

Paracord bracelet with a side release buckle

by [Stormdrane](#) on February 17, 2007

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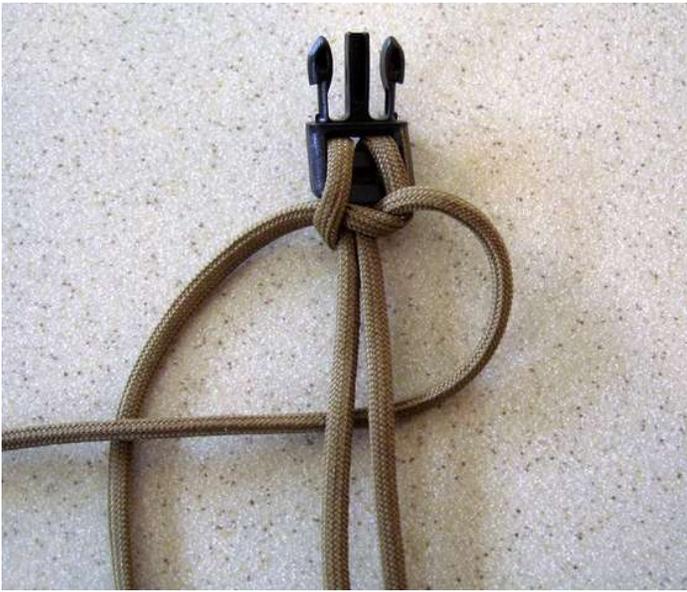
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intro: Paracord bracelet with a side release buckle

This tutorial will show how to make a paracord bracelet with a side release buckle. When made on a larger scale, you can make this for use as a dog or cat collar as well. I get my paracord from the [Supply Captain](#) and the side release buckles from [Creative Designworks](#). More projects, links, knot references can be seen on my blog page, [Stormdrane's Blog](#).









step 1: Materials

You'll need paracord, or equivalent 1/8" diameter cord, a tape measure or ruler, scissors, side release buckle, and a lighter(torch lighter works best). The amount of cord used can vary, but for this example, we'll use 10 feet of paracord to start with. Actual amount of cord used for the bracelet is about 1 foot of cord for every 1 inch of knotted bracelet length. So if your wrist is 8 inches, you'd use approximately 8 feet of cord.



step 2: Measure wrist

Wrap the paracord around your wrist and make a note of where the cord meets. Hold this point next to your ruler or tape measure and that's your wrist size.



step 3: Find the center of the cord

Hold the ends of the cord together and find the center of the loop. Take the center of the cord and pull it thru one end of the buckle (either side of the buckle, it doesn't matter). Now pull the cord ends thru the loop until it's tightened up and attached to the buckle.



step 4: Finding the bracelet length

Take buckle apart and pull the free ends of the cord thru the other part of the buckle, sliding it up towards the attached part. You're going to measure the distance between the two buckle ends for the bracelet size for your wrist. Add about 1 inch to your measured wrist length, this will make the finished bracelet a comfortable fit. You're measuring from the end of the female part of the buckle to the flat part of the male end of the buckle (the part with the prongs, they don't count for the measurement because the fit inside the female part of the buckle when the bracelet is closed.).



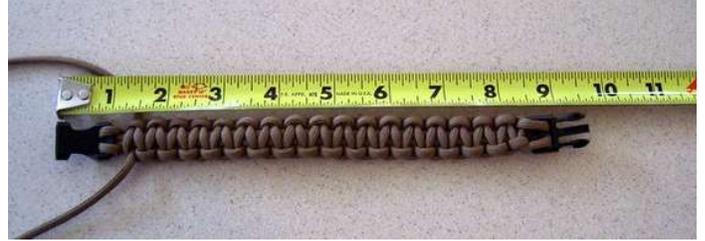
step 5: Start making the knots

The knot used for the bracelet has a few different names, cobra stitch, Solomon bar, and Portuguese sinnet. Take the cord on the left side and place it under the center strands running between the buckle ends. Now take the cord on the right side under the left side cord, over the center strands, and thru the loop of the left side cord. Tighten up the cords so the half knot you just formed is next to the buckle. Now take the right side cord under the center strands. The left side cord goes under the right side cord, over the center strands and thru the loop of the right side cord. Tighten up the cords(not too tight, just until they meet the resistance of the knot) and now you have a completed knot. You will continue doing the alternating the left and right sides as you go. If you don't alternate, you'll quickly see a twisting of the knots, just undo the last knot and alternate it to correct.



step 6: Continue knotting

Keep tying the knots until you have filled the space between the buckle ends. The knots should be uniform from one end to the other. Tie each knot with the same tension to keep them all the same size.



step 7: Trim the excess cord and melt the ends

You can now use your scissors to trim off the extra cord closely to the last knot you tied. I trim one at a time, and use my lighter to quickly melt the end I cut, wait a second for the melted cord to cool just a bit and then use my thumb to press the melted end onto the surrounding cord so it hardens as it attaches. You must be careful with this step. The melted cord is extremely hot, and it's possible to get burned, so you might also try using a soldering iron or wood burning tool for the melting step if you wish, or even use something like a butter knife or the knurled section of a tool to flatten out the melted end of the cord to finish it.

An alternative to melting the ends, is to tuck/pull the ends under the last couple of knots. I have used hemostats to do this on the inside of the bracelet, then trim them to finish. It does work, and is just barely noticeable as the cords add a slight buldge at that end of the bracelet.





step 8: You're finished

If you did everything correctly, it should look something like this finished one. Once you know what you're doing, you can vary the amount of cord used by making the knots tighter or looser and pushing the knots closer together as you go can use more cord.

A tip for paracord bracelets: If the side release buckle is large enough, you can loop the paracord around them again before you start knotting, to fill in the extra room on the buckle.

The 1/2" side release buckles are a tight fit for this, but will work, and the 5/8" size are just right.

This leaves a two strand core for the bracelet when you start knotting.

Now, you could also have a four strand core by starting with a lark's head on the first buckle end, double wrap on second buckle end(at your wrist size), run cord back to and over the first buckle end, then start knotting over the four strand core.

Or, for a six strand core, lark's head first buckle, run the two strands around second buckle(at your wrist size), back to and around first buckle(now has four strands around), then back to and around second buckle, and start knotting around the six core strands.

This gives extra cord in case you need it for whatever, but it also makes the paracord bracelets thicker and more rounded, which I personally didn't care for and that's why I stick with the two strand core. YMMV





Image Notes

1. Tip: The paracord is looped around the side release buckle twice to fill in the extra space on 5/8 " sized buckles.

step 9: Other variations.

Once you have the hang of the basic bracelet/collar, you can add another layer of cobra stitches overlapping first set of knots, called a king cobra stitch. The amount of cord used for a king cobra is about twice as much as for the regular stitch. Glow-in-the-dark cord can be found at CoolGlowStuff.com. Both the 1/16" and 3/32" sizes work well for the bracelets and can be used alone or combined with paracord.





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Comments

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 **hnnh14** says: Apr 28, 2009. 12:58 PM [REPLY](#)
Is this the 550 paracord from supply captian, or the 1/8th shock chord? the 550 doesn't tell the diameter, so i thought maybe it actually was the shock chord since you said 1/8th is what you used.
thanks.

 **Stormdrane** says: Apr 29, 2009. 12:23 AM [REPLY](#)
The Supply Captain has 550 cord and shock cord. Actual diameters of paracord can vary slightly depending on manufacturers. The 1/8" size I mentioned is in the same size neighborhood if you wanted to use a different type of cordage and end up with the same similar sized finished bracelet. You can use shock cord to make a bracelet, but all the knots limit the 'stretch' you'd get with using it.

 **knistertoni-33** says: Apr 28, 2009. 11:06 PM [REPLY](#)
Thanks for the nice instruction :-)
i made my wristband with a kind of neon-rope... hope you like it



 **dianapieri** says: Apr 16, 2009. 7:04 AM [REPLY](#)
Where do you get the buckles? Great Instructable, by the way!

 **beth_ann** says: Apr 26, 2009. 1:36 PM [REPLY](#)
i found them at wal-mart in the craft/sewing section near the zippers

 **jaykay1203** says: Apr 20, 2009. 3:49 PM [REPLY](#)
michaels or any crafts store should carry them!
:)

 **darthdarth4** says: Apr 17, 2009. 10:28 PM [REPLY](#)
i recognized them from my cat's broken collar. but you can probably order a whole bunch online

 **ezgoo** says: Apr 24, 2009. 11:23 AM [REPLY](#)
anyone know where i can find the paracord and buckle NOT online? i want to make one right now and dont wanna wait

 **rreynolds63** says: Apr 25, 2009. 7:32 PM [REPLY](#)
I found the paracord at a local Army Navy surplus store. About \$7 for a 100' package. They only had khaki & green. I got an anchor shackle instead of the buckle used in this. You could probably find the buckles at a craft store like Jo-Anns. I have made three of these already and they have turned out great. Hope yours do too!



corey11 says:

Apr 25, 2009. 6:52 AM [REPLY](#)

Yea you can he is using a cord called 550 cord. It can hold 550 pounds without tearing. Its light weight and redily available. You can find it at a military surplus store. The only thing you cant use is natural cord or hollow cord because natural cord just burns not melts and hollow wont take the nessary shape



jacob2040 says:

Apr 24, 2009. 2:51 PM [REPLY](#)

And another question what color are you using in the pictures?



jacob2040 says:

Apr 24, 2009. 2:49 PM [REPLY](#)

Can you make this out of hollow rope? (somewhat like parachute cord) I think it is made on nylon but i am not sure. Looks just like all the pictures I have seen.



lan+Siobhan says:

Apr 24, 2009. 12:04 PM [REPLY](#)

can you use something other than paracord?



kazzak says:

Apr 24, 2009. 2:29 AM [REPLY](#)

its really cool.



Covo says:

Apr 22, 2009. 9:21 PM [REPLY](#)

I'm thinkin' dog collar.



ADaftGirl says:

Apr 9, 2009. 7:21 AM [REPLY](#)

I had to take a break with making these to rave my little brains out.

1st, the buckles Stormdrane referenced are "perfect". If you want to use a buckle, I wouldn't bother even looking anywhere else (unless you're after a different type all together). I ordered 10 of the 3/8" size for a whopping 46 cents each (and the ppu goes down the more you order). I shopped around the web for other buckles but he's right in using this supplier. I received them faster than the paracord I ordered could get here, the price and quality was just great. plus, the website he refers you to (CreativeDesignworks.com) has a plethora of great photo's to give you a perfect visual perspective of the bracelet's actual size. They even have white, pink and break-away buckles in various sizes. I was seriously impressed by the Buckle supplier. Oh yea, i'll be going back. If only they sold the variety of coloured paracord, it would be a 1 stop shopping project.

Next: The steps he outlines above - flawless! This is the easiest thing I've ever made. I seriously think the Easy Bake oven takes more patience, time and skill.

I had to make 3 or 4 to really get the whole sizing thing down, because for me - it was tricky. Luckily, once finished - these things are capable of actually stretching out about 1/4" if you hold them in the middle and gently pull outward.

I used 10 feet to make a bracelet for a 9 year old (a little dangly at 6 3/4") and depending on the colour used, had about 1.5 to 2 feet of cord left on each side.

For an adult mans bracelet I used approx. 12 feet and had about a foot left on each side. I used brown cord for that one. It is worth mentioning that some of these cords are stiffer/thicker and a little bulkier (even when they're all 550/7 strand) and having that extra cord at the end is important for getting some leverage into your last 2 knots, but probably not as much extra as I had.

I'm not sure why but the scarlet red & light pink (at least regarding the batch I got) were a bit softer and I ended up with a much daintier bracelet. The weave was closer together and the final width of it was about 1/4" thinner.

It was 550/7 strand but i noticed (when i dissected a small piece of each cord) the strands inside were much softer than the other cords. *shrug* I only mention that because the red & pink ones were my first try and i loved the result. When I made subsequent bracelets, they were bulkier, wider and less tight in weave - which made me dislike them very much. If anyone knows why the inner threads would be thinner/softer - please let me know so I can intentionally buy that kind from now on, unless it was a fluke.

Um - so basically, it took me 10 minutes to complete one of these. The most time consuming part is holding the cord still while you secure your first knot (to prevent slipping, which messes up the size measurements you just made) After it's secure the rest is a breeze.

He's right about burning yourself on the melted cord. Yeeow! Watch out. It cools quickly but remains hot for a few seconds after it stiffens up.

I used a lighter slowly and carefully (to avoid blackening) then had a metal lamp shade screw handy to rock over the cooling goop. The curve in it helped eliminate a sharp edge but I'm sure other items would work well. I practiced melting and setting the cord several times on a little piece of scrap cord.

And until you actually cut the cord & burn it - you can easily take the knots out and start over without anything being messed up (i did it a few times on one because the sizing wasn't right) I love that part.

I know i've rambled on. And on and on and on and on and on - but this is a really great tutorial. I've made 5 bracelets in an hour (and i've been screwing off between knots). This would be a great project for anyone and a super nifty (super quick & super cheap) gift for friends. I don't know how it could look difficult to anyone, but if it does - it isn't!

My only complaint is that I didn't order a few thousand feet of cord. Now I'll have to wait for more to arrive. :(I got mine, which was available in 32 different colours from that particular seller on ebay fairly cheap. \$2.25 for each 25 foot piece, which was awesome for trying it out. It averages out to about \$1.50 in materials per bracelet, if that much.

/rave



zook74 says:
THAT is one long reply. ;-)

Apr 22, 2009. 6:49 PM [REPLY](#)

Great to hear somebody so excited about a project. Inspiring.

After reading this instructable I ordered a hundred feet of paracord and ten buckles off e-bay. Am looking forward to getting a start on them, hopefully, this weekend...



mjursic says:

Apr 15, 2009. 4:58 AM [REPLY](#)

When I use my thumb to smooth nylon cord, I always lick it first and slid it over the end. That way it doesn't stick and makes it nice and smooth with no fingerprints.



Yooder says:

Dec 12, 2008. 1:15 PM [REPLY](#)

Did you try using a knot to tie the loose ends to avoid having to melt a portion of the rope (aside from just the ends)? I would think a sheetbend or slipped sheetbend would work, but the tradeoff would be that it would stick out a bit.



spiceyweasel says:

Apr 13, 2009. 11:29 AM [REPLY](#)

I'd try using a belt welder to not only sear the ends, but attach them to make a continuous, and smooth loop. You can then trim the excess with a razor knife.



Stormdrane says:

Dec 12, 2008. 7:56 PM [REPLY](#)

For the cobra stitch/Solomon bar/Portuguese sinnet paracord bracelets, I have tried a few knots to finish, but wasn't happy with the results and usually still melt the ends in place.

I have used hemostats to pull the ends up under a couple of knots on the inside of the bracelet, then trim them to finish, instead of melting. It does work, and is just barely noticeable as the cords add a slight buldge at that end of the bracelet.



absolutecool says:

Mar 23, 2009. 6:45 PM [REPLY](#)

Should you take the strands out from inside the paracord or leave them? I just made my first bracelet....it is ok....and I took the inside strands out of what paracord I had lying around and it is flatter more than round.



tommy2 says:

Apr 6, 2009. 10:41 AM [REPLY](#)

If your making these as "survival" bracelets, the inner strands are important parts to use if needed. A thought!



captaincoolness55 says:

Mar 9, 2009. 1:02 AM [REPLY](#)

where did you find the skull beads on this one? do they still sell them?



Stormdrane says:

Mar 9, 2009. 8:47 AM [REPLY](#)

They can be found on ebay, search for 'day of the dead skull beads' and at spiritcrafts.net.



captaincoolness55 says:

Mar 18, 2009. 1:34 PM [REPLY](#)

cool, thanks man! :D



darkside_7 says:

Mar 17, 2009. 6:26 PM [REPLY](#)

I made several for my friends and family while I was in Iraq....they loved them



gardengate32 says:

Mar 15, 2009. 8:33 PM [REPLY](#)

i just used this pattern today to make a hat band, which is 24 inches. it turned out great. i used hinged rings and removed them at the end of the process, tying the ends of the cord together. it took 24 1/2 feet of cord. it was very easy once i got started. i lucked out and got it perfect the first time. i left some cord hanging and used two turkey spurs for beads to dress it up. sweet! i used olive drab, which was all i had in my camping stuff in sufficient quantity, but if one were to use yellow, it would look like a cavalry band. thanks for the instructable!



ry15an says:

Mar 13, 2009. 4:25 PM [REPLY](#)

nice one man , but how do you get the horizontal strands a different color from the vertical ???
I have tryed and tryed but no luck :(



Stormdrane says:

Mar 13, 2009. 5:34 PM [REPLY](#)

Sew, glue, or melt two colors of paracord together, then loop onto one end of the buckle keeping the attached section as the core strands you'll be knotting around and follow the directions from there.

One color will be the edge color and the other is the center section and those colors will be reversed on the other side, so you have to figure which pattern you want facing out when wearing the bracelet when you start knotting.



downwithwikihow says:

Mar 13, 2009. 8:29 AM [REPLY](#)

Awesome.



greensteam says:

Mar 12, 2009. 5:22 PM [REPLY](#)

I've always known this as Bosun's weave. A variation, probably not comfortable for a bracelet, is to do it all in the same direction, so it turns on itself and you get a spiral.



tomtom88 says:

Mar 10, 2009. 10:31 PM [REPLY](#)

i just made one myself! it was very easy to follow the directions, its a bit too big though... but bravo!



GeorgeVA says:

Mar 10, 2009. 2:56 AM [REPLY](#)

I watch all of your stuff on U-Tube as well. Really great job, (the Turks Head tutorial was very helpful. I love those knots and hate them at the same time!). Where the heck did you find the metallic 550? That's wild! Well, keep up the great work. Thanks.

George



Electricians says:

Feb 11, 2009. 4:39 AM [REPLY](#)

before you push it with your thumb, lick your thumb. that way the heat will have to get rid of the water first.

works really well!



elkhtr1964 says:

Feb 10, 2009. 6:51 PM [REPLY](#)

Thanks for showing how to do this.I made 1 for my wife and intend to make myself 1 also.Looks good,had no trouble with your directions.



ajk97 says:

Feb 3, 2009. 2:23 PM [REPLY](#)

I made one from leather shoelaces its sweet but i didnt use a buckle i made so i can tie it.



Moonrabbit says:

Jan 30, 2009. 11:41 AM [REPLY](#)

Just made one here at work.

Best thing about it is if I ever need some rope just unbraid it.

Nice survivalist jewelry. Might hang one of those little P-38 canopeners from it as a charm.



cali_mrtnz says:

Jan 6, 2009. 2:17 PM [REPLY](#)

OooooOOoo.... i like this A LOT!

i've never thought of using a release buckle on my bracelets. I've been doing macrame bracelets since I was like eight. great idea, maybe even for a sports watch (?)

as for my pic, I made each of these.

the upper one is made out of scoubidou, a hollow plastic lanyard

the lower left two are made of embroidery floss,

and the last, lower right, is made of colored hemp.





combatmilkman says:

Dec 30, 2008. 9:18 AM [REPLY](#)

Stormdrane, you are the HEAT! Thanks for taking the time to share this tutorial. Caveman simple. You provided me with the motivation to get off my fourth point of contact and make a cool dog collar instead of taking the lazy way out and paying someone else to make one.



JamesRPatrick says:

Aug 31, 2008. 4:38 PM [REPLY](#)

YAY! You correctly spelled "You're"! 5/5



TheMadTinker says:

Oct 2, 2008. 7:00 PM [REPLY](#)

Hurray for someone else who thinks that the distinction between "you're" and "your" is important!



grantdevine says:

Dec 29, 2008. 5:15 PM [REPLY](#)

Damn straight, few annoys me more than seeing grammatical and spelling errors in perfectly good instructables. But I'm a neurotic perfectionist XD



JamesRPatrick says:

Dec 29, 2008. 6:52 PM [REPLY](#)

Damn straight.



AnarchistAsian says:

Sep 1, 2008. 9:55 AM [REPLY](#)

think you could hide a blade in the weave?
(just for camping and stuff)



grantdevine says:

Dec 29, 2008. 5:22 PM [REPLY](#)

I got a cheap carabiner knife from a \$2 store once, it'd be too thick to hide in the bracelet but as I said it was cheap so of course it fell apart. The blade alone would fit nicely in the part of the bracelet that goes over the back of your hand, although you might want to put something over the edge of the blade so it doesn't cut your bracelet apart. A strip of a good sized eraser would be enough.



AnarchistAsian says:

Dec 29, 2008. 6:43 PM [REPLY](#)

yeah, that would be cool...

although it would only make sense to use for cutting string or packages, now i realize...



DrCoolSanta says:

Sep 2, 2008. 6:34 AM [REPLY](#)

blades in a wrist band, I won't risk it.



AnarchistAsian says:

Sep 2, 2008. 2:25 PM [REPLY](#)

but i will, doc
(can i call you that?)



DrCoolSanta says:

Sep 3, 2008. 9:47 AM [REPLY](#)

Everybody calls me that. I don't mind, and well lol?

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