

A Tucson Public Schools  
Art Department Pamphlet

# Finger Weaving

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## INTRODUCTION

### FINGER WEAVING

Finger weaving is a method of braiding or plaiting which produces a band or strap. It is a traditional method employed by many people all over the world. The term finger weaving is very appropriate, for no tools are used. The warp or lengthwise threads are picked up one by one with the fingers and used as weft or cross threads.

There are many uses or applications of finger woven objects. Since this technique is best suited for narrow bands, large objects are possible only by sewing bands together.

### CHOOSING THE WEAVING THREADS

The thread chosen for weaving depends upon the use of the finished band, but a good material for learning the different techniques is a heavy cotton yarn, or light weight rug yarn. Jute works very well and gives an entirely different effect than other yarns. As a beginner, it is easier to use just two colors, but as you progress you may want to use a number of different colors, and create patterns by how they are arranged and woven.

### LENGTH OF THREADS

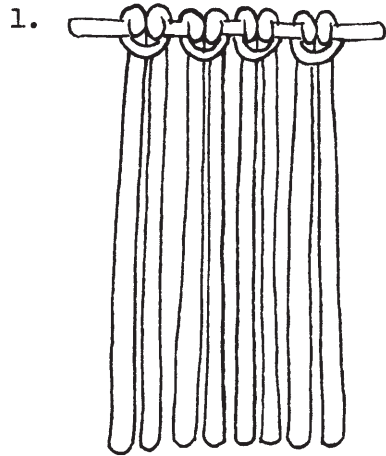
Cut nine or twelve lengths of yarn, depending upon the width of belt or strap desired. Each piece should be four yards long if a belt is to be made. If you are going to start with an overhand knot (p.4), loop the threads after they are measured. Tie the overhand knot, leaving the loops to be tied to what you are weaving from. If you knot the nine strands over a dowel, or pencil, etc., with the reversed double half hitch knot (p.3), you will have eighteen lengths when you finish, each two yards long.

## THE WARP

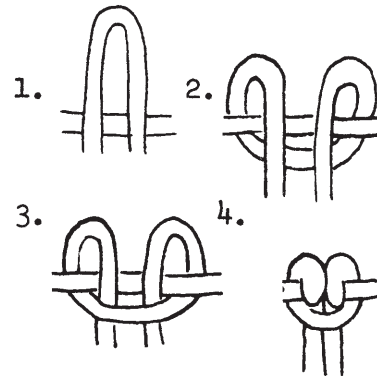
There are many ways of getting the warp ready for weaving. Five of these are illustrated on pages 3 and 4.

1. Tie strands of thread, the number depending on the width or thickness of the thread, using the reversed double half hitch knot (illustrated) on a dowel, pencil, or stick.
2. Use a ring (brass, plastic, etc.) or two rings, depending on what you want it used for - belt, sash, etc. Tie the threads with the reversed double half hitch knot on the ring. This can be easily tied to whatever you are going to attach it to.
3. For this method, measure each thread two yards long (other methods require four yard lengths). Tie each single thread with a single overhand loop, which is a loose overhand knot, and slip it on your pencil or dowel, through the loop. Have all of your knots going in the same direction.
4. Measure the lengths of thread you will need (at least four yards each), loop them so they are even, and tie an overhand knot (illustrated). Gather the loops with a shorter thread and tie to whatever you are weaving on or from.
5. Tie the threads together with a shorter thread, and attach it to whatever you are going to weave on or from.

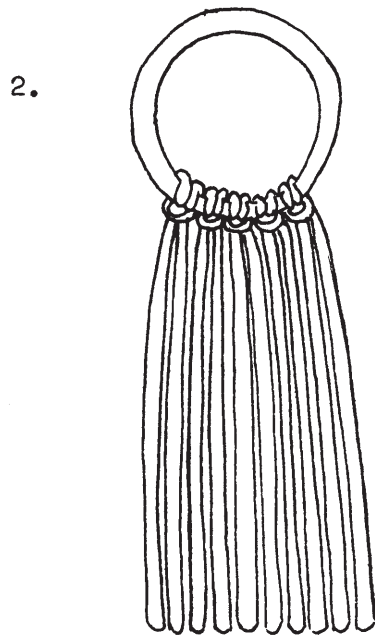
GETTING THE WARP READY



REVERSED DOUBLE HALF  
HITCH KNOTS ON DOWEL

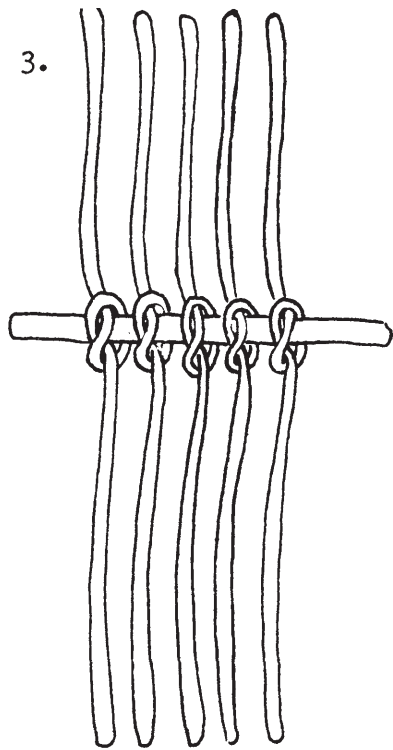


REVERSED DOUBLE  
HALF HITCH KNOT

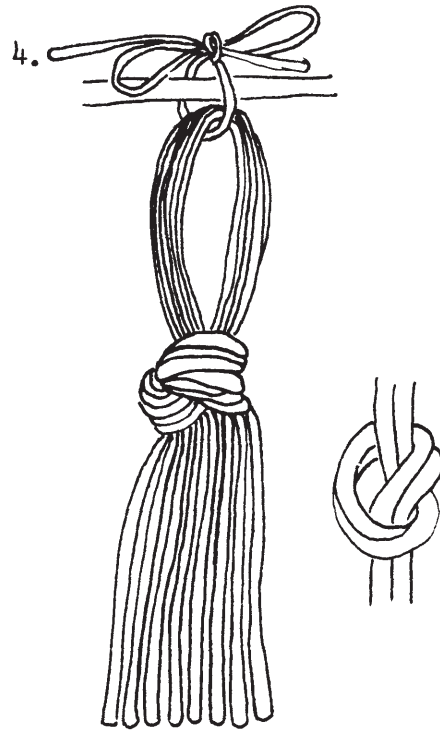


REVERSED DOUBLE HALF  
HITCH KNOTS ON BRASS RING

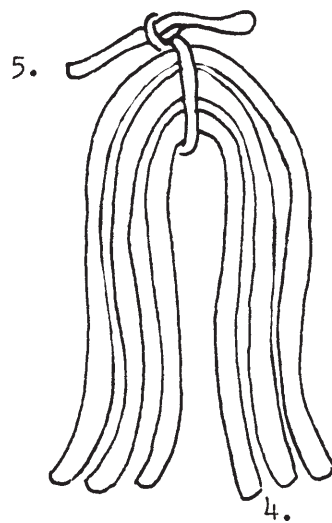
3.



SINGLE OVERHAND LOOP  
KNOTS ON DOWEL



OVERHAND KNOT



GATHERING STRANDS WITH  
KNOTTED SINGLE THREAD

### WAYS OF ATTACHING THE WARP FOR WEAVING

There are many ways to attach your warp to begin weaving. You can work on a surface, such as a thick piece of corrugated cardboard, or a flannel board, or weighted pillow or sandbag. A T-pin can be placed in these with your warp tied or looped around it. You may want to attach your warp to something solid like a nail, or a drawer handle to allow you the freedom of using both hands for weaving. If you use a dowel or a pencil, it can be taped to a solid surface. One other simple method of holding work in progress, is clipping it to a spring clip-board.

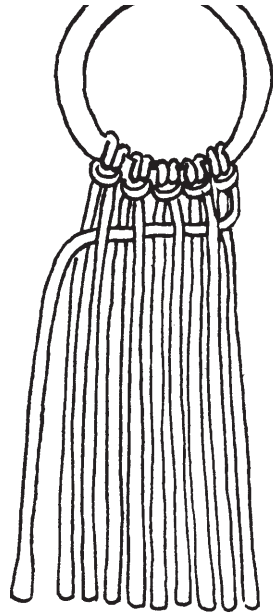
### WEAVING METHODS

There are four basic ways of weaving:

- I. Weaving from one side.
- II. Weaving with one warp thread.
- III. Weaving with added weft thread.
- IV. Weaving from the center.

The following instruction sheets for the above weaving methods use a different way of beginning in each. However, you are not restricted to the ways illustrated - you can use any of the four ways of beginning the warp with each weaving method.





### I. WEAVING FROM ONE SIDE

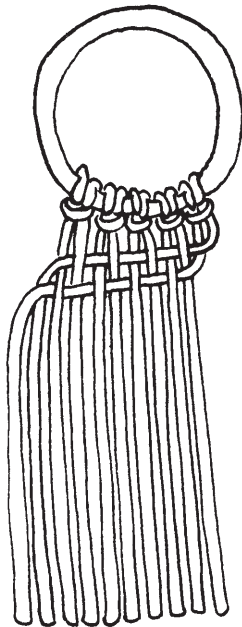
Prepare your warp using any of the five ways discussed earlier.

1. Use the outer warp thread on either side, but make sure you use the threads from the same side each time you weave. Weave over, under, over, etc., to the opposite side.

2. The second warp thread now becomes the weaving thread and is woven across. Each warp thread is used in succession to weave one way.

3. Continue weaving, always working from the same side with the outside thread, until desired length is completed.

4. Finish as desired (suggestions for finishing appear at the end of this leaflet).



## II. WEAVING WITH ONE WARP THREAD ILLUSTRATION NEXT PAGE

Prepare warp using any of the five ways discussed earlier, with the outer warp thread being about four times longer than the other threads.

1. Place longer warp thread on the outside (either side). Begin weaving under, over, under, etc., to the opposite side.

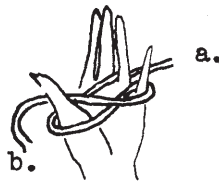
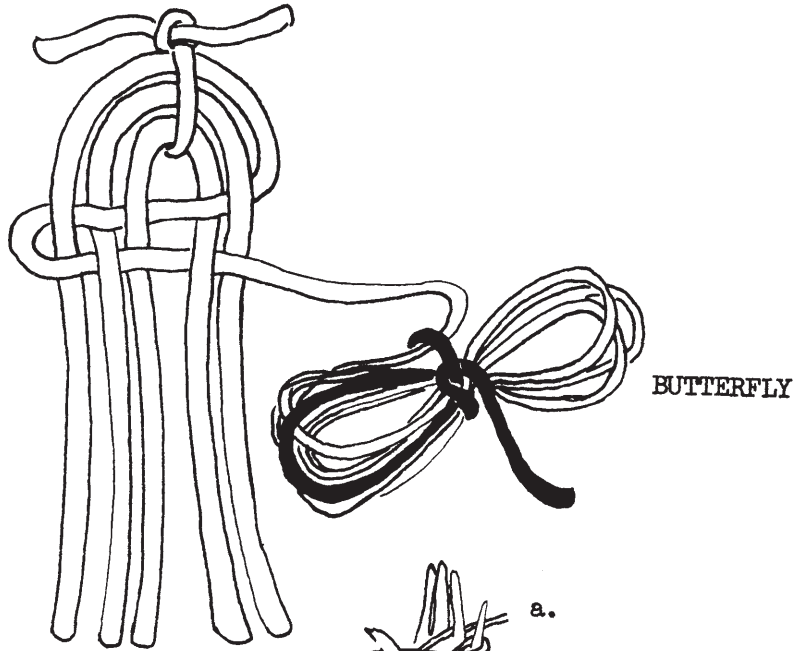
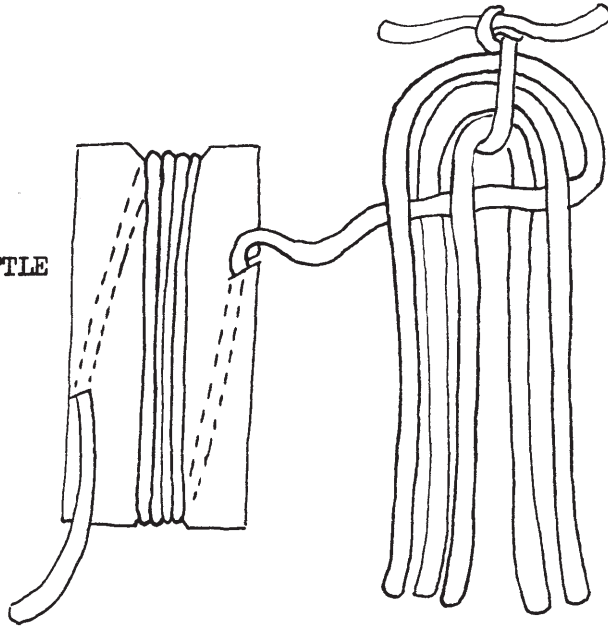
2. Roll up the end of the weaving thread in a shuttle or a butterfly (also called hand bobbins) to make it easier to handle.

a. SHUTTLE - Cut a piece of tagboard, about 4"x2" and cut a notch at both ends. Wind loose weft thread, and make a diagonal slit on each side of the cardboard to catch the yarn. When you want more weaving yarn, take yarn out of slit and replace when you finish unwinding.

b. BUTTERFLY - Clasp weaving yarn (a), leaving some slack to weave with, between middle and ring fingers (illustrated), and with remaining loose yarn (b), wind around thumb and pinky fingers in figure eights, making sure to go in the same direction each time. Tie threads together with a single overhand knot, with the leftover weaving yarn. Do not tie the knot with that thread which is closest to your warp (a). Working end of thread should slip out of butterfly with ease, providing extra yarn as needed.

3. Finish as desired.

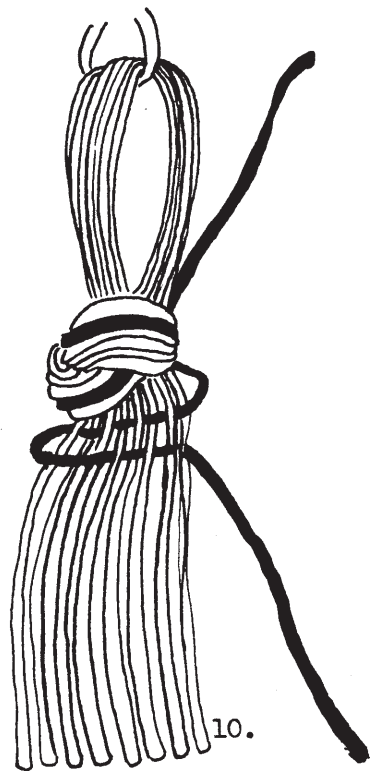
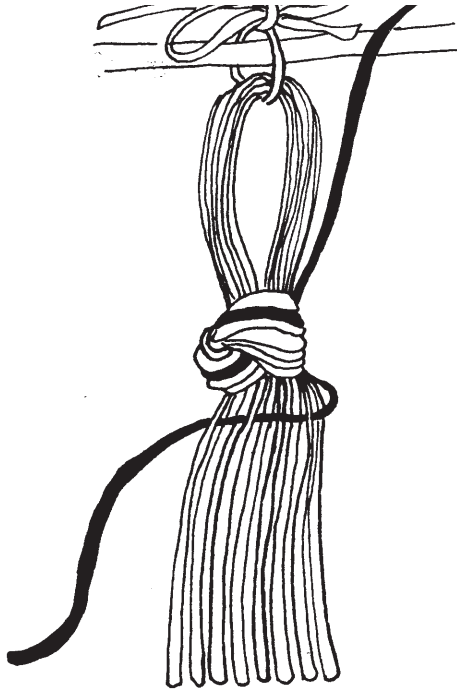
SHUTTLE



III. WEAVING WITH ADDED WEFT THREAD  
(BACK AND FORTH) ILLUSTRATION NEXT PAGE

Prepare your warp using any of the five ways illustrated earlier. The added weft thread should be three to four times longer than the warp threads. Tie the added thread in a hand bobbin to make weaving easier (illustrated p.8 ). When using the overhand knot, as illustrated here, add the weft thread when you make the knot. For other beginning methods, tie the weft thread to whatever you are weaving from.

1. Begin weaving over, under, over, etc., until all threads are woven. Flatten threads between fingers to avoid missing any warp threads.
2. Go in the opposite direction weaving over, under, over, etc. If you run out of weft thread, add more to it with a square knot and continue weaving.
3. Continue weaving until desired length is reached.
4. Finish as desired.



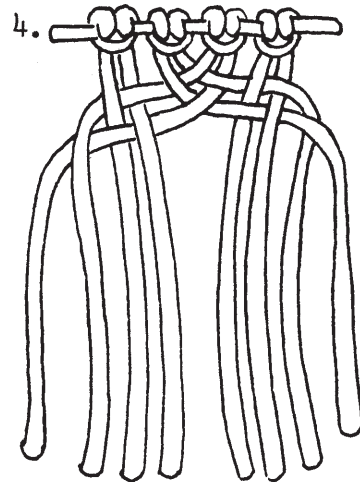
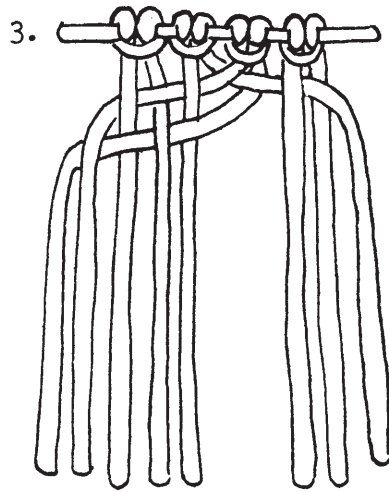
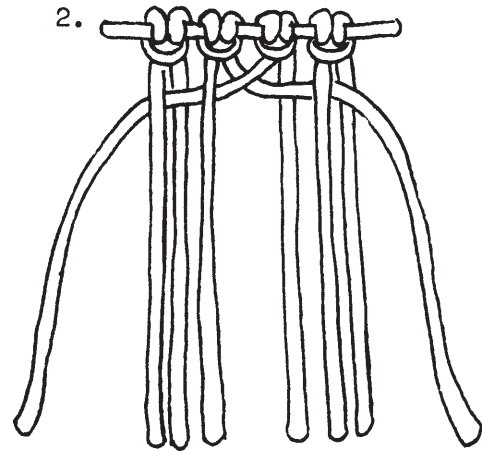
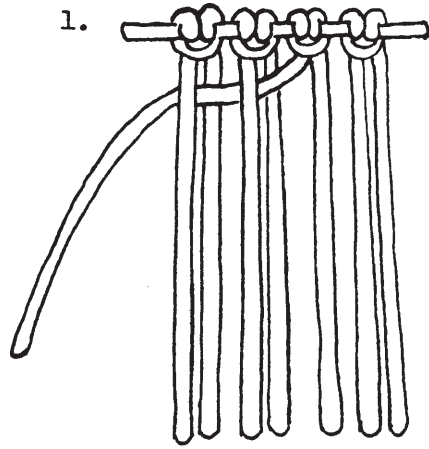
10.

IV. WEAVING FROM THE CENTER ILLUSTRATION NEXT PAGE

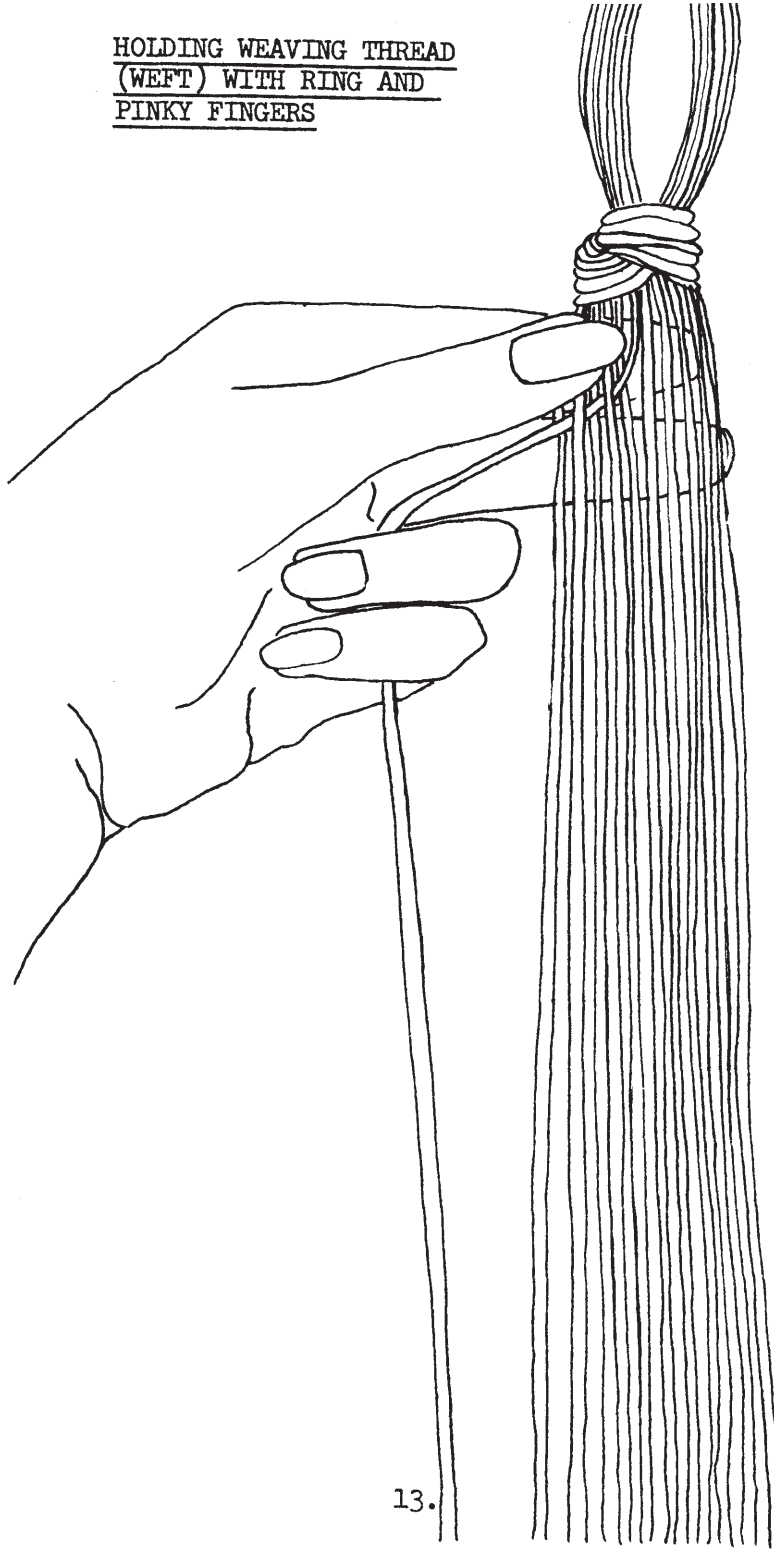
Prepare your warp using any one of the five ways discussed earlier.

1. Start with either center thread and weave over, under, over, etc., until you run out of warp. Hold the weft thread with your ring and pinky fingers (illustrated p.13) before starting the second center thread.
2. Use other center thread and go in the opposite direction, over, under, over, etc. (You will notice that this strand will already have been woven over.) Hold this woven thread with your ring and pinky fingers, and keep holding until the next two center threads are woven.
3. Use the threads that are now in the center, doing the same as 1 and 2. Do not forget to hold the weft threads each time after they are woven.
4. Finish weaving second center thread. There will be a different set each time until the first center threads become center threads again.

NOTE: This is the most difficult of the four ways to weave. It might be wise to choose one of the other ways before tackling this.



HOLDING WEAVING THREAD  
(WEFT) WITH RING AND  
PINKY FINGERS





## WAYS OF ENDING

When the desired length has been reached, or the threads are too short to weave, the ends may be finished off in one of several ways. Five of these are illustrated. on pages 15 and 16.

1. OVERHAND KNOT: The sash or band which is started with an overhand knot, may be ended in the same fashion, tying all ends together, leaving at least three to four inches of strands at both ends.
2. GUATEMALAN BRAID: Using three strands at a time, braid together tightly and end the braid with an overhand knot. Use this method only if the total number of strands used can be divided by three.
3. ADDING BEADS AND KNOTS: Beads may be added to single strands with an overhand knot below each bead or groups of beads. Knots above and below beads give variety. Knots below keep beads in place.
4. FRINGE: Using two or more strands, tie overhand knots until you have a fringe of yarn, or tie adjacent strands to each other with a square knot.
5. a. FRINGE: Weave outside thread on either side of sash over, under, etc., to opposite side. Tie this thread on either side to the closest loose warp thread in a square knot.  
  
b. FRINGE: For single warp thread weaving, tie the end of the weaving thread to the last warp thread in a square knot.

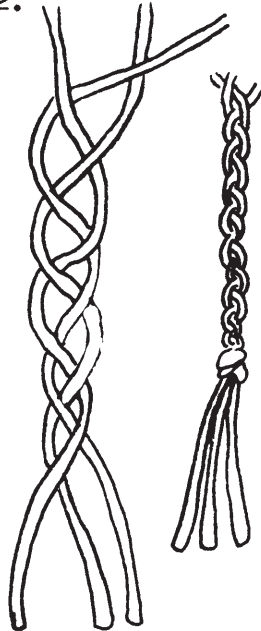
WAYS OF ENDING

1.



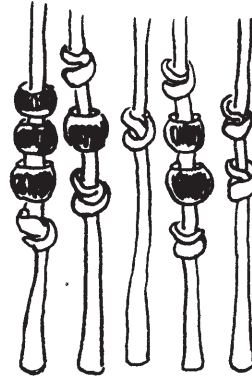
OVERHAND KNOT  
(ALL STRANDS TIED TOGETHER)

2.

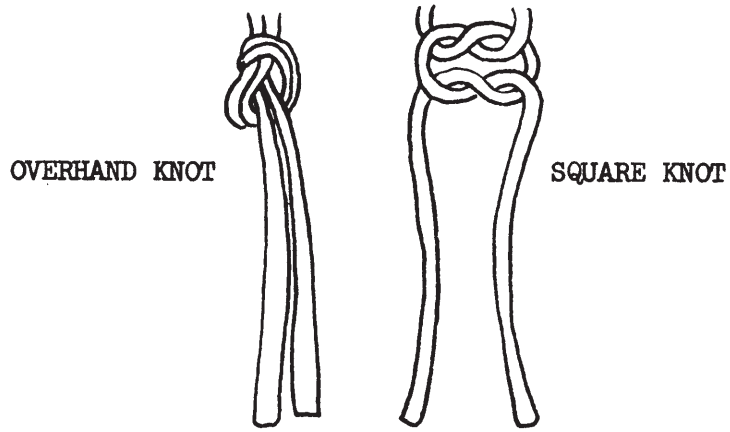


GUATEMALAN BRAID (THREE STRAND  
BRAIDING) TERMINATED WITH  
OVERHAND KNOT

3.



ADDING BEADS AND KNOTS



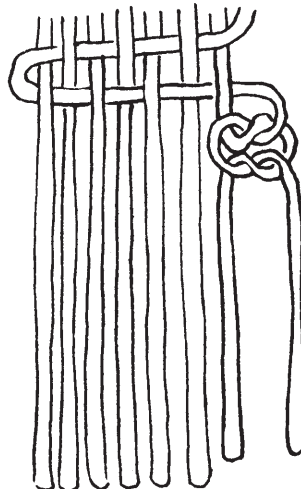
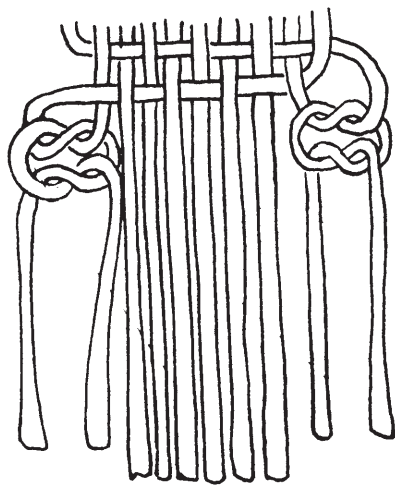
OVERHAND KNOT

SQUARE KNOT

FRINGE (KNOTTING ADJACENT STRANDS)

5. (a) FRINGE TIED WITH TWO SQUARE KNOTS

(b) FRINGE TIED WITH ONE SQUARE KNOT



### HELPFUL HINTS

1. Turn weaving over from time to time to see if any threads have been dropped.
2. When weaving from the center or from the side, hold the strand which has just been woven with your ring and pinky fingers, until you have the new strand woven.
3. Any number of strands of thread may be used, depending on the thickness of the thread and the width you would like.
4. A loose weave looks different from a tight one.
5. Do not forget to weave all of the strands.
6. When untangling the strands as you weave, pull the weft thread out of the tangled strands first and then shake the strands to facilitate untangling. Combing with the fingers usually works well.

### REFERENCE LIST

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