



Kumihimo Leather Bracelets

By Michelle Phipps

Michelle is back with a new Kumihimo lesson! This time she's using leather to braid, and the result is a gorgeous braided bangle that you'll want to make multiples of! Perfect in a stack, great for a gift, these beauties will have you making more and more!

These are Kumihimo Kongoh-Gumi 8-element braids with a blunt end start. Let's go!



Ingredients:

- 1 Magnetic Clasp with 8mm opening
- 12 Yards 1mm Leather
- 12 Yards 1.5mm Leather

Leather Notes: You'll cut 4 pieces of leather (2 in each size) each 60 - 75". This length will make up to a 9" bracelet. Your minimum cord length should be 60", anything shorter and you will struggle with putting cords in the slots of the disk as you get towards your desired length. It is best to over estimate the length of leather. Your tension and the type of leather used (distressed, coated, painted, etc) makes a difference as some are more or less flexible than others.

Tools:

- Kumihimo 32 slot, 20mm disk
- 8 Bobbins (number with permanent marker 1 through 8)
- Kumi weight
- GS Hypo Cement AND Zap Jewelry Gel or E6000
- Flush Cutter

Additional Supplies:

- Tape measure
- Scrap piece of string/cord 5" long folded in half and knotted for lark head loop
- Toothpick and baggie
- Fine tip marker
- Small hair elastic

Layouts:

Timeless

Warps 1,6 - 1.5mm Distressed Gray
Warps 2,5 - 1.5mm Distressed Gray
Warps 3,8 - 1.0mm Natural
Warps 4,7 - 1.0mm Natural

Every Intention (twisted)

Warps 1,6, - 1.0mm Distressed Green
Warps 2, 5 - 1.5mm Azure Blue
Warps 3, 8 - 1.5mm Azure Blue
Warps 4, 7 - 1.0mm Distressed Green

The 1mm leather cinches up, which makes the twist, so when finished you will have less of the 1mm leftover compared to the 1.5mm strands.

Cord Placement:

Top position of disk is the furthest away from your body, and is referred to as the North position. East/West cords are placed **over** the North/South cords. This placement will make an enclosed blunt end for one half of the clasp to be attached to.

Place cords as follows:

Making sure cords are evenly centered over the disk. (Fig.1)

North/South positions

- Cord 1 left slot of 32 (N) and left slot of 16 (S)
- Cord 2 right slot of 32 (N) and right slot of 16 (S)

East/West positions

- Cord 3 slot above 8(E) and slot above of 24 (W)
- Cord 4 slot below 8 (E) and slot below of 24 (W)

Place lark head cord loop under all of the cords on the disk and put the knotted end through the loop, pull to tighten around all of the cords to make a lark head knot (Fig.2), then attach the kumi weight to this cord.

Warps:

Wrap each cord on to the coordinating numbered warp bobbin. Start wrapping cord around bobbin from cut end of cord, fold over curved edge of bobbin to secure wrapped cord.

Before you begin to braid, measure and mark the inner depth of your clasp on a flush end of a toothpick, so you will know how long to make the section that goes into the each end of the clasp (Fig. 3) Make sure to measure both pieces of the clasp as the depth may vary.

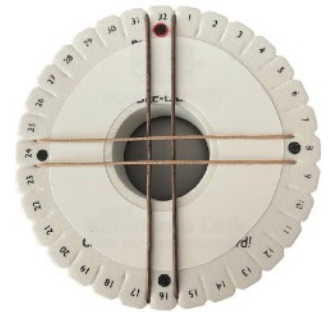


Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

Braiding:

Start by holding disk in the North position. Sit up straight and make sure the bobbins and weight are freely hanging and then begin braiding.

Kumi Mantra:

Bottom left (warp 6) up to top slot left of 31, top right (warp 2) down to bottom right slot of 15 then rotate $\frac{1}{4}$ turn to the left.

- One complete movement consists of two cords being moved and a $\frac{1}{4}$ turn to left. Warp slot numbers will change as you are braiding and rotating disk.
- Repeat Mantra until you have reached desired length.
- Keep in mind as you are braiding that you should always be measuring as you go and your measurement of your final length should include the length of both pieces of the clasp.
- Braid about a half inch or so longer than your desired length as it will be easier for preparing the raw ends for gluing on the other half of the clasp.

Finishing:

After your last full movement including the turn, put a tiny dab of GS Hypo Cement where the cords intersect (Fig. 4)

Then, take the next two cords that would technically be your next move (they should be opposite corners to each other) (Fig. 5) and tie them together in a single overhand knot.

Pull taut and place the cords back into slots (Fig.6) then put a few dots of GS Hypo Cement on the knot (Fig. 7). Do this until all 4 pairs of cords have been knotted and glued. Let dry for 10 mins.

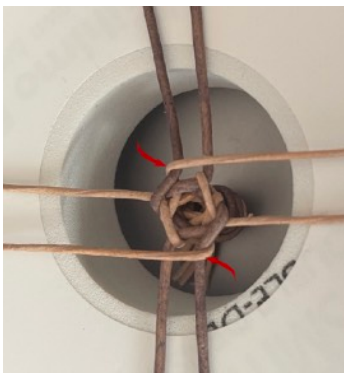


Fig. 4

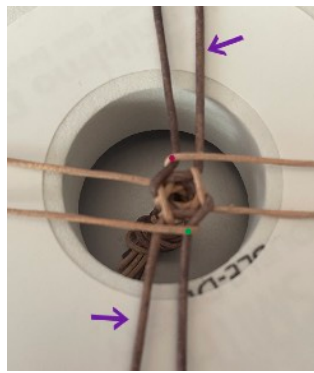


Fig. 5



Fig.6

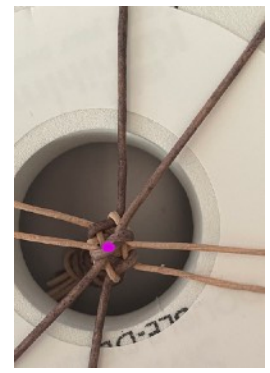


Fig.7

Removing Braid From Disk:

Now that all the cords are tied and glued, it is safe to remove your braid from the disk. If you have more than 4" of excess leather hanging below the disk, it is best to trim it as it will make it easier to put on the elastic in the next step.

From the underside, in the center of the disk, grip the braid as close as you can to where the knot is (Fig. 8). While holding firmly, you can begin to remove the cords one at a time from the disk.

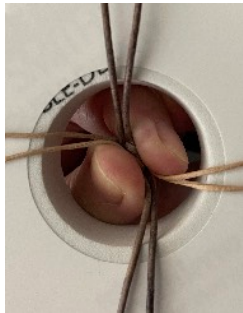


Fig. 8



Fig. 9



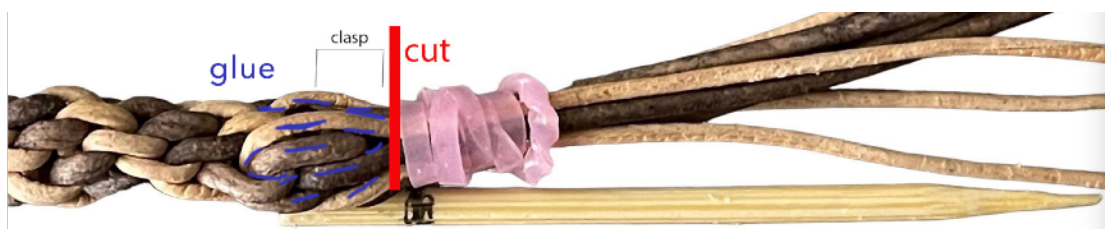
Fig. 10

Once the braid is free from the disk, secure the loose ends by wrapping with an elastic. (Fig. 9). Push the elastic up as close as you can to the braid, using your marked toothpick as a guide adjusting as needed (Fig. 10). This will keep the raw ends in a conical shape which will make it easier for gluing on clasp.

Preparing Cut Ends:

Use GS Hypo Cement on all the outer intersections of the braid. Once the cut has been made, the center of the braid won't have any glue on it, so this will help to hold the braid together and give you enough time to glue on the clasp (Fig. 11). Let glue cure/dry completely before making the cut.

If you find that the end is a bit bulky, you can put a baggie over the braid then gently massage braid with pliers to even out the end.



Gluing On Clasp

Standard Gluing Method:

Put some Zap or E6000 on a baggie and use a toothpick to thinly spread some glue on the inside of one half of the clasp, then also put glue on the tip of the braid. Slide the clasp over braid and roll the braid around inside of the clasp to make sure all sides of the braid has made contact with the inside of the clasp.

Wait a few minutes until you can feel that the clasp is attached to the braid before continuing to glue the other end.

Blunt End:

Take the blunt end of braid, remove the weight and lark head loop. Follow the standard gluing method and glue on clasp.

Cut Ends:

Once you have prepared the raw ends and have made the cut as explained above (Fig.11) The clasp can be attached by following the standard gluing method.

Completion:

Once both sides of the clasp have been glued on to the braid, **do not connect** the magnetic clasp ends of the bracelet together, lay braid flat and allow the glue to cure overnight before wearing.

