



Fishing Net Macramé

Learn about the culture of the Indigenous Mashantucket Pequot peoples while making this knotted wall hanger with UConn Extension.

History

The Mashantucket Pequots are an Indigenous group of people that reside in current-day Southeastern Connecticut. Prior to colonization by European settlers in the mid-1600s, the Mashantucket Pequots lived on a large expanse of land called *Mashantucket*. They spoke the Algonquin language and ate a diverse diet, including farmed vegetables such as squash and corn, and hunted small mammals. They also relied on food sourced from Long Island Sound and local freshwater rivers, streams, and ponds. Food harvested from local waterbodies was collected using different tools and strategies, one of which was woven fishing nets. Traditional Mashantucket Pequot fishing nets were made of animal or plant tissues tied with a series of knots. Nets were suspended in the water by two opposing forces: buoyant objects such as cork floated the top of the net to the water's surface, and stones tied to the bottom of the net weighed it down. This type of latticed knotwork, now considered a *gillnet*, blocked the path of the fish as they swam through the water and effectively caught them in the net when it was pulled up into the canoe.

Reference: [Reclaiming the Waterways, Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center](#)



Traditional Mashantucket Pequot fishing net. Source: [Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center](#)

You can create a smaller model of this net using the steps below. To learn more about the culture of the Mashantucket Pequots, visit the [Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center](#) in person or online.

Supplies and Tools

1 chopstick

5 pieces of yarn/string, each 2.5 feet in length

Scissors

Tape (Optional)

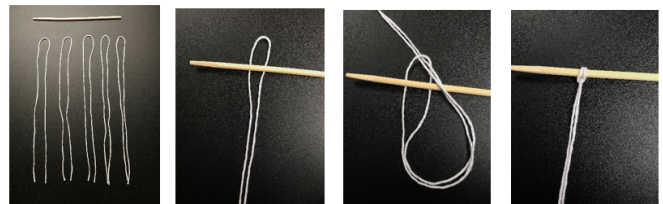


Activity Steps

Notes

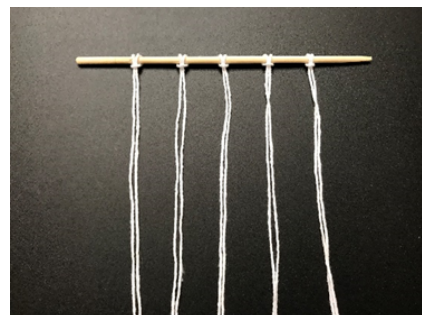
1. Fold one string in half. Take the loop and lay it under the chopstick. Tie a **lark's head knot**: thread the two ends of the string through the loop (around the chopstick) and pull tight. Repeat this step with all 5 strings.

Visuals

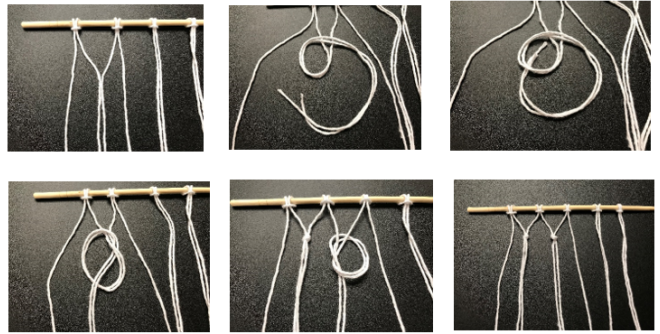


2. Evenly disperse the knots along the chopstick, leaving space at both ends.

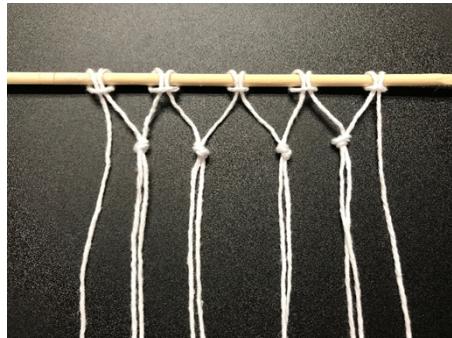
Note: It may be helpful to tape the chopstick to the edge of a desk or table so that you have both hands available to tie the knots.



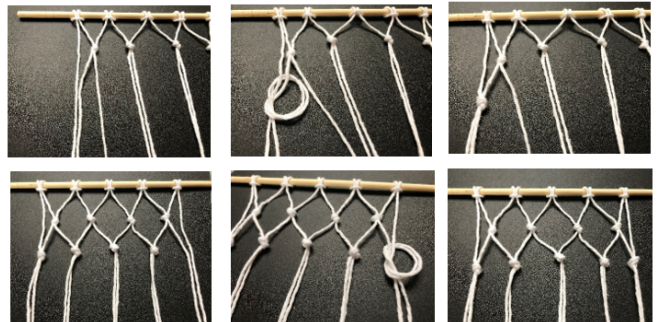
3. Take the second tail of the first loop and the first tail of the second loop. Hold them together (parallel) and tie an **overhand knot**: make a loop and thread the ends through the loop, pulling tight. Repeat this knot with the second tail of the current loop and the first tail of the following loop until you reach the last tail of the last loop. All knots should be tied $\frac{1}{2}$ inch away from chopstick.



Note: You should have 4 knots in this row.

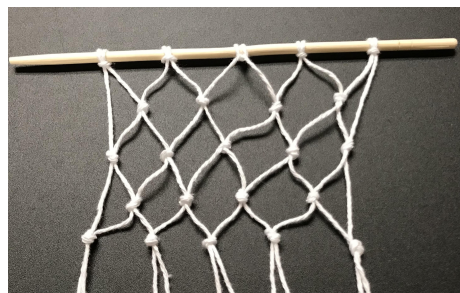


4. Take the first tail of the first loop and the first tail of the first knot in this previous row. Hold them together (parallel) and tie an overhand knot. Repeat this knot with the second tail of the current knot and the next tail of the following knot until you reach the end. All knots should be tied $\frac{1}{2}$ inch away from the knots of the previous row.



Note: You should have 5 knots in this row.

5. Repeat step 3 and step 4 until you have an inch of string left, ending on step 4.



Optional: Trim the ends of the string so that they are even. Do not trim too close to the knots or they will unravel.



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