

Shopping Bag



Description: The Shopping Bag is very similar to the net bags used in Europe. It features widely spaced rows of Alternating Square Knots, which creates a design similar to a fish net.

The top edges are formed in such a way that it's very strong despite its delicate appearance. In the example shown, I made the sack with regular cotton cord and it was able to hold over 15 pounds.

This Macrame project is rated easy, but make sure you know how to tie Square knots in **both directions**.

The finished size is 18 inches tall. The area at the top is 9 inches wide. The bottom stretches to 15 inches when pulled sideways. You can change this size easily.

Dawn Kepler inspired me to create this Macrame pattern.

Supplies Needed:

- 4mm cord material (125 yards)
- Fabric glue that dries clear
- Small paint brush or stick to apply glue
- Measuring tape
- Project Board and pins
- Rubber bands

Knots Used in Design:

- [Alternating Square Knots](#)
- [Larks Head Knot](#)
- [Square Knot](#) (Left and Right facing)
- [Overhand knot](#)



The Strap

Step 1: Cut 4 cords, each 4.5 yards long. Cut 2 cords, 3.5 yards long. Prepare the ends with tape or knots before you work on the Shopping Bag.



Secure the cords to your board at the center, arranged vertically. They need to be placed in a specific pattern, as follows:

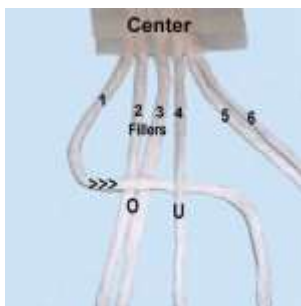
The **4.5 yard** cords should be in the 1, 3, 4, and 6 positions.

The **3.5 yard** cords should be placed at 2 and 5.

Step 2: You will be tying both right and left Square knots for the strap, as well as the body of the Shopping Bag. You can tie all the knots the same direction if you wish to make this pattern easier.

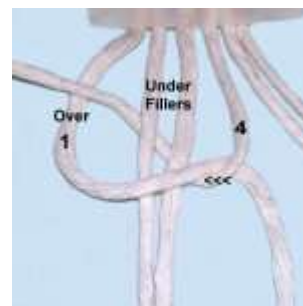
Below are the instructions for tying the knots in both directions. Make sure you tighten all the knots **firmly**.

Left Square Knot (LSK)



<< Move **cord 1** to the right, **over** the fillers (2 and 3), and **under** cord 4.

Move **cord 4 under** the fillers and **over** cord 1 on the left. >>



The rule to remember when tying Square Knots in opposite directions is that the head of the knot will face the direction of the **first working cord you move**.

So a left SK begins by moving the working cord on the left, which is cord 1 in this case. When you finish all 4 steps, the head will face left.



Working cords 1 and 4 have switched places.

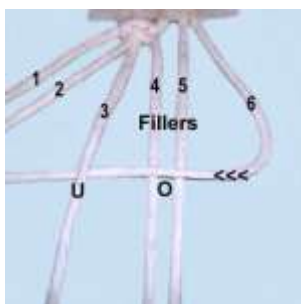
<< Move **cord 1** to the left, **over** the fillers and **under** cord 4.

Move **cord 4 under** the fillers and **over** cord 1 on the right. >>



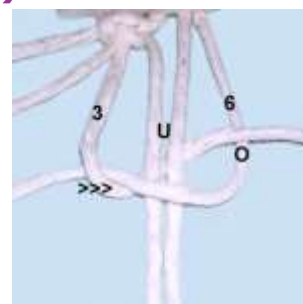
To create the zigzag pattern for the strap of your Shopping Bag, you will use cords 3 through 6 to tie the **right** Square knots. Cord 4 and 5 are the fillers.

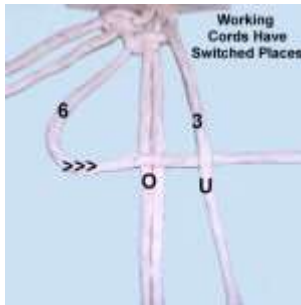
Right Square Knot (RSK)



<< Move **cord 6** to the left, **over** the fillers (4 and 5), and **under** cord 3.

Move **cord 3 under** the fillers and **over** cord 6 on the right. >>

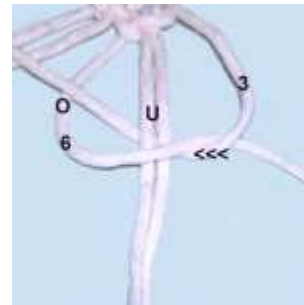




Working cords 3 and 6 have switched places.

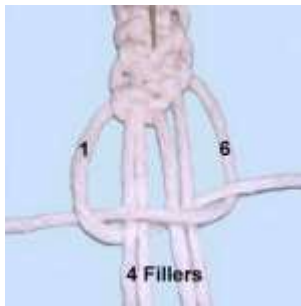
<< Move **cord 6** to the right, **over** the fillers and **under** cord 3.

Move **cord 3** **under** the fillers and **over** cord 6 on the left. >>



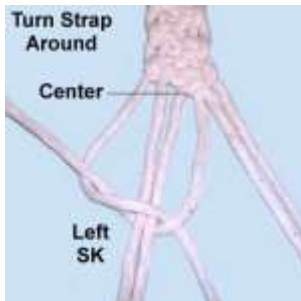
Step 3: Continue on, tying **left** Square knots with cords 1 - 4 and **right** SK with 3 - 6.

Stop when the first half of the strap is **7 inches long**.



Tie one more Square Knot, using **cords 1 and 6**. There should be four fillers (cords 2 - 5).

It should face the opposite direction from the last knot tied, so it follows the same pattern. In this image, the last knot was facing left, so this knot faces **right**.



Step 4: **Turn the strap around**, and go back to the center.

Create the second half of the strap by repeating steps 2 and 3. The first knot you tie will be a **left SK**.



Step 5: **Make a second strap**, repeating steps 1 - 4.

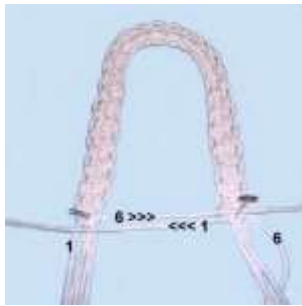
When you get to the second half (step 4), place it next to the first strap. This will ensure that both straps for the Shopping Bag are the same length.



Mounting Process

Step 6: Now it's time to mount the working cords for the Shopping Bag. Start by locating cords 1 and 6 at each end of the first strap (total of 4). These will be holding cords for the top half of the bag. Apply tape to mark these cords, so you can easily locate them.

Fold the strap so the ends are vertical, and the folded area is at the top of your board. **Make sure the front of the strap is face up.** There is now one group of cords on the left and right, coming from each end of the strap.

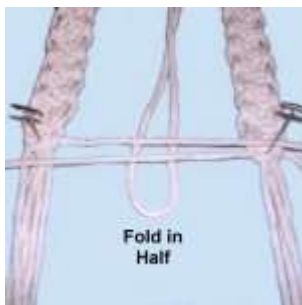


Move **cord 6** from the left group so it's horizontal, heading right.

Move **cord 1** from the right group, heading left.

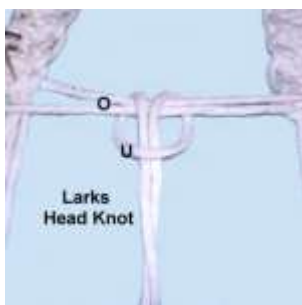
The area **between** the two halves of the strap is where the cords are mounted in the following steps. Secure them so they have tension.

Design Tip: A good way to secure holding cords while making the Shopping Bag is to wrap them around the edges of the board. The weight helps to hold them taut.



Step 7: Cut 6 working cords, each 2.5 yards long. Prepare the ends to prevent unraveling.

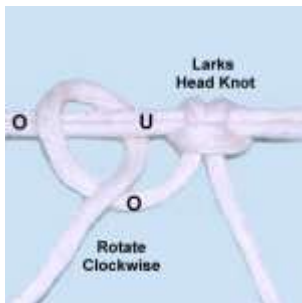
Fold one in half and place it **under** the two holding cords, between the two ends of the strap. The folded area should be close to you, with the ends heading towards the back of the board.



Step 8: Tie a Larks Head knot by moving the ends towards you, **over** the holding cords and **under** the folded area.

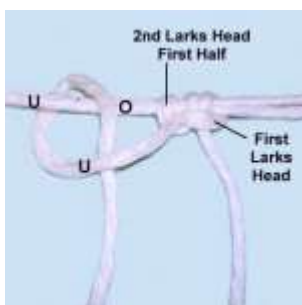
Pull both ends to tighten the knot firmly.

Step 9: Use the **left end** to make another Larks Head knot, as follows:



First Half: Move the end **over - under** the holding cord, rotating **clockwise**. As you pull it down, pass it **over** the portion of the left end just below.

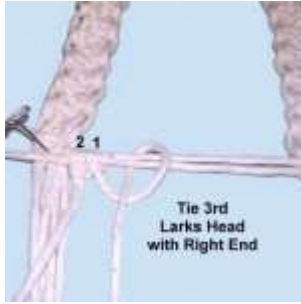
Pull firmly to tighten, so the loop rests against the left side of the first Larks Head knot.



Second Half: Move the left end **under - over** the holding cord, rotating **clockwise**.

As you pull it down, pass it **under** the portion of the left end.

Pull firmly to tighten.



Step 10: Move the knots to the **left**, so the second one rests against the edge of the strap.

Tie a 3rd Larks Head knot, by repeating step 4. The only difference is that the two loops should be made rotating **counter-clockwise**.

Step 11: Repeat steps 7 - 10, mounting the remaining 5 working cords to the holding cords in the same way.

The space between the straps will be around 6 inches. To make the top area of the Shopping Bag wider, you can add more cords in sets of 2. You need to end up with an even number that can be divided by 4.

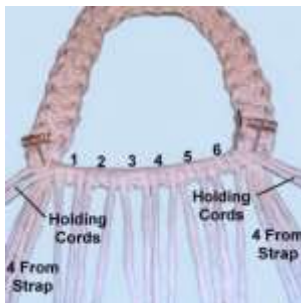
After all the cords have been mounted, **pull the holding cords** so the knots rest close to each other, as shown in the image below. Adjust the knots as needed so the upper edge of the Shopping Bag is neat.

Step 12: Repeat steps 6 - 11, mounting the same number of working cords to the **second strap**. **Make sure the front of the strap is face up**.

Put the design aside for now, since it's the **back half** of the Shopping bag and you won't need it until step 22.



Top Area of Bag

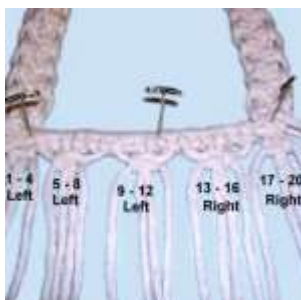


Step 13: Move the **four holding cords** to the sides. These are **CORDS 1 and 6** from each end of the strap, which you marked with tape.

The remaining 4 cords from each end of the strap are considered working cords, along with the six you just mounted. This gives you a total of 20 cords for the first row of knots.

The top area of the Shopping Bag is made with Alternating Square Knots arranged close together. You will be **adding cords** after the first row is tied (step 15).

You can tie left and right Square Knots for the Shopping Bag, or tie all of them in the same direction. In the example shown, I changed the direction of the knots. Ignore that part of the instructions if you choose to tie them in one direction.

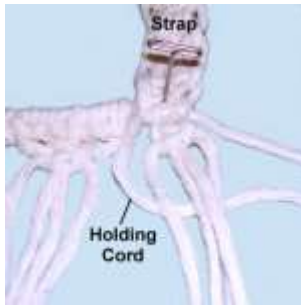


Step 14: Tie the first row of Square Knots as follows:

Left SK: 1 - 4, 5 - 8, and 9 - 12

Right SK: 13 - 16 and 17 - 20

Tighten the knots firmly, so they rest as close to the Larks Head knots as possible, and are lined up.



Move the holding cords **behind** the Square Knots tied with the four strap cords (1 - 4 and 17 - 20), and arrange 2 of them to the left and 2 to the right side of the Shopping Bag.

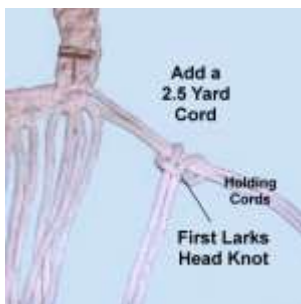
Secure them so they are diagonal and have tension.

New working cords will now be attached to the holding cords in the same manner as the ones you just mounted. That's one Larks Head knot followed by one with each end (steps 7 - 10). The only difference is that the holding cords will be **diagonal**.

Mentally number all the working cords each time you add new ones. **Do not include the holding cords when you count.**

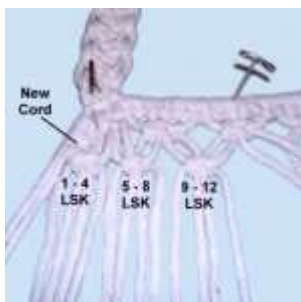
Step 15: Cut 4 cords, each 2.5 yards long. Cut 6 cords, 2 yards long. Prepare the ends to prevent unraveling. These cords will be added to the holding cords on each side of the Shopping Bag.

When you are tying the first 6 rows, tighten the knots so they are close to the ones in the previous row. You can add some space, but make sure it's **1/2-inch or less**.



Step 16: Add one 2.5 yard cord to each pair of holding cords, with a Larks Head knot. Use each end to tie another knot, as you did when you mounted the other cords.

Push the knots close to the first row of Square knots, and mentally number all the working cords 1 - 24.



Step 17: Tie the 2nd row of Alternating Square Knots as follows:

Left SK: Cords 1 - 4, 5 - 8, and 9 - 12

Right SK: Cords 13 - 16, 17 - 20, and 21 - 24

Step 18: Add one 2.5 yard cord to the holding cords, as you did before. Mentally number the cords 1 - 28, and tie the 3rd row of ASK as follows:

Left SK: Cords 1 - 4, 5 - 8, 9 - 12, and 13 - 16

Right SK: Cords 17 - 20, 21 - 24, and 25 - 28

Step 19: Add one 2-yard cord to the holding cords. Mentally number the cords 1 - 32, and tie the 4th row as follows:

Left SK: Cords 1 - 4, 5 - 8, 9 - 12, 13 - 16

Right SK: Cords 17 - 20, 21 - 24, 25 - 28, and 29 - 32

Step 20: Add one 2-yard cord to the holding cords. Mentally re-number the cords 1 - 36. Tie the 5th row as follows:

Left SK: Cords 1 - 4, 5 - 8, 9 - 12, 13 - 16, and 17 - 20

Right SK: Cords 21 - 24, 25 - 28, 29 - 32, and 33 - 36

Step 21: Add one **2-yard cord** to the holding cords. Mentally re-number the cords 1 - 40. Tie the 6th row as follows:

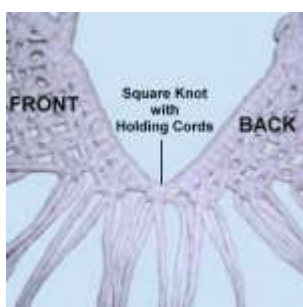
Left SK: Cords 1 - 4, 5 - 8, 9 - 12, 13 - 16, and 17 - 20

Right SK: Cords 21 - 24, 25 - 28, 29 - 32, 33 - 36, 37 - 40

Step 22: Use the other strap design that you put aside earlier, and **repeat steps 13 - 21**. This will be the back half of the Shopping Bag (you've been working on the front).

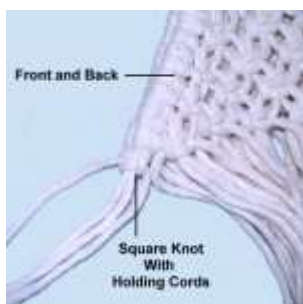


Sides and Body



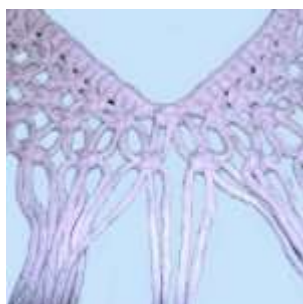
Step 23: Place the **front** of the Shopping Bag on your left, and the **back** on your right. The 6th row of knots on each half should line up. The diagonal rows where you added the cords should form a V shape.

Tie a Square Knot with the **4 holding cords**. This will connect the front and back.



To connect the other side, you need to place the front on top of the back. Check the straps to make sure the **insides** are touching.

Tie a Square Knot with the **4 holding cords**.



Step 24: The remaining rows of Alternating Square Knots are tied all the way around the Shopping Bag.

To alternate the cords, always start at one side. Use the cords in groups of four. Make sure two cords come from two different knots in the previous row.

The image above shows the 7th row of ASK, which was tied all the way around the design. The knots in this row should rest **1-inch below** those in row 6. The remaining rows should be **1.5 inches** apart.

Step 25: Tie rows of ASK moving in a circle from front to back. Stop when the Shopping Bag measures **18 inches** from the top edge down to where you are working.

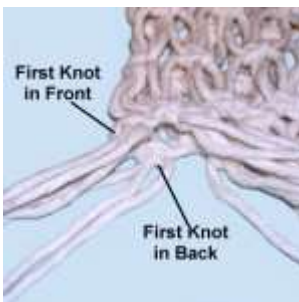
I recommend you hang the bag by the straps while you work, rather than flat on a board. It's easier to make straight rows that way.

Finishing Process



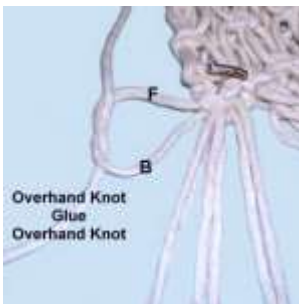
Step 26: Tie the last row of Alternating Square Knots. Tighten the knots so they rest just below those in the previous row, **with no space between them**.

This helps to stabilize and strengthen the bottom of the Shopping Bag.



Step 27: Turn the bag inside out, so the finishing knots will be on the **inside**. Place the bag on your project board, with the front resting on top of the back.

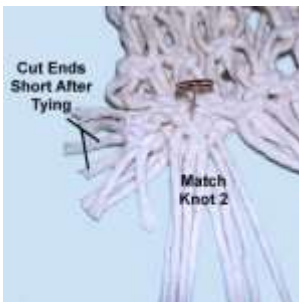
Start at the left edge, at the bottom of the bag. Locate the first knots in both the back and the front. Match the knots and secure them together with a pin.



Step 28: Organize the cords so there are 4 sets of two cords (one from the back and front).

Tie an Overhand knot with one set of cords. Apply glue, and tie a second one.

Repeat this process with the remaining 3 sets of cords.



Cut the ends short after tying the knots, so that you know which ones have been used.

Step 29: After all the cords from knot 1 are tied, match knot 2 from the back and front.

Repeat step 28.

Step 30: Repeat step 28 with the remaining cords. It's important to **take your time** and match the knots before tying, since it's easy to lose your place.

By focusing on just 4 sets of cords at a time, you ensure that all the cords are tied off and the bottom is closed.