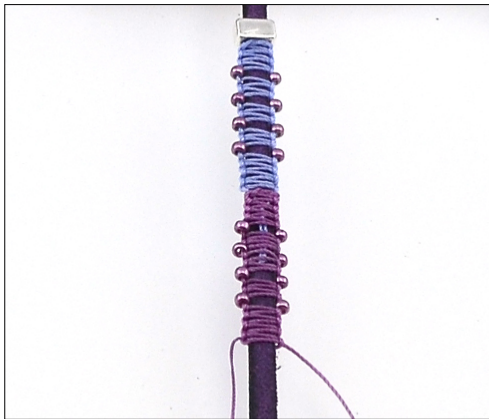
Begin your macramé with 4 full square knots.



Add a small dab of glue on the C-Lon tails from the previous color, making sure to keep it to a small dab.



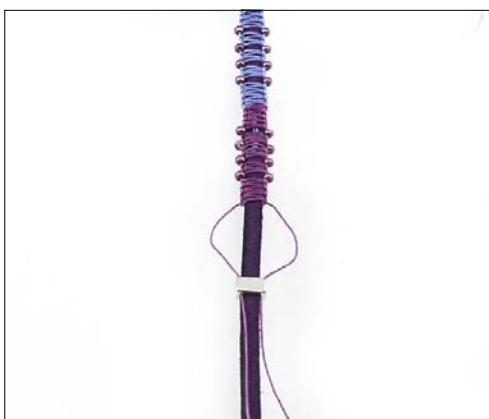
With your flush cutters you can now cut away the tails of the previous C-Lon, making sure not to cut the new color.



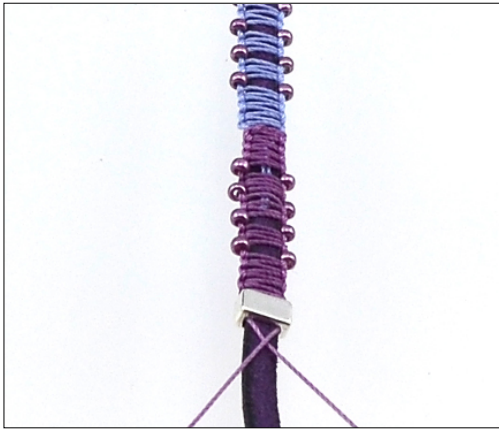
Continue your macramé pattern with your new cord.



String on another slider, almost up to your macramé knots. Thread your cord through a needle and feed the tail through the slider. Repeat with the other tail using the same needle.



The fit might be tight, but do your best to get the cord on the back of the leather.



Take the ends of the C-Lon and do your best to cross them to bring them on the back of the leather.



Tie the tails together into a square knot (right over left, left over right). Gently pull tight. Add a small dab of glue on the knot.

Allow the glue to dry.



Cut the excess cord with your flush cutters. If you have a thread burner, use it carefully to singe the ends.

Please see our Skill Builder: How to Use a Thread Burner, if you are new to this tool.



Now the real fun begins! You now know the technique to embellish with macramé. Time to lift the project off the table and try it on. Wrap the leather around your wrist and begin to build the design....where do you want sliders?



Add a slider and experiment. The design will come!

String on another slider almost up to your macramé knots.

Thread your cord through a needle and feed the tail through the slider. Repeat with the other tail using the same needle. The fit might be tight but do your best to get the cord on the back of the leather.



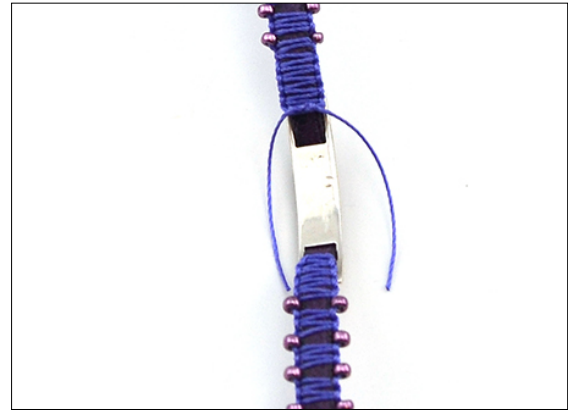
As you begin building, the pattern starts to emerge. The pattern and number of wraps is limited only by your creativity.



It is recommended that each extended macramé section begin and end with a metal component. The sliders act as book ends to keep the stitches in place and aid in hiding any unsightly endings.

You will probably find as you try it on, design, try it on again and then design that you can be unstructured in the pattern of each macramé section; they all don't need to be the same. The goal is to have the colorful beads and stitches and the sliders placed at intervals that will show a balanced, interesting design when worn.

With some sliders, you won't be able to thread the tails of C-Lon through the slider; just tie a square knot, add a drop of glue, cut the tails and then singe the ends off.



When you get almost to the desired length, try it on again. Even out the two straps so they are the same length.

Measure one more time and then use your flush cutters to cut the two ends straight across where you want them to fit into the inner opening of your clasp.

Test that the ends sit side by side inside the clasp. Add glue to the back side of the leather and fit inside the clasp. Allow to dry.

NOTE:

We found sometimes the leather was uneven and could be too thick to fit a slider opening. It can be frustrating, but it's usually an easy fix.

Using flush cutters, angle cut the leather end to make it more narrow. Also shave a bit of the thickness off by using the cutters to give it a little buzz cut.

As you feed the leather through the slider opening, you may need chain nose pliers to pull the leather through. Once on, it's ready to move into place.

Also, sometimes the sueded backside of the leather can look furry. Just run your fingers along it and wipe away the little bits. With wear, it will smooth out. However, when you first wear it, we don't recommend wearing it with white pants, etc. Give it a road test until you're sure it's done shedding.

Each sample done by our team tells a story personal to the maker. We hope your creations speak to you with your voice. Don't be afraid to mix your colors of cord, use more than one color of seed bead...just express yourself!

We would love to see your designs. Would you like to enter it into Beader Showcase? Please do! And if you would like to let me know how we're doing, how you're doing, what projects you'd like..please feel free to contact me. I can best be reached at feedback.beadshop@gmail.com

Happy beading!
~janice



Desert Lavender
By: Janice Parsons



Country
By: Janice Parsons



Jess
By: Janice Parsons



Black Heart
By: Karen Marshall



Mirage
By: Grace Noland



Annie Oakley
By: Cara Scopazzi



Trail Ride
By: Janice Parsons