

Lotus Mandala Earrings

Pattern No. 38 - a micro-macrame lace mandala in waxed cord

A Javoews House pattern

SKILL LEVEL

Advanced

FINISHED SIZE

2 in (5 cm) dia. per earring

BUILD TIME

4-6 hours / 2 evening sessions



Inspiration



Finished pattern

Worked flat on a pinning board in 0.5 mm waxed polyester - every ridge is a double half hitch.



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Materials List

Item	Specification	Quantity
Waxed polyester cord	0.5 mm, turquoise (Linhasita 227 or similar)	1 spool (approx. 22 yd used)
Welded metal rings	10 mm inner diameter, brass or silver	2
Ear wires	French hook, nickel-free	1 pair
Jump rings	4 mm, matching finish	2
Pinning board + T-pins	Cork or foam board, 12+ pins	1 set
Tapestry needle	Fine, for burying tails	1
Thread zap or lighter	For melt-sealing cord ends	1
Sharp micro scissors	Fine point	1 pair
Fabric stiffener (optional)	Clear spray or diluted PVA	small amount

Time to complete - 4 to 6 hours per pair (2 evening sessions)

Per earring: mounting the ring 20 min - inner petal round 45 min - outer point round 45 min - picot edging 30 min - hanging point & finishing 20 min. Expect the first earring to run longer; the second always knots faster.

Designer's note

The inspiration piece reads as an 8-petal lotus mandala in 0.5 mm waxed cord at roughly 2 in across. Cord weight is judged from knot scale against the ear wire; if you substitute 0.75 mm cord, the finished mandala grows to about 2.5 in and yardage rises by a third.

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Cord Cutting Chart

Quantities below are PER EARRING - cut a second full set for the pair.

Label	Purpose	Qty	Cut length	Subtotal
A1-A16	Petal / working cords (mounted doubled on ring)	16	20 in	320 in
B1-B2	Leaders for the outer point round	2	24 in	48 in
C	Hanging loop cord	1	12 in	12 in
	TOTAL per earring	19		380 in (10.6 yd)
	TOTAL per pair	38		760 in (21.2 yd)

Cutting rule

Cut every cord 3-4 inches longer than listed. Micro-macrame punishes short tails - you cannot splice 0.5 mm cord invisibly mid-petal.

Knot Reference Guide

Five knots build the entire earring. Each diagram shows cord path and pull direction - accent turquoise is the working cord, grey is the leader or ring.

RLH - Reverse Lark's Head

fold cord, loop behind ring, ends through

DHH - Double Half Hitch

2 hitches over a taut leader; snug each

DDHH - Diagonal Double Half Hitch

DHH worked along a 45-degree leader

PIC - Picot Loop

leave a 3 mm loop between hitches

OK - Overhand Knot

single loop, end through; pull to close

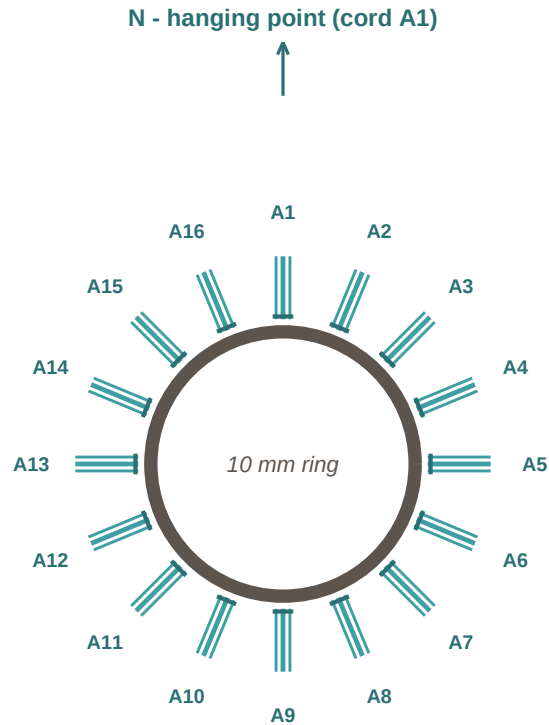
RLH - Reverse Lark's Head: Fold cord in half, loop behind the ring, pass both ends through the loop. Mounts every cord.
DHH - Double Half Hitch: Two half hitches over a taut leader cord. The workhorse - every ridge in this piece is DHH.
DDHH - Diagonal Double Half Hitch: DHH worked along a leader held at 45 degrees. Shapes every petal and point.
PIC - Picot Loop: A small loop of slack left between two DHH, pinned to size. Makes the lacy edge.



OK - Overhand Knot: Simple single knot. Secures the hanging loop before the jump ring goes on.

Cord Layout & Mounting Diagram

Top-down view of the 10 mm center ring. Every cord A1-A16 mounts with a reverse lark's head; A1 sits at north and becomes the hanging point of the finished earring.



16 cords x RLH, evenly spaced - one head every 22.5 degrees, all heads facing outward.
Each mounted cord gives 2 working ends: 32 ends total per earring.

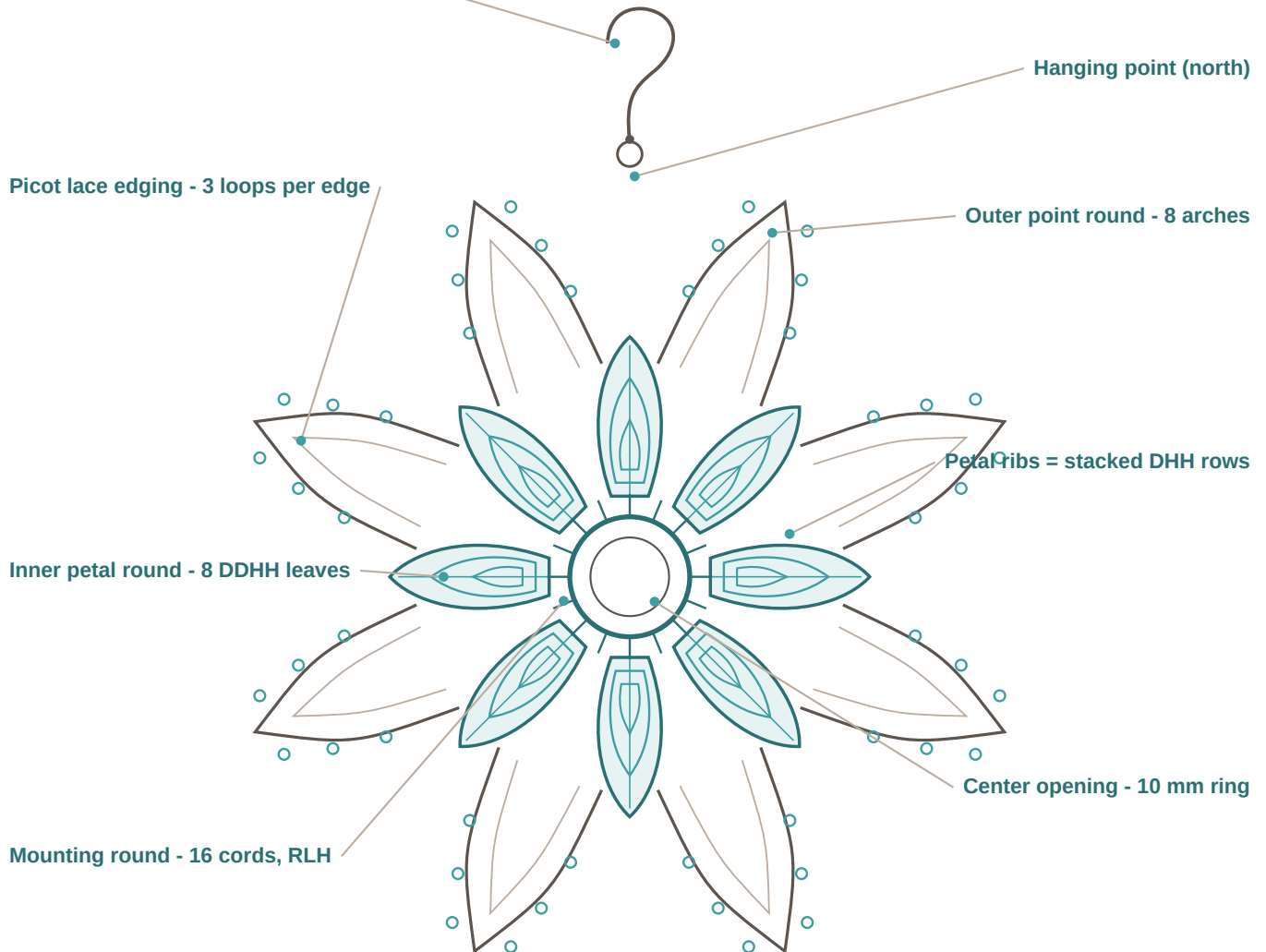
Side view - heads sit flat on the ring face



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Full Piece Assembly Map

Early map of the whole project. Work proceeds from the center ring outward, round by round.



Rounds are numbered from the center out: mounting round - inner petals - outer points - picot edge - hanging point.



Build Order Overview

1. Mount 16 cords on the center ring (RLH), space evenly, mark north.
2. Inner petal round - shape 8 DDHH leaves, 4 ends each.
3. Outer point round - 8 arches on leaders B1/B2 between the petals.
4. Picot lace edging - 3 loops down each edge of every point.
5. Hanging point - gather at north, OK loop, jump ring, ear wire.
6. Finishing - trim, melt-seal, block flat, optional stiffener. Repeat all for earring 2.

Construction

Section 1 - Mounting the center ring (20 min)

- Pin the 10 mm ring to your board through its center. Fold cord A1 in half and mount it with a reverse lark's head at the top of the ring - this is north, your hanging point. Mark it with a contrast thread.
- Mount A2-A16 the same way, working clockwise. Keep every head facing outward and snug flat against the metal.
- Slide the heads until spacing is even - one head every 22.5 degrees (see mounting diagram). You now have 32 working ends.

Section 2 - Inner petal round (45 min)

- Divide the 32 ends into 8 groups of 4. Each group becomes one leaf petal centered on its pair of mounted cords.
- Work each petal exactly as shown in Deep-Dive 2: outer two ends are leaders angled out at 45 degrees, inner two are fillers, two DDHH rows out and back, closing at a point about 0.6 in from the ring.
- Pin each finished petal tip before starting the next so the round stays symmetrical. All 8 tips should sit on one circle - check against the assembly map.

Section 3 - Outer point round (45 min)

- Pin leader B1 behind the work, its midpoint at a petal tip. Its two halves run diagonally outward to form the rising edges of the arches on the left half of the mandala; B2 mirrors on the right.
- DHH the ends emerging from each petal onto the leader as it climbs to a point midway between two petal tips, about 1 in from center - then descend to the next petal tip.
- Each arch collects 4 ends - 2 from each neighboring petal. Keep leader tension even or the points will pull to different heights.

Section 4 - Picot lace edging (30 min)

- Work a second DHH pass along the outer edge of every arch, leaving a pinned 3 mm picot loop between hitches - 3 picots down each edge (Deep-Dive 3).
- Keep a pin in every loop until its neighbors are tied; unpinned picots shrink and the lace loses its rhythm.

Section 5 - Hanging point & ear wire (10 min)

- At the north point, thread cord C through the tip knot, tie an overhand knot to form a 4 mm loop, and seat the loop snug against the point.

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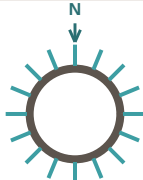
- Open the 4 mm jump ring sideways, catch the loop, close, and hang the ear wire from the jump ring.

Section 6 - Finishing (10 min)

- Turn the work over. Trim every tail to 2 mm and melt-seal each against the back of its knot (Deep-Dive 3, step 5).
- Steam lightly and press flat under a heavy book for an hour; mist with stiffener if you want a crisper drape. Then build earring 2 - pin it directly over a printout of earring 1 to match.

Technique Deep-Dives

Deep-Dive 1 - Mounting cords on the ring

1  Fold a 20" cord in half; hold the fold behind the ring.	2  Push the folded loop up over the front of the ring.	3  Pass both tails through the loop from behind.
4  Snug flat. Repeat with all 16 cords, heads outward.	5  Slide evenly - 16 heads, one every 22.5 degrees. Mark north.	

Deep-Dive 2 - Shaping a DDHH petal

1  Take 4 ends. The two outer cords are the leaders (L).	2  Angle the left leader out at 45 degrees; DHH cord 2 onto it.	3  Mirror: right leader out, DHH cord 3 onto it.
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4

Turn both leaders back inward; DHH the fillers again.

5

Where leaders meet, DHH one over the other to lock the point.

6

Finished leaf: crisp ridged sides, closed tip. Repeat x8.

Deep-Dive 3 - Picot edging & sealing ends

1

Finish a point; the working pair continues to the next edge.

2

Leave a 3 mm loop of slack; pin it to keep the size true.

3

Tie the next DHH. The pinned loop stays proud - a picot.

4

Repeat down both edges of every point: 3 picots per side.

5

melt-seal 2 mm tail
(back of work)

On the back, trim tails to 2 mm and melt-seal each one.

Troubleshooting

Problem	Likely cause	Fix
Mandala cups like a bowl	Knots too tight in outer rounds	Loosen tension as radius grows; steam-block flat under weight.
Petals different sizes	Uneven leader angle or hitch count	Count hitches per side; pin every tip to a drawn circle before locking.
Center hole distorted	Ring not pinned during mounting	Always pin through the ring; re-space heads before round 2.
Picots uneven	Loops unpinned before neighbors tied	Pin every picot at 3 mm; remove pins only after the edge is done.
Cord fuzzing / fraying	Overworked waxed cord	Handle ends less; re-wax with a beeswax pass; trim and seal early.

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Problem	Likely cause	Fix
Earrings do not match	Second piece knotted from memory	Pin earring 2 directly over a same-size print or tracing of earring 1.

General Tips & Finishing

- Blocking: a 10-second steam pass (iron hovering, never touching) relaxes wax bloom and lets you square the points; dry flat under weight.
- Stiffening: for a crisper earring, mist the back with diluted PVA (1:4 with water) or clear fabric stiffener - never soak, or the wax clouds.
- Color care: waxed polyester holds color well, but store away from direct sun; turquoise dyes are the first to fade.
- Sealing: every melt-sealed tail should be pressed flat with the side of the thread zap while warm - proud stubs catch hair when worn.
- Scale play: the same pattern in 0.75 mm cord on a 14 mm ring makes a pendant; on a 25 mm ring in 2 mm cord it becomes a coaster.