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Braided Leather Knife Lanyard 2 Tailed, Part 1

Schwert

- Skills and guides - DIY, Making things. -



Publication: Thursday 1 July 2004

Description :

This article will be presented in two parts. Part one will consist of a pictorial and instructions for the basic Kangaroo leather braided knife lanyard, and Part 2 will demonstrate the semi-decorative cover knots. A fully functional and nice looking lanyard can be done following the directions in Part one only.

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This lanyard is a fairly easy project that both looks good on a sheath knife and is functional. This lanyard is braided in 1/8 inch handcut kangaroo lace. Semi-fancy cover knots are also included but are optional in this design.

A lanyard like this both assists in removal of the knife from a deep pouch sheath and can be used as an extra measure of security when carrying the knife. If the tails of the lanyard are tucked under your belt the knife has less likelihood of falling from the sheath.

First here is a view of the finished project. Part 1 of this tutorial will not cover the addition of the black cover knots, but only make the tan portion of this lanyard. The tan portion is a fully functional lanyard and the cover knots are mostly decorative. [Part 2](#) will complete the lanyard.



2-Tailed Kangaroo Lanyard

Only a few items are necessary to do knife lanyards. The most important item is of course, the leather. Any leather lace or other materials can be used. This project used 1/8 inch wide handcut kangaroo lace that was purchased from David Morgan, Woodinville Washington USA. This is expensive material but is of exceptional quality. Less expensive machine cut lace could also have been used which is also available from David Morgan (see resources). Depending on the size of the knife, the diameter of the lanyard hole etc various products can be used for knife lanyards. I find this lace to be nearly ideal for most applications. Kangaroo lace is consistently strong, easy to braid, looks good and lasts for a long time.

Materials List

Kangaroo leather lace

Clamp of any sort, small

Awl(s), two is good with one not to sharp

Braided Leather Knife Lanyard 2 Tailed, Part 1

Sharp small knife

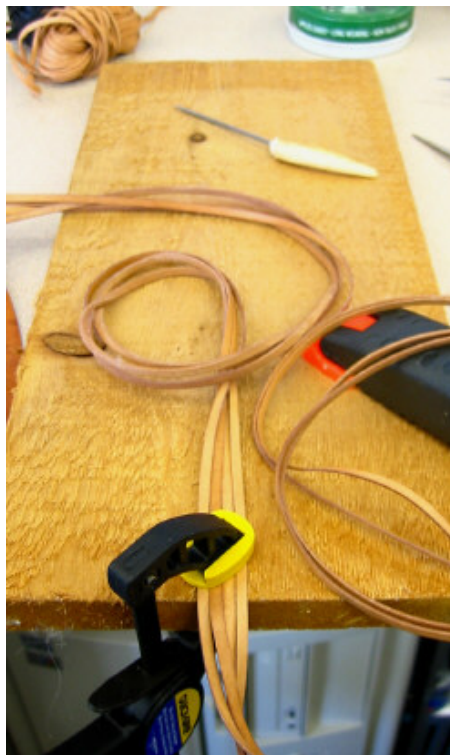
Braiding soap

First step is to cut the leather strings, grease and stretch them. The total length of this lanyard for this knife is 10 inches. I generally use twice the total length of the project plus a few inches of lace to start. This gives a generous bit of leather to work with to allow easy efficient braiding. So, for this project, I cut four 24 inch strings.

Each of these was well greased with a lard/ivory bar soap (braiding soap, David Morgan's recipe), but saddle soap could also be used. You want the strings slippery to braid, but eventually to dry. This lard/ivory blend works very well and the recipe will be given below in the Resources.

As you grease the strings, stretch them well, looking for thin or weak spots. Allow them to dry a bit as you get set up for braiding. I generally roll them around my hand and lay on top of some paper on the back of my monitor. The monitor heat distributes the grease nicely.

Here is my setup for braiding. I use a cedar board clamped to the desk to allow me to use my awls and clamps to hold the project during braiding.



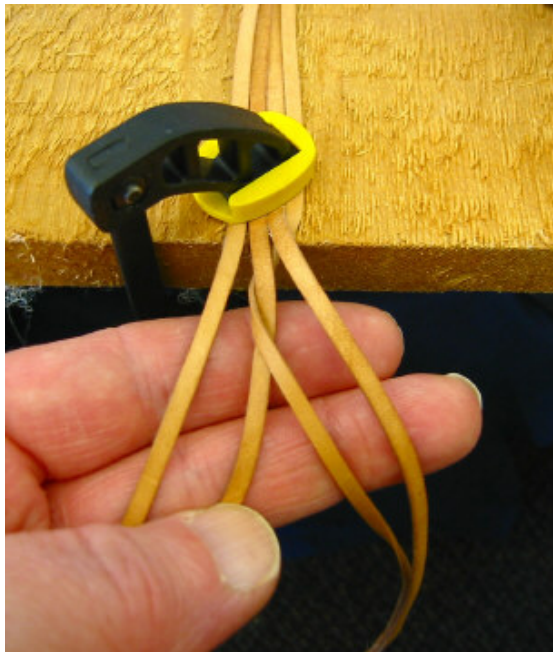
Getting Started

Find the middle of the 4 strings. Clamp them with the flesh side up about 2 inches back from the true middle. We are going to braid starting at the center of the string and eventually want this section to span the true middle of the set.



Middled Strings

Separate the 4 strings into a pair on each side. Start braiding by bringing the outer string on the right **behind** the inner string on the left side. The flesh side should be turned so it is **out** on the backside. You are going to braid under one string over one string---alternating sides. This is called 4-plait braiding.



First Pass

Now the second string, from the left side **behind** the inner string on the right, under the outer string over the inner string.



Second Pass

And then repeat from the other side.



Third Pass

Make sure you get started correctly, then tighten this beginning passes up. A gentle pull on each of the four strings should tighten everything up nicely, if not use the blunt awl to pick the strings up and pull. Well greased strings slide into place with a firm tug. Careful not too tight, just snug and firm.

Continue on.



Continuing 4-plait

This knife has a fairly wide butt. I needed about 2 inches of this round braid to span this width.



Enough of this round braid

Now thread the braid through the lanyard hole of the knife.



Threaded 4-plait

This is the move that makes or breaks this lanyard. This transition step needs to be carefully sorted to make the

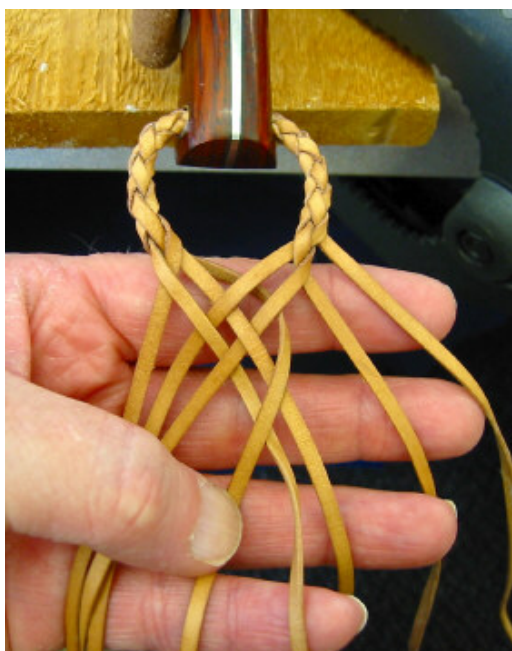
lanyard look nice in the end.



Crux Move, join to 8-plait

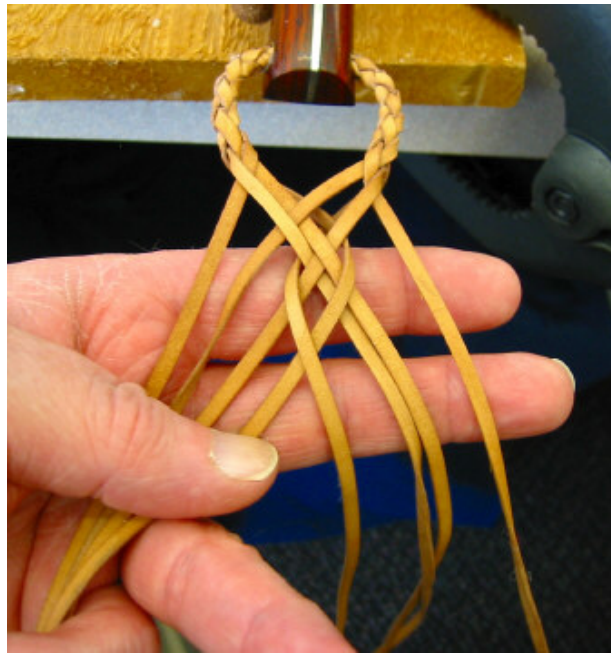
First even up both sides of the 4-plait braid. Make sure everything is tight and even. Twist both sides so the flesh side is up and begin crossing the inner strings. This is a single diamond braid transition, but will rapidly go into 8-plait 4-seam work. 4-seam work is faster and results in a slight square feel to the braid. It is a bit denser with 8 strings than single diamond work which is why we are going to go to that.

Once you are set like the image, bring the left outer string **behind** the project, and go under the outer **two** strings on the right.



First step of join, from left string

Then do the other side. Keep things loose until you get it set right.



Second step of join—;from right

Now slowly and gently tighten everything up.



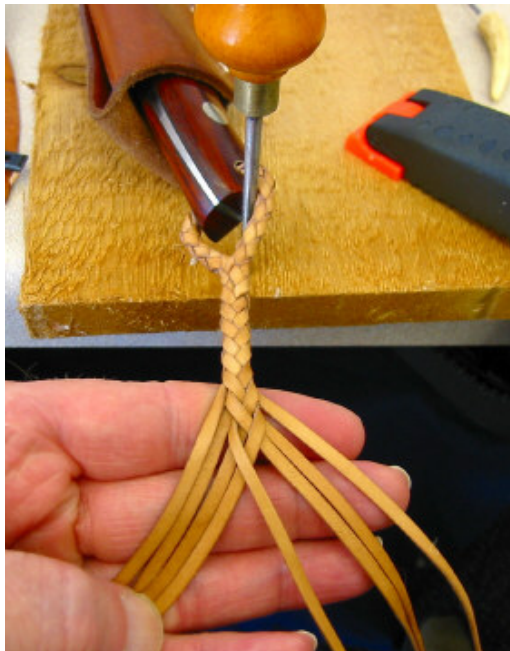
Snug this up

Now do one more pass on each side then work this join up nice and tight. You may need to use an awl but again well greased strings will snug with a firm tug on each of the strings in series. Make sure this looks good on both the front and back before proceeding.



Continue 8-plait

Continue with the 8-plait 4-seam work until you have a good "handle" on this braid.



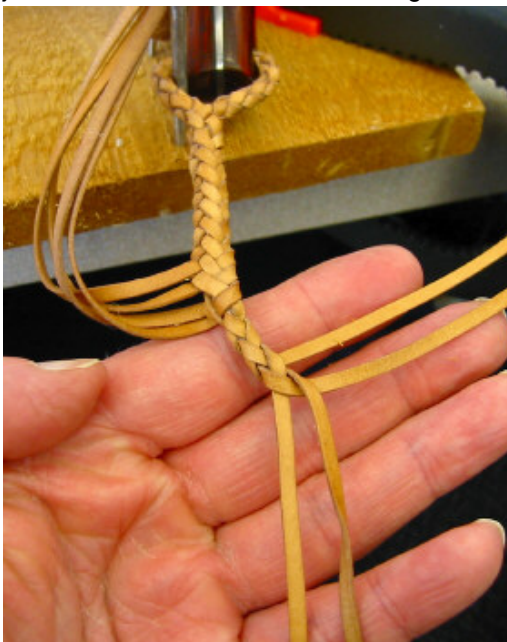
Finish 8-plait braid

When the knife is withdrawn from the sheath the hand naturally falls on this larger diameter section. Make it long enough but not too long.



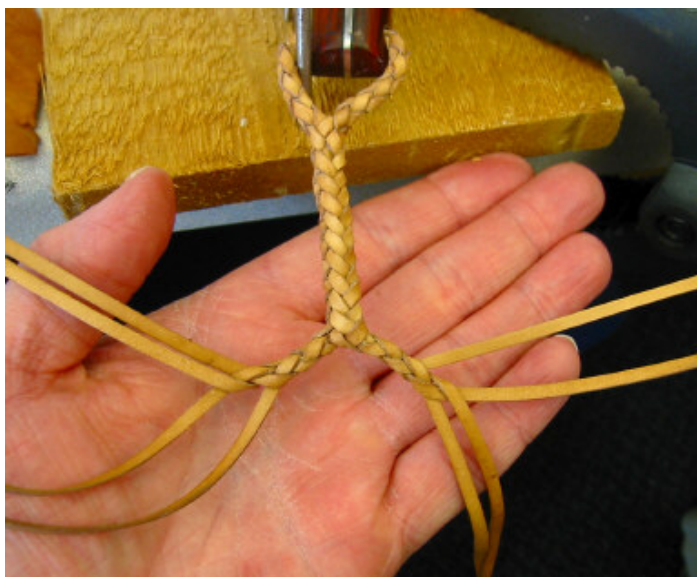
Split into two 4-plait tails

Now the lanyard will be split into two tails. Going back to 4-plait round braid. Clamp off one side of the braid and begin the bifurcation. Braid will start just as it did from the middle strings above.



Start braid on one tail

Braid a few rounds on one side.



Start braid on other tail

Then go back and braid a bit on the other side. Take time to make the bifurcation look good, again by firming up each side with an awl or firm tugs on the strings.



Carry on with one tail

Once both sides are splitting off nicely, finish braiding one tail.



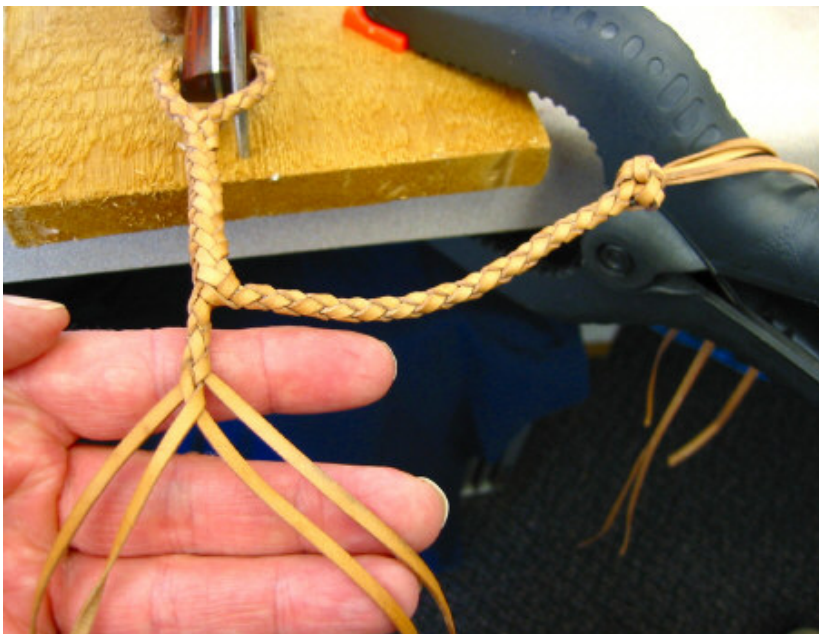
Add loose wall knot at the end

Add a loose wall knot to the first tail. Each string is flopped over its neighbor in the classic lanyard braid knot that most Girl Scouts know by heart.



Crown and Wall the end

Add a crown to this knot also. Each of the strings is brought around its neighbors leg and up through the middle of the knot. These were left loose at this step in case some final shortening or lengthening was done at the end.



Braid the other tail

Go back to the second tail and complete its 4-plait braiding. The tails here were purposefully done at different lengths, but symmetrical braids could have been done. I just like the asymetric look.



Asymetric strings

Wall and Crown this leg and check for length. I like my lanyards a bit shorter than the total sheath (not including the fringes).



Crown and Wall this string

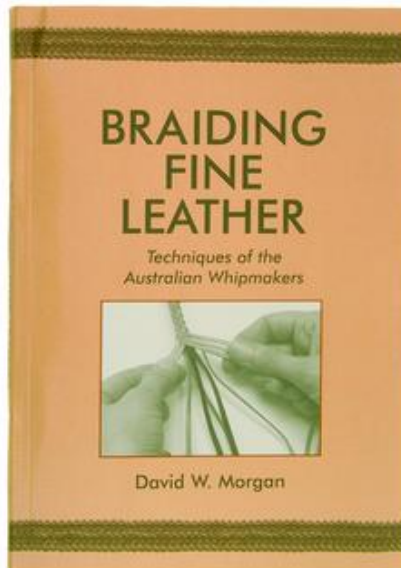
At this point the terminator knots can be tightened with an awl. Take care on these as this terminator knot can be disrupted by too firm a pull. I usually tighten each string round and round until firm and uniform.



Finished Project

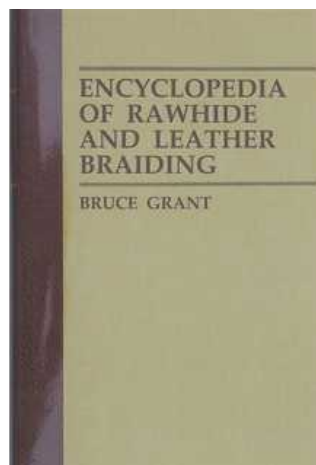
Finished. Part 2 of this tutorial will cover the decorative black cover knots.

Resources



Essential David Morgan Book

[David Morgan, Braiding Fine Leather](#)



Bruce Grants Advanced Manual

[Bruce Grant's Encyclopedia](#)

[David Morgan Hand cut Kangaroo Leather](#)

[Very nice machine cut Kangaroo Leather](#)

Braiding Soap as made by David Morgan.

1 pound lard 4 oz ivory bar soap 1.5 cups water

Heat water and shave soap into it. Once soap is dissolved, cut in lard. Stir over gentle heat till a creamy paste is created. Pour off to a plastic tub and cool. Lasts for years.

Continued in [Part 2](#)

Post-scriptum :

Version 1.0 6/30/2004 Beginning

Version 2.0 7/1/2004 Done