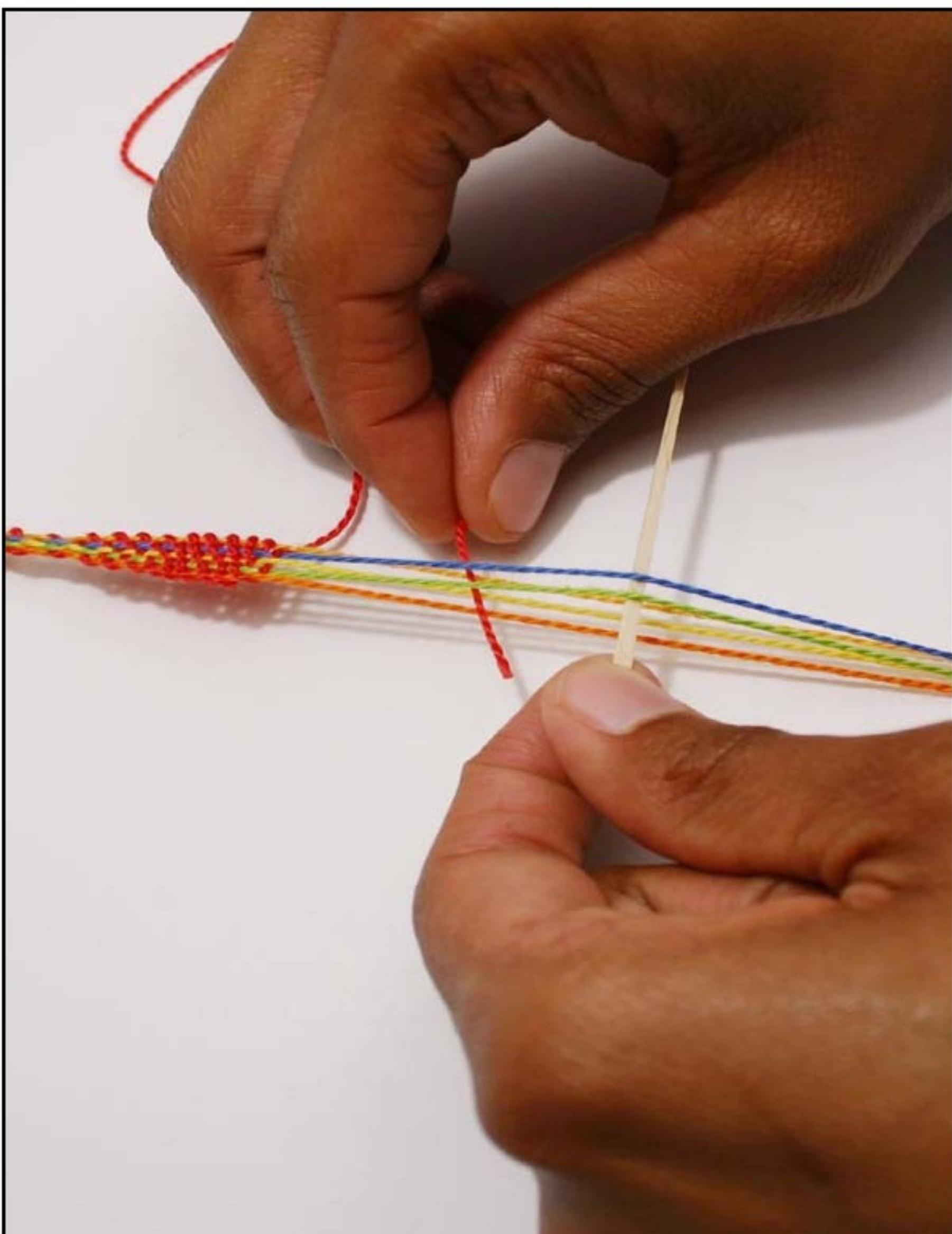


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Weave It!

Written by Kira Freed

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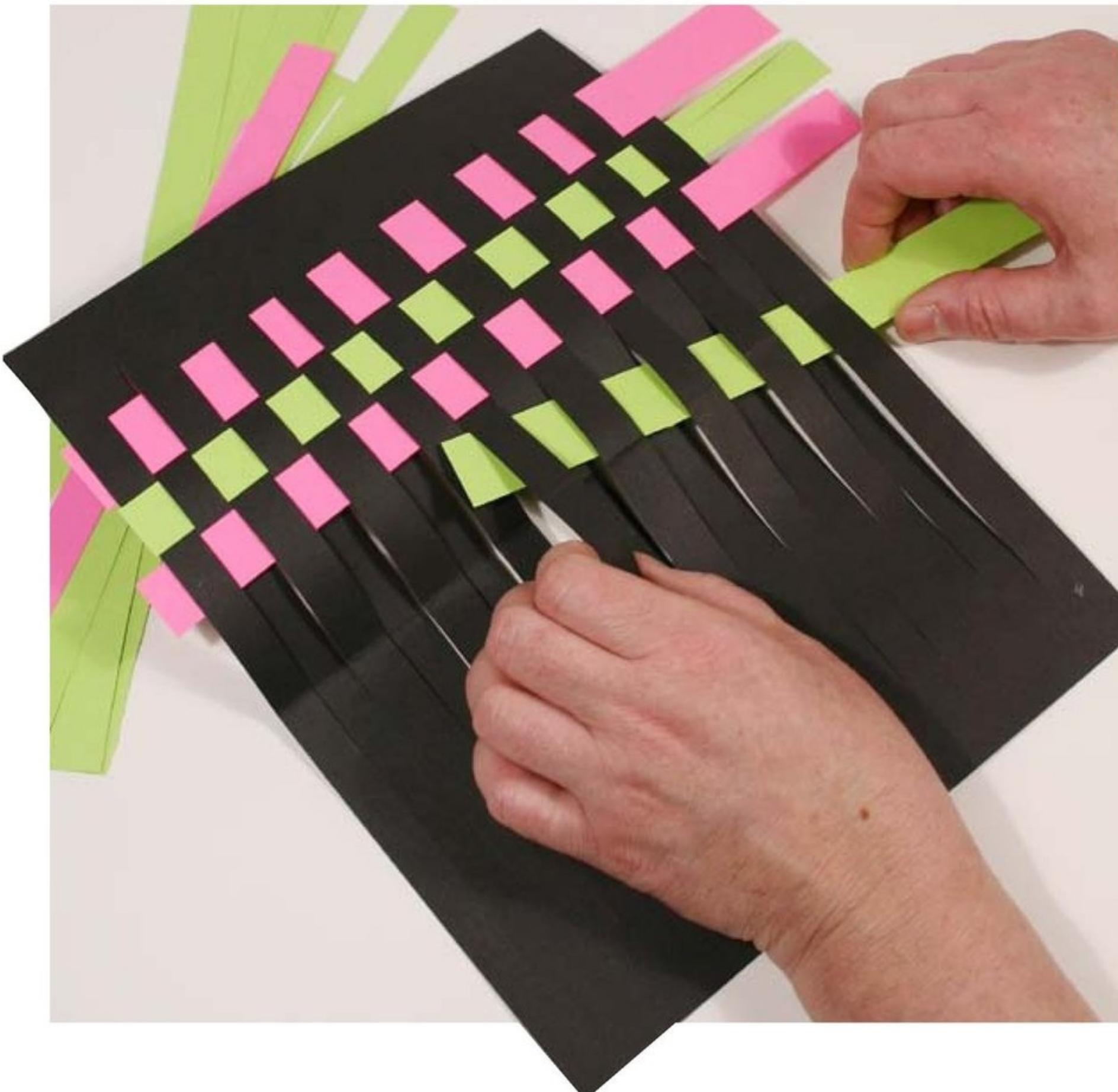


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What Is Weaving?



Weaving with natural materials

Weaving is the process of creating fabric by lacing together two sets of threads or fibers. The art and practical craft of weaving dates back

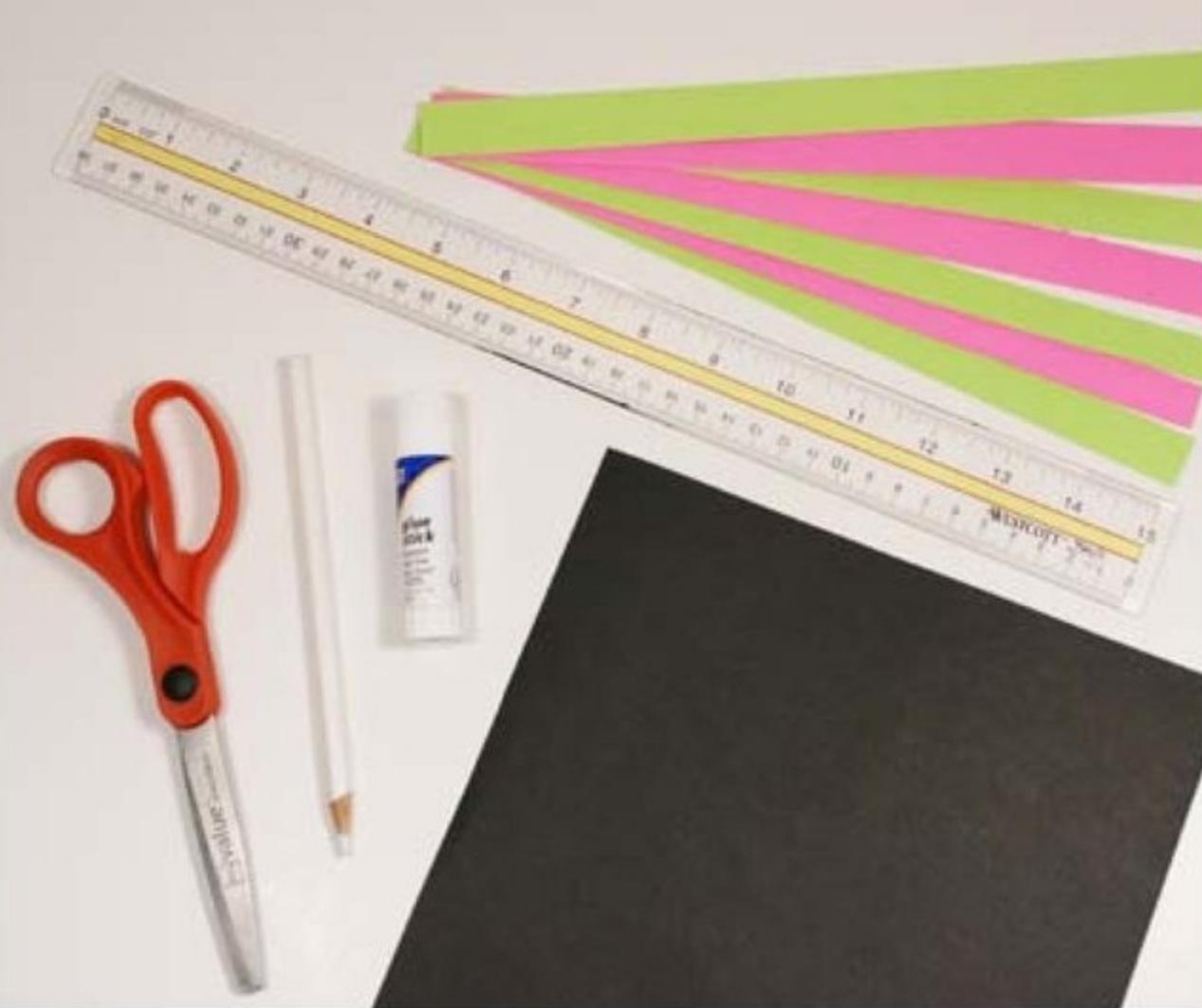
tens of thousands of years. In ancient times, people wore shirts, skirts, and hats made of grasses that had been woven together.

Before beginning a new woven pattern, the weaver needs two sets of threads as a base. The **warp** is a set of **vertical** threads that are held in position, usually over a frame, by tension. The **weft** is one or more **horizontal** threads. The weaver laces the weft over and under the warp and packs it down so the threads fit closely together and form a fabric.

This book introduces you to the art of weaving with three fun projects—a paper mat, a friendship bracelet, and a dreamcatcher. Each project will introduce you to a different way to weave. Let's begin!

Materials:

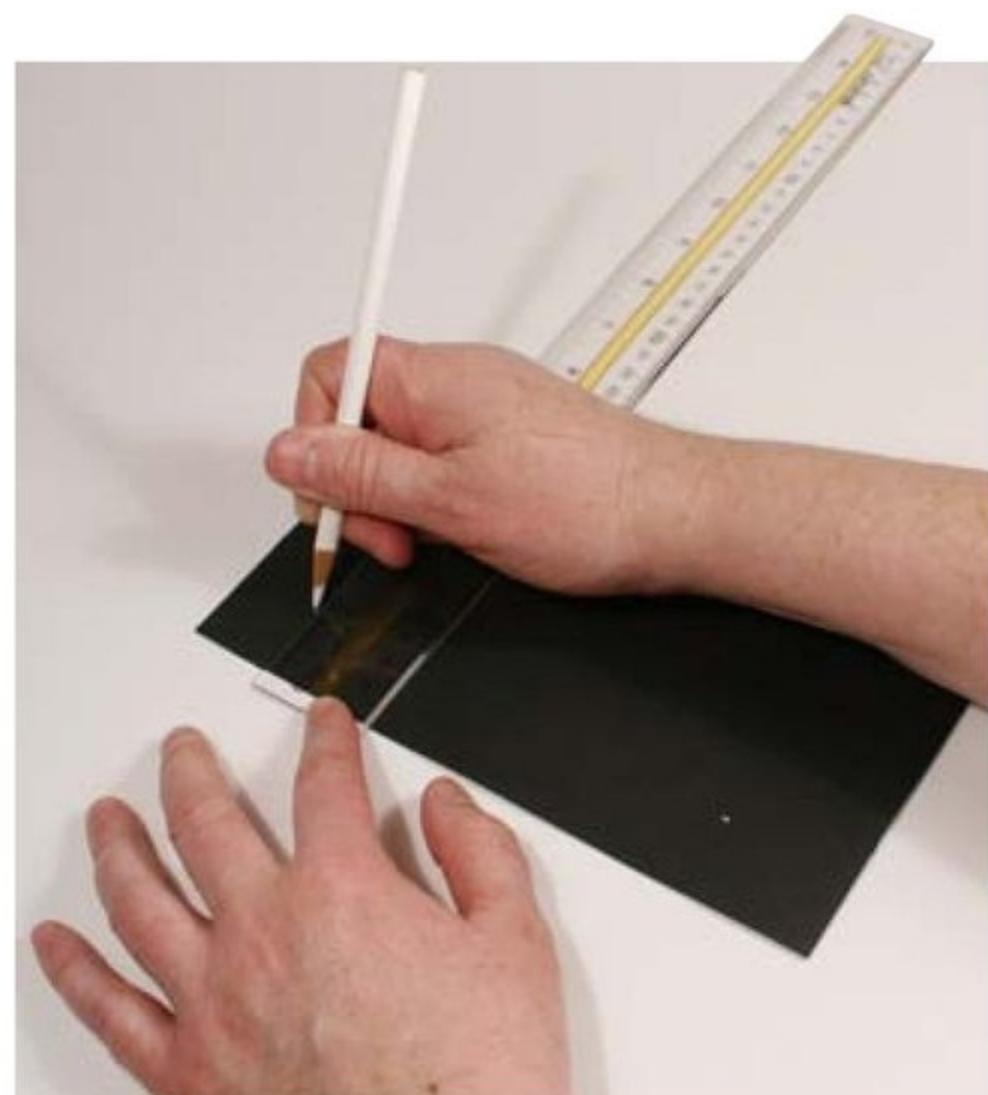
- 9" x 12" construction paper (One whole piece, a second piece cut into 1" x 9" strips)
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Scissors
- Glue stick



Paper Mat Weaving

Our first project introduces the basics of weaving with a paper-weaving activity. You can use paper weaving to make placemats, book covers, and colorful designs to hang on a wall.

- ❶ Select one piece of paper, which will be the warp, or foundation, of your project. Carefully fold it in half and draw a straight line 1" from the long open edge.



② Draw ten to twelve lines from the fold to the straight line you just drew. You may make these lines straight, curved, or a mixture. Be careful to avoid drawing lines too close to the edges of the paper. Also, avoid drawing **complicated** shapes, as this will make weaving too hard.



③ Keeping the paper folded, cut along the lines you drew in step 2. Start at the fold in the paper and stop at the straight line. *Do not cut on the straight line.* Gently unfold your paper and place it flat on the table with the cuts placed vertically.



④ Pick up a 1" x 9" strip of a different color of paper, which is the weft. Insert the strip crosswise over one warp and under the next one. If you're right-handed, start on the right side, and if you're left-handed, start on the left side. Continue weaving over one strip and under the next strip until you reach the far edge. Gently slide this weft strip all the way to the top edge of the warp, stopping at the horizontal line.



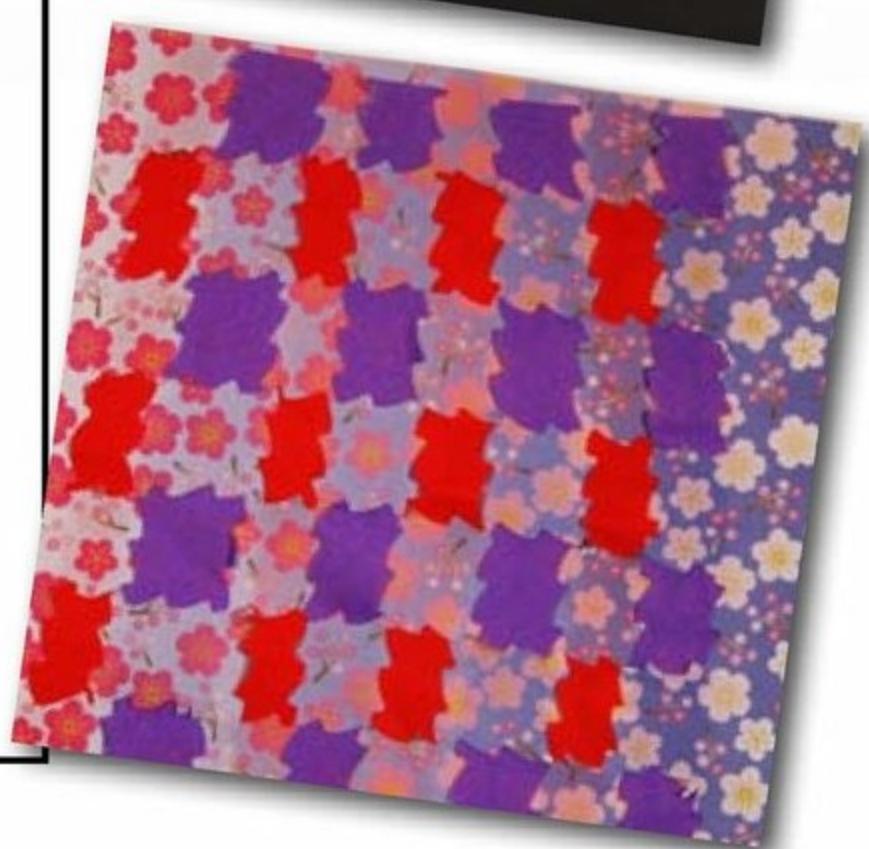
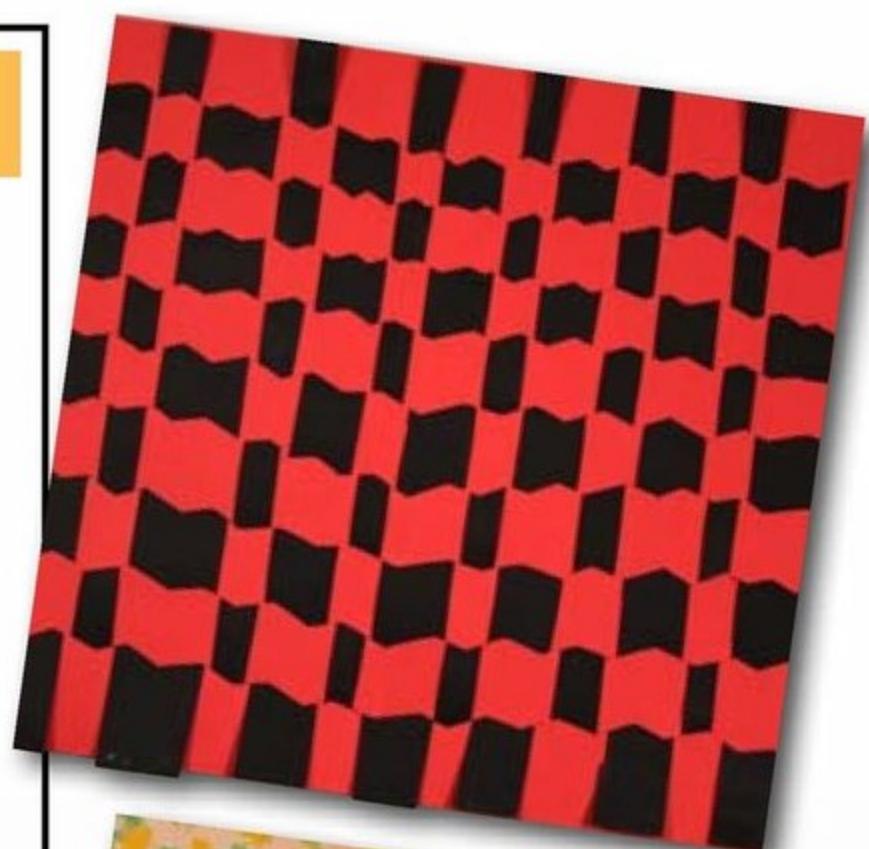
⑤ Start weaving a new row with another 1" x 9" strip of paper. Since the **previous** row began with *over one*, start this row with *under one*. Continue weaving weft strips, **alternating** how you start the rows (*over one* and then *under one*). Gently slide each weft strip up right next to the previous one. Be especially gentle as you insert the last strip to avoid tearing the paper.



⑥ After your weaving is finished, use a glue stick to attach the loose edges of the weft strips. Turn over your weaving and glue these edges, too. Congratulations—you've just finished your first weaving!

Variations

- Try different thicknesses of warps and wefts to create new patterns.
- Try other kinds of paper, such as wrapping paper or origami paper. Be careful when you handle thin paper to avoid tearing.
- Cut the weft in curves instead of straight lines. Be sure to insert the weft strips in the same order as how you cut them so they will interlock.
- Using a different color of paper, cut out a shape, such as a heart or a butterfly, from the center. Cut the weft and warp to highlight the shape you cut out.
- Paint or draw a picture on a piece of paper, and use it as the warp for a paper-weaving creation.



Materials:

- Embroidery floss of various colors
- Round toothpicks
- Masking tape
- Small beads, if desired

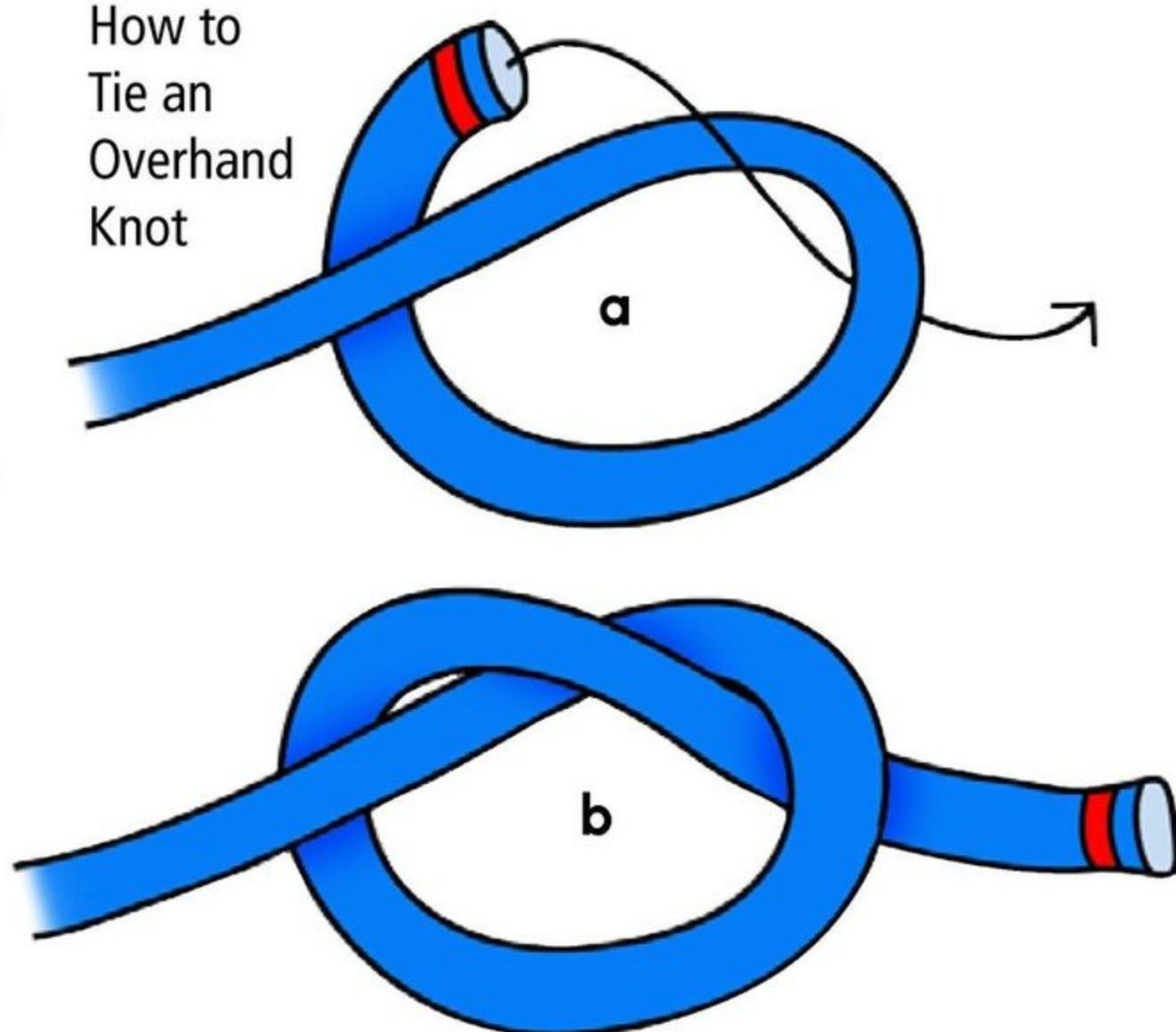


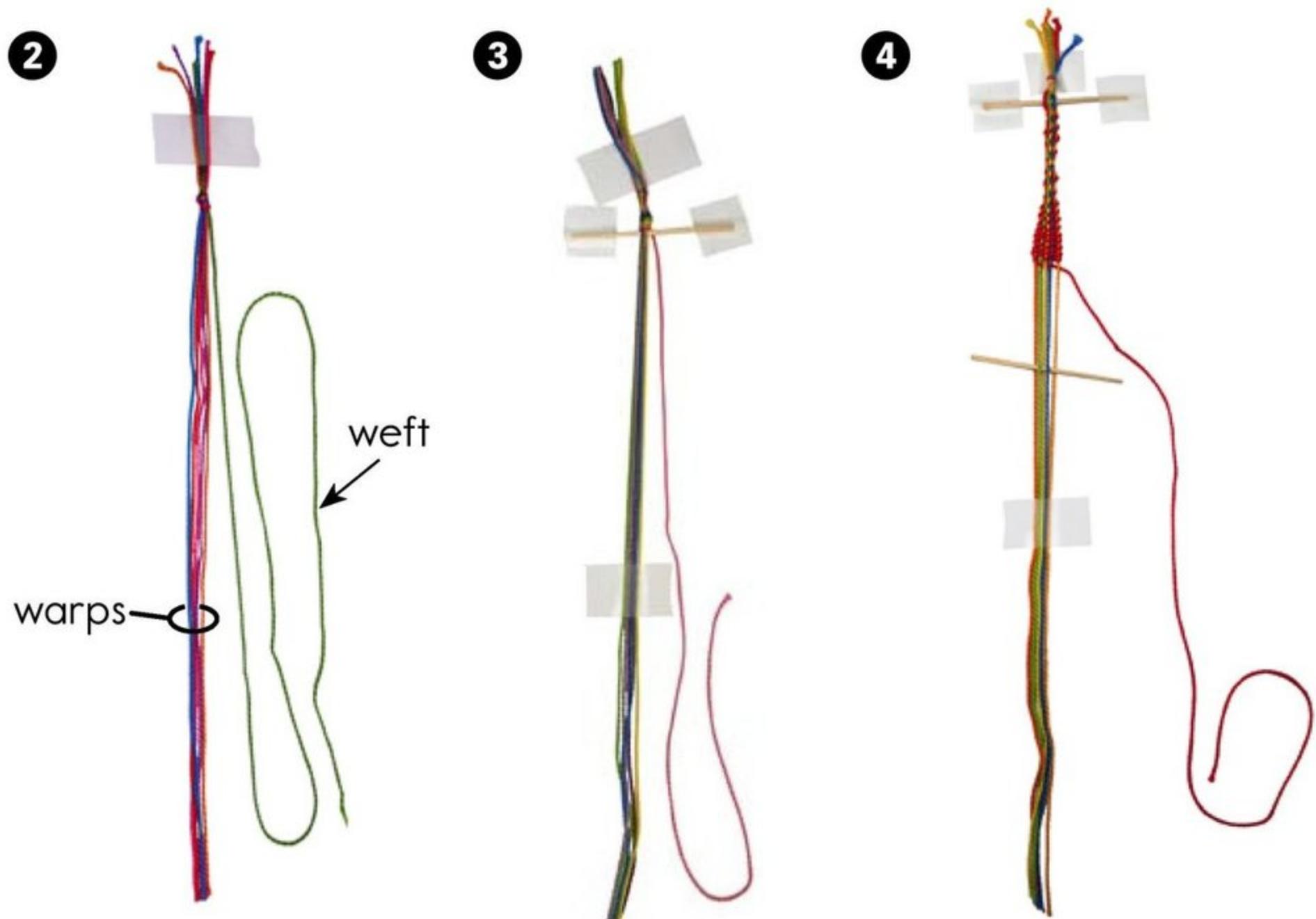
Weaving a Friendship Bracelet

Our next project uses your paper-weaving skills to work with thread. You can make friendship bracelets with this finger-weaving technique and also use it in dreamcatchers.

- ❶ Cut four to six warp threads of embroidery floss, each thread 1' long, as well as one weft thread 4' in length. Line up one end of all the threads even with each other, and tie an overhand knot 3" from the end.

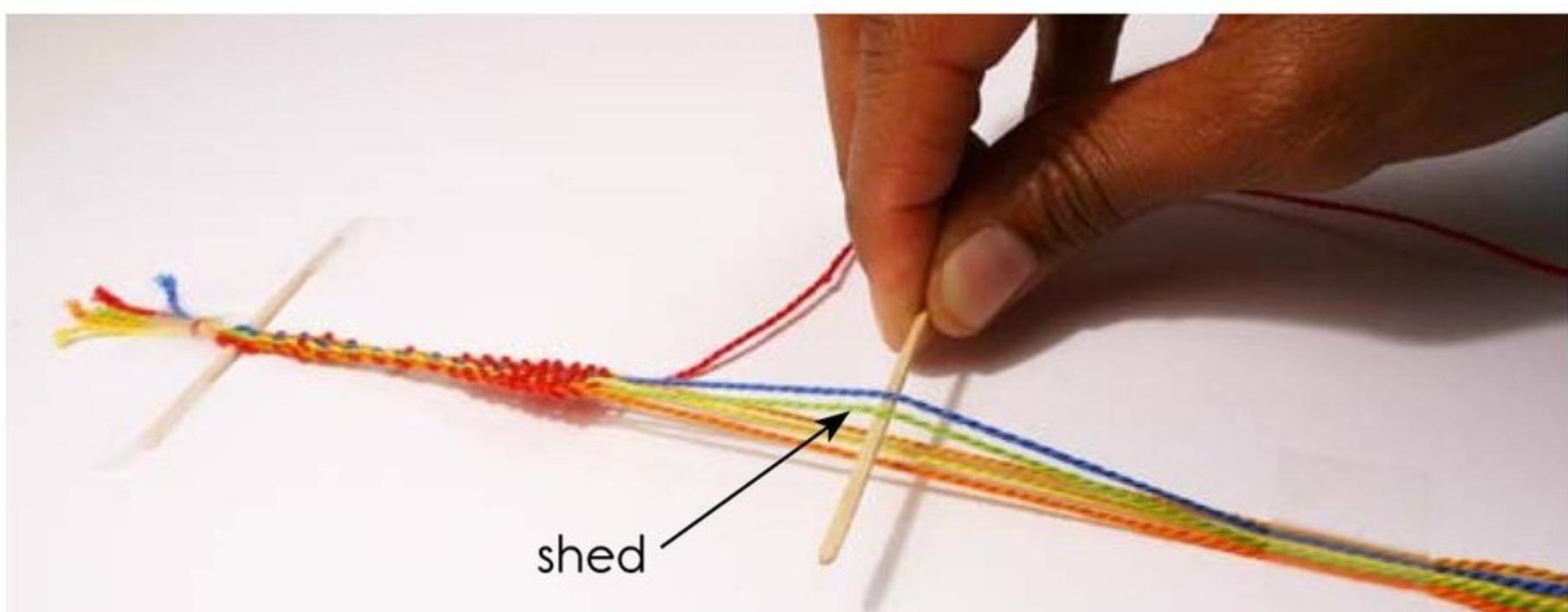
How to
Tie an
Overhand
Knot



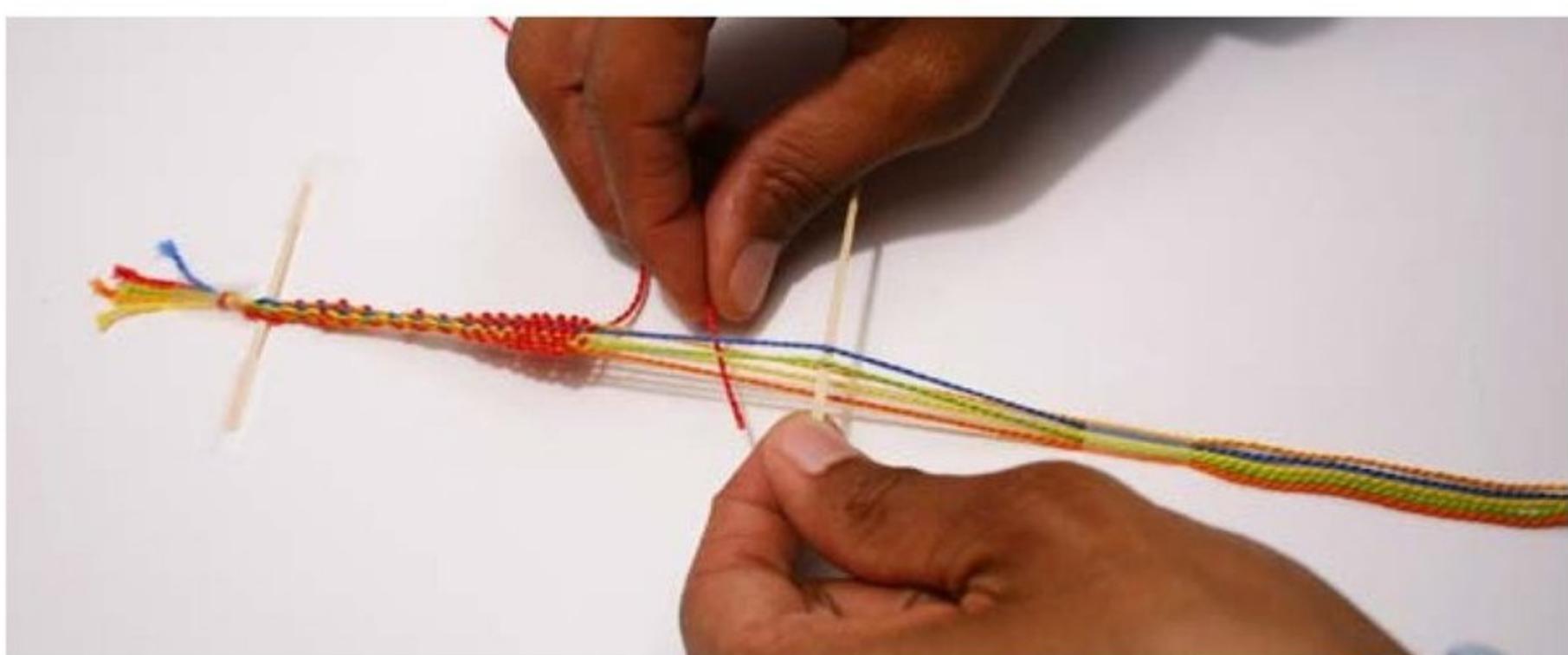


- ②** Tape the “tails” of the knotted end to your work table a few inches from the table edge closest to you.
- ③** Separate the weft thread (the long one) from the warp threads. Then decide on the order you want for your warp threads. Smooth them out flat and tape them in that order near the edge of the table.
- ④** Insert a toothpick crosswise just under the knot—over one warp thread and under the next one. Continue weaving the toothpick over one and under one until you get to the other side. This toothpick will remain in place until you finish your weaving. Tape both ends to the table.

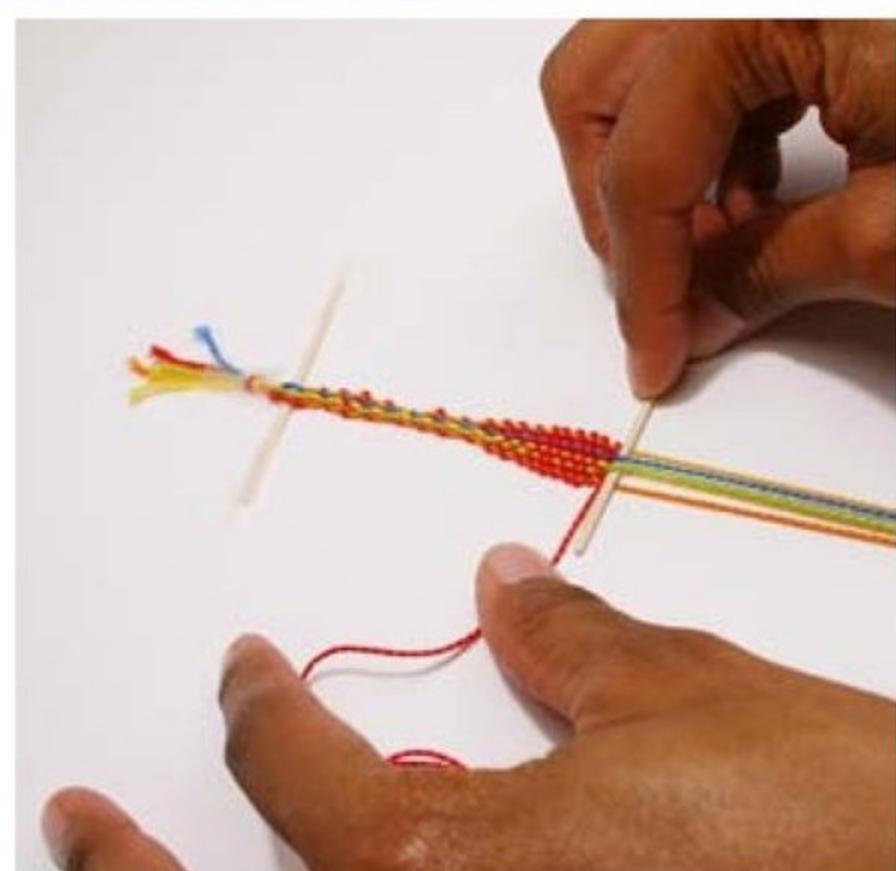
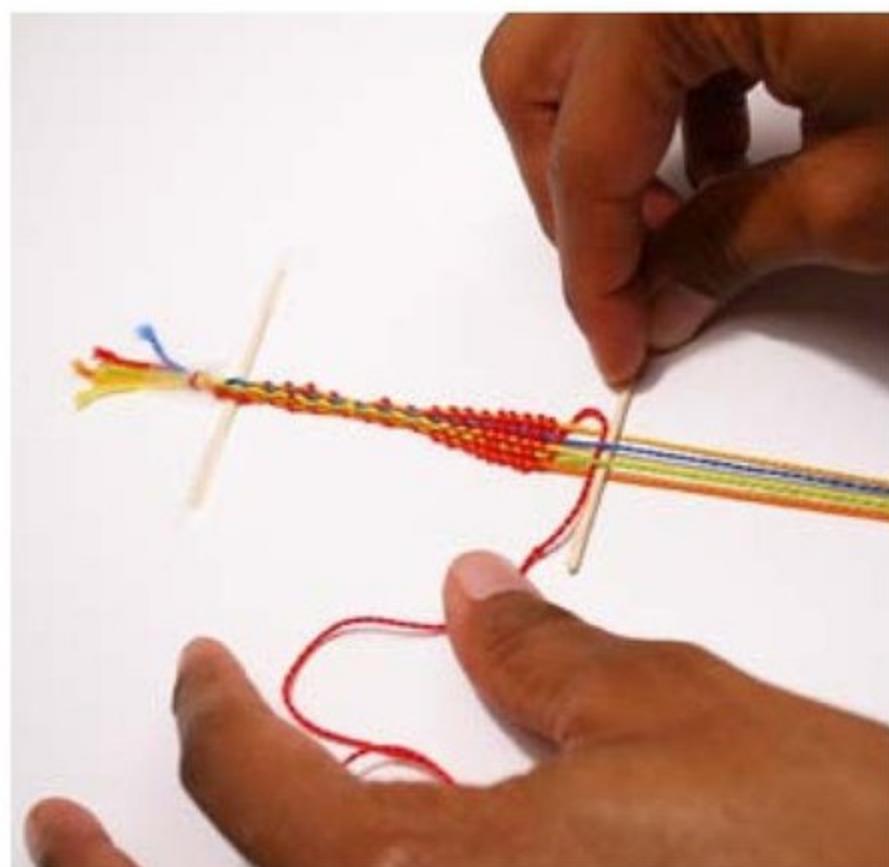
⑤ Use another toothpick to lift up every other warp thread. Lift up the *opposite* threads from the ones you lifted with the first toothpick. After you weave the toothpick through, lift it up enough to create a space, or **shed**, between the warp threads you lifted and the warp threads that are flat on the table.



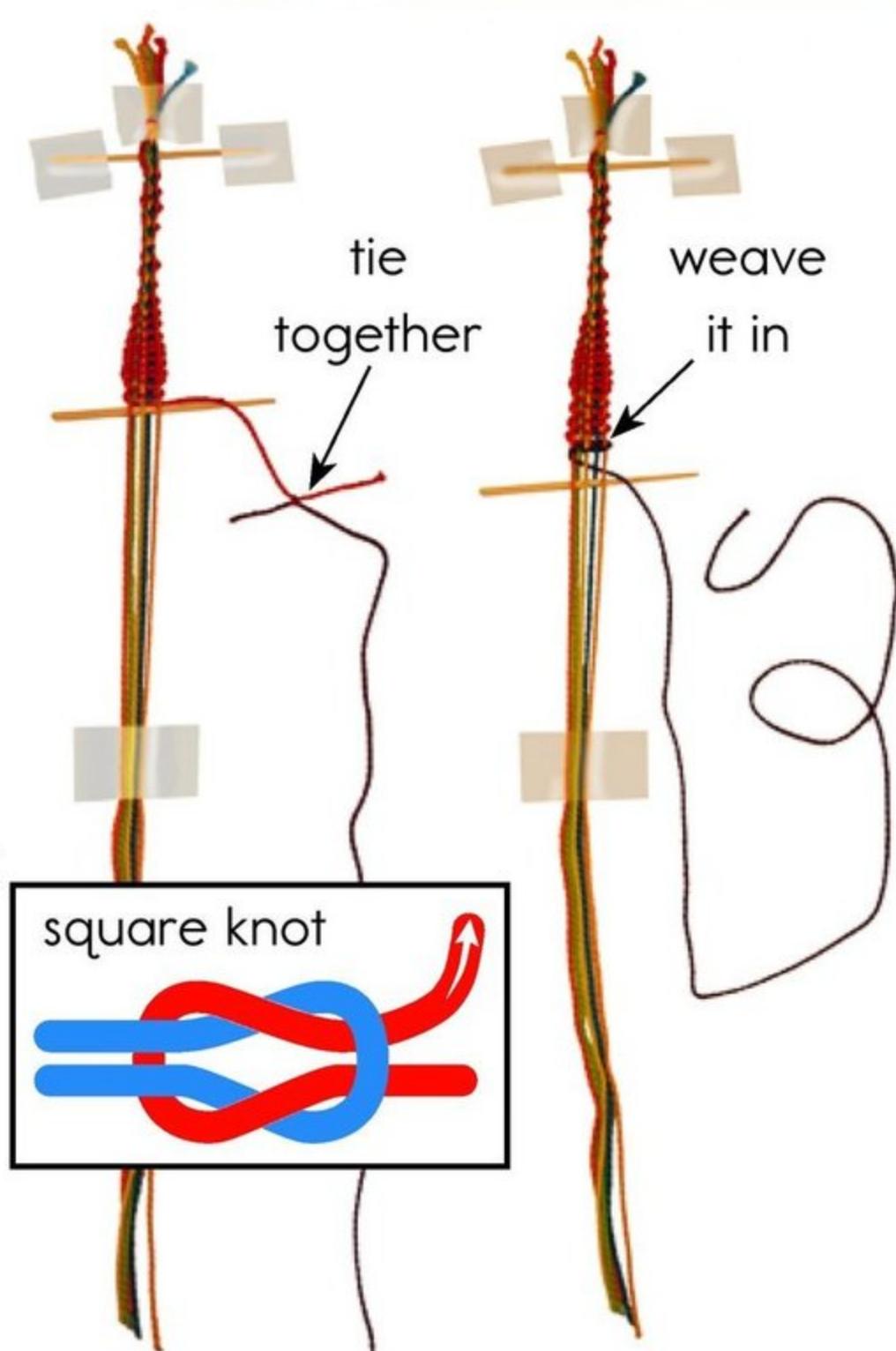
⑥ Feed the weft thread all the way through this space and gently pull it across. Slide the toothpick up and use it to pack the weft tightly against the top of the weaving.



7 Continue lifting up every other warp thread with the toothpick, feeding the weft thread through, and packing it tightly. You may need to move and retape your weaving several times as it grows. If the weft covers up the warp threads as you weave, tighten the warp threads and add more tape at the end closest to you.



8 If you get close to running out of weft thread, cut another piece and use a square knot to join the two. Do your best to position the knot in the middle of a row to hide it.

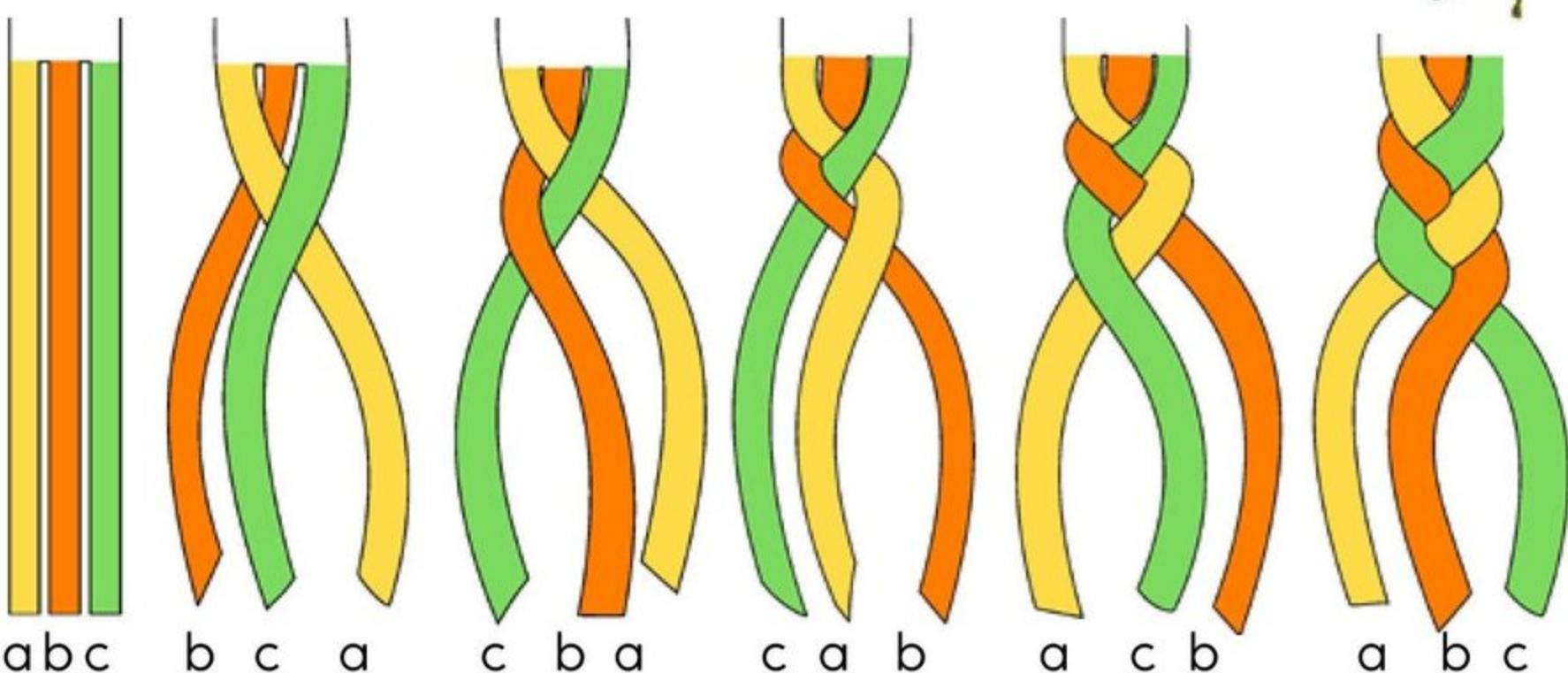


9 Stop when your weaving is as long as you want it to be. Remove the tape at the bottom and tie an overhand knot to secure the last row of weft. Cut the tails to 3" to match the other tails. Gently remove the tape from the top of your weaving and also remove the toothpick.

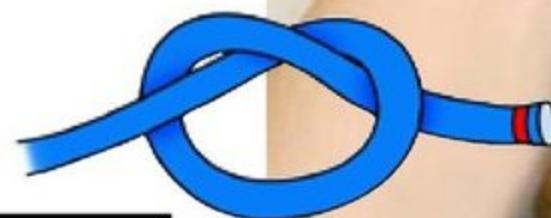
10 Finish the fringe with braiding or with an overhand knot on each piece of embroidery floss. You can also attach decorative beads if you like.



How to Braid

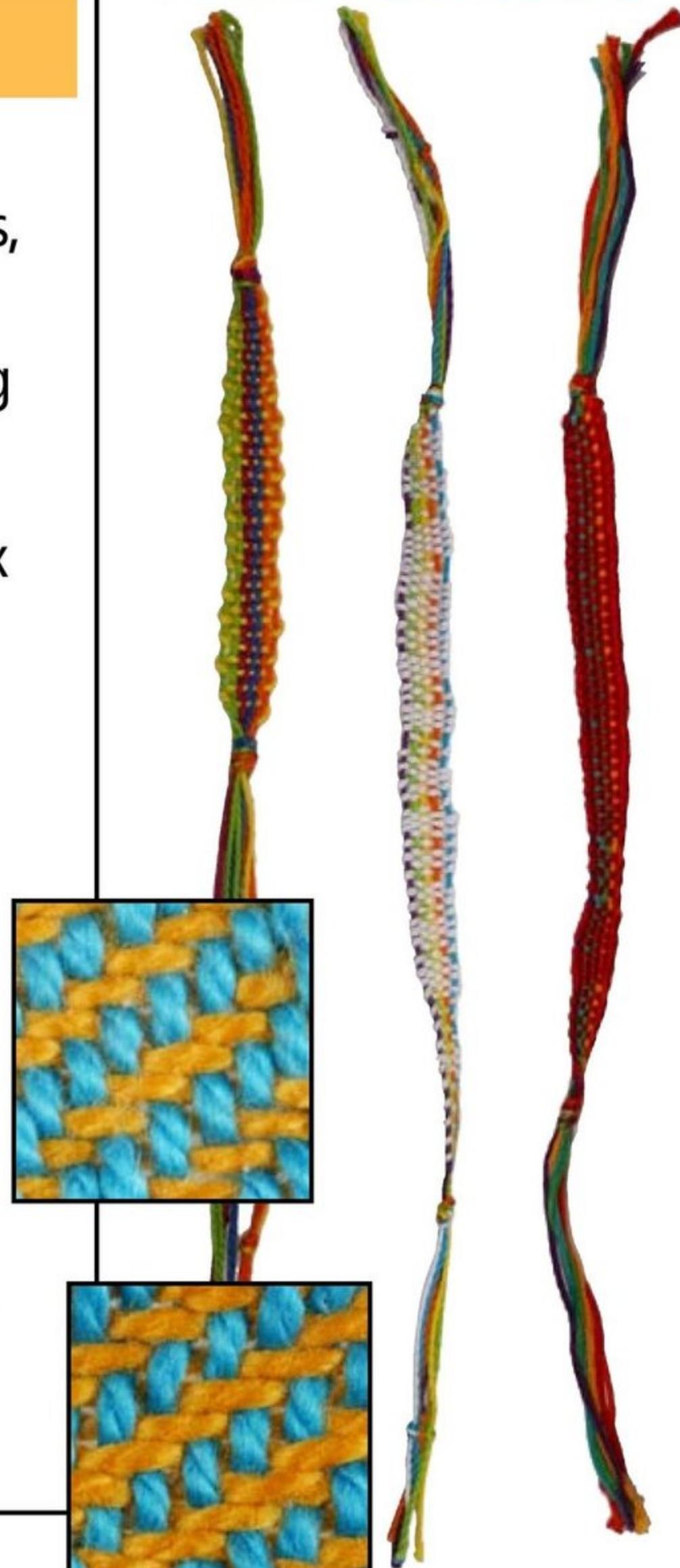


11 Use an overhand knot to tie your bracelet in place or to attach your weaving to something. Use the tails, not the woven area, to tie the overhand knot.



Variations

- Experiment with different color patterns, such as alternating warp colors or creating a stripe in the middle.
- If your weaving has six or more warp threads, you can try other weaving patterns. These two use *over two* and *under two*. Be sure to start with an even number of warp threads (not counting the one that becomes the weft) for these patterns.





Materials:

- Sturdy hoop
- Yarn and thread of various colors and textures
- Beads and shells with large holes, feathers, small bells, pompoms, and other decorative items

Dreamcatchers

Our third project combines finger weaving with other fiber techniques. Dreamcatchers are Native American objects traditionally hung over a bed or cradle. Legend has it that they catch bad dreams, which get burned up by the Sun the next day. Good dreams pass through dreamcatchers and allow for peaceful sleep.

1 Wrap a wire or wooden hoop with yarn to use as the foundation of your dreamcatcher. Handle your creation gently as you work on it to avoid **distorting** the shape of the hoop.



Helpful Hints:

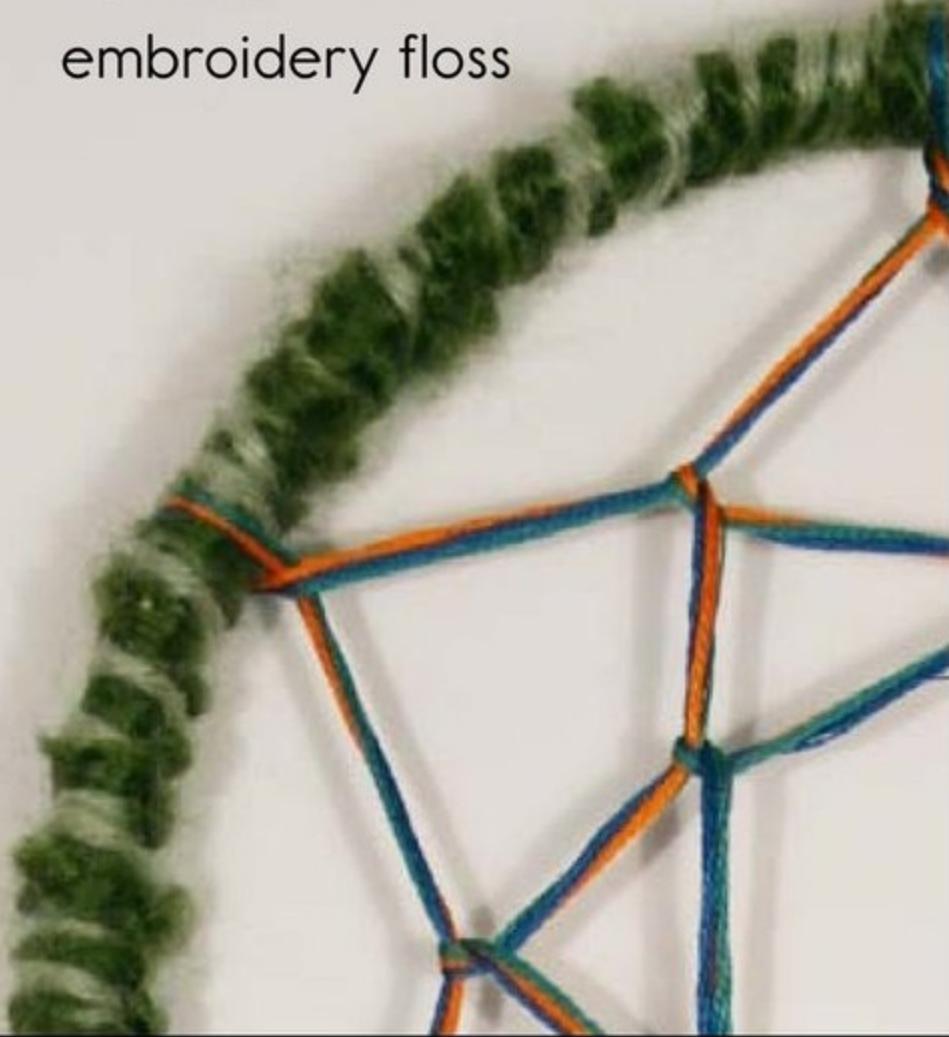
Cut about 6' of yarn to wrap a 12" hoop. Tie the yarn to the hoop with an overhand knot. Hide the tails by wrapping the yarn around them. Use two or more colors to wrap your hoop to add visual interest.

2 Using yarn and the finger-weaving technique on page 10, create as many woven strips as you want. Attach them to your dreamcatcher with square knots.

③ Add other pieces of yarn as desired, using a combination of knotting and braiding.

Use your imagination to create designs and different ways of attaching yarn. You can create **symmetrical** patterns, spider webs using half knots, **freeform** patterns, and more.

half knot with embroidery floss



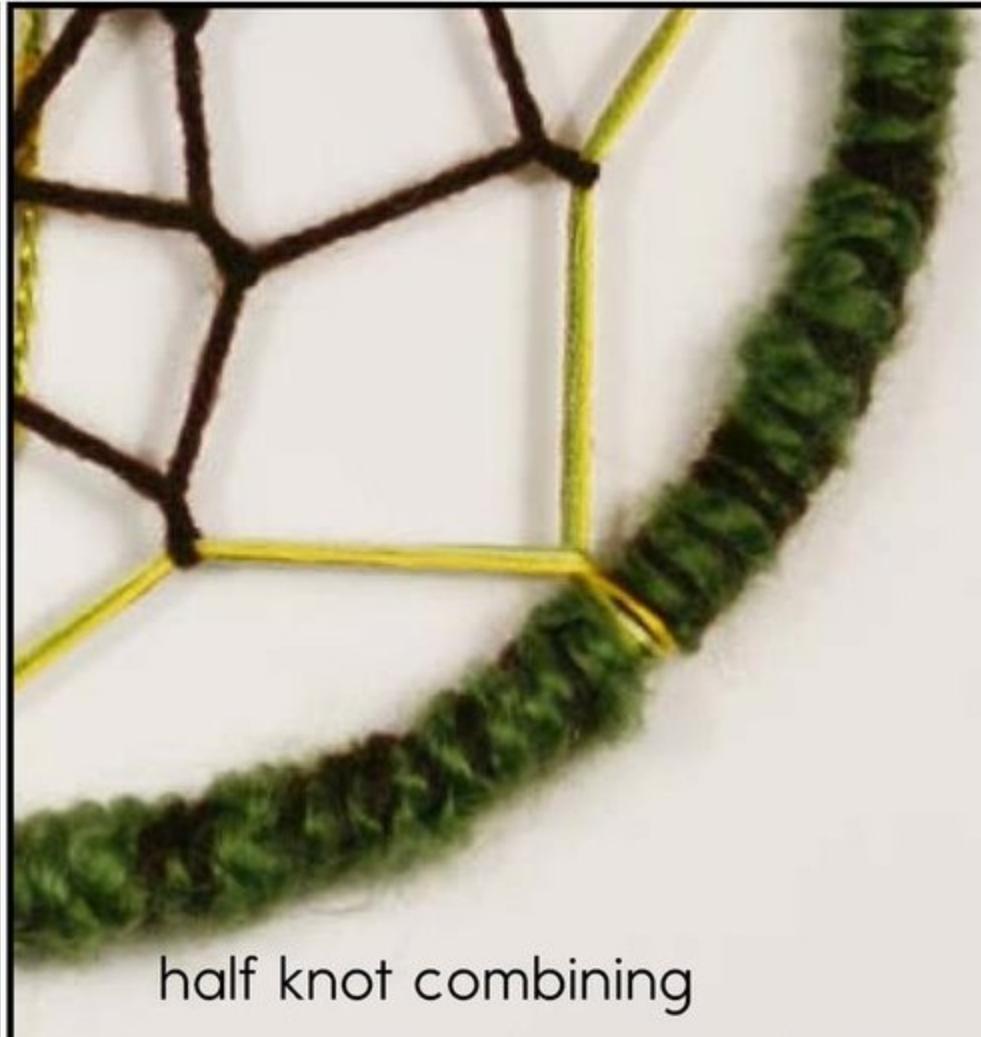
freeform pattern



fringe and symmetrical pattern



half knot combining yarn and embroidery floss



4 Attach beads, feathers, and other decorative items directly to the hoop or to fringe you tie to the hoop. Use a small drop of white glue if needed to hold things in place.



5 Create a loop with yarn or thread on the top of your dreamcatcher. Hang it above your bed and enjoy your dreams!



Variations

- To change your hoop's color, you can wrap it with yarn, paint it, or color it with markers.
- Use a small branch instead of a wire hoop as your foundation.
- Experiment with splitting your finger weaving into two or more branches partway across the hoop.



Conclusion

The projects in this book are just a taste of the many kinds of weaving you can do. You've learned the basic principles of weaving, and you've experimented by using your imagination. You've tried different materials, patterns, and colors. You can apply all of these ideas and techniques to many other kinds of weaving. Have fun!



Explore More

Books:

Weaving Around the World, by Kira Freed.

Reading A-Z (www.readinga-z.com), 2007.

Weaving Without a Loom, by Veronica
Burningham. Kent, Great Britain: Search Press,
1998.

You Can Weave! Projects for Young Weavers, by
Kathleen Monaghan and Hermon Joyner.
Worcester, Mass.: Davis Publications, 2000.

On the Web:

You can find instructions on the Internet for many weaving projects that do not require special equipment. Try typing *finger weaving* or *card weaving* into your favorite search engine.





Other Kinds of Weaving

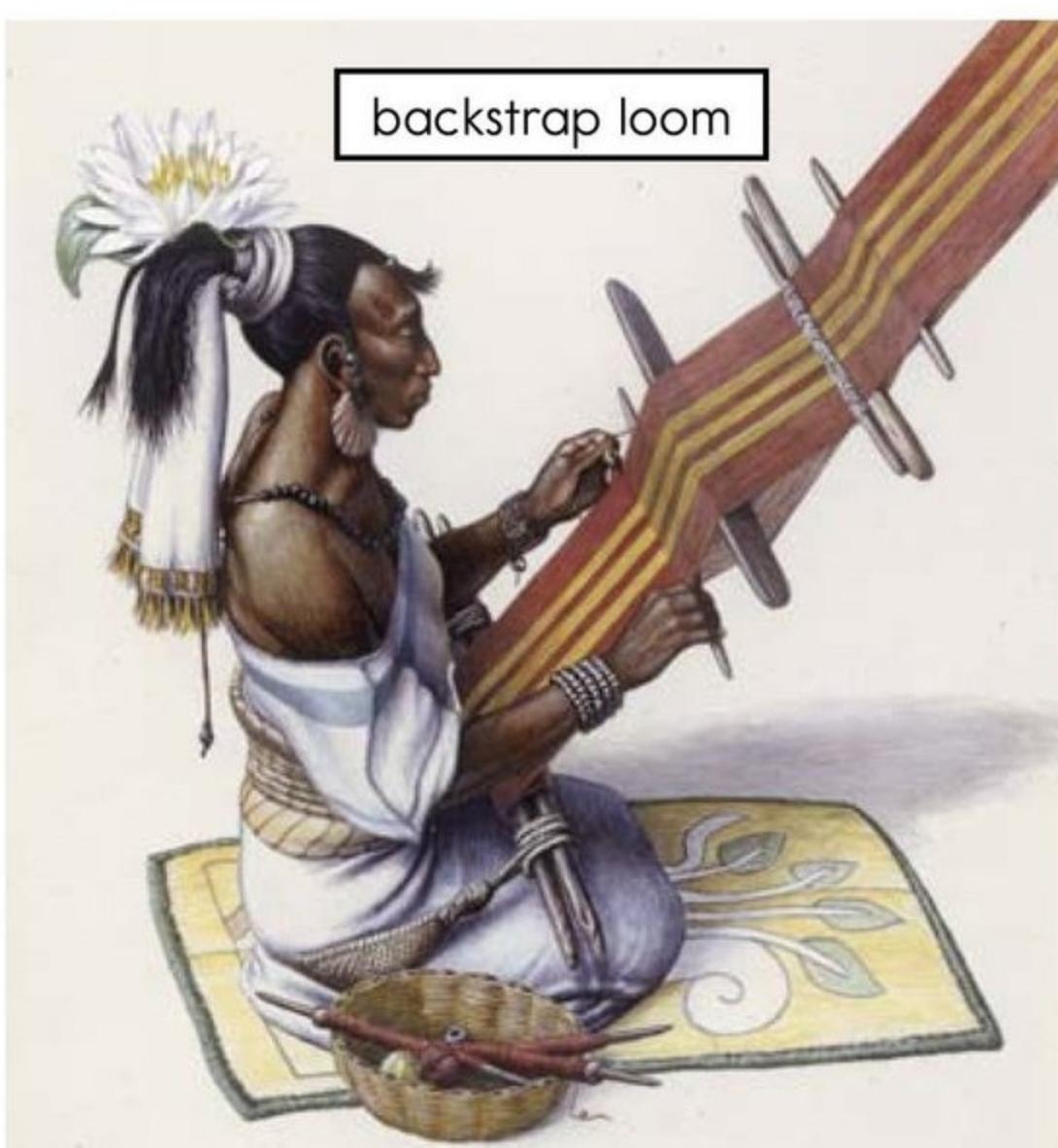
hand loom

frame loom

backstrap loom

floor loom

floor loom



Glossary

alternating (<i>v.</i>)	occurring in turns; switching between (p. 8)
complicated (<i>adj.</i>)	complex; having many parts (p. 6)
distorting (<i>v.</i>)	twisting or pulling out of shape (p. 17)
freeform (<i>adj.</i>)	irregular; not having set rules (p. 18)
horizontal (<i>adj.</i>)	across; left to right (p. 4)
interlock (<i>v.</i>)	fit together (p. 9)
previous (<i>adj.</i>)	earlier; the one before (p. 8)
shed (<i>n.</i>)	the space between warp threads where weft threads pass through (p. 12)
symmetrical (<i>adj.</i>)	balanced like a mirror image (p. 18)
vertical (<i>adj.</i>)	up and down (p. 4)
warp (<i>n.</i>)	vertical threads that are the foundation of a woven piece (p. 4)
weft (<i>n.</i>)	horizontal threads interlaced between the warp of a woven piece (p. 4)

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