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## **Make a Paracord and Leather Cuff Bracelet** with Elke Bergeron

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### **Chapter 1 - Introduction**

#### Overview

- Hi, I'm Elke. I've worked many years in the men's wear industry. I've worked for companies like Nautica and Structure. Now I have my own leather handbag and accessories company. I like to work with leather but I also like different materials as well. And paracord is really popular right now. It's all over craft stores, the hardware stores, and the sporting goods stores, so there's many places you can find it. By combining the leather and the paracord we've come up with a really nice sophisticated cuff that you can stack with all sorts of other jewelry that you may already have.

### **Chapter 2 - Materials**

#### Materials

- To make your cuff, you're gonna need some basic supplies that you can find either at a hardware store or a craft store. You'll need a scrap of leather. It's lightweight. A glue gun, a lighter, scissors, ruler, some basic leather punches that you can either find at a craft store or online at [tandyleather.com](http://tandyleather.com), a rotary cutter, a poly board or an old cutting board, anything that you can hammer on, an s-biner that you can find at a sporting goods store, and the power cord of the colors that you'd like to make. You'll need about two yards of your main color and maybe just a foot of your pop color, a poly hammer, some masking tape, and a sewing machine.

### **Chapter 3 - Make Cuff Bracelet**

#### Prepare materials

- The first thin you're gonna want to do is measure your wrist. I know my wrist is a six and a half, and you're gonna subtract an inch and a half from your wrist size to cut your paracord lengths. I have already seven strips precut of my paracord. You can use as many or as little as you like, depending on how wide you would like your cuff bracelet. So I'll need to cut one more piece of my main color. I'm going to do eight total, With one pop color in the middle. So, one, two, three, four, five. And those are my main colors. And my pop color, which will be orange. Let's see, I have my ruler here, so we'll do five inches of this one as well. For your loops on the end, you're going to need two pieces at two inches long. So one, and two. To make the end pieces of your cuff, you're gonna need a scrap of leather. And lightweight is best because it's going to have to go through your sewing machine with the paracord in the middle. I've precut one end, we cut it with a rotary cutter, and punched the holes in the middle. And now we'll make another one for the other side. The end pieces measure one and a half inches high by two inches long. So I'll start with the one and a half, then we'll measure two inches for the width. You're gonna want to place your holes right in the center. And this is what your loops will go through. So the easiest way to find your center is to just fold your leather in half lengthwise. You can open it up again. And then you'll need your leather punch, your polyboard, and a hammer to place your holes in the middle. The punch size I'm using is a medium sized hole, and it's just about the right size for the paracord to fit through. I'm gonna line them up in the middle, about three quarters of an inch apart, and right in the middle. That's one hole. And two holes. Let's just add our loops to the leather. You'll need a lighter to burn the ends. The best thing about paracord is the ends melt. The ends dry pretty quickly, and they harden. But you want to touch them. This one's still a little bit tacky, so just wait for it to dry. And once it's hard, it'll be much easier

to fit through the hole in the leather. We'll start on the backside by pushing the hard end through the back until you have a little bit left over. That's gonna be glued in on the inside. Then you're just going to turn it around and come through the front. You can even out the loop on the back, so now you have a nice shape there, and that will be held with the s-biner for the closure. Okay, we'll do the other one, coming up the back. You only need to burn one side, because you're really just burning it so you have the ability to pull it through the leather. The other side can stay loose, because it will be held in place by the glue that we'll be attaching. Sometimes you have to wiggle it a little bit. There we go. There, now we have the two loops, with enough left over on the back where they can be held with the glue, but not long enough that they're gonna be caught in the sewing machine. You can make this bracelet as wide or as narrow as you'd like depending on how many pieces of paracord you decide to put in.

### Create cuff

- To start assembling the cuff, we're going to need some masking tape. You're going to cut a piece long enough that it can wrap all the way around all your pieces of para cord when they're all lined up. So maybe start with, about, six to seven inches. We're going to place the tape sticky side up and perpendicular to you because it's easier to place the pieces that way. This is when you're going to arrange all your para cord in the color combination that you'd like. I like to lay them on top of the tape and leave about 3/4 of an inch sticking out of the edge. And you're going to want, as you're laying them down in order, the edge will all line up nice and straight. For this color combination I think we're going to do an asymmetrical design. Which means we're going to put our pop color not smack in the center. We're going to put it off to one side. And we'll see how it goes. But this is something that you can play with the colors and you can play with the proportion, forever actually. There's so many combinations and it's really a lot of fun to see them all lined up. I like masking tape as opposed to painter's tape because it's a little bit stickier. I've found that para cord doesn't really want to stick to tape that easily. So a little bit stickier the better because it will come off in the end. Okay now they're lined up real nice and tight and close. So basically all side are kissing, they say. We're going to fold it over. So that they stay together. This will be removed but while you're gluing it, this will keep it really nice and straight. And we can even cut off this piece. We can do both sides at once now that they're all together. Whoops, see it's already coming undone. So you have to be, you have to be a little patient and a little careful and use your fingers to wiggle them in. And when it's in, just make sure you press it nice and hard. There that looks pretty good. We'll try one more time, there we go. We're going to cut another piece of tape. We'll repeat the same step to the other side. So just carefully kind of move it on to your tape. And you're gonna want to hang it over that extra 3/4 inch just like the first time. That there, just enough so that it doesn't get caught in your leather ends. And keep it nice and straight, press it down, and you're gonna want to actually look at the center parts as well and make sure that your pieces are going straight so you don't have gaps in the middle when it's all finished. That looks pretty good, wrap it and lock it on the end. And actually you start to see your color combination, how it's going to lay out and it looks really nice. Now rip off this side so I don't get it stuck to anything. Now we're ready to add the leather ends. You want to make sure that your edges are straight. Mine need a little bit of trimming so we'll just take some scissors and carefully just cut some ends off on both sides. And just use your fingers to keep it together. We're going to take the glue gun. Hot glue sets very quickly so you just want to put a little bit on the ends, not too far down because the last thing you want is for this to have to go through your sewing machine. It just won't work, it will jam your machine. So you're going to just add a little

bead of glue to the top of your para cord. Without going down too low. You're going to take your leather and put it right to the center. And you'll know when it's there cause it will hit the loops, and just press down. So that it's secured. Then we can flip it over and we're going to keep applying some glue, especially to the area right at the top all around your loops because you don't want your loops to just come flying out. You want them to be nice and secure. So that's the one part that actually has more extra glue. But like I said, you're not going to get anywhere near the tips where it's going to go through the sewing machine. You can also add another little bead of glue to the top of the para cord. And then we're going to carefully fold it over so that the leather matches up on both sides. And that's one side done. Okay now we will glue the end on the other side. In the process my pieces have gotten a little bit mixed up. So I'll just take the time and straighten them out again. So they're nice and flat. There we go. And again, check your center so that everything is still touching and nothing is too bowed out. So we'll take our other end of the leather. Just keep your glue at the end of the para cord. At the very, very tip. Okay, you're gonna put it so your tips go into the center, which you'll know cause you'll hit the loops, and you're going to press down again. Okay, well we're going to be sewing right through the para cord just about down here, about a 1/4 of an inch up from the end of the leather. So you really want to make sure this is clear of any kind of glue. So we're going to do that same that we did on the other side. We're going to add one nice glob of glue around your loops so that they do not come out. You want them to be nice and secure inside your bracelet. And then you're going to add a small bead of glue again to the top of the para cord. And we'll just fold the whole thing over. And make sure, once again, that the leather lines up so it's at the same distance at the bottom. Press it nice and tight until your glue is dry. We can then, using a scissor or you can rip it off whichever way you like, we can take the tape off. Because now it's all held in place with the glue and on the leather. Depending on the width of your bracelet, you're going to want to cut off the extra leather on the tips. So that it's even with the width of your para cord. So just using a regular scissor, okay and then this is, you can see the extra leather hanging out on this side so we're going to want to get rid of that as well. And do the same to the other side. Okay sometimes, you'll hit a little bit of para cord that sticks out on the side and it will fray. The best way to take care of that and to just tidy it up is to take a lighter and just burn it a little bit so it stops that fraying process. So any of the corners that you see that may need it. A lighter is a very useful tool. And that side's okay, and that's okay as well. We're ready to finish it with some stitches down the leather. You're going to slide the bracelet into the machine, giving it about a 1/4 of an inch from the edge of the leather for your sewing. And you don't want to go too close to the edge only because you want to make sure that you get both sides of the leather. Just in case it's not as even as you may have thought. So just go nice and slow. You're going to do a couple stitches. And then do a backstitch. Okay. And just keep it nice and straight. And when you get to the end, just repeat the backstitch. You're going to cut your thread and you're going to do the other side. If you're having trouble sewing this on your home sewing machine, you might want to try a leather needle or a denim needle in your machine which are stronger and made for going through the leather. Because I'm using a light colored leather we're still just doing a straight stitch but I'm using white thread. So depending on your color of your leather you'll pick the color of your thread to go with it. And clip all your threads. And then we just need to attach the closure.

## **Chapter 4 - Finish**

Sew ends, add clasp and finish

- We're gonna close the bracelet with an S-Biner. This little piece of sporting equipment is used by

climbers and outdoorsmen. I live in a really active, outdoorsy kind of place, and these are all over the hardware stores and the sporting goods stores. When I found the S-Biner I knew I wanted to use it, so the bracelet was a basically a vehicle so I could use this closure. The best way to attach the S-Biner is to clip it in the same direction, and what I mean by that is this is an S-shape with two spring clips, so if the hook is facing down when you're clipping one loop, when you're clipping the next loop, you're going to want your hook again to be facing down. This will make the closure lay flat instead of laying perpendicular, which can be really uncomfortable on your wrist. So as long as the Ss are facing the same direction when they're closed, it will lay nice and flat. Using paracord is a great way to play with color and combinations and widths, and there's so many different ways that you can put it together. This is one that we made with a gray and aqua color, and it has a brown tip for the leather. You can also use as many colors as you'd like. This one has a navy, a blue, with a yellow pop. I like to bring the pop colors into the loops as well. This is more of an ombre color, so you can fade or grade it in any way you'd like. And a really nice, bright, pop bracelet that would be great layered with all sorts of other jewelry you might have. Depending on the colors, the widths, and the combinations, it's a really great project and you can create a really fun cuff.