

BASIC GUIDELINES ON USING MACRAME ROPE FOR YOUR PROJECTS



The above photograph is just a few projects that I have created using a variety of macramé stitches. I have experimented using satin ribbon and adding it to hair accessories, as you can see they all look amazing.

If you are a beginner, I would highly recommend that initially you follow patterns. This guideline is useful and helpful for beginner and experienced macramé creators. I am still learning & experimenting after several years of making macramé products.

How to measure rope/twine/cord/ribbon

TIP: – If this is your very first project, I would first practice with some wool (though wool/yarn has a stretch to it, it is good to experiment with and then you will not waste your expensive rope/twine) or an inexpensive rope/twine.

Please note that this is a basic guideline and estimation. We all have our own unique way of doing macramé stitches and your stitching will vary from day to day. Some days your macramé stitches are tight and other days they are loose, this will affect the amount of rope/twine that you use. As you use more patterns and create your beautiful macramé décor you will know approximately how much rope or twine to use.

As with any creative project, whether you are painting, crocheting or macramé, the more detail your pattern/product is the more material/supplies you will use.

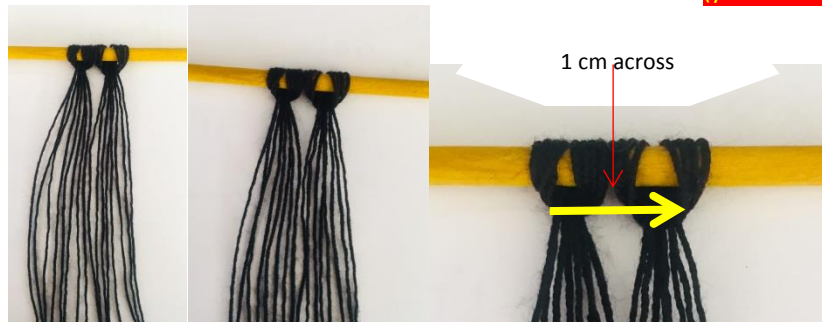
Thus your simple macramé pattern, which uses a few square knot stitches to create your product such as a plant hanger will use a lot less rope/twine than a detailed wall hanging/wall art.

I use a lot of crochet cotton in my macramé as it makes the product delicate and pretty. My personal guideline when trying to work out how many lengths I need, when creating a new product or inventing a new pattern:

1. I use the measurement of 1 cm



2. I then cut short lengths – 30 cm, doubled over is 15 cm -, the thinner crochet cotton, I use 8 lengths. I split in two groups, fold them and then do the larks head knot and measure 1 cm across (yellow arrow)



Example: The width of your creation is 5 cm. You will need 5 groups of 8 lengths. The length will be calculated as in the next paragraph. “General rule of thumb for measuring”

General rule of thumb for measuring

Some basic questions* to ask yourself:-

**Please note that there are many more questions to ask when creating a macramé project, without this becoming overwhelming, I have kept them simple and the most commonly asked questions.*

1. Is your design going to be a closed weave (lots of macramé knots next to each other) or open weave design?(a few macramé knots, with rope/twine/cord gaps with no macramé knots).



Closed Weave/Tight Weave

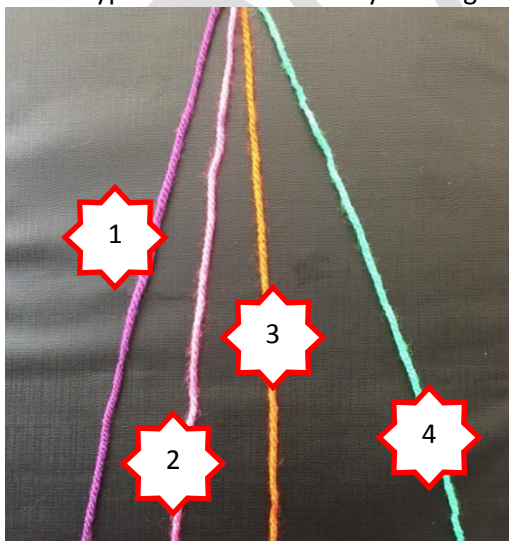


Open Weave/Loose Weave.

2. What is the width and height of your project, including the tassels?



3. The type of macramé knots you are going to use.



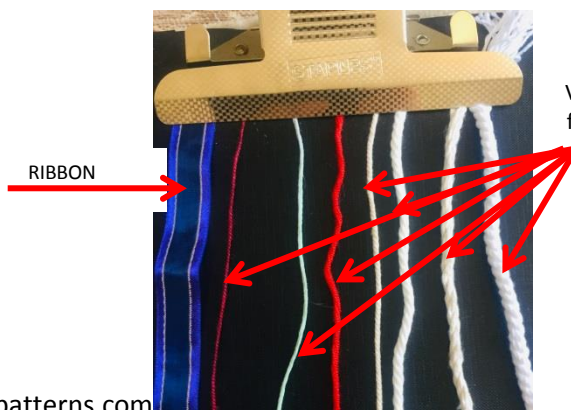
1 & 4 are your WORKING CORDS and 2 & 3 are your FILLER CORDS.

In creating a simple plant holder, a square knot and a spiral knot is commonly used and here one tends to use your working cords to create the knots and therefore 1 & 4 cords will be used up very quickly, but if you are pattern is uses alternating and more complex macramé knots you will use up all 4 cords very quickly.

4. The type of rope/twine/cord used.



Image credit- free-macrame-patterns.com



Various types of cord from 4 mm to 1 mm.

There are so many different types of rope/twine/cord that can be used in macramé. They come in varying thicknesses and materials, such as cotton, hemp, jute, nylon and silk, just to name a few. I personally used different types of rope and have used ribbon for certain projects. The beauty of creation is to experiment.

As per the image above, the rope/twine/cord comes in varying widths.

Some questions you would need to ask yourself, when choosing a rope/twine/cord:-

- Is the product for inside or outside?
- Is a delicate product – table runner or a bolder one – wall hanging/wall art?
- Texture – if you are making a bracelet, you need a soft cotton rope compared to making an outdoor chair cover.

Taking all the above pointers into consideration, this is a basic guideline for measuring your rope/twine/cord.

Open weave/loose weave –

3 to 5 times the length.

Closed weave/loose weave –

4 to 6.5 times the length.

REMEMBER TO DOUBLE THE LENGTH, where ropes/twine/cords are to be folded.

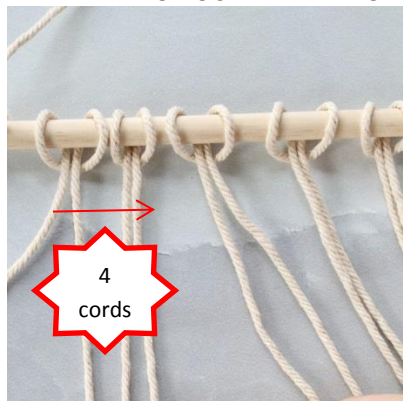


Image credit – redheart.com

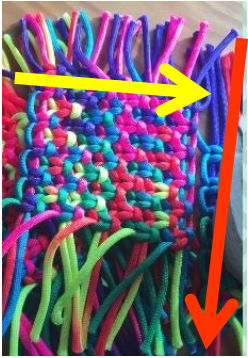
Keep a record of all that you make and you will start to develop your own personal guideline.

The amount of rope/twine/cord lengths you need will depend on your width. Nearly all macramé knots need even number of rope/twin/cord lengths. I have found it best to work with groups of 4 cords, place them together and measure. You can then add the rope/twine/cord lengths according to your required width.



Example: – As shown in Image above with pink arrow. 4 ropes measure 1.5 cm (10mm). The amount of ropes that will make 1 cm measurement will vary according to the width of the cord. A 1 mm rope will more ropes to make a 1 cm compared to a 3 mm.

Example to measure for Macramé Coasters



4 rope/twine cords measure 1.5 cm (15mm), my required width is 8 cm (80 mm) (yellow arrow)

I will therefore need

My required length, including tassels on both sides is 15 cm* (150 mm). (red arrow)

This may look and sound complicated. Do not stress, get some wool and practise.



I will need per coaster:

4 rope/twine cords = 1.5 cm (width) = 2 lengths of 30* cm each (folded = 4 lengths of 15cm each).

Basic formula for closed weave 4 to 5.5 times 30 cm length. We will choose the 4 times 30 cm = 120 cm per unfolded rope/twine/cord length (folded 60 cm)

9 cm (total width) = 12 lengths of rope/twine/cord x 120 cm = 14.4 metres, approximately.

*Remember this is the unfolded measurement.

A few tips gathered through the years from course I have done and my own experiences.

1. I have always added a few extra centimetres to my measurements, particularly if it's a new project. If you making a specific project constantly, you will not need to do this as you would have worked out your exact required measurements.
2. Do not panic, if you see you are starting to run out of cord, depending on the project you can start to change the pattern by changing your macramé knots; you can finish your project sooner; make your tassels shorter.
3. Keep all your scraps for tassels, fringes or to finish your product with a wrap knot.
4. I have always cut and added my cords in groups of four at a time.
5. If you are creating your own pattern, remember to write down your measurements in your book for future references.
6. All patterns are interchangeable, if you decided you would like to change a row, do so.
7. Some ropes/twines/cord fray, either tie a knot at the very end of the rope; sticky tape or burn the edge with a lighter. This will stop your rope/twine/cord from unravelling or fraying.

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