

# Coiling on a gourd with Danish Cord

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## Coiling on a gourd with Danish Cord

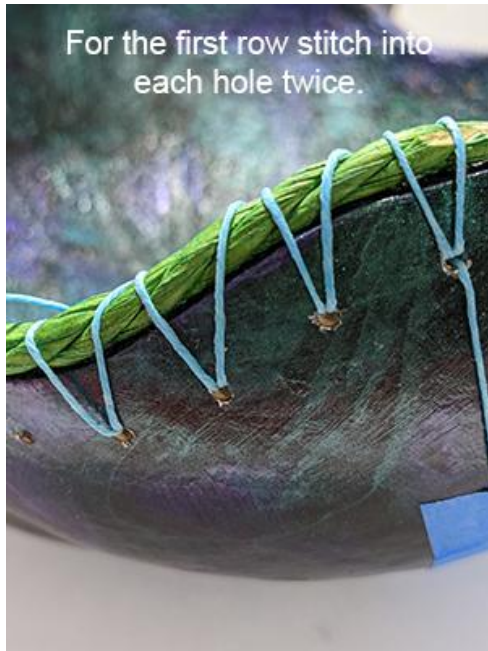
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1. Drill holes with a 3/32" bit. I generally use 1/2" down and 1/2" apart but that is because I like to see the first row of stitching. You can choose:
  - a. 3/8" down, 1/2" apart or
  - b. 1/2" down, 1/2" apart or
  - c. 1/4" down, 5/8" apart or any other spacing.
2. Direction of coiling: I prefer to stitch clockwise which means the supply of cord is on my left.
3. Thread the tapestry needle with 2 to 3 yds of waxed linen. We are using a 4 ply Crawford thread.
  - a. Insert the needle into a hole ALWAYS from the outside. Leave the starting thread (the end) outside in a length of 3" and tape the length of it to the outside of the gourd.
4. Cut one end of the cord at a slant.
  - a. Hold cord with the slanted end on top of the rim, with the end slightly to the right of a hole (or left if you are stitching the opposite direction). The slant side should face up.

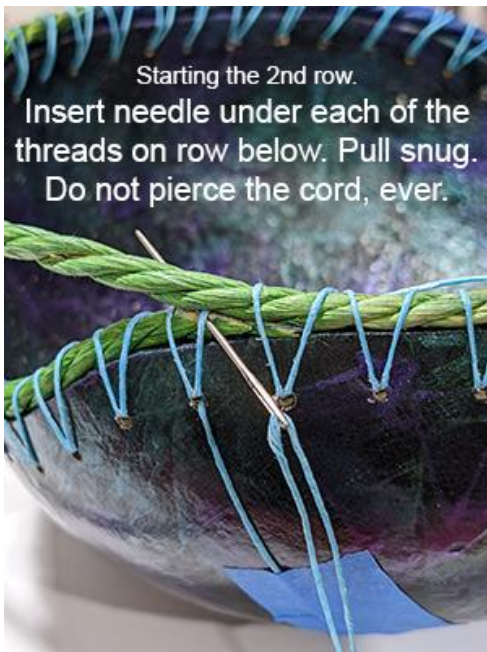


5. Stitch into the same hole two times, wrapping over the cord. This creates a "V". ALWAYS bring thread from **back to front**. For the first row, only, you will stitch in each hole twice. Continue to the beginning

of the first row.



6. Row 2 and after - stitch into the row below by inserting the needle into the top of each stitch on the row below. Only stitch once through each thread



stitch.

7. **3 Rows** - Stitch at least 3 rows before doing any shaping, beads or floating coils.
  - a. Shape weaving by laying the cord slightly to the inside of the row below so you get a gentle upward slope.
  - b. Shape weaving by laying the cord slightly outside of the row below to enlarge the weaving.
8. **To add a floating coil section**

- a. This can be a design element itself. But as you coil you may find the angle of a valley in the gourd is getting too tight or the stitches are getting too close together. To solve this you can add space by floating a section.
- b. Pull tight the last stitch before floating. Wrap thread around cord without stitching into the row below. Space the stitches evenly apart as you wrap. When you are horizontal to the beginning section of the floating coil start stitching into the row below. Pull this first stitch tight.



9. **Closed Coiling** is where you wrap and cover the cord entirely. You can add closed coiling anywhere in the design. Start wrapping the thread around the cord close to the previous stitch. Keep the wraps close together so NO cord is showing. Continue wrapping until you get to the desired length.
  - a. To return to coiling stitch into the next stitch without wrapping and tug it snugly..



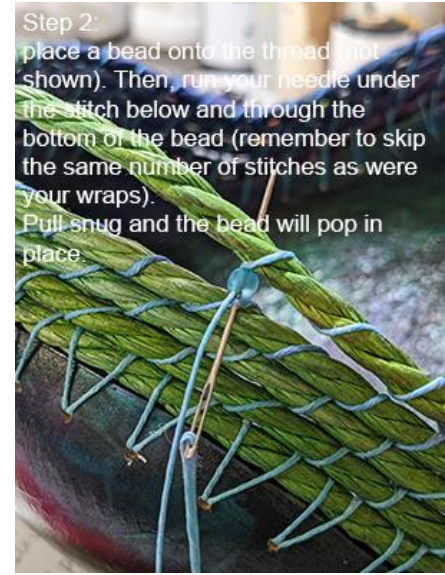
**10. To change thread color or add new thread**

- a. For Closed Coiling: About five stitches before you need to change thread start wrapping the new thread into the coiling. Wrap 5 times, then lay the old thread to the left and coil over the old thread with the new thread.
- b. For regular coiling: When you have about 3 inches left of thread pull the thread you have been using to the front of the last stitch. In the new thread tie an overhand knot to make a loop. Place the old thread into the loop and knot the new thread over it. Pull the two short threads apart snugly up against the coiling. Cut these ends to about  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch long, twist together. Lay these two short pieces between the rows. As you continue stitching they will become hidden.

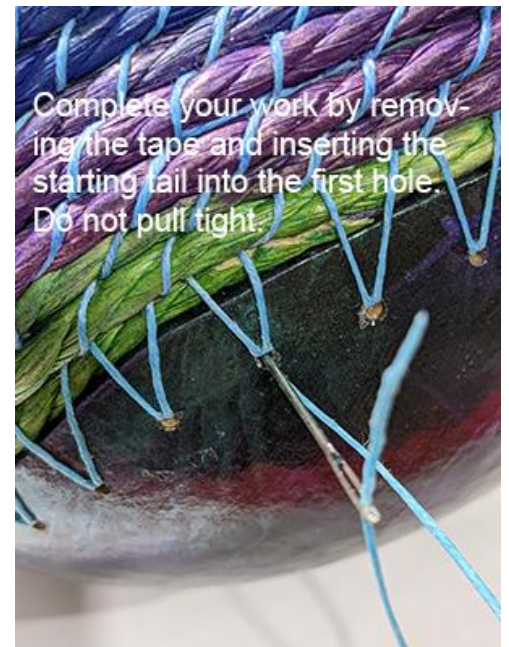
**11. Adding Beads**

- a. Prepare to add a bead by first wrapping the coil without picking up stitches from the row below.
- b. Wrap as many times necessary to make space for the bead. Ex. an 8mm bead will probably need 2 wraps. Keep the wraps snug.
- c. Add the bead to the needle and thread
  - i. Skip the number of stitches equal to the number of wraps.
  - ii. Hold the threaded bead in position and go through the stitch below, into the bottom of the bead and under the upper cord all at the same time.
  - iii. Pull snug and the bead will pop into place.
- d. Repeat for each bead.
- e. Finish by wrapping the coil the same number of times and picking up the stitch below.

- f. Video Link: <https://youtu.be/DnQPfHGd94g>

**12. Finishing off.**

- a. About 5 stitches before ending cut the cord at an angle and stitch until the end of the cord is covered.
- b. Bury the thread as inconspicuously as possible.
- c. Remove the tape and tuck the tail into the first hole. Do not pull it through.
- d. Use a hair dryer or heat tool to soften, smooth and shine the wax on the coiling.



Susan Ashley - [www.txweaver.com](http://www.txweaver.com) provides a mathematical method to calculating the length needed for a project. To roughly estimate how much cord the project will require, measure the circumference of the rim. Determine the number of inches of coiling you want. Estimate how many rows to an inch of coiling. When using 1/8" cord and -ply waxed linen thread, there are six rows to an inch of coiling.

Fewer rows to the inch occur when the thread is thicker. Multiply the circumference of the gourd by the total number of rows of coiling to get the total number of inches of cord needed. Example: Circumference: 15" Number of inches wanted: 2 (at 6 rows to the inch) the result is  $15 \times 2 \times 6 = 180$ " or 15'.

## Resources

1. Danish Cord (Unlaced)
  - a. <https://hhperkins.com/>
  - b. Bulk - [Lee Valley Tools](#)
  - c. 25' and 50' (natural and dyed) sold by IDGS member [Jane Wilson](#)
  - d. [Blue Whale Arts](#)
2. Crawford Irish Waxed Linen Thread (I use 4-ply)
  - a. [Blue Whale Arts \(best price\)](#)
3. US Art Supply's White Alcohol Ink
  - a. [Amazon \(best price\)](#)
  - b. [US Art Supply](#)
4. Alcohol Based Dyes-must be alcohol based
  - a. [My Shoe Supply \(Best Selection and Price\)](#)
  - b. [Tandy Leather](#)
  - c. Amazon
5. [Sargent Art 22-8808 16-Ounce Acrylic Gloss and Varnish](#)
6. [Tiny Measuring Spoons](#)
7. [Jacquard Pearl-Ex Pigment Powders](#)
  - a. Found at craft & art supply stores online or brick & mortar

## How to Dye Danish Cord

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The first thing to remember is that Danish Cord is made of paper. This means that any water-based dye will damage the cord. It is possible to use acrylic paints to paint color on the cord but that is not the same as dunking cord in a dye liquid.

Dyes that are alcohol based can be used very successfully and it can be done without damage if you follow my directions.

Most dyes are opaque. The others are transparent. The natural color of Danish cord is unbleached paper and therefore the natural color of Danish Cord will show through and be influenced by the natural color. It is most noticeable when using lighter colors of dye. And, the more you dilute the dye the more the natural color shows.

About dyes. It cannot be water based. So always look for alcohol based colorants. If the product is flammable that's a pretty good sign it's alcohol based.

Fiebing dyes and Pro dyes are the most economical dye which I use primarily and with best results.

<https://fiebing.com/product/leather-dye/>

<https://tandyleather.com/collections/supplies/products/fiebings-pro-dye>

<https://www.myshoesupplies.com/collections/leather-dye/products/fiebings-leather-dye-w-applicator-4oz>

I have used diluted Transtint, too, with really great results but it is expensive.

<https://www.woodcraft.com/categories/dyes-pigments>

I tried Mixol with bad results.

I have used Ranger alcohol inks and they are really good but not economical.

Regardless of the dye you use you will undoubtedly have to dilute with 91% or 99% isopropyl alcohol (rubbing alcohol). My first try with Fiebing purple made the cord look bronze. That one I had an alcohol to dye ratio of 20:1 if I recall correctly.

About creating tints....I wanted lavender and pink and gray. It took a lot of experimentation and buying 5 different brands of white alcohol inks before finding what works. Except for US Art Supply's white alcohol ink, <https://usartsupply.com/collections/alcohol-inks/products/usa-alc-401> (it is cheaper on Amazon), all of them became chunky and wouldn't mix in. The worst was Fiebing. Oh, and, don't expect pink using Fiebing red. It is too orange. I had some diluted Bordeaux Transtint and it made a perfect pink and I suspect using Oxblood Fiebings dye will too.

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