

Braided Key Fobs

Design created by Marjorie Kauffman (Reverse T-End); and Sandy Busby, who figured out a simpler solution to burying the end.

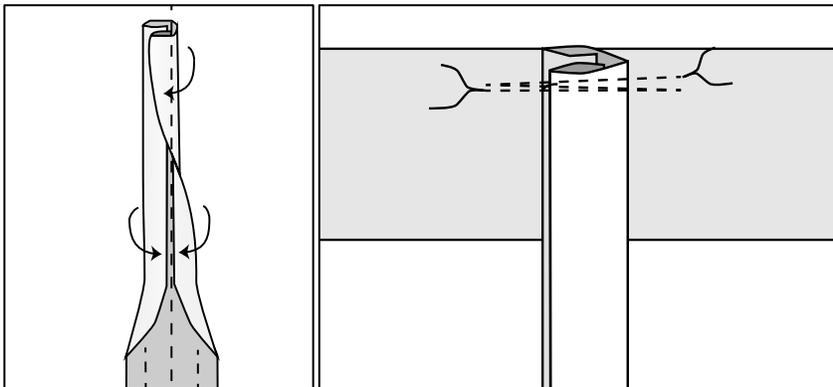
Illustrated by Christine Manges

A. Supplies:

- 2 strips of wool, 1.5" wide; one is 11" and one is 22"
(OR: three 11" long strips)
- Needle and thread, and sewing machine if you have one
- 2 large safety pins, 3 medium safety pins (one is gold, the other two silver)
- a couple straight pins for seams
- Scissors
- A key ring, or D-ring, or large jewelry lobster-claw clasp
- A working-end clamp (clothespin)

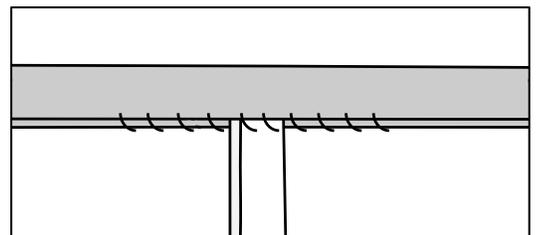
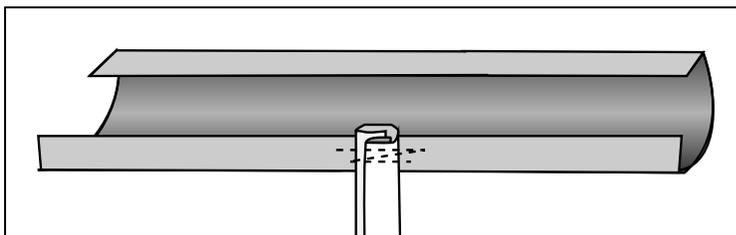
B. Make a T-Start

Note: a single crosspiece is shown for making the T-Start, which will result in 2 of the 3 strands being the same fabric. If you wish to make a 3-color T-Start, then sew two of the strands together on the diagonal, and position the spoke of the T in the center of that diagonal.



1. Spoke: Fold the 11" strip to the center and then in half again, as for braiding. The open folded edges should face left.

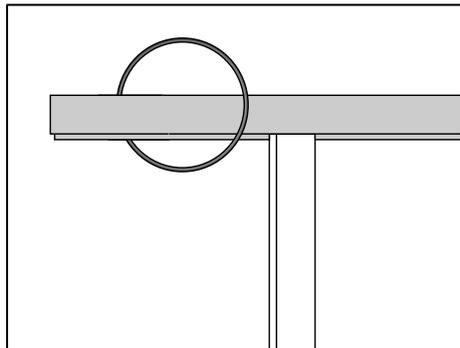
2. Place the folded 11" strip on the center of the 22" strip as shown in diagram. Place the edges of the folded strip at the upper edge of the long strip. Stitch $\frac{1}{4}$ " down from the top edge by stitching forward and reversing a few times.



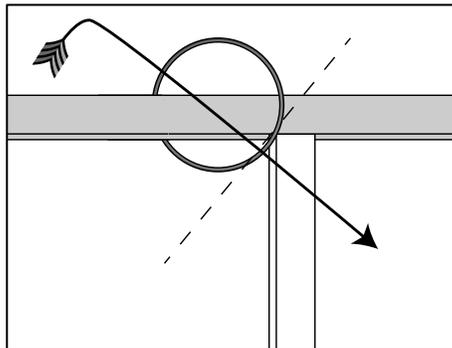
3. Fold the bottom of the crossbar back, up, and over top of the stitched area, with $\frac{1}{4}$ " folded under.

4. Stitch the crossbar of the T-start closed on the front of the spoke, and a bit on either side.

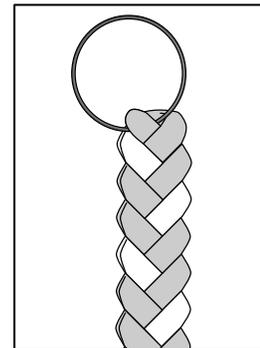
C. Add the Key Ring



1. Put a key ring onto the left crossbar of the T-Start.

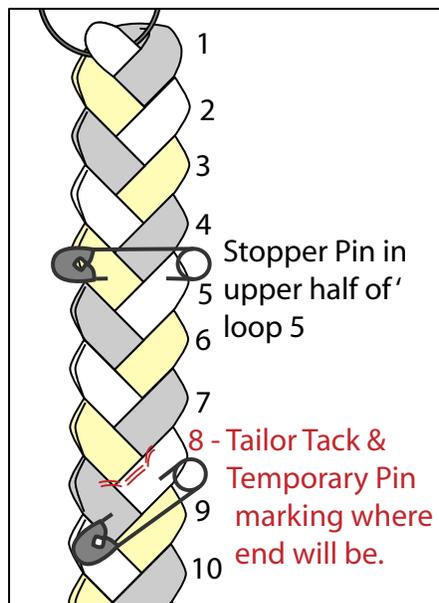


2. Nestle the key ring close to the spoke. Flip the left crossbar over along the dashed diagonal line so that it falls between the other two strands (see arrow). The folded edges should now all face left.



3. Braid. The key ring should be contained in the braid as shown. Braid to the end of the strips; clamp.

D. Mark and Secure the Braid



Note: diagrams show 3 strand colors for clarity, but there may only be two colors.

1. In diagram left, you are given the locations for:

a. Stopper Pin, placed in the upper part of loop 5 and carried straight across the braid.

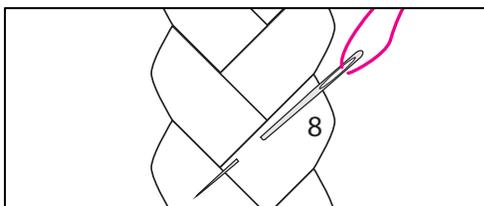
b. Tailor Tack: essentially, two stitches in the same place, with the ends cut. The location is on the front edge of loop 8. (This marks where the spoke of the Reverse-T-End will be attached).

Note: Stopper pin loop and Tailor-tacked loop are the same color.

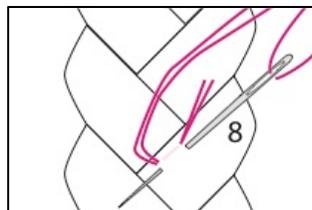
See next set of diagrams for making a tailor tack. Use a **contrasting color** of thread.

c. Temporary Pin, marking where the braid will end: on Loop 8 and the next loop braided. this pin marks where the braid will end, and helps you to keep track of where to place your Tailor Tack.

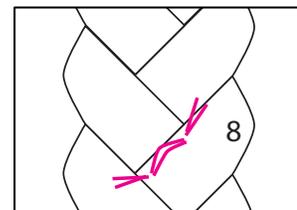
E. Making a Tailor Tack:



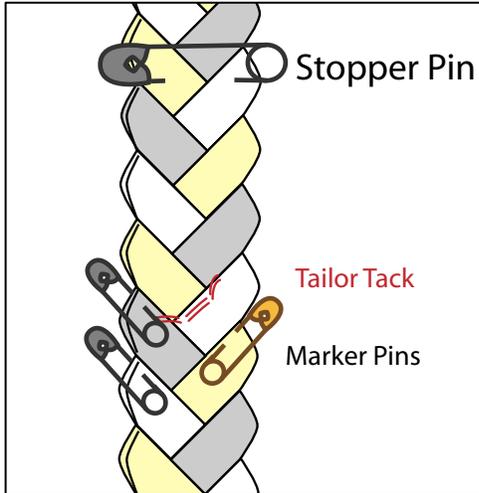
1. With doubled thread, make a stitch catching the front edge of loop 8 as shown. Do not pull all the way through: leave a tail.



2. Make a second stitch next to the first stitch.

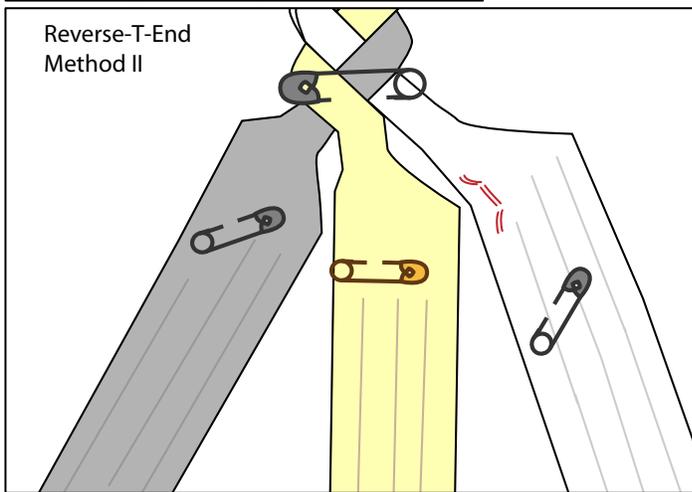


3. Trim the ends.



Placing Marking Pins – Gold on right, Silver on left

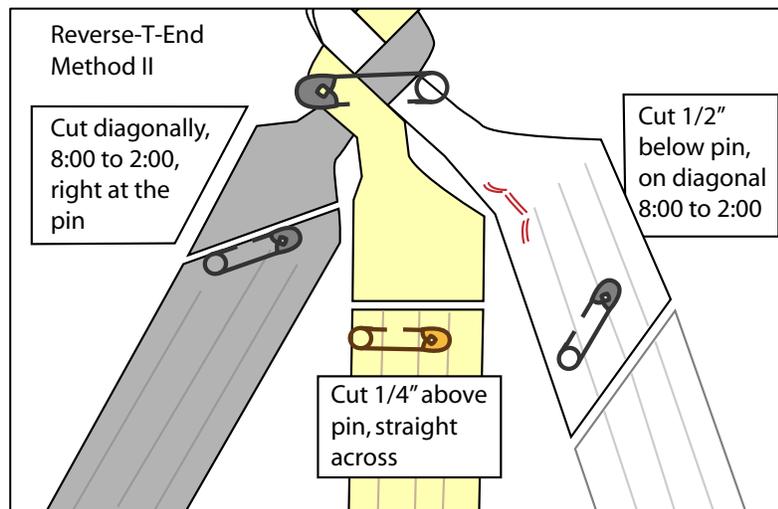
d. Identify the tailor tack loop. The NEXT 3 LOOPS braided after the tailor tack (a Left, Right, and Left) will get marker pins on their upper outer corners. The two on the left are silver; the one on the right is gold. Catch only one layer of fabric.



e. Unbraid back to the Stopper Pin. Open out the strands, fronts facing up. The strands must be in the following arrangement:

- **Left** strand has a silver pin.
- **Middle** strand has a gold pin.
- **Right** strand has a silver pin and a tailor tack.

If this arrangement does not exist for your braid, carefully adjust the strands and re-pin the Stopper Pin.



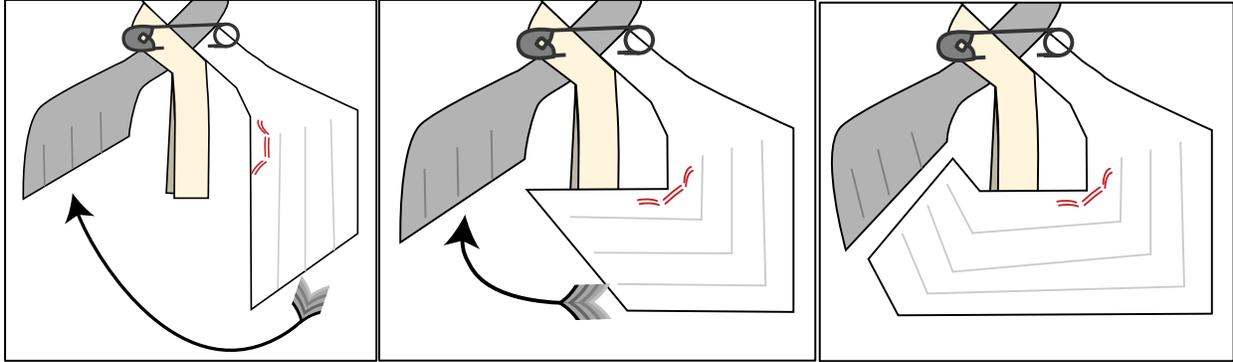
f. Cut the strands:

- **Left:** cut diagonally, 8:00 - 2:00, right at the pin.
- **Middle:** cut straight across, 1/4" above pin.
- **Right:** cut diagonally, 8:00 - 2:00, 1/2 inch below pin.**

**If you are working with heavier strands, you can increase the distance below the right pin for the cut, up to 1 inch.

F. Sew the Diagonally Cut Strands Together

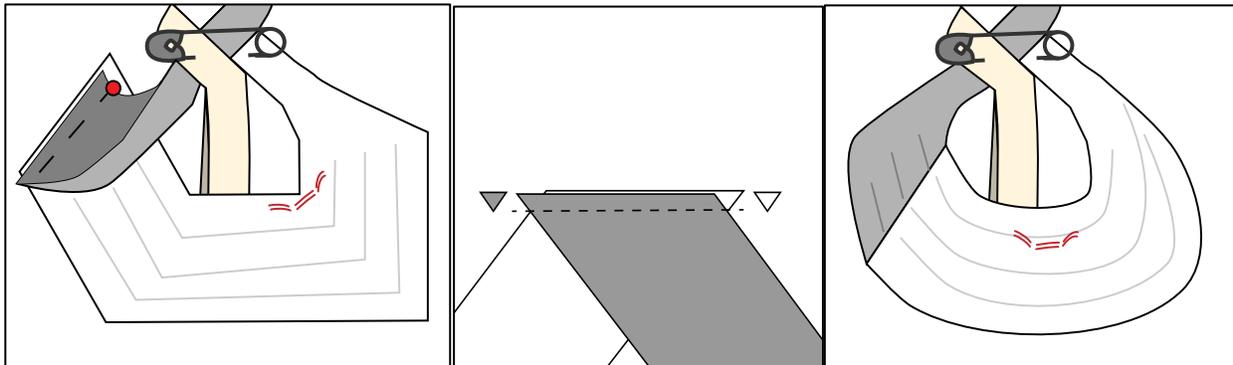
The arrangement of strands to sew this seam properly is important. I messed it up a few times, and it gave one of the strands an unnatural twist. Follow these directions closely. The strands are shown shorter than their actual length for conservation of space.



1. Ignore the center strand for the moment. Arrange the left and right strands so that fronts are facing up, and both points are down to the left at 8:00.

2. Take the right strand and make a right angle turn toward the left strand. Keep the tailor tack and the front of the strand facing forward.

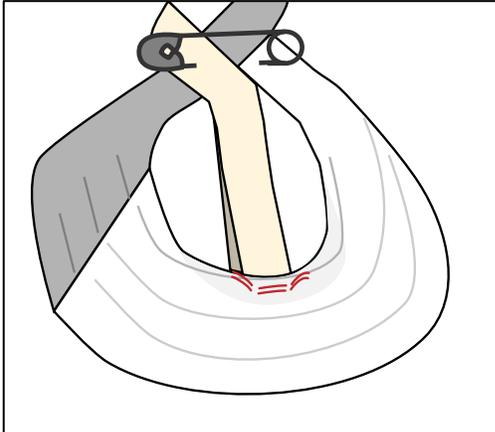
3. Make yet another right angle turn with the right strand – still with both fronts facing forward – to have the cut edges meet.



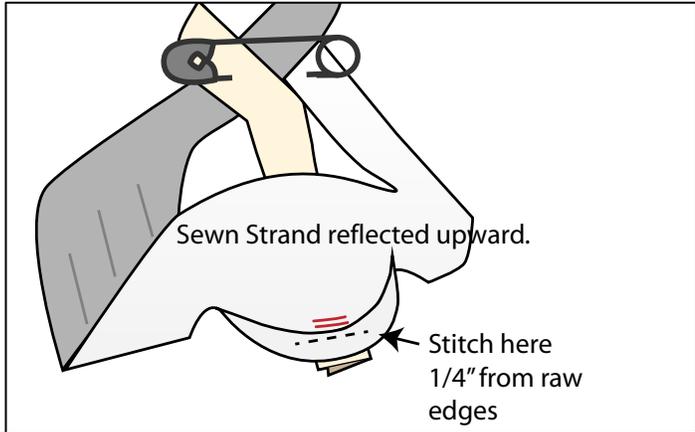
4. Where the diagonally cut ends meet, pinch right sides together, and pin. The darker area on the left strand indicates the back of the strand.

5. When sewing diagonally cut seams, the diagonal edges are matched up $\frac{1}{4}$ " down from the cut edges – see dashed line. There will be $\frac{1}{4}$ " triangles on either side as extra fabric – some trim them off; some leave them be. Trim seam allowance to $\frac{1}{8}$ ".

6. After the seam is sewn, your braid will look something like this diagram.

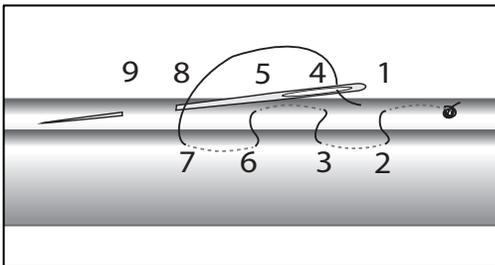


7. Find the tailor tack. Fold the inner 1/4" downward inside the tailor tack, as if you were folding it for braiding.



8. Reach under the sewn strand and grasp the end of the spoke and the folded-under raw edge next to the tailor tack. Pin them together, and sew straight across the spoke so that the seam is right next to the tailor tack. See diagram. Reverse stitch, then sew forward again, to anchor the spoke.

To remove the tailor tack, lift the center stitch upward sharply. If ends have been caught in the seam, snip the center and pull on the ends.



9. This diagram (left) gives you a quick review of how to sew the ladder stitch, which you will use to sew the edges of folds together on all 3 strands.

Take some extra stitches when you are securing the spoke, so that it is firmly attached on both sides.

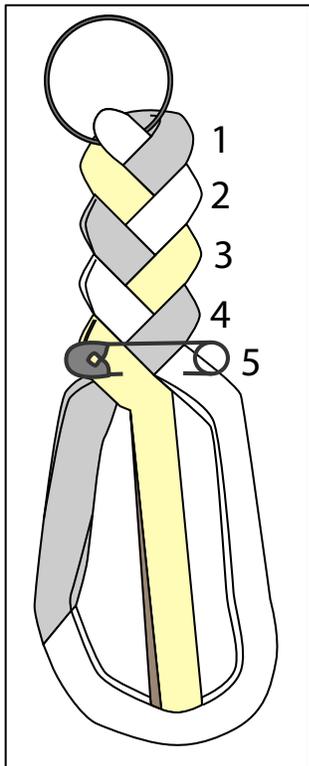


Diagram left: This is what the strands will look like once the folds are stitched together.

If you look carefully, you can see that the left strand starts out with folds to the left... then turns its folds toward the back, then inward (to the right) to contain the spoke. This is normal.

G. Re-Braiding

1. Re-braid tightly. The strands twist and turn inside each other as you braid: you will have to shove the sewn end through openings as you braid.

Braid up to the 7th loop. The 8th loop is a bit tight: SHOVE the end through the opening from the front to the back of the braid.

2. The finished key fob! When you have finished braiding, you will have 8 loops on the right.

Adjust the strands with a hemostat to make loops the same fullness. Done!

