
Make a Macramé Wall Hanging with Emily Katz

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

- My name is Emily Katz, I'm a macrame artist, designer and teacher from Portland, Oregon. My macrame work has been featured in design magazines and blogs all over the world. I'm going to show you how to make a macrame wall hanging with a real modern feel, using cotton rope and some great rough textures. We'll be working on a found piece of drift wood for the frame. I'll be showing you the basic square knot which you'll be able to use in a variety of ways to create texture and interest in your macramés. We'll be cutting the bottom into a diamond shape to mimic the patterns that we'll be doing above. This wall hanging has such a great modern bohemian feel, and will add a wonderful touch to any room in your home. (cheerful music)

Chapter 2 - Materials

Materials

- To make a macrame wall hanging you're going to need something to hang the rope on. In this case, here we have a driftwood piece that's about three feet long which I found on an excursion to the beach. But you could use a copper rod, or you could use a dowel from the hardware store, or anything else that will match the decor of your home. For this pattern, you're going to need a total of 18 ropes. I use a 3/16 inch diameter white cotton rope that you can find at the hardware store or online. I've pre-cut 16 lengths of rope at 150 inches. It's important to cut the rope a little bit longer; you'd rather have the rope be longer than to have it be shorter, so just keep that in mind. And then for the pop color I've taken two lengths of that rope - also 150 inches, and I've dyed it with a black RIT dye. It's been rinsed and dried. You wanna make sure that it's dry before you work with it. The cool thing about dying your own cotton rope is that when you untwist the ends, you get a really neat striped pattern. And I think that adds a really special appeal to the end of your wall-hanging. You'll also need a pair of scissors to cut the lengths of rope, and to do fringe at the end.

Chapter 3 - Make Wall Hanging

Attach ropes to driftwood

- For every macrame piece that you do, it's really important to have a good amount of tension. So that each knot that you make is nice and straight and even, and the pattern will lay flat. For this piece, I've attached my piece of driftwood to the table by using just a chord of rope attached to a C-clamp just at the edge. But at your house you could do any number of things. You could hang it from a curtain rod, you could put a nail in the wall wherever you're gonna hang the piece and do the piece on the wall. Once your branch is secured, you can start adding your ropes. I'm gonna take my first piece of white cotton rope that I've cut to 150 inches and fold it in half like so. So that I have a loop at the top. This is where I'm gonna attach it to the branch. The way that you attach the rope is you place the loop over the driftwood, put it underneath probably a couple of inches from the edge, and then take the long piece, the long two pieces and thread them through that loop. You might want to hold onto the driftwood for extra tension. I'll attach seven more ropes this way in groupings of two until I get to the center and that's where I'll add the black. Here we have our first grouping of two. I've spaced them out just about an inch apart, but that's gonna depend also on how long your piece of driftwood is or the dowel that you're using. Often, I'll put the ropes on first and then

afterwards, adjust where they are in relationship to each other. Especially when you're using a unique shape of wood, it becomes a little bit more whimsical sometimes, so you can play around with where the ropes are gonna go. For example, here I'm going to put the ropes underneath this little extra part of the driftwood, instead of on top so it creates a nice texture on the driftwood itself. Now that I have all eight of these ropes attached, I'm gonna move on to the center and use the black ropes. I'm going to attach them in the same way, but put them in the center. When you're pulling the rope through, to avoid rope burn, reposition your hands as you go instead of sliding them down the rope. Now that I have the two centers, I'm going to go and do the rest of the eight on the right hand side in the same pattern as I did on the left. As you're attaching the ropes, make sure that they're even and that the loop is in the center so that you have the same amount on each side. Here's your chance before you get started to make sure your groupings are even. So I'm just going to adjust them here. Make sure that they're close together and also that they're nice and tight on there. And then we can get started with the knotting.

Learn square knot and work rows 1-4

- This pattern is essentially a four row repeat, and it's all made together with a simple square knot, which I'm going to show you here. To have the tension right, I like to hold the two center ropes with my right hand between my pointer finger and my thumb. The right rope is in between my three fingers, sort of held tightly there, and the left rope here is where we're going to start. So you take your left rope, you put it over the two center ropes, and then you take your right rope and you put it over that left rope. Sort of makes a sailboat shape, and then you put that right rope underneath and through and pull it all the way through. Then you pull those guys tight. You've made a little pretzel shape there. Make sure that the two ropes are going through those ropes, and then pull tight. And bring it all the way up to the top. Next you take your right rope and you repeat the pattern, only in the opposite. So you cross the right rope over the two center ropes, you take your left rope and cross it over your right rope and then take that left rope and go underneath everything and through that right loop and pull it through. And then here you go and you pull them taut and make it nice and tight so that the knot is consistent. That's our first square knot, so I'm going to do that again on the same ropes by starting on the left, going underneath, and up and through with the right, and pulling taut, and again now we have to switch to the right side, starting with the right, go over the middle, go over with the left, and through, and pulling taut. Now we have two square knots. It's important when you're working with the square knot to remember to alternate between the left rope going first and the right rope going first. If you find that you're confused, I can show you a nice trick to get back on track. You see here, this is one square knot and here's the other square knot. To determine which side of rope you're supposed to use first, you can look here to see this vertical line. Here it's on the left side, so I'm going to use the left rope. Here it was on the right side, so that was the side that I used before. So make sure that you follow along with that vertical line and that will tell you which side rope to use. We're going to make two square knots on every pair of rope all the way across the driftwood. The first few knots might seem a little bit confusing. As I go, I like to make sure that the ropes are straight, and it just keeps things more consistent. There's a lot of rope whipping at this stage, but as you go along, the ropes will get shorter and so you won't have that issue so much. For the second row, we're going to place the two left ropes aside and make a new grouping out of the next four that are in line. I'm going to do the same step with two square knots going all the way across, but skipping the black rope and going on to just the white. It's the same technique, it's just combining the two groups together, and thus you create the

pattern. Now that this side is complete, remember we're going to skip the black in the center and move on to the right side. Set the first two aside and make the new group of four and begin on your square knots. Oops, I got confused and it looks like I've done two left side knots instead of alternating between a left knot and a right knot. If you continue only doing one sided knots, you're going to end up with a spiral, but for this pattern we're working with a square knot, so I'm going to undo this stitch and make sure that I get back on track. For the third row of the macrame wall hanging, we're going to do exactly what we did for the first two rows, two square knots on only the white on both sides. Sometimes as I work I like to adjust the knots. You can do that by pulling down on the center ropes and readjusting the tension of each rope that you're knotting with, just to keep things consistent. You can really start to see the pattern develop by the rows of square knots and then all of the negative space that happens in between. Again we're going to skip the black ropes in the center and repeat the pattern from the left side onto the right hand side of white ropes as well. You can really get into the flow of what you're doing. For this row, we're going to switch things up a bit. I'm going to stay on the left hand drooping. I'm going to create a little bit of space in between the square knots, which will create a larger diamond shaped negative space here. I'm going to continue that along, and then we're going to finally incorporate the black. I'm leaving about one inch of space here so that there's a nice gap between the square knots. It creates a nice pattern and it also allows for that negative space in the center to be longer and larger. As you can see, instead of combining like I did above, I'm working on the original group of four. Before I finish this row of white, I'm going to incorporate the black. How I do that is just by combining these two groups and making a group of four, and I'm going to still start with the left hand side and make the knot with the two tone, and I'm going to push it all the way up to this knot here. After combining these four, you're going to take those two back and continue this pattern here on this, with two square knots. To create the same color contrast here, I'm going to take the right handed ropes and the black and combine them again, but instead of starting with the left hand side, I'm going to start on the right and do my square knot from there. This way you can see that the white loops go over on each side and that the black has the nice vertical line. Then we're going to continue with the two square knots, leaving that little gap on the right side just like we did on the left. You can really bring that knot right up under the one here on the left. You can kind of nestle it in there, and again you can see I'm working from the left first and then the right, and that's only because it's easier for me to start on the left hand side. The only time that it's really important to switch is here when you're trying to get this consistent color pattern. When you're just working with the white, it's not quite as important. The stitch is pretty similar, it's just that the vertical lines show up a little bit differently on one side to the other, but because of the ease for me and using it left to right instead of right to left, I just prefer to do it that way. That completes our first four rows in the top section of our big black diamond shape.

Continue square knot design

- On row five, we're going to repeat the patterns that we did from rows one through four. And, when we get to row eight, we'll pick back up with the black rope to create our diamond. Set the two left ropes aside and join with a new group of four. By creating these square knots here, you can see the new elongated diamond shape that we've made. So now we're going to jump again to the right side. Let's reserve these four ropes for later and grab a new grouping of four to start the two square knots here. Now that row five is complete, we're going to do rows six, seven, and eight, keeping in pattern. For row eight, we're going to do square knots all the way across the white to complete our

honeycomb shape, then I'm going to combine the black to create our diamond. You can see how that row completes this honeycomb pattern. To create the black diamond, I'm going to grab ropes, right about at row eight and bring them up to create the diamond shape, here. I'm just eyeballing it, but I wanna make sure that the diamond shape falls into space, and you'll see in a moment why. This is what I'm gonna do on my piece. Starting here, with these two square knots, on all four of these groups, I'm going to come back and look at this part and repeat the pattern that's here. So, I'm going to make the gaps, like this, and then I'm going to do the rest of this pattern, and also reconnect the black, like I had done up here. This row here, I repeated down here. So, the next step I'm going to do is take the black rope and combine it here. Continue on the row here, with the gaps. Do a few more square knots. I'll then complete the honeycomb shape until I've made another black diamond.

Chapter 4 - Finishing

Tie final knots and trim ends

- You can see now what we've done so far. There's a few different kinds of patterns with the honeycomb and with the diamonds, with the long stretches of square knots and the shorter ones. You could continue on with this pattern or, what I'm gonna do, sort of like what I do in my studio, I'm gonna step back from the piece a little bit and think about what the next step is going to be. So, I think what's gonna happen is we're going to attach the black ropes here again and I'm gonna make another diamond pattern, but with the white rope on the side I'm gonna create just a few more simple knots before we finish and cut to create the fringe. To connect the diamonds, remember I'm going to bring the black rope to the left side over here and connect them with the white rope, and just do that square knot on the left side, starting with the left hand rope. And then on the right side, when I bring these together I'm gonna start with the right hand rope. And then I'm going to connect the diamond so we'll have three diamonds in the center of this piece. When I'm working on a wall hanging in my studio the first thing that I'll do is I'll find a piece of driftwood or something to create the frame, I'll cut all of the rope, do a few rows of stitches, and then I'll sort of step back from the piece and think about what kind of symmetry I want, or if I want asymmetry, or if I want to include some more open space, or if I wanna do a lot of tight woven areas. I really let the rope speak to me in that moment, and it's a very intuitive process. So I encourage you to create a piece that's, could be whimsical or you could really plan it all out. Each one is unique, and I think it's a great idea to just have fun with it. So when I look at this piece, I see that there's a few areas here and over here that still need to have a little bit of balance. So I'm gonna put a few knots on this side and a few knots on that side. I'm going to do a couple more single square knots on the black, and then I'm going to cut and we're going to be pretty much done. So I'm gonna do two square knots there, and I think I'll do two down here as well. Working in a V shape so that when I cut the fringe at the end it'll have a nice V for the final wall hanging piece. And then I'm gonna come over here and sort of eyeball where those ropes are. Again, I'm combining these ones here and letting the right side kind of lay to the side. That's about four inches down. And I'm gonna create two more sets of square knots. And then also on this one in the center. Finally I'm going to just tie a couple more in the center on the black. And here's the final knot before I'm gonna cut. I'm really happy with how this macrame wall hanging has turned out so far, and the final piece to finish it all off is going to be cutting the ropes and making the fringe. It's really nice to have a great clean cut because it brings the sort of bohemian feel into a more clean modern way. So looking at this piece, I'm going to make a V-shaped cut to about here. I wanna cut these all very straight and clean, and then on the black I'm gonna cut a little

bit lower, and then I'm gonna untwist all of those ropes. I'm gonna start with the black, and make a nice clean cut. And then for the white rope I'm gonna cut on a diagonal going up this way. So I'm gonna get rid of a lot of this rope, but I really want a great, solid, clean cut. Something to make sure of too before you cut is to make sure all of your ropes are straight so that you're cutting in a straight diagonal line. And it can help to kind of pull the rope down so that there's some tension. You can even pick all of them up to make it easier to cut. So you can see how that makes a nice clean line that way there, and if you need to make any adjustments you can, like right here, I'm gonna cut that a little bit shorter. And then I'm gonna do the same thing here on the right side. I'm gonna make sure they're all straight, and if you need to do any final trimming at the end, it's totally okay. To unwind, it helps to make it easier if you twist clockwise at the top of the rope and kind of let it do the work for you. And just pull those apart. The last thing we'll do on the wall hanging is we'll take a piece of the black rope that we cut off the bottom and attach it to the top so that you can hang it on your wall. So I'm gonna tie these on, and then I'm gonna undo the rope here too to make the tassel and fringe on this, so you really get to see that white contrast with the black from where I did all the dyeing before. This entire piece that I just made came together with one simple knot, the square knot. You can really see how many interesting things you can do with that one knot. And adding a little bit of color, doing some fringe, cutting the bottom in a straight line or on a diagonal, it all creates cool ways to make a really great modern piece to hang in your home.