

BRAIDED EASTER EGG



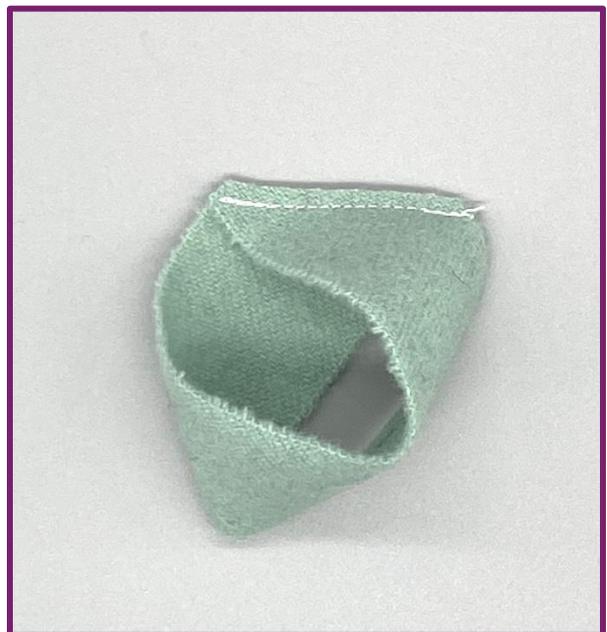
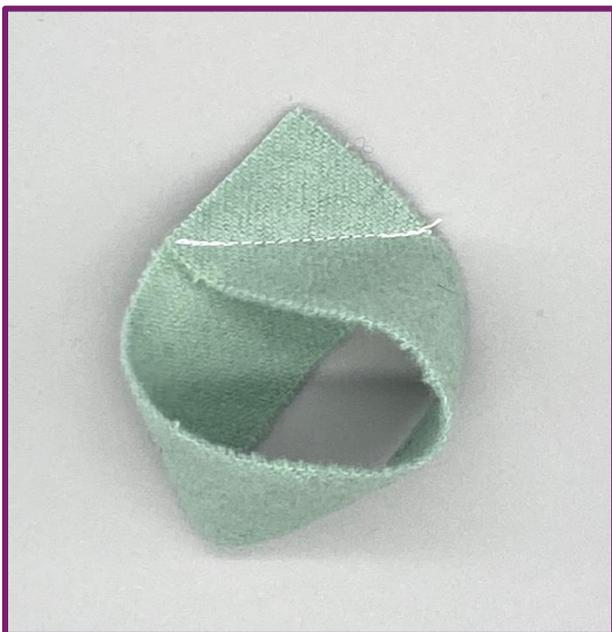
This braided Easter egg is made from three 9 loop centers. For this egg, all three centers are the same. They can also each be made with different colors. The first step is determining the length of wool you need for each strip. This will vary depending on the weight of the wool, the width of the strip, and your braiding tension. Once you determine your length, it will be the same for all strips in any 9 loop center with the same weight and width of wool.

These directions are for left opening braids. For right opening braids, see the section at the end of the directions.

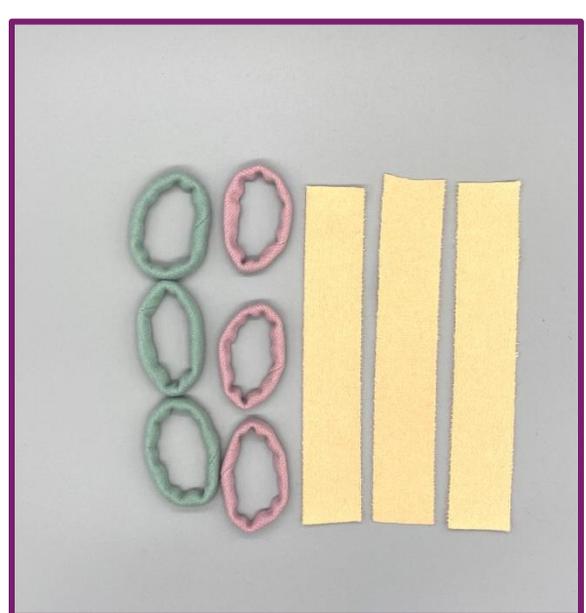
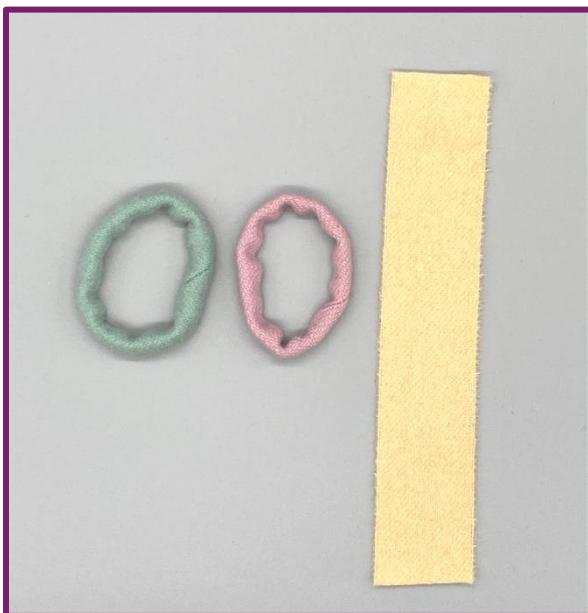
To make a 9 loop center, first braid about 12 loops. Place a pin in one strand where it first comes out on the right side. Place another pin in the same strand 9 loops down. Unbraid the strand and measure the length between the pins. Add the width of your strip to this measurement for seam allowance. You can use this measurement for all strips. For example, my strands are 1-1/2" wide and my wool is light weight. My measurement between the pins is 6-1/2" so my strip length is 8".



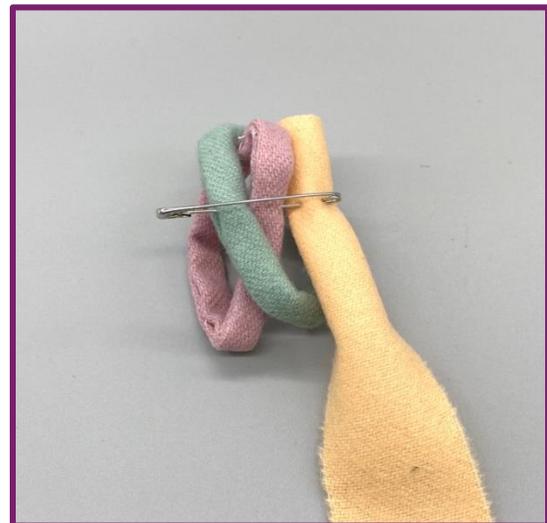
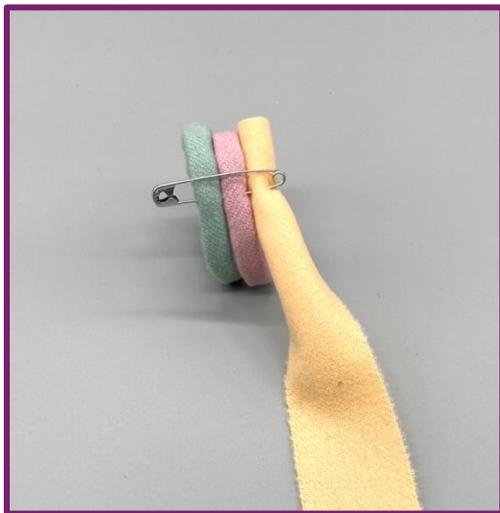
Cut your three strips to your measurement. For two of the three strips, make bracelets. Bring the ends of the strips together with the ends up. Rotate the top layer 90 degree counterclockwise. Sew across on the diagonal. Trim. To be sure you have the strip in the correct position, you can pin the seam and make sure the strip will open to a loop without a twist.



Fold the strip for braiding, clip, and sew the open folds together making a bracelet. Do this for 2 of the 3 strands. Leave the third strand loose. Repeat to make three 9 loop centers in total. You will have 2 bracelets and 1 loose strand for each 9 loop center.



Arrange your wool on the pin with the openings to the left. Start with the loose strand about 1" from the top, then the two bracelets. Stagger the location of the seams. Begin braiding with the left strand over the center. Braid snugly until you have 8 loops on the right and the loose strand has returned to the right. The ends of the loose strand will make the 9th loop. Remove the starting pin and pull on the ends being careful not to twist the strands.



Put the ends of the loose strand right sides together and rotate the right strand 90 degrees counterclockwise. Sew across the diagonal, trim, fold as for braiding, and sew the open folds closed.



Using a pliers or hemostat, carefully pull the loop into the braid a little at a time making all loops equal sized and keeping the openings on the same side. Adjust the other two strands so the seams are hidden and all loops are equal sized. Repeat so you have three 9 loop rings.



In order to avoid e-lacing, one of the rings is laced into a center with the openings to the inside, one with the openings to the outside, and one is left as a ring. Start by lacing one ring with the openings to the outside. Go through every loop and then go around a second time. Pull the lacing thread tightly to close the opening. Knot the lacing thread, send the ends to the back, and cut the lacing thread leaving about 1" tails. Next do the same for a second ring, this time with the openings to the inside, Knot the lacing thread and send the short end to the inside and trim. With the long end, go under a loop to the outside and lace the last ring onto this 9 loop center. You may need to flip it to get the colors to match if you want each color on the center to fall between the other two colors on the ring. The loops should form v's as with regular lacing.



Go under a loop to get the lacing to the outside and attach the first 9 loop center. When you are almost done lacing, you can add a bit of stuffing before closing the egg. Go through several more loops and cut the lacing thread. Your egg is finished!



For right opening braids, rotate the top strand clockwise before sewing on the diagonal. Put the loose strand on the pin last and keep all openings to the right.

To make a 9 loop center for a round rug, you may want to cut your strips a little narrower than usual so the center will fit and be flat. For example, my strips are 1-1/2" so I use 1-1/4" strips for the center of a round rug.

To make a braided pincushion, use the same technique to make an 18 loop ring in addition to a 9 loop ring. Lace your 9 loop ring tightly into a circle. Lace the 18 loop ring to the 9 loop center skipping every other loop on the ring and lacing every loop on the center. Using all the same width wool will give you a dome shape that you can hot glue to the top of a short wide mason jar.

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