

Flemish String Jig Instructions

This Flemish string jig will allow you to make nearly any length Flemish string. The system of measuring and twisting that you use will alter the finished length of the strings. For that reason the pre-drilled adjustment holes are not marked with a specific length. Each person twists the Flemish string a bit differently and each variation affects the finished string length. The tighter you twist, the shorter the finished string will be. The longer you twist back into the main body of the string, the shorter the finished string will be. It is not difficult, you just have to settle into a personal pattern.

We will briefly describe how to make a Flemish string, and we will supply you with the measurements that we use to make the strings, but you will still have to experiment to find which pegs make which length strings for you. Do not worry! Flemish strings are easy to make. Once you twist a couple and become consistent in your system, the string lengths will work out perfectly for you, every time. You'll learn to make it happen, you'll be twisting the string rather than the string twisting you!

The many nails you see at the top of the jig are there to create a nice taper to the ends of your bundles. (Bundle, is the name given to one of your groups of strings.) This creates a smooth transition when they are twisted back, on top of themselves when making the loop, and makes a much more attractive string.

By moving the wooden peg up and down the board, you control the overall length of the actual bundles of string material. The closer to the nails the peg is, the longer the finished string will be. The farther away from the nails, the shorter the finished string will be.

Please use the diagram of the string jig as a reference as we walk you through the proper usage of the jig itself.

Tie the end of your string material to the top left nail marked "A". That end of the string material will now remain tied to that nail until the bundle is completed. Remove string material from the spool as you proceed. Continue from position "A" over to position "B", you are now no longer tying the string to the nail, you are simply running it on the outside of the nail. From position "B", continue down to "C" then up to the wooden peg, "D", back down to the nail "E" and up to the nail directly under the first nail that you tied the string material to, to begin with. Cross over to the corresponding "second" nail and "B" and continue the process going from "B" to "C", back up to "D", down to "E" and each time you arrive back at the tapering nails, use the next lower nail until you reach the desired number of strands in the bundle. If you want eight strands in the bundle, repeat the looping process eight times. Now, to finish you last wrap for each bundle, you will not terminate on the lower nail, but you will continue with your string material all the way up, around and past "A" and over to "B". There you simply hold the string tightly against "B" while you cut through the strands.

To cut the strands, use sharp scissors, (Do not cut yourself, use extreme caution with any sharp cutting implement. We will not be responsible for any accidents, injuries, and/or any other problems resulting from your use of this product. Use this string jig at your own risk!) While holding the end of the string tight against "B", cut the strands through the middle of the space between point "A" and point "B". Once you have cut through the string material, you should untie the "tail" piece that is left attached to nail "A". You now hold in your hand your first bundle. Each end should be nicely tapered. Set this bundle aside and continue on to your next bundle. If you are planning on a two bundle string, cut two bundles. If you plan to twist a three bundle, cut three bundles.

Twisting the Flemish string is really very simple. The following description will be based on a two bundle string because it is easier to understand. Once you understand the basics of the Flemish string, you'll easily be able to twist the superior three bundle string.

These directions will be from the perspective of a right handed person. In your mind picture the two bundles, one bundle is white, the other is black. Lay your two bundles on a table, side by side, and ends lined up evenly, in front of you. From one end, measure back 8". This is where you will start the twisting process. Pinch both bundles between the thumb and index finger of your left hand at the 8" mark. With your right hand take the black bundle and twist it away from you. (Or think of it as in a clockwise direction if that is easier for you.) Your left hand is still holding both bundles tightly. As you twist the black bundle, you will feel it get tight. While maintaining the tension, bring the black bundle back towards yourself, up and over the white bundle. (or take it over the white bundle in a counter-clockwise direction.) Move your pinching left fingers over a bit to now include the portion of the black bundle that you just twisted. On to the white bundle. Grasp the white bundle in your right hand and twist that bundle away from you, as you did the black bundle. Twist until you can feel that it is tight and bring it back over the black bundle towards you just as you did the first bundle. Continue this process until you have 2 ½" of twisted "rope" in front of you.

The 2 ½" will now form the loop. You have almost the entire length of the string, two long untwisted bundles lying next to each other on one side, then close to an end, you have a short 2 ½" section of twisted string, then another short section of untwisted bundles, one white, one black. Pick up the short section of twisted string and fold it in half upon itself. Do you see what happens? You now have the short end of both the black and the white bundles lying on top of the long section of the black and white bundles. Place the white end on top of the white bundle and the black end on top of the black bundle. Now, for a short section you have doubled the thickness of the bundles where you have folded them on top of themselves. That short 2 ½" pre-twisted section now becomes a loop in the string.

With your left hand now pinch the spot where the bundles come back together, while your right hand grabs the black bundle and twists it away, tightly. Once twisted, maintain tension as before and bring the twisted black bundle back up and over the white bundle towards yourself. Sound familiar? This is just what you have already learned. It's just at the bottom of a loop now. Like before, move your pinching fingers over a bit to hold the section you just now twisted and then continue with the white bundle. Repeat this process until you have 4 ½" of twisted string from the point where the bundles were mated back upon themselves. Tie that spot off with a twist-tie or clamp it with a small clamp. That holds it in place while you go to the other end to form your second loop.

When you finish the second loop, you will twist the both loops counter-clockwise, at the same time, which will add the necessary twist to the body of the string. All Flemish strings depend on the opposite twist to hold them together. Always keep some twist in the string. If you untwist them in the main body and then string up a bow the loop will fail. That can be dangerous. Again, always keep twist in the string. Now, serve and wax your string and it is ready to use.

The following are some guidelines for figuring out string length. We use these for our three bundle strings and if you twist just like we do, the string lengths will work out perfectly for you.

Longbow:

Upper loop, measure in from the end 8", twist 2 ½", fold over and twist 4 ½".

Lower loop, measure in from the end 7 ½", twist 2", fold over and twist 4 ½".

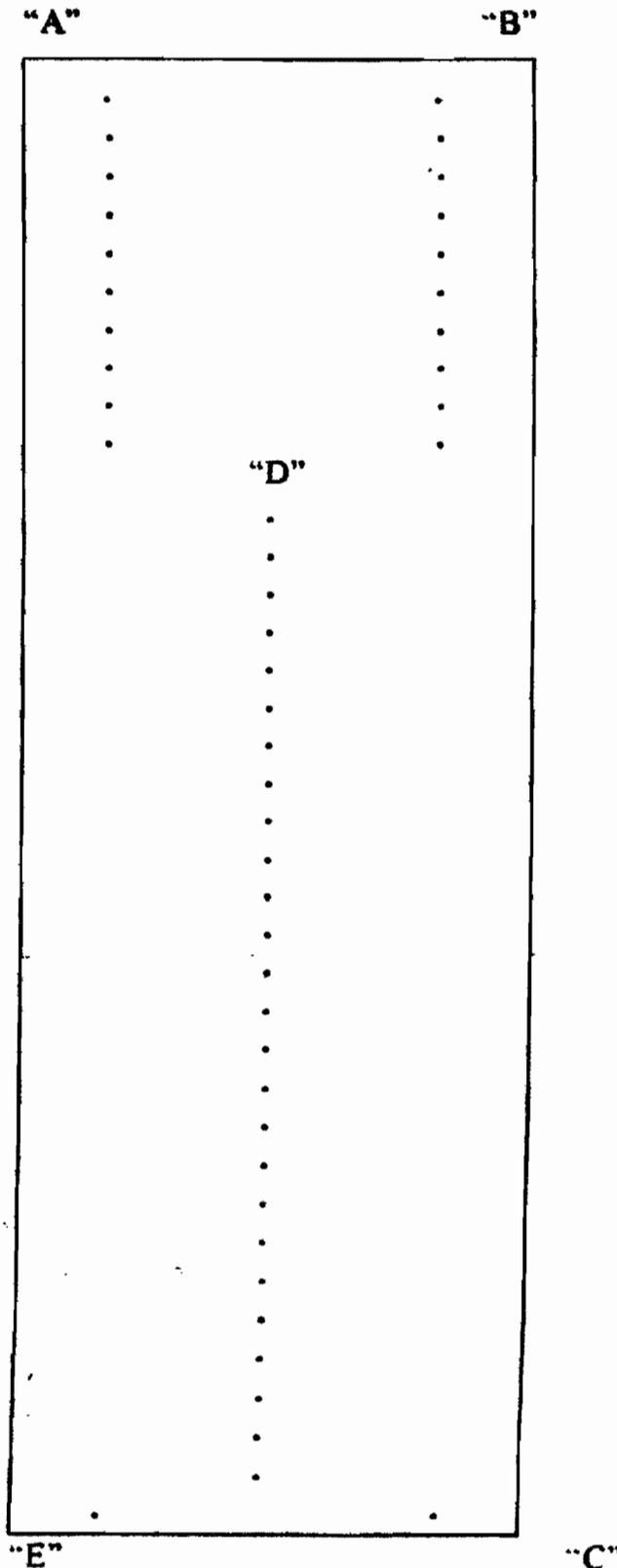
On this board, twisting a three bundle string as above, the longest longbow string you will make will be 70". From there deduct 1" for each adjustment hole.

Recurve:

Upper loop, measure in from the end 9", twist 3 1/2", fold over and twist 4 1/2".

Lower loop, measure in from the end 8", twist 2 1/2", fold over and twist 4 1/2".

On this board, twisting a three bundle string as above, the longest recurve string you will make will be 69". From there deduct 1" for each adjustment hole.



*HAND MADE IN
INDIANA, USA*