

Braiding Disks and Basic Instructions

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Straw Braiding Disk 7 strand Braiding

Using sticky back foam sheets, make a sandwich 3 sheets thick. If you use the 6" by 9" sheets, you can cut out six 3" square sets from three sheets of foam.

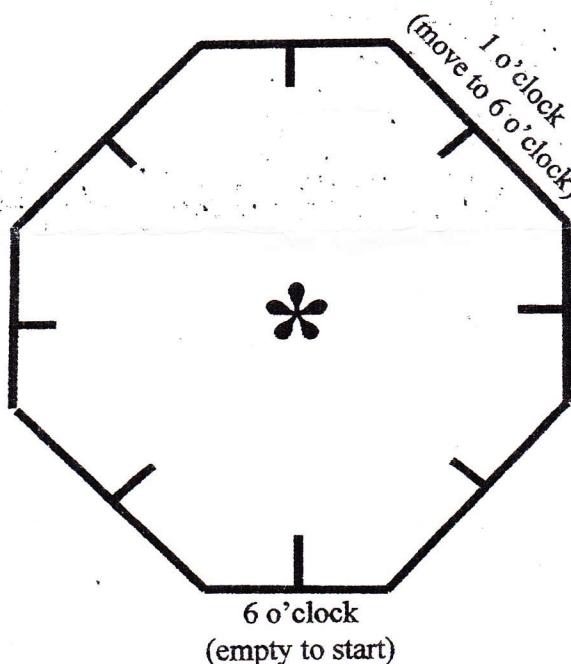
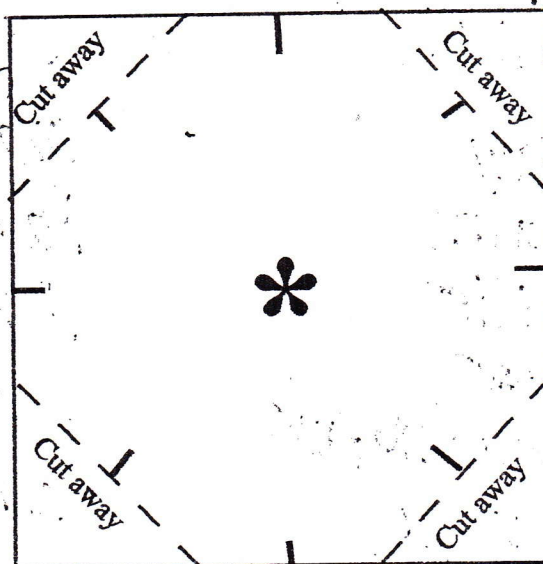
Using a ruler, divide the sheet into 6 squares, 3 across and 2 down. Cut apart the sheet into the 6 squares. Don't worry if they are not exactly square.

Make a marking template from heavy plastic. Cut a 3" square. Mark each edge at 1 inch intervals on all four sides. Cut off the four corners as shown on the sample. Mark the center of the plastic and punch out a small hole.

Lay the marking template over the 3" foam squares and trace around the 8 sided shape. Mark the center.

Cut off the four corners of the foam squares along the marking lines and enlarge the center hole. I use a pencil and then a large knitting needle to form a 1/8" hole. You can hammer in grommets for a cleaner finish.

Cut a 1/8" to 1/4" slit in the center of each of the 8 sides.



Weights:

You will need counterweights to hang under the disk. You can find square metal magnet clips at Office Max. These are used to supply the counter balance weight needed to pull the braid down through the hole.

Bobbins:

You can braid with lengths up to 1 yard without needing bobbins. With longer lengths, I use Susan Bates Yarn bobbins (small). You can order on line (Google Susan Bates Yarn Bobs). The large bobbins are handy or wrapping the finished braid as you work.

Basic 7 Strand Braiding Instructions:

1. Select 7 strands of thread, yarn, etc. (2-3 color best to begin.)
2. Tie together in a knot.
3. Insert knot downward into the center hole.
4. Clip weight onto knot, or hold with your hand.
5. Place one strand into each slot. Leaving the 6 o'clock slit open and facing you at the bottom of the disk.
6. Move the 1 o'clock strand into the 6 o'clock slit.
7. Rotate the disk so the 6 o'clock slit is at the bottom. (Repeat 6 and 7 to make the braid.)

Make several disks and designate them for different sizes of threads. The slits will stretch over time and thinner thread will not work well in a disk used for thick threads.

There are several faster ways to braid. Key idea: Skip over 2 strands to the empty slit, skip one slit, and repeat.