

Demo: Making a 9-Loop Center (Left Opening)- Christine Manges
 Valley Forge Rug Braiding Guild Meeting, February 13, 2021



Photos above: 9-loop center, and 3 braided items that start with a 9-loop center: a Star-Hexagon trivet, a chair pad, and an octagonal rug.

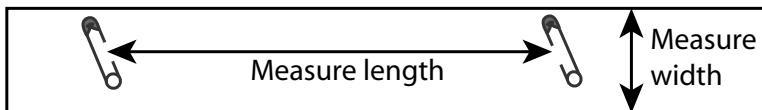
Supplies

- 3 strips of fabric
- Safety pins, large and small
- Needle & thread to match fabrics
- Lacing cord, lacing needle
- Scissors, ruler
- clothespin
- optional: sewing machine

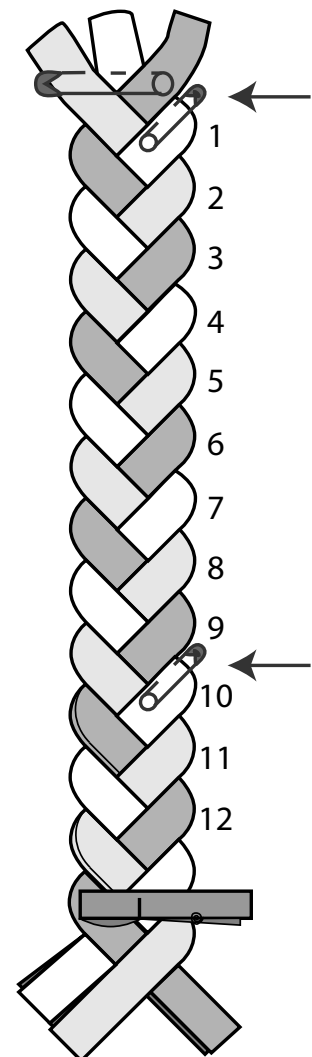
Making a 9-Loop Center:

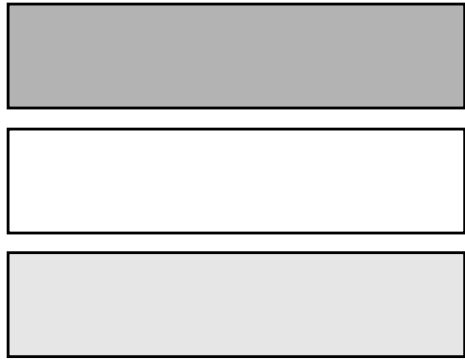
This method was taught to me by Debbie Wykosky, who learned it from Nancy Young. I've made a few modifications, but their essential method remains the same. The advantage of this method is that it will work with all weights of wool.

1. Place 3 strands folded as for braiding on a safety pin. Braid about 12 loops and clamp with a clothespin. (See diagram right).
2. Start counting loops AFTER the loops in the Start Pin. Pin loop 1 and loop 10 at the upper outer part of the loop, just where it comes out from under the prior loop. Catch only 1 layer. It should be the same color of strand at loop 1 and loop 10. (See diagram right).
3. Unbraid completely. Lay the pinned strip out flat.

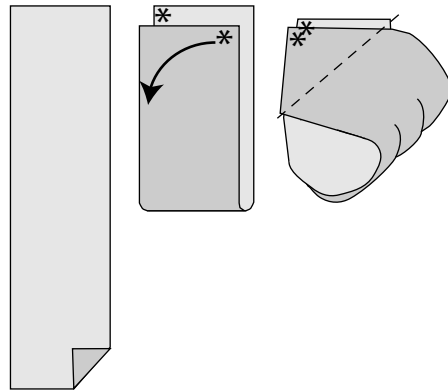


4. Make two measurements: the length between the pins, and the width of the strip.
 Length between pins: _____ Width of strip: _____
 and add the length and width together: _____.





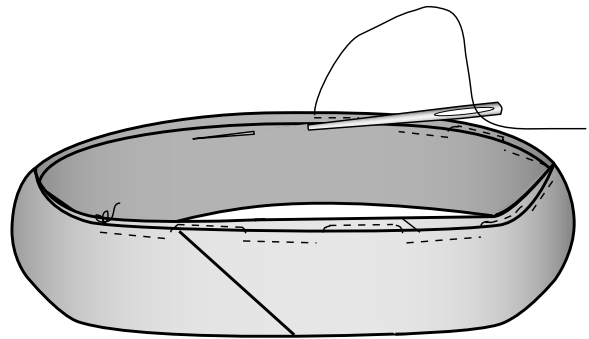
5. Cut three strips that are the length of the added-together measurement from step #4, with ends that are straight across.



6. Take ONE of the strips, and sew its ends right-sides-together on the diagonal by following these steps: Fold in half with right sides together. Rotate the front strip 90° to the left, so that it looks like your normal diagonal for sewing on more braiding strips. Sew on the diagonal from corner to corner.

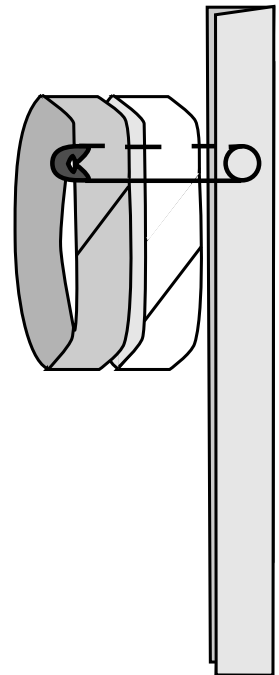
7. Repeat step 6 with ONE additional strand, leaving one strip unsewn. Trim off the triangular seam allowances from the two sewn strips.

8. Fold the raw edges of the two sewn strips inward, and stitch the folds closed all the way around both rings. *Diagram right* shows using a ladder stitch.

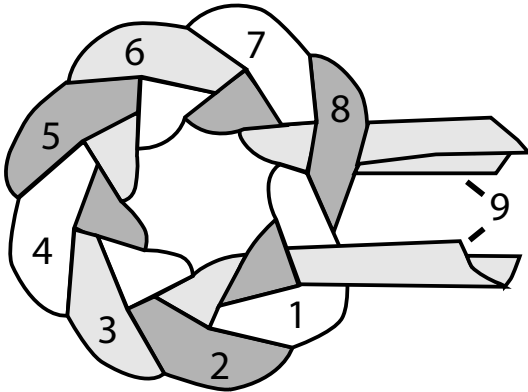


NOTE: These two sewn rings are why this method of making a 9-Loop Center is called a “two bracelet” method.

9. Put the 2 bracelets and 1 unsewn strand onto a Start safety pin, with folded edges on the left. Start braiding with the long strip. Then tightly braid the 3 strands together, moving the tail of the unsewn strand through the “bracelets” to make the braid.



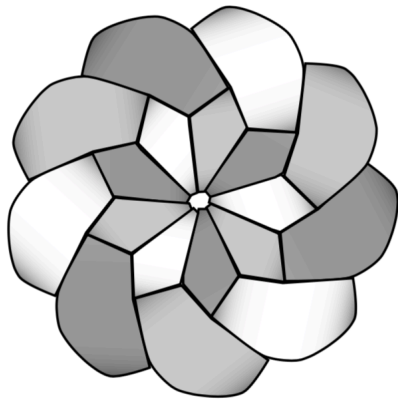
10. When there are 8 loops on the outside braided, then the ends will meet to make the 9th loop. Pull firmly on either end (remove Start Pin) to get enough length to sew the ends together on the diagonal. Remember to match right sides together. Sew. Trim off the triangular seam allowance to 1/8". Re-fold the strand.



11. Use hemostats to move the strands so that loops are even and seams are hidden.

12. Lacing: Run lacing thread through the inner 9 loops, make the first “throw” of a knot and pull tightly. If the center hole closes up, tie the knot.

If the center hole doesn't close up, try Pam Rowan's tip: steam the 9-loop center with the steam from an iron. When the braids are wet with steam, you should be able to pull the lacing cord tighter and tie a knot. Bury the lacing cord under loops, and trim.



Done!