

# How to Make Finger Loop Braids

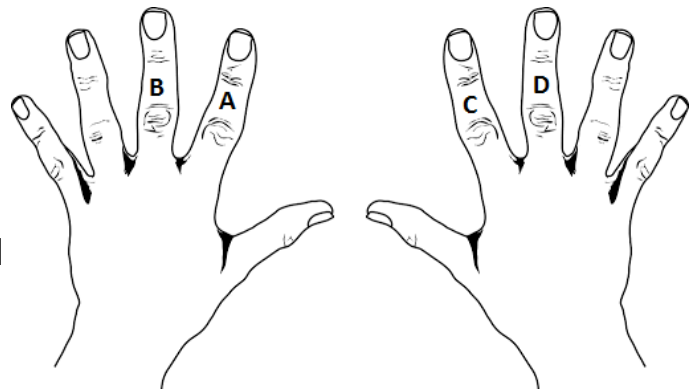
**\*This project requires a level of finger dexterity that doesn't develop until late elementary school and will be difficult for children under 8\***

While these braids are fairly quick and easy once you get started, they are easier to learn from watching. For a video tutorial check [rclreads.org/braids-loops-knots/](http://rclreads.org/braids-loops-knots/)

This is an historic way of making cords that people have been using for hundreds of years. Back before zippers and buttons lots of people's clothing was tied on, and that meant people needed a way to make strong, small cords for their clothing. By using different colors and numbers of loops (or "bowes" as they are called in medieval manuscripts) they could even make decorative patterns in their cords.

These instructions cover the most basic three loop braid. If you find you like making this style of bracelet, there are great resources online to teach you new braids like [loopbraider.com](http://loopbraider.com).

Start with 3 pieces of embroidery floss about 2 1/2 times as long as you want your bracelet. Fold each string in half to form the loops, making sure all 3 loops are the same length, and tie a knot with all the ends. Folding the strings separately helps keep them from tangling. Then make a slip knot with the yarn provided in your kit around the knotted end and secure it to a table leg or other sturdy anchor—you could even use your foot, but it isn't the most comfortable choice.



Separate out your loops—making sure they aren't tangled—and put two on your left hand, one over the 1st finger (**A**) and one over the 2nd finger (**B**) of your left hand, and the final loop over the 1st finger (**C**) of your right hand. The 2nd finger (**D**) of your right hand will make the first move.

# Finger Loop Braids, cont.

Hold your hands so your palms face each other, making sure to maintain tension. Keep your fingers slightly hooked to hold the loops in place. Take D, stick it through the loop on B, and grab the loop on A from the top of the loop so it flips over. This is a reversed stitch (see diagram below). If you took a loop from one side to the other without flipping the loop it would be unreversed.

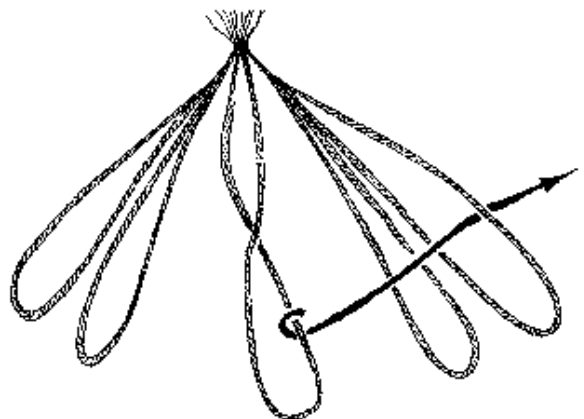
You should now have loops on B, C, and D. Transfer the loop on B up to A, as you will always be taking with B and D. This is called “Walking up” the loop.

Now repeat the same motion with your left hand, taking B, sticking it through the loop on D, and taking C from the top of the loop so it flips. Pull your hands apart to tighten the stitch, but not too hard as it can bunch the stitches. Walk the loop on D up to C and repeat these movements to make a round, 3-sided braid that is as long as you want.

If you want to add a split into your braid, you can switch from taking each stitch reversed, to taking each stitch unreversed. Start with loops on A, B, and C, stick D through the loop on B and into the loop on A, taking it without turning the loop. Walk B up to A, then stick B through the loop on D and take C unreversed. Doing this causes you to braid the top and bottom lines of the loops into two 3-strand braids. This can be a cool way to finish your braid in two tails, or to put a loop in your braid if you return to taking loops reversed.

To make a flat braid you combine the two methods. For the first stitch, use D to take A reversed through B. Then use B to take C unreversed through D. Continue taking reversed from the left and unreversed from the right to make a flat braid.

When you finish your braid, simply remove the loops from your fingers and tie them in a knot. If you ended with a split braid you could cut the loops and tie each end of the split into its own knot.



Taking a loop reversed in a 5-loop braid, from [fingerloop.org](http://fingerloop.org)