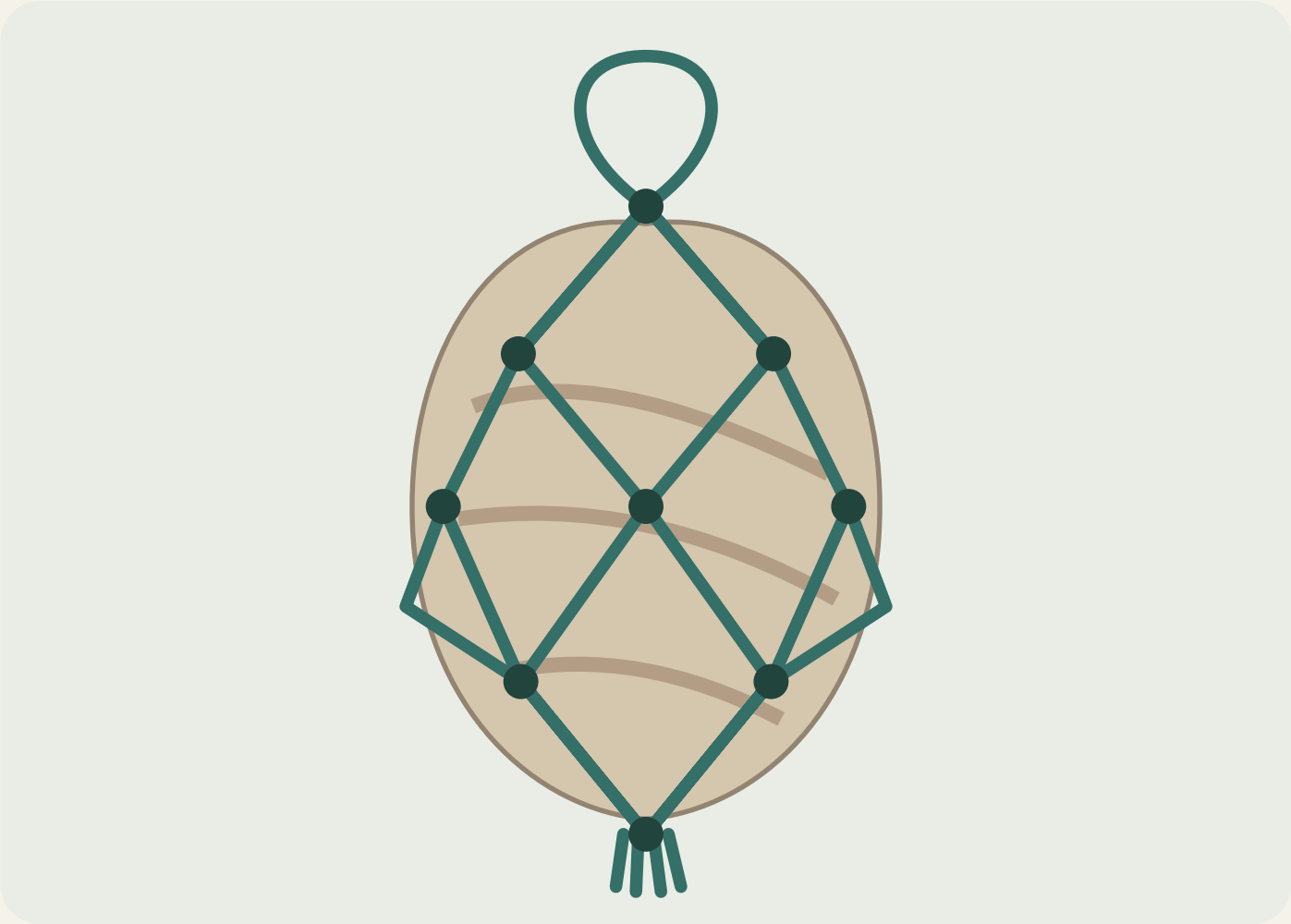
STEADLEAF PRESS

MAKE / BEADS & WEARABLE KEEPSAKES

Make a Thread-Wrapped Pendant from a Found Pebble



Original schematic — not a measured retention result

14 practical steps · No drilling · Alternating knot rows

Eight-strand map, knot routes and two maker records

Before you start

A little stone with an interesting colour or stripe can become the centre of a handmade pendant without a hole through it. Instead of winding a single decorative strand around a slippery surface, this project creates a continuous eight-strand net: a common loop above the stone, alternating rows of paired knots around it, and a gathered closure below. The stone remains intact. You will work over a lined tray and make the wrapped pendant component, not a complete necklace. The safest first use is a resting decoration. Wearing or hanging requires separately suitable materials, attachment and reliable retention; neither the drawn cage nor a visual check certifies those properties.

Materials: one small, light, rounded pebble you already own or may lawfully collect; four equal lengths of labelled nonelastic jewellery or macramé thread suitable for the chosen bundled overhand knots; an extra scrap of the same thread; a shallow padded tray; ruler; paper; pencil; eight numbered paper labels; smooth craft clips if appropriate to the cord; and adult scissors. A compatible, purpose-made opening jewellery connector and clasp necklace are optional for a later, separately assessed use. Use smooth, sound thread and stone. Avoid sharp or brittle stones, polished spheres that easily slip, unknown contaminated material and stones with cracks, flakes or fragile edges. Do not drill, abrade, melt, glue or use a flame. Keep small parts, cords and scissors away from children and pets.

Plan a cage that closes on both ends

Choose a broadly oval, rounded stone with a narrower upper and lower end and a continuous rounded edge, rather than a flat disc with sharp edges or a smooth sphere. An illustrative starting stone is about 35 mm long, 25 mm wide and 12 mm thick; these are design dimensions, not a safe size or weight rating. Measure length, width and thickness on the tray without scraping the stone. Sketch the front and side profiles. The net must surround the front, back and both sides. No two-dimensional outline can tell whether a stone can pass sideways through a flexible opening. Make the gaps small relative to the actual shape, especially at the shoulders, and reject any arrangement that leaves an open escape route or visible sliding. Do not try to force the stone through a gap to find out.

For a first plan, four pieces of about 700 mm each provide eight working ends of about 350 mm before knots and the loop consume length. This is only a generous working example; thicker thread and extra rows consume more. The folded midpoint of each piece contributes one loop to the top bundle. A single overhand knot in the four folded bights creates the top gathering point and keeps eight free ends below. Arrange and label these ends 1–8 in clockwise order looking down from the top, keeping that viewpoint. Row A joins (1,2), (3,4), (5,6), (7,8); Row B joins (2,3), (4,5), (6,7), (8,1). Each paired knot is an overhand knot made with both free ends treated as one bundle, only where the actual thread maker permits that method. Alternate A and B, adding rows as required by the actual stone. The closure below gathers all eight ends. Never choose a universal gap, knot spacing or tail length by guesswork.

Steps 01–02

1. Establish that the pebble may be used

Start with a stone already lawfully in your possession, a purchased craft pebble, or one from a place where collecting is permitted and the landowner has agreed. Parks Canada's visitor guidelines prohibit removing rocks and other natural objects from its protected places. Other jurisdictions and private sites have their own rules; check before collecting, and leave unknown, protected, historic or culturally significant objects where they are. Record the permitted source or use an ordinary craft pebble instead. Do not disturb wildlife, shoreline habitats or a protected site for this exercise.

2. Select and inspect the stone on a tray

Choose a lightweight, sound oval stone with rounded shoulders and a shape that gives the net something to close around. Wash only an ordinary known clean stone with a method appropriate to its material and let it dry completely; do not use chemicals or remove coatings from an unknown mineral. Look for cracks, loose fragments, sharp edges and residues. Turn the stone gently while supporting it in a padded tray. If its surface damages thread, its shape provides no narrowing at the ends, or its identity or condition raises concern, choose another. Do not sand or drill it to make it fit.

Steps 03–04

3. Sketch the shape and the intended eight-strand route

Measure the three accessible dimensions, then draw a front and side silhouette in Record 1. Mark the upper shoulder, widest region and lower shoulder. Draw four knot locations around the perimeter at each row, with a front and back view; two visible front knots alone do not make a cage. Mark the intended top gathering point and the bottom gathering point. Plan small, staggered openings and enough rows to follow the contour. The example diagrams are enlarged schematics, not a template for a particular stone or a minimum retention standard.

4. Select compatible thread and practise a paired knot

Read the exact product's intended use, knot and end-finishing directions. Prefer a smooth, nonelastic cord suitable for decorative knotting; embroidery thread, elastic, waxed cord and slippery monofilament do not behave alike. On a spare length, practise an overhand knot in two parallel strands: hold them together as one bundle, form a loop in the bundle, pass both free ends through together and seat as directed. Do not make a knot separately in each strand. If the knot creeps, cannot be seated evenly, or the maker does not support the intended knot or finish, change materials or obtain guidance. Do not perform a pull-to-failure test.

Steps 05–06

5. Cut four equal lengths and make the common top loop

Cut four equal working lengths on the table, allowing generous extra length. Align them and fold all four at their midpoints. Hold the four folded bights together as one bundle, form a loop with that doubled bundle and pass the four folded bights through together to make an overhand loop knot. Leave a modest common opening above the knot and eight free working ends below. Seat the knot according to the cord directions without crossing or trapping a loose strand. The common opening contains all four folded loops; a future connector must capture all four, not just one. If the bundle is too bulky for an approved finish, stop and choose another compatible design.

6. Set the top gathering point and number the eight ends

Lay the stone in the lined tray. Position the common knot just beyond its narrow top, keeping the stone supported by the tray, never by the new loop. Spread the eight free ends around the perimeter in a single cyclic order, 1 through 8, as viewed from above the top. Put numbered paper tags beside the free ends, not inside the knots. Maintain the same order as you turn the work; 8 and 1 are neighbours. Arrange the four original pairs in evenly distributed sectors around the upper shoulder, including the back and both sides. Avoid twisting the entire net or crossing unrelated ends.

Steps 07–08

7. Tie the first four paired knots at the upper shoulder

At the first planned row, make the bundled overhand knot with ends 1 and 2, then 3 and 4, 5 and 6, and 7 and 8. Bring each pair together where the net follows the stone's upper taper, with comparable distances from the common gathering point. Keep the knots on the outside of the cage; do not let a bulky knot push the stone out. Work one sector at a time, gently repositioning the supported stone as necessary. Allow the cord to follow the surface without stretching it or pressing hard into the stone. If a knot falls at the wrong height, adjust it while possible rather than adding an extra wrap over the error.

8. Offset the next row across the gaps

Below the first row, bring end 2 from the first pair together with end 3 from the second. Tie them as one bundle. Repeat with 4 and 5, 6 and 7, and finally 8 and 1 across the cyclic boundary. This second row joins neighbouring first-row groups, producing staggered openings rather than four independent ladders. Keep every strand numbered and in order. Check the back as well as the front; if 8 and 1 are not joined, the net has an unintended open seam. The rows should follow the actual contour, with no loose opening through which the stone appears able to pass. Do not stretch or force a fit.

Steps 09–10

9. Add alternating rows around the widest region

Return to Row A pairings for the next row, then Row B again. Repeat as the stone's length and thickness require, preserving the cyclic order. The example shows four rows, but the number is not fixed. Move the supported stone only to reach the underside; keep the free ends controlled on the tray. Make the net follow the wider region and then the lower taper, so there is coverage on both faces and both edges. If one region develops a large diamond-shaped opening, redo the relevant row with shorter spacing or choose a more suitable stone. Do not assume an opening is safe simply because its apparent width is less than the stone's longest dimension.

10. Bring the eight ends together beneath the lower shoulder

When the staggered net reaches the lower taper, guide all eight ends to a common point immediately beyond the bottom of the stone. The last row must already follow the lower shoulder; do not bridge a long open section with the final gathering knot. Inspect the placement before closing: every end must participate, and there should be continuous thread around both faces, not a decorative front wrap alone. If necessary, add another offset row before gathering. Keep the stone in the tray and leave enough working tail to make the maker-approved bundled finish.

Steps 11–12

11. Close the bottom with the approved bundled knot

Hold all eight ends together without changing their order. If the exact thread directions permit a bundled overhand closure of this size, form a loop in the bundle and pass all eight free ends through it together. Ease the knot toward the lower gathering point and seat it as directed, without forcing the stone against the knot. This is the bottom closure, not a hanging loop. If the bundle is too thick, the knot cannot be seated, or the thread maker does not support the finish, do not substitute glue, a melted end or a random tight knot. Hold the project or remake with an appropriate material. Trim only after the closure is accepted and only to the maker's stated tail allowance; keep every strand accounted for.

12. Inspect the entire cage while the stone stays supported

Examine the top bundle, all paired knots, front and back, both edges, lower gathering point and finished tails. With the stone still supported by the tray and your hand, gently reposition the assembly as in ordinary handling; watch for gaps, changing knot positions, loosening, sliding or a possible escape route in another orientation. Do not lift it by the loop, tug, shake, drop, suspend or attempt to push the stone out. If the net moves away from the surface or a knot shifts, do not wear or hang it. Unwrap or remake the cage. A visually unchanged net does not establish reliable retention under movement or load.

Steps 13–14

13. Decide how the finished pendant component may be used

Keep the completed wrapped pebble as a resting decorative keepsake on a stable surface if you have not independently established suitability for wearing or hanging. A future wearable pendant needs known skin-contact materials, a purpose-made necklace with an appropriate opening clasp and a compatible connector that captures every bight in the common loop; the necklace and connector makers' instructions govern. Ask a qualified jewellery maker if retention or the attachment is uncertain. Do not improvise a closed neck loop, attach to a single bight, use as a child or pet accessory, or suspend over people or valuables. Do not treat the illustrative cage or any visual observation as proof that it can retain the stone in wear.

14. Record the actual result and preserve the keepsake

Complete Record 2 with the number and pairing of rows, actual stone dimensions, material, top and bottom knot method and visible condition. Mark RESTING DECORATION, CHANGE/REMAKE or HOLD. If a future wearable use is intended, record the independent attachment and retention questions still to resolve rather than declaring the piece certified. Store it dry, supported and away from rough surfaces, heat, children and pets. Discontinue use if thread frays, knots shift, stone cracks or the net becomes loose. Keep the original stone intact by carefully removing the cord when the design is no longer suitable; do not cut against the stone or pull a tight net off by force.

Fix, care and preserve

A net opening looks large. Stop and check the whole shape, including thickness and the narrower ends. A stone can turn edgewise through an apparently narrow opening. Rework with closer staggered rows or a more suitable pebble; never force a stone through the net as a trial.

The rows make separate vertical ladders. Confirm Row B joins 2–3, 4–5, 6–7 and 8–1 rather than repeating the same pairs. Unpick incorrect knots before making another row. All eight ends must stay in their cyclic order.

The stone shifts near the bottom. A long unknotted distance between the last row and the gathering knot may leave the lower shoulder unsupported. Rework or add an appropriate row before closing. Do not tighten the final bundle harder to conceal the problem.

A knot will not seat or tails are too short. Start again with a maker-compatible cord and more working length. Do not burn, glue, melt or randomly shorten the ends. A finish that is not supported for the chosen cord is a reason to hold the project.

I want to attach the pendant to a necklace. Verify suitable components and retention independently. The connector must capture all four bights in the common loop; a purpose-made clasp necklace is a separate product. If suitability is uncertain, keep the wrapped pebble as a resting decoration.

Source & evidence boundary

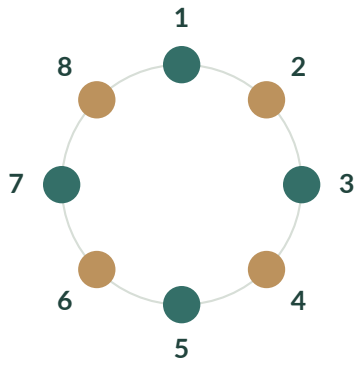
Original Steadleaf English prose, cyclic pairing map, schematic knot routes, cover and printable records. Factual context: Parks Canada visitor guidelines on natural-object collection; Marching North's general explanation of overhand-knot stone netting. The original top-down cage plan is not copied from a third-party template. Follow actual thread and jewellery-component instructions.

- Parks Canada, Visitor guidelines: https://parks.canada.ca/voyage-travel/regles-rules - Marching North, How to Wrap a Stone with Macrame Netting: https://www.marchingnorth.com/how-to-wrap-a-stone-with-macrame/

No source illustration, photograph or protected instruction is reproduced. The publisher has not physically collected, measured, knotted, wrapped, fitted, printed, worn or retention-tested a stone. All dimensions and diagrams are illustrative. This guide is not a certification of load, stone retention, jewellery strength, skin compatibility or safety.

Eight-strand pairing map

Enlarged symbolic map, not a spacing template. The positions are numbered clockwise when looking down from the common loop.



Cyclic top view

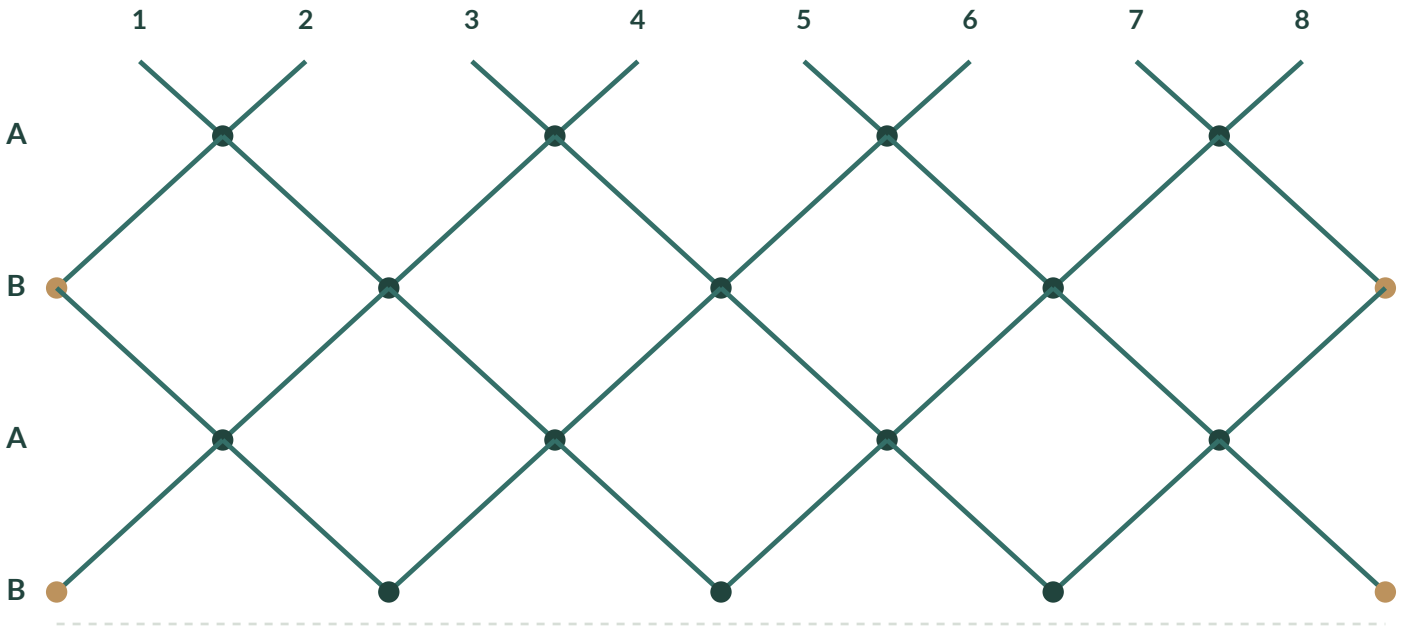
ROW A

1–2 3–4 5–6 7–8

ROW B

2–3 4–5 6–7 8–1

UNROLLED NET / THE LEFT AND RIGHT EDGES MEET

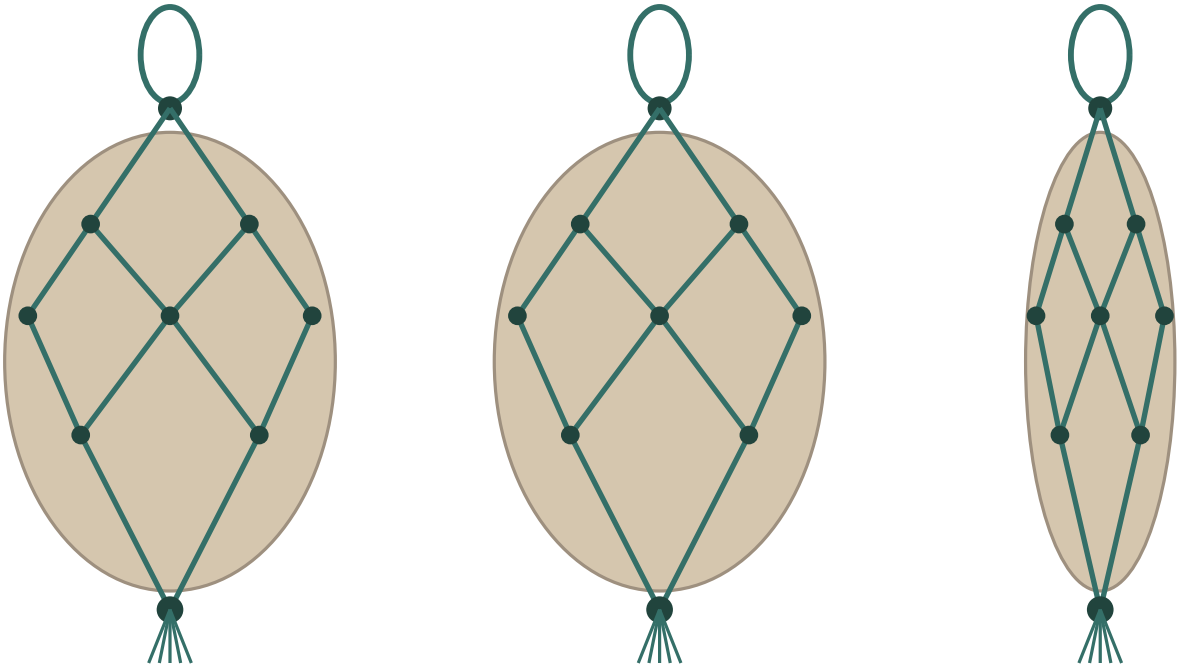


Same seam knot 8–1 at both edges

Alternate A and B to close the seam and form staggered openings. Repeat as needed to follow the actual stone; the four rows are illustrative. Plan small gaps and no visible escape route.

Complete cage and knot routes

Schematic, not to scale. Both faces and both edges are enclosed. Keep the actual stone supported; appearance is not a retention rating.



FRONT BACK SIDE

BUNDLED OVERHAND / FOLLOW THE CORD MAKER



1 Gather strands 2 Form bundle loop 3 Pass ends through

The top knot uses all four folded bights. Each row knot uses two ends; the bottom knot uses all eight. A loose gap, shifted knot or uncertain material means CHANGE or HOLD. No pull or drop test.



CLOSE-FOLLOWING STOP: EXAGGERATED GAP

Pebble, thread and net plan

Enter your own observations. Unknowns remain UNKNOWN. No strength or safety test is implied.

Permitted pebble source / permission confirmed

Stone length / width / thickness (mm) and condition

Thread product / intended use / diameter

Maker-approved paired, top and bottom knot methods

Cut length per piece / four equal lengths

Planned top loop and shoulder locations

Row A / Row B spacing plan / additional rows

Spare knot observation or NOT CHECKED

Unresolved compatibility question / decision

SKETCH YOUR STONE AND PROPOSED KNOT LOCATIONS

Front profile

Side profile

Assembly and visible condition

Enter your own observations. Unknowns remain UNKNOWN. No strength or safety test is implied.

Actual A/B sequence and number of rows

Actual stone dimensions / thread product

Top loop: all four bights captured?

Bottom closure: all eight ends accounted for?

Front / back / both edges: visible condition

Gaps, sliding, loose knots or thread damage

Maker finish and actual tail allowance

Future wearable attachment / retention still to verify

Decision: RESTING DECORATION / CHANGE-REMAKE / HOLD

Date / reason / future care