

Cording and Tassels

I will be giving brief cord making instruction here (no pictures) and spend the most time with the instruction (including pictures) for attaching the cording, ending the cording and adding tassels to the ends of cording. Hopefully you will find these instructions clear and easy to follow. If you get even the least little bit confused please e-mail me and I will try to revise them or add whatever is necessary to clarify it for you.

Getting started...general rules for making your cording: You can make your cording out of so many things. Do not limit your self to just certain fibers. You can make you cording out of metallic braid, ribbons, silk, jute...whatever you can think of. Just try it and if you like it - go for it.

A general rule when deciding how long your cording needs to be to start is to wrap whatever it is you have decided to use (I shall say floss from this point on just to simplify things here) around the area you want to add cording to and then multiply it by three. Don't forget to add for any bows or ties you may be wanting.

Decide how thick you want the cording by adding lengths of floss and folding it over and twisting just a very small section with your fingers. This will give you a pretty good idea of how thick it will be. I generally use 4 strands of 6 ply cotton floss. You do not need to separate them prior to making your cording.

Tie one end to a cord winder, electric drill, hand mixer (use just one blade), or whatever works for you and knot the other end. Have someone hold the knotted end with a clean pair of pliers or tie it to a silverware drawer or whatever and start twisting. When the cord crimps (you will know what I mean as soon as it happens) untwist it a couple times to get the crimp out and fold it in the center so the two ends meet. If possible run your finger down the center of the cording letting only a small amount of cording twist at a time. If you do not have someone helping you this can be difficult to do and if this is the case you will just have to let the cording twist on itself and then when you have cut it loose and secured the ends together you can play the cording to even it all out. **Note: If you add a weight like a pair of scissors or washer to the center of the cording it will twist smoother when you drop it. A great tip from a stitcher who will have to forgive me as I have forgotten who it was...sorry, I am such a ditz...but, thank you as it is a terrific idea.** If you have to add a weight to the center of your cord...tie it on. Then you can just cut the tie off and you still have the clean folded end to work with. Or you can use one of those metal rings that open (like the floss away metal rings).

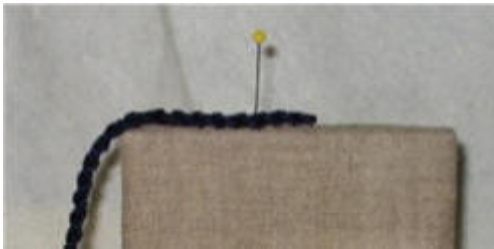
OK, so now you have made your cording...we shall continue with detailed instructions for starting and stitching your cording onto your project.

Attaching the cord:

Figure out where you want your cording to begin and end. You should always keep it on the bottom half of your project. I generally end my cording on the bottom right

side or center back but never on the corner. (If you plan on adding a bow directly over the cording...begin and end your cording where you will place the bow. The bow will hide the ends and you will not have to worry about it.)

Please keep in mind that I am using a large loosely twisted cord and thread that does not match in the hopes that you will be able to see the process a little more clearly. When you make your cording you should twist it as tight as you can and use matching thread so it disappears into the cording. If you make your cording out of floss use the floss to stitch it on also.



Decide where you want your cord to begin. (for these instructions I shall start at the top just because it will be easier to hold and take pictures). Pin the folded end about 1/4 to 1/2 inch down so that 1/4 to 1/2 inch of the cord is loose. Secure your thread to the project and start stitching the cord on at the pin spot.

When I stitch cording on I catch the twist of the cording from the under side. I do not go over the top and wrap in the twist of the cording. I use a curved needle and work from the under side of the cord: **Hot tip: Notice the rubber maid piece of drawer liner I am working on. Having this on your working surface will keep your project from slipping and sliding away from you while you are working.**



Pull the loose length of cord up and out of the way and catch the cord on the underside just over the spot where you will be attaching it to the project. Go through the cording and insert your needle into the linen exactly under where you caught your cord. Travel under the linen about 1/8 inch and exit your needle. Give the thread a little tug to pull your cording on nice and smooth and hide the thread. Again pull the cord up and out of your way and grab the underside of the cord with your curved needle and then go through the linen. Travel under the linen about 1/8 inch and exit your needle.



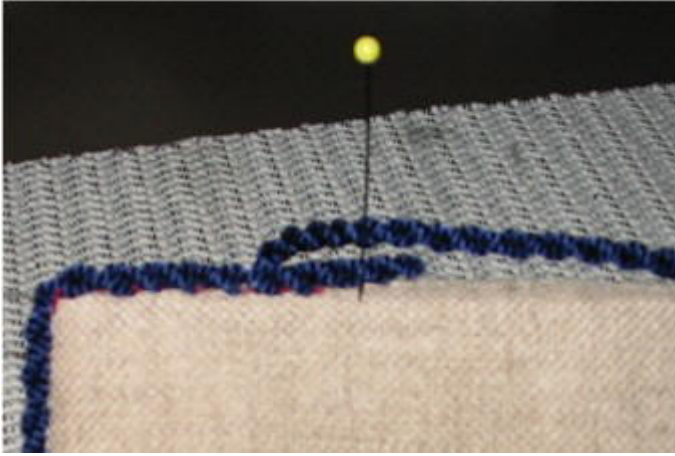
You can pull your sewing thread tight

(do not brake it) and the stitching will disappear. No really, it will...trust me.

Repeat this process until you reach the starting point. Twist your cord as you stitch it on to keep the original twist nice and tight.

To end the cord: Of course there are many ways you can end your cording. This definitely depends on what you are wanting for the end result. Example: If you want a bow and it is going over the starting point then you can just glue and cut the cord where it meets itself and secure it to your project. Then just add the bow or button or what ever where the two ends meet. Actually, I will just add some pictures of possible cord ending and bows and ties at the end of these instructions. The possibilities are just endless so for these instruction I will just show you how to end a cord that has nothing over it so must be nice and neat. Then you can do your thing. :)

Ending invisibly:

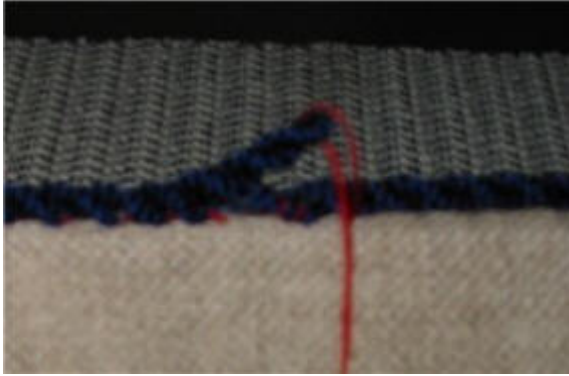


Once you have stitched your cording on and you get to the beginning point you need to mark the cording so it ends at a point under the loose piece of cord that you left at the beginning. This is where you will cut the excess cord off.



To secure the cut cord so it does not twist you need to untwist a small loop of cording just at the point where you will cut it. Add a small tad of hot glue or clear drying glue. Re-twist the cord and once the glue is dry cut the excess length of cord off a the glued area.

Finish stitching the **ending** cord onto your project.



Insert your threaded needle through the beginning cord loop.



Pull the folded end down tightly over and along the top of the ending cord.

Stitch the loose folded end down so it is tight against the ending cord and project.



Whip stitch the two cords together laying the thread so it lays along a twisted groove. Pull tightly so the two cords become one and is the same thickness as the rest of the cording.

Remember, you will not see the thread because yours will be the same color as the cording. Wow, doesn't that seem so easy. :)

Making Tassels and Adding tassels to the end of cords:

Note: To make a tassel you could follow these exact same instructions but leave out the cording. Yep, that is the only extra step to adding tassels to the ends of cording. The hardest part is knowing where to add your tassels...in other words...how long do you need your cording to be. That would be your measurement...I can't help you with that one. :) Now, on we go.



Wrap a piece of cardboard with your floss or whatever (I will instruct with floss because it is easy) I generally wrap an approximate 2 inch square of cardboard about 50 wraps.



Cut the floss off the cardboard

template and lay it out flat.



Knot the end of your

cord and lay it in the center along the length of the floss with the knot at the bottom. **Note: Skip this step if you are just making a tassel with no cording.**



Cut a length of floss (use all 6

plies - do not separate) and tie knot at the center of the floss.



Fold the floss strands in half with the cording at the top. **Note: If you are making just a tassel you would take the two ends of the floss you tied with and they would be at the top instead of the cord.**



Thread a sharp needle with 1 strand (all 6 plies) of DMC Floss and make a nice long loop with the thread.



Lay the loop over the top of the tassel and wrap the neck of the tassel about 7 to 10 times with the length of floss that

has the needle on it. The loose end will be pulled later so it will just dangle for now below the tassel.



Once you have wrapped the neck insert the needle through the loop from the back side (I say to come in the back door and it helps me remember) Once the needle is through slowly pull the loose floss end that is dangling below the tassel and see what happens. You are going to catch the thread as you pull. Keep the needled thread taught as you pull the loop out. Once the loop is under the neck wraps you will feel a little snap. Do not pull any longer.



Go under the just the first top wrap and bring your needle up and out at the top of the tassel just at the base of the cord. You may need a pair of "clean" pliers here.



Stitch back and forth through the cord at the base of the tassel. What you are doing here is making sure your cord does not slip out of the tassel once you have cut the knot in the cord off later.



Push your needle back down to the bottom of the tassel neck and come out amongst the floss strands. Pull the needle all the way through and cut off the long floss strands. Cut the knot off of

the cording in the center of the floss strands and untwist the cord. If your tassel is not nice and flat you can dampen it and hit it against a table edge to straighten it out. Then decide what length you want the tassel and trim it evenly across.



Good job...hey, I like that tassel at the end of your cord. :)

If you click on the "Books and Booklets" web page in the left menu you can click on any of the books pictured and scroll down and check out lots of different finishing ideas and different ways to complete your cording...with and without corded tassels.