

Four Basic Steps

All the tassels in this book have been made using the following basic steps. Read these instructions carefully before you begin any of the projects. With each project you will also find specific notes to help you, and throughout the book further techniques are introduced to create variations of form and texture.

1. COVER THE WOODEN FORM

You will need a wooden form, thread and glue.

Using spray glue

You will need a rubber glove and some plastic wrap.

Cover the hips of the wooden form with plastic wrap, and put on a rubber glove to protect the hand that will be holding the tassel.

Spray two coats of glue over the wooden form, waiting two or three minutes between sprays so that the glue becomes quite tacky. After the second coat of glue, start winding the thread from the base of the wooden form, working slowly upward.

When you get to the top of the head, snip off the leftover thread leaving about $\frac{3}{8}$ in (2 cm) hanging loose. Do not tuck in the loose end yet.

Using tacky craft glue

Starting from the bottom, apply a small amount of glue around the wooden form, then wind a few rows. Apply more glue, and wind a little further. Continue this procedure until you have finished the whole head.

When you get to the top of the head, snip off the leftover thread leaving about $\frac{3}{4}$ in (2 cm) hanging loose. Do not tuck in the loose end yet.



Wrap the wooden form from the bottom to the top and leave a tail hanging loose at the top.

2. ATTACH THE SKIRT

Wrap the skirt (usually fringing) around the waist of the wooden form. Secure the ends of the skirt by stitching. Glue is not used for securing the skirt because it dries hard, making the fibres difficult to stitch through, and it is sometimes necessary to stitch through the top of the skirt when decorating the waist.

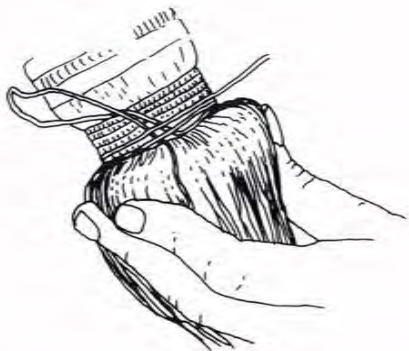
As the waists of the wooden forms vary slightly in size, determine how much fringing you will need by winding it around the waist several times before cutting the length. A trial wrap also helps you to control how thick the skirt will be. It seems that most tassel makers prefer a thicker skirt, so that it is not possible to see the wooden form through

the skirt. However, it is a matter of personal taste, so, for those of you who prefer less fringing, this is the step to ensure you create the effect you want.

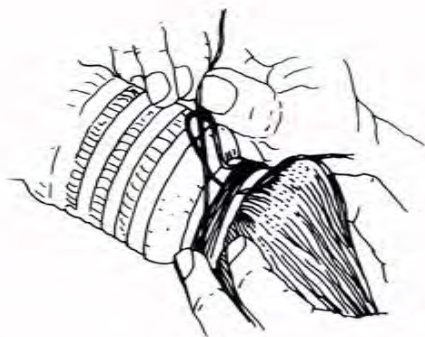
3. COVER THE WAIST

The waists of the tassels in this book are covered using either a ribbon or thread. If you are covering the waist with ribbon, simply join the ends of the ribbon with a needle and thread.

If you are covering the waist with thread, make a loop of thread and hold it against the waist, allowing the start of the thread to dangle free. Start wrapping upward from the bottom of the waist, covering the loop as you go but leaving the tip of the loop free. When you have finished wrapping, pass the end of the thread through the tip of the loop, and pull the start of the thread so that the end of the thread is drawn—by the loop—underneath the wrapping. Trim the start and the end of the thread so that they don't show.



Make a loop, hold it against the waist and start wrapping.

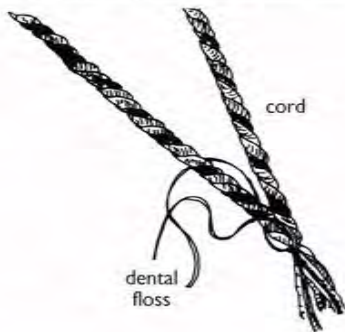


When you've finished wrapping the waist, pass the end of the thread through the loop and pull the loop under the wrapping.

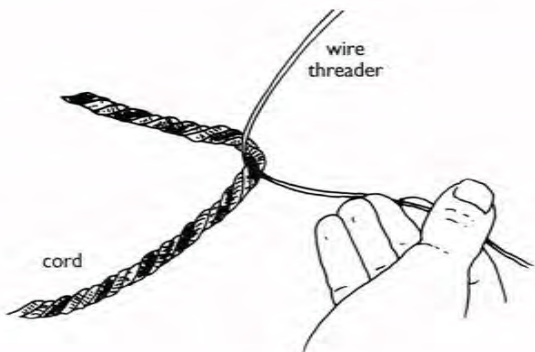
4. ATTACH THE CORD

These instructions can be used with any type of cord or ribbon.

Fold the cord (or ribbon) in half. Tie the ends together with dental floss.



Pass a wire through the folded end of the loop to make a 'threader'.



Pass the wire threader from the bottom of the wooden form through to the top.

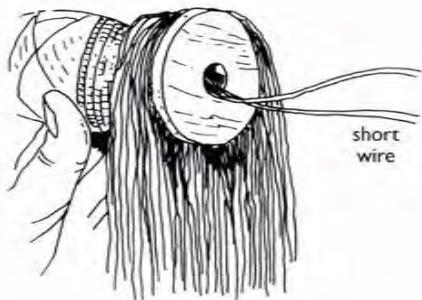


Use the wire to pull the cord through the wooden form.

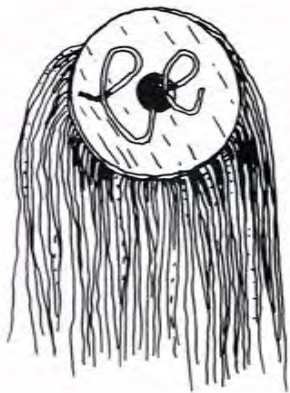
Remove the threader wire, and pull the cord (or ribbon) through until the tied ends nearly reach the hole at the bottom of the form. Hook a shorter piece of wire through the tied end of the loop.



Pull the cord (or ribbon) through so that the knotted end of the cord disappears into the wooden form, but leave most of the short wire hanging out.



Twist the wire to prevent the cord (or ribbon) from being pulled through the hole in the wooden form.



Twisted wire stops the cord from slipping through the wooden form.

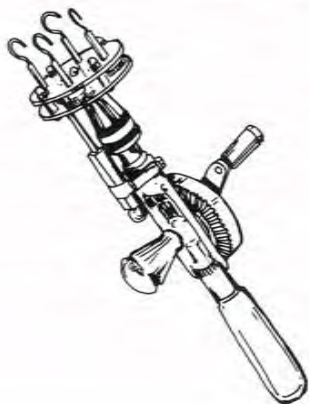
The Cord

MAKING YOUR OWN CORD

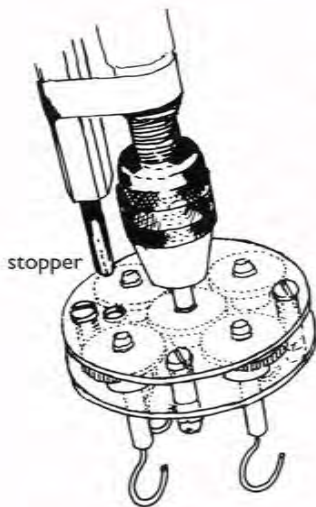
Plaiting can be used to make an effective three-coloured cord, and a simple twist can be used for making one- or two-coloured cord. Crocheting in chain stitch can make a one-coloured cord. You can also use any of the stunning ribbons available to make a simple matching hanging for your tassel. Experiment with the various possibilities, and choose your cord to match the colour and texture of your tassel.

Many of these projects specify handmade cord to match the threads on the tassel. Lengths of specific cording materials are given in each project, but any length of cord can be made to suit your personal taste, and any combination of threads and ribbons can be used.

For the three- or four-stranded twists you will need a corder. Your local engineer can probably make you a corder; otherwise see the Suppliers at the back of this book.



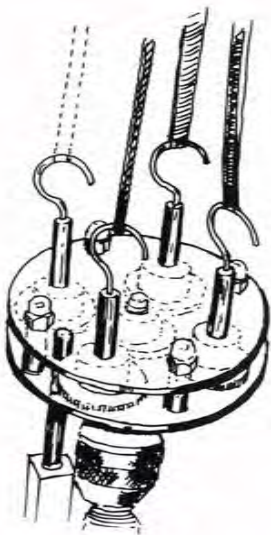
A corder



How to hold the threads when using a corder.

USING A CORDER
First, the threads have to be twisted (with the stopper in the corder). Using the corder ensures that the threads all have the same number of twists so that they will fit together exactly to make the cord.





Loop the threads over the corder hooks.



With the corder stopper released, turn the handle to twist the threads together.