

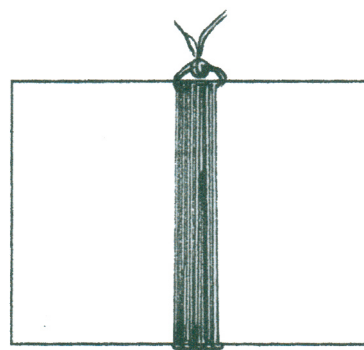


How to Make a Tassel

The directions for making a tassel uses DMC 6-strand embroidery floss since that method applies to my publications. However, you can use any floss, yarn or thread of your choice to make a variety of tassels. You can select one color of floss or an assortment of colors for a multi-colored tassel. My example below will start with a darker color and a lighter color on top. I like to use a twisted cord at the top of the tassel, therefore, the instructions will cover that method. You may print the complete directions for making twisted cord, which is listed in the “Classroom Information” section of keepsakestitches.com.

1) Cut a piece of cardboard to use for wrapping the floss around. The fullness or number of wraps for the tassel and length is an individual preference, therefore, my example is not a rule.

Example: Cut the cardboard 3” wide by 2 ½” long. The tassel directions will use DMC 353 (medium peach) and DMC 3770 (pale peach). Make 18-20 wraps with DMC 353 over the cardboard pulling the DMC from the skein without cutting. Once the wraps are made, cut the DMC. Next, use DMC 3770 pulling the DMC from the skein, wrap directly over the first wraps on the cardboard using 18-20 wraps and covering the DMC 353 wraps. Cut a piece of DMC 3770, 3-4 inches in length and tie wrapped strands at the top to hold them temporarily until you complete Step 3. Slide floss off the cardboard.



2) Since I use twisted cord at the top of my tassels, it is necessary to cut the bottom loops of the tassel wrap. Cut through the loops and lay floss out flat on your work surface.

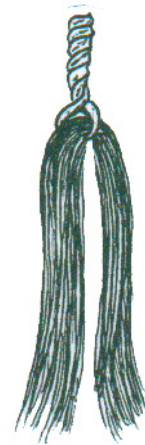


3) Make a twisted cord for the tassel hanger using DMC 3770, one 6-ply strand 20” long, folded in half. Note: when the twisted cord is finished, one end has a loop in it and the opposite end contains the knot. It is not necessary to remove the knot as covered in the directions for twisted cord. The knot will be placed on the inside of the tassel head which creates some fullness as well.

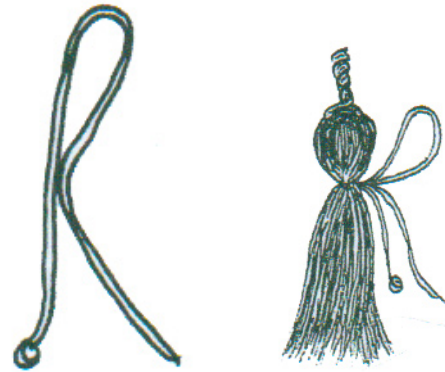


How To Make A Tassel (cont.)

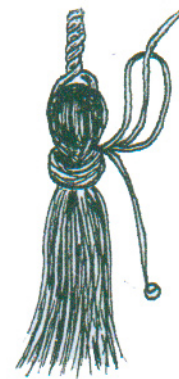
4) Refer to diagram on right. Open the twisted cord above the knot and insert one end of your tassel threads through the open loop. If you have trouble holding all the cut ends, wrap ends with tissue paper and tape tissue paper to hold in place. Once the cut ends are pushed through the loop, slide the cord to the center of the tassel. Turn cord so the knot goes to the inside of the tassel. The knot will add a little fullness to the top of your tassel when finished. Once the twisted cord is in place, you can remove the piece of DMC which was used to temporarily hold the cut pieces of thread and remove the tissue paper if used.



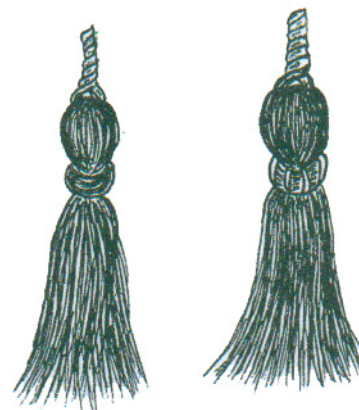
5) Cut a 15" piece of DMC 3770 to make the horizontal wrap on the tassel. Tie a knot in one end of the floss. The knot will assist you in being able to locate the tail among the other threads when you are ready to pull the slip knot. Refer to diagram on the right. Make a loop at the top of the floss leaving the two tails below the loop. Pinch in the tassel floss about an inch from the top and bring the wrapping thread into position as shown in the diagram right. wrapping thread



6) Wrap clockwise with the unknotted tail and make the width of the wrap approximately 1/2", leaving at least 3" of the wrapping tail to finish off. Once the wraps are finished, slip unknotted tail through the loop and with the knotted tail gently pull the loop under the wraps leaving the unknotted tail above the wraps. Thread the unknotted tail into a tapestry needle and slide tail under the wraps bringing the tail down into the lower tassel threads along with the knotted tail. Cut off knot from the wrapping tail.

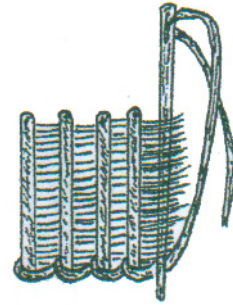


7) Refer to diagram on right. The first diagram shows a tassel with the plain wrap and the second diagram shows the tassel with the buttonhole stitch done over the wraps. The wraps around the tassel can be left plain or done with a buttonhole stitch over the wraps.



How To Make A Tassel (cont.)

8) To work the buttonhole stitch over the wraps, use 2 strands DMC 3770*, 12" long. **(Note: see alternate method below.)* Thread a tapestry needle with the 12" length of floss and tie a knot in the end of your floss. Bring the floss up through the center of the tassel coming out above the top of the wraps. The knotted end of your thread should anchor the floss as you work. Bring your thread down over the tassel wraps and swing the needle back to the top of the wraps. Note you will have a loop in your thread at the base. Slide needle under the wraps coming out at bottom of wraps with the tip of your needle on top of the thread loop, bring needle all the way through. This will make one buttonhole stitch. Continue in this manner until the tassel wraps are completely covered with the buttonhole stitches all around. When you have completed the last buttonhole stitch over the wraps, take needle and thread to the inside of the tassel going through the stitch right next to the bottom of the first buttonhole stitch. You will want to do this so the stitch has a look of continuity all around. Bring needle and thread out at the top of your wraps and run thread back and forth into the tassel several times to secure the thread. Bring remaining thread down into the lower tassel threads and remove your needle.



**Note: If you wish a heavier buttonhole stitch over the wraps, allow extra inches on the piece of floss you use initially to wrap the tassel. Once the wraps are completed and you have pulled the loop end under the wraps, thread needle with the unknotted end of the floss and work the buttonhole stitches over the wrap and in the same manner described above.*

Finishing the Tassel

Use a spray bottle filled with water that has a capacity for a light mist. Grasp the top of the tassel in your hand and spread the lower tassel threads from the center out across your palm and mist the threads lightly. Use a small brush such as a tooth brush and starting from the center of the tassel begin brushing out the DMC strands. Once the strands are dry, trim the tassel to the desired length. Your tassel is now ready to use on any piece of needlework to give it that special finishing touch.

Other Ideas

1) When you are using twisted cord on a sewing case, needle case, scissors case or scissors fob that also requires a tassel, use the twisted cord hanger at the top of the tassel. Slide the twisted cord through the loop at the end of the tassel's twisted cord. Once the twisted cord is attached to your sewing case, this technique gives the appearance that the tassel was made directly on the twisted cord. Remember when doing this, the twisted cord at the top of the tassel will be short with only one or two dimples showing. Using this technique on a pincushion is also very attractive. You will need four tassels for each corner of the pin cushion, sliding each tassel onto the twisted cord and attaching twisted cord along with the tassel at each corner so it looks like a continuous unit.

2) You might also like to add gold braid or metallic thread above and below the main wrap of your tassel. Gold braid included in the main tassel is a wonderful look for Christmas ornaments.

I hope you will enjoy learning to make your own tassels. If you have any questions or comments, do not hesitate to contact me.