

Class 3's home learning, w/b 15.6.20 - Art/Craft

## Viking Cord Winding

(Young Archaeologists' Club, [www.yac-uk.org/activity/viking-cord-winding](http://www.yac-uk.org/activity/viking-cord-winding))

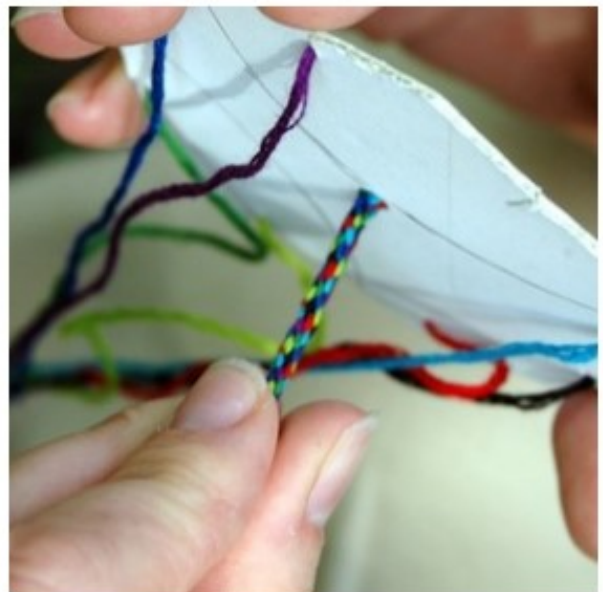
Please read all of the instructions first, as you may be able to adapt some of the required materials to what you already have at home.

## Viking cord winding

Cords have been made for many thousands of years, using yarns from woody plant fibres and fine yarns like wool and silk. One method for making cords was using a cord-winding tablet. It was used by the Saxons and Vikings. Try our experiment to have a go yourself!

YAC HQ

**Adult supervision is not required for this activity.**



**Ages :** Suitable for all ages.

**Time Required:** Depends on how long you want your cord to be! It will take about 15 minutes to make your cord-winding tablet

### **Materials Required:**

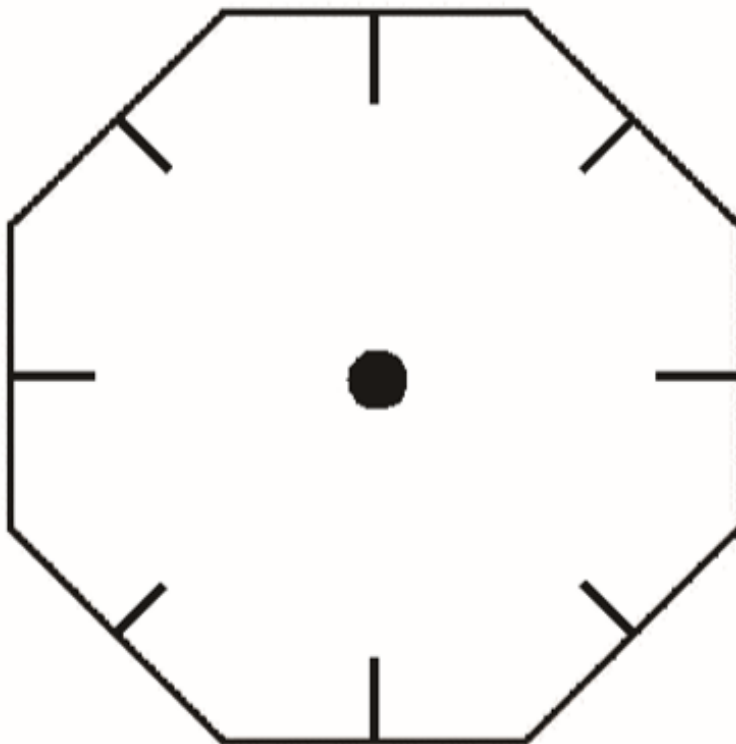
- Thick cardboard
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Embroidery thread
- Single hole punch (or bradawl)
- Cord-winding tablet template (optional)

# Cord winding tablet template



## To use this template:

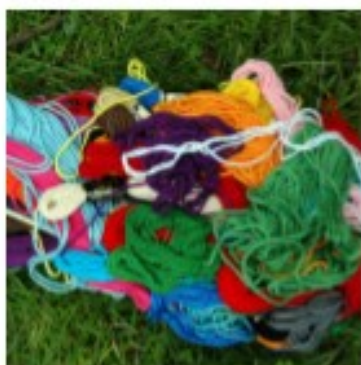
- 1) Cut out the pattern below, and carefully draw around it on your cardboard.
- 2) Cut out the cardboard shape; this is your cord winding tablet
- 3) Mark and cut the small slits in the middle of each side of the tablet
- 4) Make a small hole in the middle of your tablet; you can use a single hole punch, or you may need to ask an adult to make the hole with a sharp tool
- 5) Your cord winding tablet is ready to use. Follow the steps on the YAC website:  
[www.yac-uk.org/activity/viking-cord-winding](http://www.yac-uk.org/activity/viking-cord-winding)



1. Copy the outline of the octagon onto your thick cardboard. Each edge should be at least 3.5cm long. [Alternatively, print out our downloadable cord winding tablet template.](#)
2. Carefully cut out your octagon. Cut a small slit in the middle of each side (as shown on the outline diagram). Make a hole in the centre of your octagon with a hole punch – or ask an adult to make one using a bradawl. You have now made your cord-winding tablet!

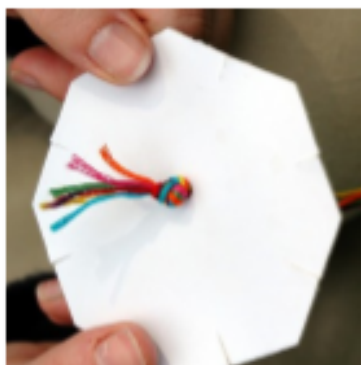


3. Choose seven different coloured embroidery threads. Measure and cut a 50cm length of each colour.

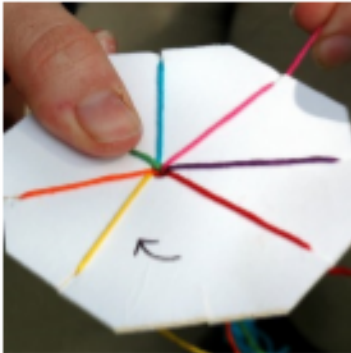


*You could also use wool/yarn instead of embroidery thread.*

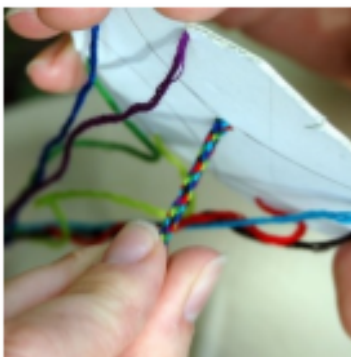
4. Twist your threads together and push them all through the central hole. Pull the threads through a little way and then tie them together in a double knot. Make sure your knot is big enough to stop the threads from disappearing back through the hole!



5. Turn your cord-winding tablet back over, and put one thread into each slit. It doesn't matter what order the threads go in. You should have one empty slit left over. Draw an arrow onto your tablet to show which way you will turn it when you start to make your cord. (Most people find it easiest to turn in a clockwise direction, but it is up to you!) You are now ready to start cord winding!



6. Hold your tablet horizontally so that the empty slit is facing you and the threads are hanging down. Count back (in the opposite direction from your arrow) three slits. Take the thread from that slit and move it over the two threads in between, and tuck it into the empty slit facing you.
7. Now turn your tablet in the direction of the arrow until the new empty slit is facing you. Count back another three slits and move the thread over into the empty slit. Keep repeating this process. Remember to always turn your tablet in the same direction!
8. Your cord will be emerging from the underside of your tablet. It is important to keep on gently pulling the cord through from the underside. The threads will also get tangled very easily, so it is a good idea to run your fingers through them regularly to avoid getting them in a knot!



9. When your cord has reached the required length (or when you have nearly run out of loose threads), remove the seven threads from the slits and pull the cord through the hole from the underside. Tie the loose strands into a knot and trim the ends into a neat tassel. You now have a piece of cord perfect for a friendship bracelet or even shoelaces!



10. Your next challenge is to try different patterns of threads. What happens if you only use two different colours? Or you could try counting back four threads from the empty slit each time, rather than three. Does this make a different pattern? Can you use a different number of threads? Try drawing out a pentagon (5 sides) or hexagon (6 sides) to make another tablet. What happens then?