

A Step By Step Instructional Guide



Paracord Survival Bracelet

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Introduction

Introduction

Paracord Survival Bracelets are very useful tools that are passively considered to be a type of jewelry. Most production bracelets found in convenience stores or boutiques are generally made solely for that purpose. This type also lacks the qualities that satisfy the requirements of a true survival bracelet. This step-by-step guide is intended to inform people about the benefits and uses of Paracord and contains detailed instructions to make a survival bracelet. Survival bracelets get their name from the fact that it can be cut if needed, and expand out to a very strong and reliable source of rope in survival situation. These bracelets are a necessity for avid outdoorsmen, but are useful to everyone.

The process used to make the Survival Bracelet is similar to crafts such as macramé and hemp, which also utilize square knots. Once the basic process is learned creativity will take over and allow for experimentation with other projects like the ones in the Gallery at the end of this guide. First time projects, even when following directions, rarely turn out perfect and this should not discourage future attempts. This talent can be mastered with practice, patience and perseverance.

History and Useful Information

1 History and Useful Information

1.1 History of Paracord

- Paracord, properly known as Type III 550 Parachute Cord, was used as suspension cables for World War II (WWII) parachutes by the United States Military. After WWII the U.S. Military made paracord available to civilians as military surplus. They also continued to make it standard issue to military personnel for its versatility and countless uses.
- There are multiple types and strengths of parachute cord, the cord used in this guide will be the Type III 550 (commercial grade). The name identifies a couple of things:
 - Type III signifies that it has internal strands, giving it much more minimum strength.
 - 550 is the actual minimum breaking strength of 550 pounds.

1.2 Material

- The cord cover, or **Sheath**, is made of nylon so finely woven that it makes a smooth texture, it is also more elastic when the core is removed. The strands within the sheath are called **Yarns**. The yarns are also made of nylon, and when they are inside the sheath, they are collectively referred to as the **Core**.
- Commercial grade, which is used for this guide, is available to civilians. MIL-Spec grade is only available for military personnel.
 - Commercial grade Type III 550 is available in an array of colors and material, such as polyester.
 - MIL-Spec grade is only available in “Natural” and “Olive Grab”, which is a camouflage green color. MIL-Spec also requires that the core consist of 7 woven nylon strands called *Yarns*. Most commercial grade versions of Type III 550 will not contain this many.

1.3 Military Uses

- Rope.
- Tying camouflage.
- Attaching packs to vehicles
- Dummy cords (attaching small items to equipment to avoid loss)
- Core yarns are used for:
 - Sewing
 - Fishing string
- The sheath is used for:
 - Boot laces

1.4 Civillian Uses

- Survival Bracelets

- A single strand of Type III 550, many feet in length, intricately tied or braided into a wearable form for a “worst case scenario” survival tactic.
- As covered later in this guide, an average of 1 Inch of a survival bracelet is equivalent to 1 ft of usable Type III 550 Paracord.
- Survival experts use Paracord for its utility much like the military. This can come in wearable forms, such as a bracelet, or simply inventoried as a lighter and more versatile substitute for other utility rope.
- Common projects:
 - Dog Collars
 - Gun slings
 - Key chains
 - Watches

Supplies and Preparation

2 Supplies and Preparation

2.1 Supplies



- A permanent marker
- A spoon
- Scissors
- Lighter
- Two 4" pieces of Duct Tape
 - One 4" long piece needs to be ripped long ways to make two ½ width strips. (Figure 2.1)
- A bundle of Paracord (at least 10 Ft)
- A small size binding clip
- A 3/8" snap buckle
- A tailors measuring tape

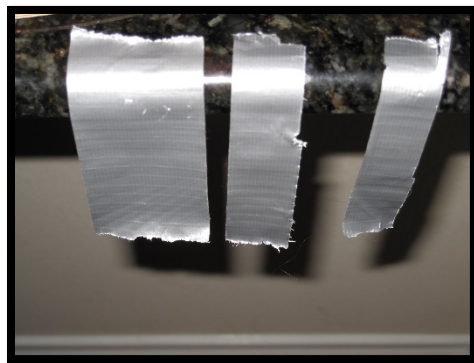


Figure 2.1

2.2 Where to Buy Supplies

- Walmart
- Craft Stores (i.e. Michaels or Jo-Ann)
- Army Navy Stores
 - These stores also offer special items to add to your projects that other places may not.
 - They carry various gauges and colors of Paracord, a variety of fasteners and bulk quantities.

2.3 Constructing the Craft Area

- Place the small binding clip at the edge of the table with the “mouth” facing the edge (see Figure 2.2)
- While holding down the bottom “wing” to the table, flip the clip and top “wing” forward. (see Figure 2.3)
- Tape the bottom “wing” down to the surface of the table (with the thick piece of tape), then flip the clip back over into the position in Figure 2.4 and Figure 2.5.



Figure 2.2

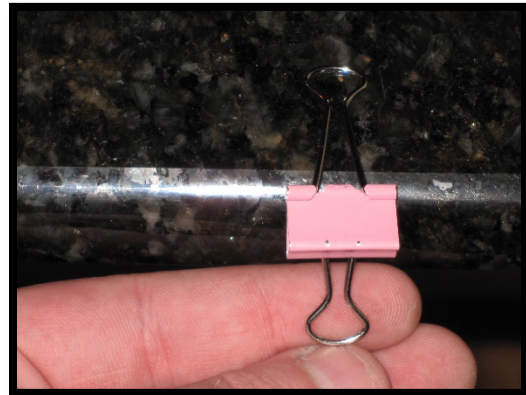


Figure 2.3

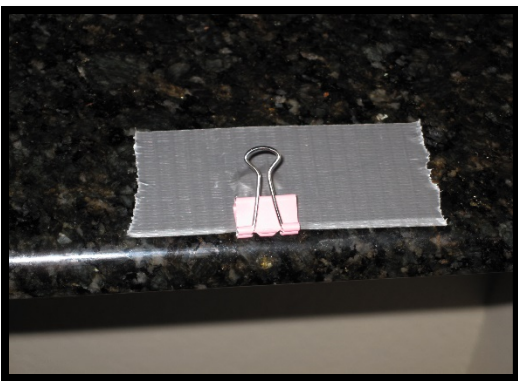


Figure 2.4

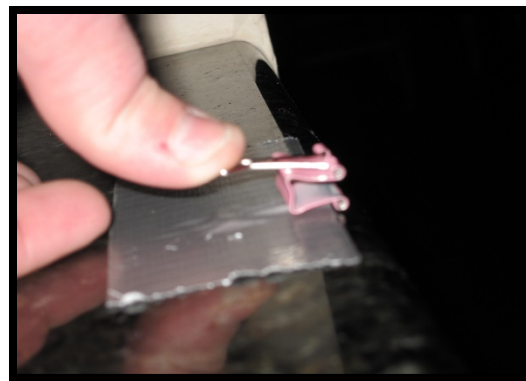


Figure 2.5

Size and Measuring

3 Size and Measuring

3.1 Rules to Reduce Errors

- It is easy to make a project too small or too short. Following these rules will help prevent a critical error.
 - Write down the measurement of the wrist, and measure the bracelet frequently to ensure consistency.
 - Do not cut any cord until you measure or test the project and are positive you are correct. Anything during the process can be reversed and corrected, except for cutting the cord incorrectly.
 - It's always better to have a little extra than not enough. This is true throughout the project.

3.2 Measuring The Wrist

- There are different methods to measure. The tailors tape method offers a balance of ease and accuracy.
- Simply wrap the tailors tape around the wrist to the desired fit. (Figure 3.1)
 - Keep in mind that a little extra is better than not enough, the bracelet will tighten when wet.



Figure 3.1

- Mark with your fingers where the 0" meets the measurement of your desired fit. The circumference used for this guide is 7". (Figure 3.2)
- Write this measurement down, or mark it on your tape.



Figure 3.2

3.3 Measuring and Cutting Cord Needed

- Follow this Equation:

- Every 1" of wrist = 1' (foot) of cord.
- So for this guide, 7" wrist = 7' of cord needed.
- Unwrap the paracord bundle, measure the amount needed, and cut the cord.
 - If your tape is shorter than your requirement, just go to the longest length, pinch your cord at that point (Figure 3.3), go back to the 0" point (Figure 3.4) and measure the excess needed (Figure 3.5).
- Cut the cord at this measurement.



Figure 3.3

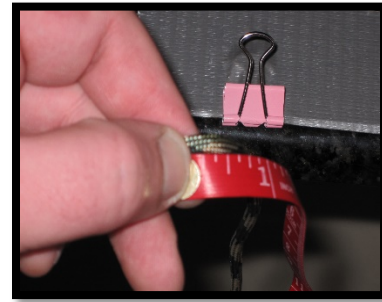


Figure 3.4



Figure 3.5

Adding Buckles and Braiding

4 Adding Buckles and Braiding

4.1 Adding the First Buckle

- Fold the cord in half, holding the looped end (Figure 4.1).
- Push the loop through the top of the strap bar of the “claw” side of the snap buckle (Figure 4.2).
- Pull the strands through the loop created by the bar and looped end of the cord (Figure 4.3).
- Pull the strands tight ensuring that the ends are still even and the knot looks like Figure 4.4.

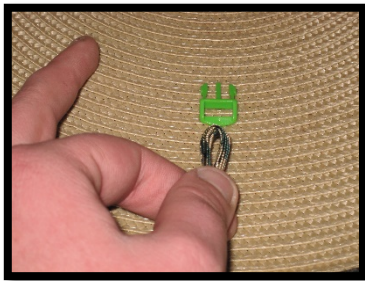


Figure 4.1

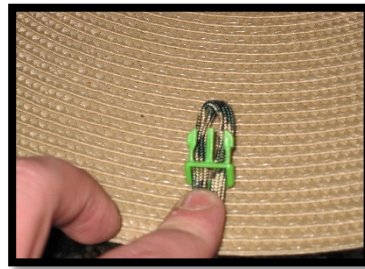


Figure 4.2



Figure 4.3

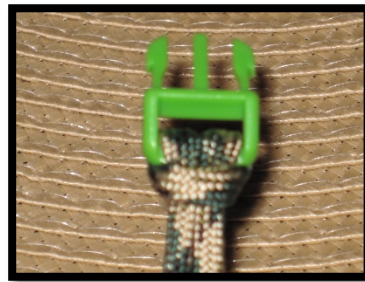


Figure 4.4

4.2 Adding the Second Buckle

- Clip the “Flat” buckle into the binding clip fixed to the table, with the strap bar hanging out, top side up (Figure 4.5).
- Thread the two free strands through the strap bar, making sure that the strands do not cross (Figure 4.6).
- Wrap one of the strips of duct tape in half around the end of the **left** strand, making a flag label. Label this strand “TOP” (Figure 4.6).

- Repeat the above step for the **right** strand, labeling it “BOTTOM” (Figure 4.6).
 - NOTE: The cord between the buckles will now be referred to as the “center” strands. The cord being used to braid will be referred to as the “TOP (or BOTTOM)” strand.
- Pull the center strands through the strap bar of the clipped buckle. The center strands need to be equal to the measurement written down previously, in this tutorial, the measurement is 7”.

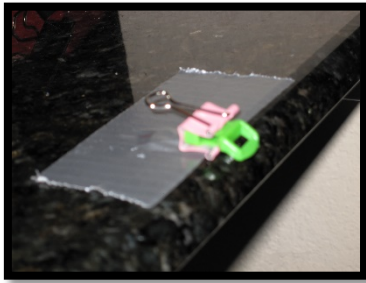


Figure 4.5

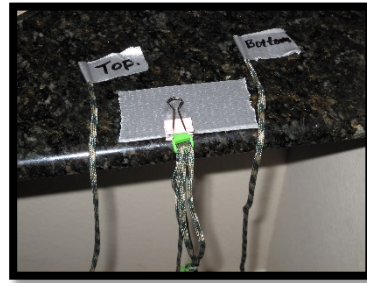


Figure 4.6

4.3 First Knot

- Cross the “Top” strand **over the top** of the “Center” strands, and the “Bottom” strand **under** the “Center” strands.
- There will be loops on each side of the center strands, **push** the “Top” strand through the loop on the right, and **pull** the “Bottom” strand through the loop on the left (Figure 4.7). Take a closer look in Figure 4.9.
- Pull tightly, making a knot (Figure 4.8).
 - Note: Make sure not to give or remove any length from the center strands, if the measurement has changed, just loosen the knot, fix the slack and retie the knot at the proper length.
 - Note: The cord will not break, do not be afraid to pull it tight with force.

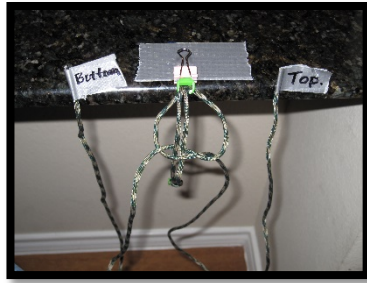


Figure 4.7



Figure 4.8



Figure 4.9

4.4 The Second Knot and Beyond

- The second knot and all of those thereafter are easier than the first due to the center strands measurement being fixed by the first knot.
- Measure the center strands to ensure the length from buckle to buckle at the strap bar is equal to the wrist measurement (Figure 4.14).
- Simply do the same routine as the first knot, only putting the “Top” strand back **over** “Center” strands from right to left, and the “Bottom” strand **under** the “Center” strands from left to right; again, **push** the “Top” strand through the “Bottom” strands loop, and **Pull** the “Bottom” strand through the “Top” strands loop (Figure 4.10).
 - Note: The **Push** and **Pull** loops will be on the opposite side of the “Center” strands than they were on the first knot.
- Pull Tightly (Figure 4.11).
- Repeat these steps making sure that the “Top” strand always crosses the top of the “Center” strands, and the “Bottom” strand crosses underneath the “Center” strands; the “Top” and “Bottom” strands will swap from left to right.
- If your knots are correct, you should have a flat and level braid as pictured in (Figure 4.12) and (Figure 4.13).
 - Note: Make sure that your knots are very tight, it will make sure that the bracelet will be consistent in width.



Figure 4.10

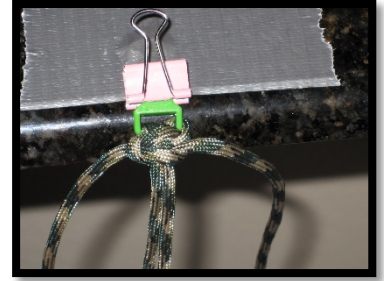


Figure 4.11

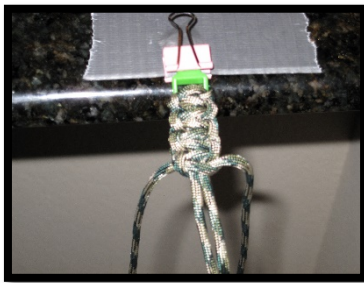


Figure 4.12



Figure 4.13



Figure 4.14

Finishing the Bracelet

5 Finishing the Bracelet

5.1 The Last Knot

- The last knot needs to be very tight. Do not be afraid to break the cord, it is nearly impossible. The last knot should look smaller than the rest of the knots. (Figure 5.1)
- There will be excess cord, sometimes this cord will be long, sometimes short, this will depend on how tight the knots are.

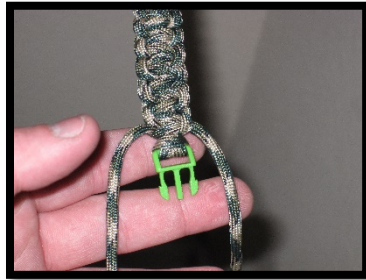


Figure 5.1

5.2 Cutting and Melting

- Remember to measure the bracelet one more time before cutting, the length between the buckles should be the original measurement, for this guide 7". If you would like, snap the buckles together and measure the inside circumference, which should also be equal to the wrist measurement (Figure 5.2).
- Cut the excess cord from the last knot, leaving about a 1/4" remainder on each side (Figure 5.3)
- Hold the bracelet firmly in one hand, (now unclipped) and use the lighter to melt one of the excess remainders (Figure 5.6), when it begins to bubble, mash the melted piece with the back of the spoon (Figure 5.4), pressing it firmly, allowing it to shape with the bracelet. (Figure 5.5).
- Repeat the previous step on the other side.



Figure 5.2

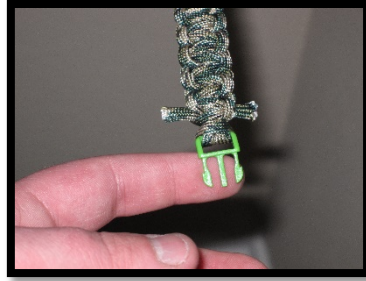


Figure 5.3



Figure 5.4



Figure 5.5

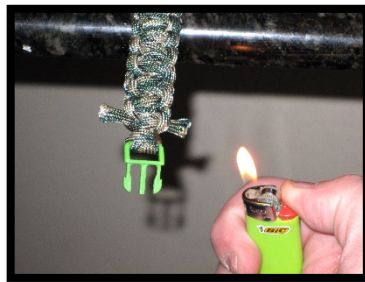


Figure 5.6

5.3 Let Cool and Enjoy

- Allow the melted ends to cool for about 2-3 minutes.
- Buckle the bracelet to the wrist, ensure the desired fit and enjoy.
- Congratulations! The Survival Bracelet is complete.

Gallery of Paracord Project

6 Gallery of Paracord Projects

