

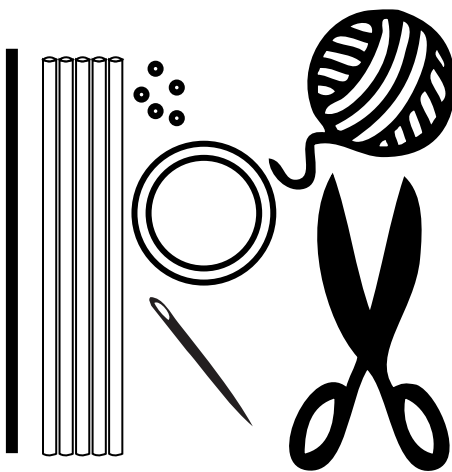
Time: About 5 hours

Difficulty: Easy

Cost: Around 6 dollars (most of the cost is yarn and a belt ring unless you have it around your house like I do).

# Alona's Cheap and Easy Woven Belt Tutorial

So a while ago, I found this nifty little straw loom set at some store, it cost me all of a dollar to buy, and once bought I threw it into my big pile of craft crap and forgot about it, until I realized I wanted to make a belt for a friend, and I wanted to make it out of stuff I had around my house, So a skein of yarn, and a belt ring later I had come up with a pretty nifty, cheap and easy belt. You can buy this loom (look for Knifty Knitter Straw Loom) or you can make one for cheap, or even free. Here's what you need:



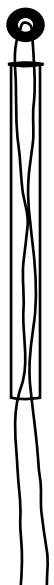
- 4 to 6 Straws. Pick up a few extra at a fast food joint. (Free)
- A pipe cleaner (needs to be longer than your straws) (about \$.99 at craft store)
- A belt ring (a dollar or two at Leather Factory or Farm and Fleet)
- As many pony beads (big plastic beads) as straws you have (a dollar at craft store)
- Yarn (you can use crochet thread, though you want smaller straws in that case, or you could even try macrame cord too) in whatever colors you want (\$3.00 + at craft store)
- Scissors
- Yarn needle, if needed (a dollar and change for two at craft stores)
- Tape (optional, in case you want to tape it to a table to start)

## How to Make Your Straw Loom and Prepare the Warp

-Figure out how many straws thick you want to make your belt. 4 straws creates a pretty small belt, maybe an inch wide, while six will create a belt that is about 2 inches wide.

-Remove your straws from paper packaging.

-Bend pipe cleaner into a long hook, make sure the hook can easily pass through a straw, and be long enough to reach both sides of the straw.



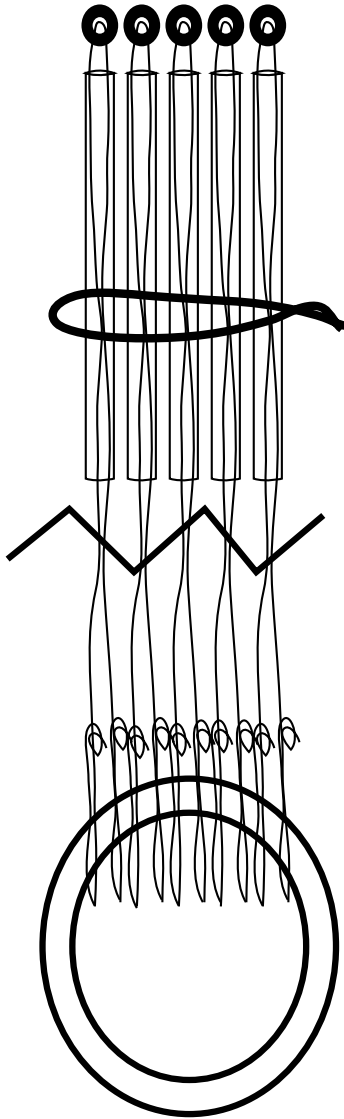
-Choose which yarn will be your "warp" This is the yarn runs up and down through out, and the "weft" is woven around, it is hidden, for the most part, though there will be some of it sticking out at the end.

- Measure how long you want your belt to be, keep in mind that your belt will be knotted like ring belts are and that there will be some yarn tassels at the end of it. Add a few inches to be on the safe side. Double that measurement, and cut out your yarn at that length in as many straws as you have.

-Push pipe cleaner through one straw. Take one end of one piece of your warp yarn, and hook it on the hook. Pull hook through straw. Push yarn through one pony bead, then use the hook to pull the yarn back through the straw. You should end up with something like the image on the left.

-Repeat above step for all straws that you have.

-Lay out the loaded straws on a table, with the beads pointed away from you, and the yarn falling over the table at you. Take your pipe cleaner and wrap it around your straws, or you may tape the middle of the straws to the table at this point.



- Now take your belt ring, go to the end of your warp yarn, and loop and tie your warp yarn in double knots onto your belt ring like the image at the left.
- Pull your warp yarns so the pony beads are pulled against the straw.

Now you are ready to start weaving on your loom.

## Weaving on your Straw Loom

- Now choose your “weft” yarn. This will be the color of your belt. Use the end of a ball of yarn, you might need the whole thing.
- Tie end of weft yarn in a knot around the far right straw, up against the pipe cleaner (or tape)
- Weave weft yarn over the first straw and under the next one. Repeat till you get to the end of your straws, circle around and repeat.
- Push down on your last row so it is against the pipe cleaner, and there is no space showing in between your rows. Repeat. A lot.
- As your weaving grows, you can eventually push the pipe cleaner off, (or once you get to the top, pull off the tape.) Keep pushing weaving down, but make sure to never push it all the way off the straws, leave at least an inch or two on the straws to keep them in place.
- Eventually you will be done with your weaving and have a nice long belt. Push your weaving down till it is against your belt ring, and the knots that the warp yarn made are now hidden in the weaving.
- When you get to your desired length, pull up and cut the warp threads near the pony beads, and remove the loom from the piece. Now tie all the warp (and the weft yarn) in knots (after you push the weaving down nice and tight at the very top of the weft yarn, so it doesn’t unravel. If needed use your yarn needle to weave your ends in.

And that’s all there is, pretty simple.

## Some options:

Here are some other things you can do to make your belt better:

- Change up your weft yarns so your belt has a striped look.
- Have two weft yarns at the same time, alternating which warp they go over.
- Use wool or alpaca yarn, then felt your belt by either washing it in the washing machine with detergent (though I don’t know if I would do that with the metal belt ring) or hand washing it till it felts.
- When done, add another color to the sides of the belt by weaving in (with your yarn needle) a whip stitch of another color yarn up the sides.
- Add in an embroidery design into your belt.

