

Paracord Laced Pallet, Hanging Chair

by [Twotim221](#) on April 2, 2010

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Intro: Paracord Laced Pallet, Hanging Chair

Very comfortable, very easy to make chair from a pallet and some paracord.

I know that there are a lot of different kinds of chair instructables already, but I have never seen a chair like this before. It is so easy to make and it is comfortable because it conforms to your body. I don't know how I came up with the idea and as I was making it I wasn't even sure if it would work out. But it did and I am very happy with the results. So here goes- my first instructable.

This instructable will show you everything I did to make the chair, but I am sure you will find ways you can customize yours to meet your needs.



Step 1: Tools and Materials

Stuff you will need-

Tools:

- Drill
- Saw
- Lighter
- Sawzall (optional)

Materials:

- Paracord
- Pallet (I was able to get by with just one but it all depends on how much usable wood you can get off of each pallet)

I used pallet wood because it is hardwood and free.

I used paracord because it is small yet strong and does not stretch as much as other ropes. Paracord is also easier to work with because it doesn't unravel or fray like other types of rope, and because the ends can be melted to make lacing with it easy.



Step 2: Take Pallet Apart

There are many different ways to take apart pallets in order to use the wood for something else. I have found that prying them apart causes a lot of damage to the wood and is a lot more work than is necessary. So, my preferred method is to **cut the pieces apart using a sawzall**.

All you have to do is cut through the nails that are holding it together and you are good to go (with minimal damage to the wood). If you want you can pop the remaining parts of the nails out of the wood.

Just take the sawzall and cut right between the piece you would like to save (the top piece) and the thick frame. Try to cut just the nails and not too much of the wood. Once you get the hang of it it will go really fast.



Step 3: Cutting the Wood to Size

Now here is where you need to decide how wide you would like your chair. I guess you should base the size on the hiney that will be sitting in it. With the pallet that I had I was able to just cut the boards right down the middle (20"). But the size is up to you :) The amount of board is also up to you. I ended up using 16 boards for my chair.

Warning:

Make sure you look out for left over bits of nails in the wood as you are cutting.



Step 4: Marking Wood for Lace Holes

Now what you want to do is take one of the boards and mark where you want to put the laces. I put my laces **1/2" in from the edge** of the board and **put them 2" apart**.

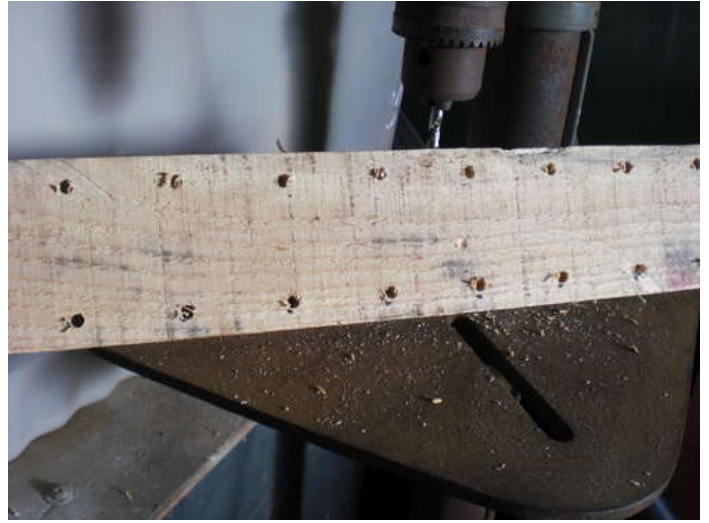
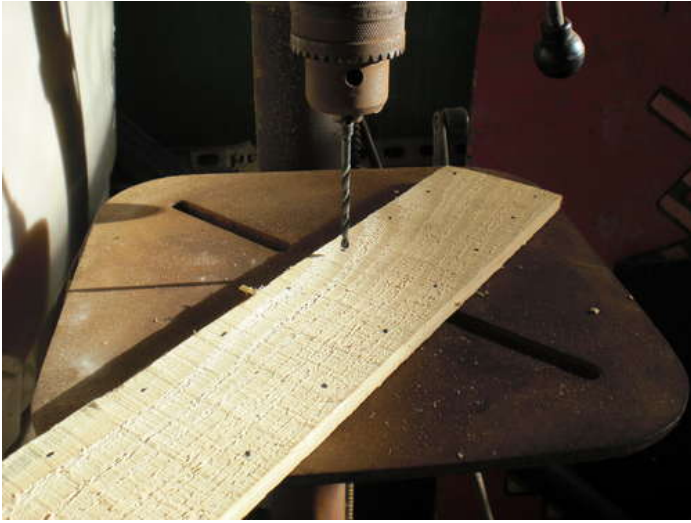
Depending on how you would like yours to look you can make the laces further apart or closer together. As long as they are in far enough from the edge so that the board does not break once it has weight on it. Keep in mind also that if the laces are spaced further apart, the boards will tend to pull away from each other more, making a gap where things might get pinched (fingers, "cheeks", etc.)



Step 5: Drill the Holes

Now that you have you holes marked you can start drilling. I used a drill press but a regular drill will work just fine. I started by drilling all the holes in my first board and then I used that board as a jig to do the rest.

You will want a drill bit that is a **little bigger then your paracord** so that the cord fits easily through the holes.



Step 6: Start Lacing

Now comes the fun part. Start by placing two of your boards next to one another. Now lace the paracord through them **just as you would a pair of shoes**. Once you reach the end cut the paracord, making sure you leave enough slack to tie a strong knot at the end. Now you can pull the paracord out and use it to measure the rest of the pieces you will need. When you cut the rest make sure you leave a little room for error, it's better to have too much and cut then to have too little and have to start over.

Once you have cut your paracord to size it is a good idea to melt the ends so that it is easy to get the cord through the holes.

Now you can start lacing boards together.

Things to watch as you're lacing:

- Make sure you are paying attention to what side it up and what side is down so that you end up with all the good looking sides facing up.
- It looks best to have all the knots on the bottom.
- Once you have finished a lace go back and pull each "X" to get the slack out







Step 7: Hang and Enjoy

Now all you have to do is hang the chair from whatever structure you have available. I used some 2x4's between the trees in my back yard (not the prettiest but it works).

Just drill a couple of holes in each of the four corners you would like to hang the chair from and thread the paracord through them. I put the front cords back one board from the end so that it would be more comfortable on the back of my legs.

For a somewhat laid back chair attach the front and back cords further apart from each other with the back cords low, for more of an upright chair, like mine, put them closer together with the back cords high.

The whole thing is **completely adjustable** to your liking, so tweak it till it's comfortable for you.

Note: I used two strands of paracord per corner, which is strong enough to hold me, but you might want to braid more together for some more strength.

-Getting into the chair can be a little tricky (kind of like getting into a hammock) but once you do relax and enjoy.

Improvement:

I think I would stain the boards next time, this would look nicer and make the paracord stand out more.





Related Instructables



Nalgene Cap Paracord Fix by rstupplebeen



DIY Camping Hammock by lerickson



Super-easy Paracord Camp Chair by RavingMadStudios



Paracord Hammock Anchor Cord by repeet13



Sew What Hammock by pacowarabi



the hammock hut: a easy to make hammock rain-fly by fidgety2

Comments

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agrippatheperson says:

Dec 21, 2010. 3:47 PM [REPLY](#)

I'm not sure if this actually matters to anyone, but having an odd number of holes causes the very middle point of your rope and your knot to be on opposite faces of the plank. Therefore, you cannot hide the middle point of the rope AND the knot, so your board will look like this:

X X X X X I

with the 'I' being the middle of the rope.

if you have an even number of holes, you'll have the middle point AND knot both on one side, so your front side is like:

X X X X X X

Im sure this doesnt make sense, if you want I could try to make it less confusing.



Guuskeunen says:

Oct 30, 2010. 6:25 AM [REPLY](#)

euh, i'm almost done but how long is the chair my length is 2.10meters



Twotim221 says:
Mine is about 5 feet long.

Nov 8, 2010. 12:37 AM [REPLY](#)



komodoboyx5 says:
ima make a couch. ill make/buy 1x4s. sounds like a really fun project. :D

Sep 11, 2010. 10:23 AM [REPLY](#)



hguvg says:
make sure to reinforce the paracord just in case if you possibly will have more than 500 pounds. (It is 550, but 500 is pushing it)

Oct 24, 2010. 10:10 AM [REPLY](#)



SonOfaVermont says:
This is amazing, can't wait to try

Aug 21, 2010. 2:47 PM [REPLY](#)



wangerton says:
Finally got around to building my own, reclaimed some pallets, great project since it was finishable without ever visiting the hardware store or spending any money, next time I'm gonna build it loveseat width so two can watch the sunset. Great Instructable! keep the weekend ideas flowing.

Aug 10, 2010. 7:59 PM [REPLY](#)



sunnysideup says:
I see a lot of concern over BUTT PINCHING and different ideas on how to reduce it. I know the whole idea is that it costs next to nothing to make, BUT you could easily sew or even buy a pre-made-- little pillow type removable padding for it. Something thinner than a pillow so it doesnt add senseless weight and will still conform to the bend of the chair itself no matter what angle. If you wanted to take it a step further you could also add a little square of velcro to each corner of the chair and padding- and maybe one to the butt on both. That way when youre sitting in it you wouldnt have to worry about the padding going limp and drooping over your head. Problem solved and youve just made it more comfortable for company.

Jul 28, 2010. 1:39 PM [REPLY](#)



krafftmarc says:
I'm thinking inexpensive yoga mat to reduce pinching.

Aug 5, 2010. 8:44 AM [REPLY](#)



pyrocord says:
you could use it like a swing

Jul 20, 2010. 6:22 AM [REPLY](#)



unigamer says:
(removed by author or community request)

Jun 16, 2010. 11:12 AM



unigamer says:
I've made my chair but haven't hung it up yet (pictures will follow shortly!).

Jun 16, 2010. 11:14 AM [REPLY](#)

A few comments, apologies if I have misunderstood your directions. It's a great instructable and a great idea :)

As a needle I gently melted roughly 4cm of the rope with a lighter. This formed a nice needle so it was easy to get the rope through the holes.

OK, I've just used one piece of cord per "lace". The way I did it was measured out about 4x length of the pallet (roughly 4 metres) but I DON'T cut it. I threaded it up and tied a stopper knot at the end. There is now a load of slack and the knot is that the end. Pull this knot so it there is now slack on the other side of the pallet. Pull this slack back through the next hole and continue until you eventually get to the you began with. You can then cut off the amount you need to tie another stopper knot with. This way you don't need to guess how much rope you'll need and you don't have lots of wasted off cuts. It also means you get it all nice and tight!

As a side note, if you find you don't have enough rope to finish the lacing you can just feed more rope through from the main roll.

I laced my pallets with the standing on there ends, this gave easy access.

For anyone attaching a rope to just one pallet (the top one) at the top bear in mind it will take THE WHOLE WEIGHT. If the suspending rope is threaded through all the pallets the load is evenly distributed (correct me if I am wrong).

Also, this is a safety measure, since if one of your pallet failed the whole chair wouldn't fail catastrophically (that is, split in two with you going through it!).

Instead it should hold up nicely and you'll know there is a problem (without lying in a crumpled heap on the floor).

Final note (that I can think of just now) is that paracord comes in varying strengths and while the "official" stuff is rated at about 250 kilos or something the cheap stuff MAY NOT BE. And for anyone that doesn't know, tying knots in rope reduces it's strength, sometimes up to 50%. But that's a whole different topic.

Pictures coming soon! And thanks again for your great build! :)



Twotim221 says:
Whatever works for you :)

Jun 18, 2010. 4:21 PM [REPLY](#)



knightop says:
Almost forgot the pictures...

Jun 13, 2010. 5:48 AM [REPLY](#)



Twotim221 says:
Nice

Jun 18, 2010. 4:20 PM [REPLY](#)



knightop says:
Great idea...just tried my own. Didn't quite lace it together the way that you did. Just did one line down each side of the lats. Also took the left over blocks from the pallet and made a square about 2ft above the head to hold out the seat....made it a little easier to hang. Fun, thanks!

Jun 13, 2010. 5:46 AM [REPLY](#)



Smackle Boo says:
Hey man

Jun 2, 2010. 5:34 PM [REPLY](#)

I actually made this and guess what... i made a foot rest and it is a great addition you should include that in your instructable.

Bye



megdyl says:

May 16, 2010. 6:45 PM [REPLY](#)




berin says:


May 7, 2010. 2:48 PM [REPLY](#)


I Build multi million dollar yacht's as my job, I work for a company called Hinckley yachts. If you want to stop the pinching with your current setup. You have but to ROUND all the edges so instead of having a setup looking like this from a side view of the boards [==][==] you have a setup like this (==)(==) notice how much closer the non rounded edges are? Thats whats causing your pinching. The only down fall to rounding your edges, is that you will also remove some of the stiffness in the chair.


Another suggestion for at least under the legs if you want to make a bit of a longer version of the chair. Would be to have tension based hinge device under the legs area. Basically a design that kind of looks like a V but 2 pieces of wood bolted together with a bolt and a lock nut and washers. Should be just loose enough to bend easy. Then add a quarter circle slot on one board and a permanent bolt on the other board with either a wing nut, Or a tool less quick lock like on a bike tire. You could use a double quarter circle slots one per board to gain a larger degree of adjustable swing. Make sure you have one of these V like wooden devices on ether side or closer to the middle of your chair. And ensure the two devices are attached with strong wood across to the other set. If

you follow my description and poor grammar cool. A good visual shape description would be to think of a ying-yang and take both shapes, and mirror image them in opposite directions. laying the large round areas over each other to kind of look like a wing. That way you carry a nice arch. Happy building. By the way you could use the per hinge bolts area for the leg rest as the lower hanger. Or as a third one. so one for upper area one for but area and one for legs. Then you have some adjustment capability if you do a simple rope and rings setup or any kind of strap adjustment device if you hang the chair with straps instead of rope. Heck if your going to go that far, in Twotim221's picture showing the hanger. If the vertical wood parts are cut ^ with an upside down V well like an A the cross board thats attached to the two palms then you can even swing the entire chair with stop points so you dont go to far.


 **Suzanne in Orting** says: May 4, 2010. 3:58 PM [REPLY](#)
Not meaning to be too personal, but any idea of what weight it would hold?
Suzanne in Orting, WA


 **Twotim221** says: May 5, 2010. 3:47 AM [REPLY](#)
Well, I am not sure at what point it would give way at the joints- I would assume it would take whole lot of weight to do that. The paracord holding it up will hold a lot of weight too and you can put as many strands in each corner that you want. Hope that helps.


 **bombmaker2** says: Apr 26, 2010. 5:49 PM [REPLY](#)
This uses one long piece of paracord to hold it together right? And also, about how much paracord did you use?


 **Twotim221** says: Apr 26, 2010. 6:47 PM [REPLY](#)
Not including the paracord to hang the chair, mine used about 50 ft. You do not use one long piece though, it would be really hard to lace it all if you did, you cut one piece per joint (see step #6).


 **bombmaker2** says: Apr 27, 2010. 5:27 PM [REPLY](#)
Okay thank you

 **geminijhall** says: Apr 15, 2010. 12:25 PM [REPLY](#)
I would recomend right before this step, or right after. If you have the aproprate tools (table saw) to make a tounge and groove on the long edge of each piece. that way the pieces will butt together and reduce any pinching of your back end while your trying to relax in your new hanging chair.

 **TonkaDan** says: Apr 25, 2010. 9:35 AM [REPLY](#)
tongue & groove would actually ADD more pinching .. spacing the boards farther apart would eliminate any pinching


 **Twotim221** says: Apr 15, 2010. 1:54 PM [REPLY](#)
I guess you could do a tongue and groove but you would have to cut off the bottom side of all the grooved pieces so that it would still bend the way it needs to. There really isn't any problem of pinching if you lace your boards nice and tight.

 **gooseflight** says: Apr 15, 2010. 12:35 PM [REPLY](#)
Be serious, a tounge[sic] and groove joint is designed for flat surfaces, e.g., floorboards or shed cladding.

 **Corvidae** says: Apr 25, 2010. 6:14 AM [REPLY](#)
This reminds me of the barrel stave hammock from the Ashley Book of Knots. If you can get your hands on a whole barrel to do this project with, the seat would be curved and even more comfortable. The Ashley version only sews the ends together, not along the entire board. Yours looks more stable and less likely to pinch!

 **attawudh** says: Apr 23, 2010. 9:38 AM [REPLY](#)
Good idea ,It easy to assembly and took to any where

 **peace, love, art** says: Apr 22, 2010. 6:46 PM [REPLY](#)
Great job on winning the contest!

 **Twotim221** says: Apr 22, 2010. 7:38 PM [REPLY](#)
Thanks

 **Ricefootball71** says: Apr 20, 2010. 6:21 PM [REPLY](#)
made on myself.... will put it outside soon



Twotim221 says:
Cool

Apr 20, 2010. 7:12 PM [REPLY](#)



ralphab says:
I like the idea of being able to roll it up to transport or for a hike. Maybe a simple "x" frame could make it a portable lawn chair.

Apr 17, 2010. 8:33 AM [REPLY](#)



JohnSalad says:
I think he means a bead and cove not tongue and groove. Like what you use when you're building a strip plank canoe.

Apr 15, 2010. 6:35 PM [REPLY](#)



Shiftlock says:
Where do you live with all that beautifully lush tropical vegetation? Looks like the perfect spot for a chair like that!

Apr 15, 2010. 10:06 AM [REPLY](#)



Twotim221 says:
Guam

Apr 15, 2010. 1:51 PM [REPLY](#)



zenilorac says:
if you use a (raffia or bamboo etc -something natural) yoga/beach mat secured to the seat somehow it would stop 'cheeks' etc from getting pinched or any other problems like splinters. the chair is great idea, just wish i had space to have one

Apr 15, 2010. 10:02 AM [REPLY](#)



danm95 says:
could you possible set it up with a pully on top and then lean back to make it recline?or mabye loop the ropes over a set of bars?

Apr 12, 2010. 1:44 PM [REPLY](#)



Twotim221 says:
That is an awesome idea. Why didn't I think of that?

Apr 12, 2010. 2:04 PM [REPLY](#)



abf220 says:
great job i really like it i was wondering, can u use it as a hammock

Apr 8, 2010. 4:19 PM [REPLY](#)



Twotim221 says:
Yep, you can decide how high or low the back is.

Apr 8, 2010. 6:54 PM [REPLY](#)



oldmantime says:
Nice Chair. The drill press table and chuck really trouble me. That table will clean up very quickly with the application of a scotchbrite and a touch of 3-in-1 oil or the like. You might start with some naval jelly if you have some. A nother possible is to use what I save for the preservartion. A good coat of paste wax. You can speed up the entire process by using the scotchbrite under a random orbit sander. The wax helps to make the table smooth and easy to move your material.

Apr 8, 2010. 10:45 AM [REPLY](#)



Twotim221 says:
Wow, thanks for all the information. The drill press is at my work and it looks as it does for a few reasons. One it never gets used, Two it is stored in an open air shop, and Three everything in Guam rusts quickly. I moved here not too long ago so what we have is what I have to work with. If I get some time I might just clean that old thing up- Well, first I will move to somewhere air conditioned.
Thanks again

Apr 8, 2010. 1:58 PM [REPLY](#)



janihayes says:

You really should seal the pallet before you use it. It can come from anywhere and since they re-use them, it may have had chemicals or toxic substances leak on it.

Apr 6, 2010. 5:10 PM [REPLY](#)



Project_Nightmare says:

I agree. In addition you should have planed it because pallets are usually full of splinters.

Apr 6, 2010. 11:30 PM [REPLY](#)



Twotim221 says:

In working with pallets I would normally clean them up a bit with a rasp, but this one was fine to leave as-is. I thought about sealing it but I was trying to keep it simple. I never thought of the risks though-good point.

Apr 7, 2010. 4:08 AM [REPLY](#)



janihayes says:

Hey, no problem. I think the chair is cool, nicely designed. And I love hanging chairs and swings. Nothing like it. I've had a hammock on my porch for years.

My husband is a truck driver and he's always picking up pallets on jobs, and he said just to seal them would be fine.
Good project !

Apr 7, 2010. 11:18 AM [REPLY](#)



Una says:

Just beautiful. It looks like some exotic wood hanging between the trees. If I can not acquire a pallet what size boards could i use. We are build our kids a swing set this year. I may add this for me.

Apr 6, 2010. 7:16 AM [REPLY](#)

[view all 74 comments](#)