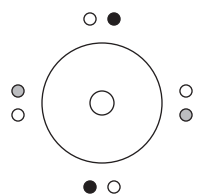


Maru Yotsu “Round Four”

Maru Yotsu Gumi is one of the simplest plaiting patterns, but it teaches basic kumihimo skills and is a good learning braid. It’s very fast, producing a great length of braid in a short time, which makes it very useful when quantity is more important than quality.

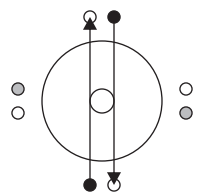
Because of the small number of strands, only a few color variations are possible. Start with an “X O X O” pattern to help you keep track of odd and even strands, but try “X X O O” for a quick and easy decorative spiral effect.

Start



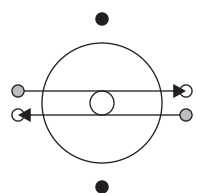
Begin with 4 strands in 4 groups of 1. The top strand is strand 1 and the numbers proceed clockwise.

1



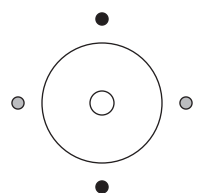
Exchange the positions of strand 1 and strand 3. Both should move clockwise around the marudai.

2



Exchange the positions of strand 2 and strand 4. Both should move counter-clockwise around the marudai.

End

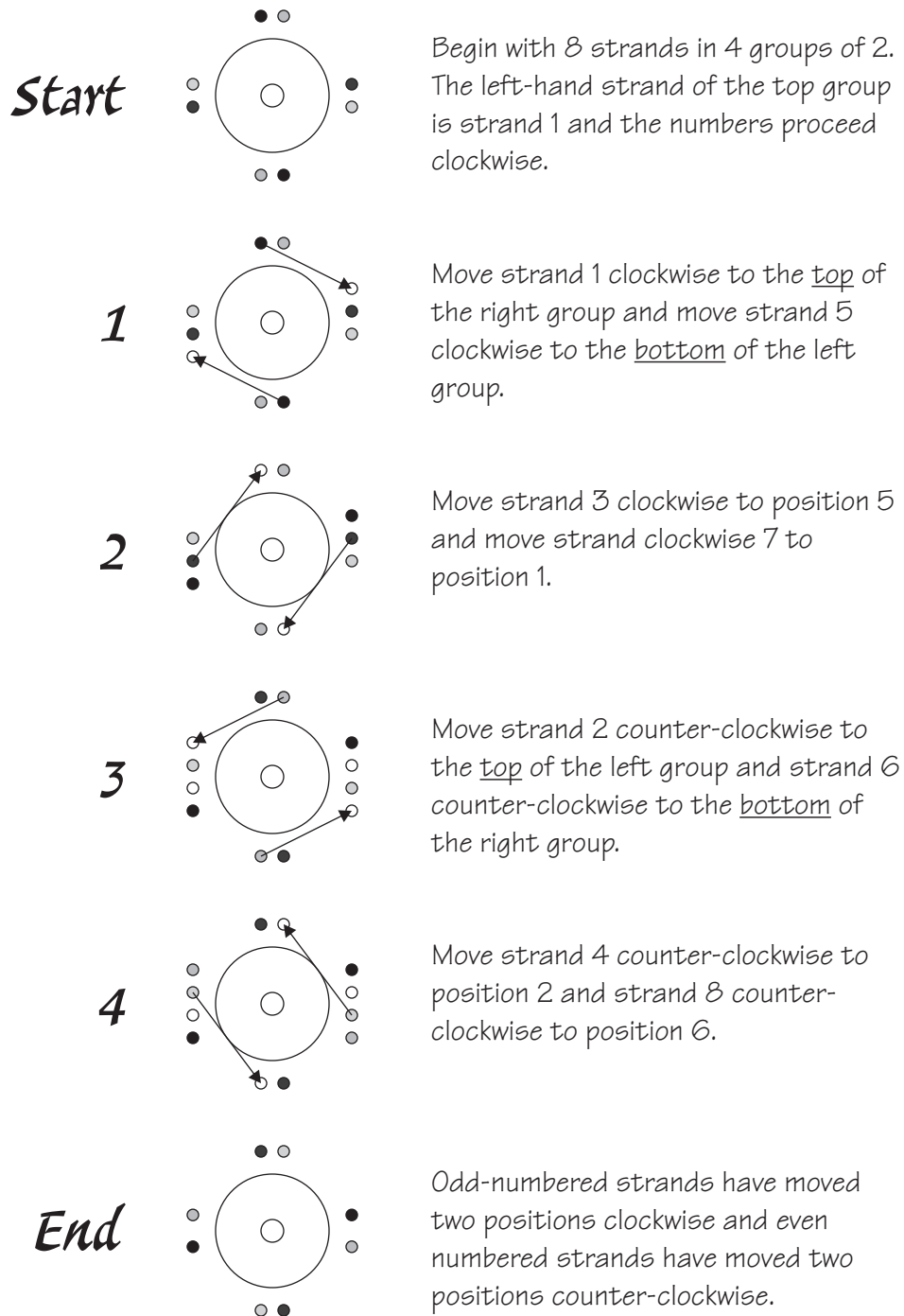


Odd-numbered strands have moved two positions clockwise and even numbered strands have moved two positions counter-clockwise.

Edo Yatsu "Tokyo Eight"

Edo Yatsu Gumi yields a hollow, round braid with a smooth, woven texture. Half of the strands move clockwise around the braid, and half move counter-clockwise around the braid. This braiding structure can be seen in commercially available braided rope and cord. Often, a non-braided core runs down the hollow interior of the braid to add strength.

Different color patterns easily produce a nice array of pleasing visual patterns. Start with "XO XO XO XO" to keep track of the odd and even strands, but later try "XX XX OO OO" for a nice houndstooth check.



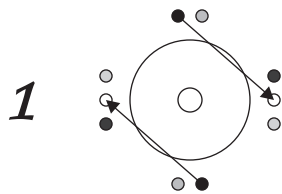
Yatsu Sen "Eight Streams"

Yatsu Sen Gumi yields a solid, flat braid with a ridged, twisty texture. A simple change from the Edo Yatsu pattern, adding an extra cross-over, changes the braid shape from round to flat. This braid is a quick way to produce ribbons and straps.

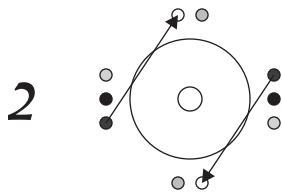
Start with an "XO XO XO XO" color pattern to keep track of the odd and even strands and produce a pinstripe visual pattern, but make sure to try the classic "XO OO OX XX" pattern that produces this braid's distinctive Yatsu Rai "S Braid" pattern.



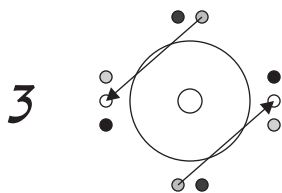
Begin with 8 strands in 4 groups of 2. The left-hand strand of the top group is strand 1 and the numbers proceed clockwise.



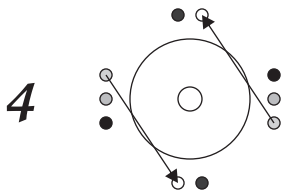
Move strand 1 clockwise to the middle of the right group and move strand 5 clockwise to the middle of the left group.



Move strand 3 clockwise to position 5 and move strand 7 clockwise to position 1.



Move strand 2 counter-clockwise to the middle of the left group and strand 6 counter-clockwise to the middle of the right group.



Move strand 4 counter-clockwise to position 2 and strand 8 counter-clockwise to position 6.



Odd-numbered strands have moved two positions clockwise and even numbered strands have moved two positions counter-clockwise.

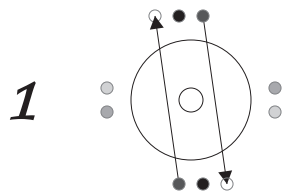
Kongou “Strong” Gumi

Kongo Gumi yields a round, solid braid with a smooth spiraling structure. Though this braid can resemble twisted rope, it does not un-twist into separate strands like rope does. Some feel that since all threads in this pattern move in the same direction, that it is not a true braid.

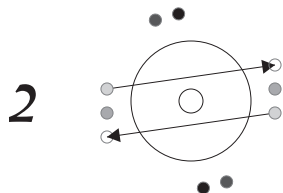
Start with an “XX 00 XX 00” color pattern to keep track of which strands are in which group and produce a long spiraling visual pattern. This braid can be expanded to a large number of threads and colors without greatly increasing its difficulty.



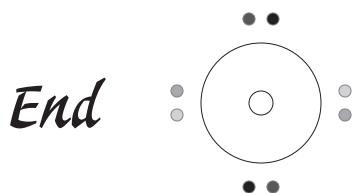
Begin with 8 strands in 4 groups of 2. The top, left strand is strand 1 and the numbers proceed clockwise. Strands 2, 4, 6, and 8 are “leading” their groups.



Move strand 2 clockwise to the right end of the bottom group, and move strand 6 clockwise to the left end of the top group.



Move strand 4 clockwise to the bottom end of the left group, and move strand 8 clockwise to the top end of the right group.



Rotate all strands so that the current position resembles the starting position. All even numbered “leading” strands have become the odd numbered “trailing” strands of their groups.

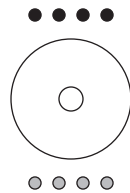
Hira Nami "Flat Waves"

Hira Nami Gumi yields a flat braid with a woven texture. It is the best braid for creating ribbons and straps, but takes quite a bit of attention.

This braid can also be expanded to include more strands, in any multiple of four. More strands mean a wider braid, without any increase in braid thickness.

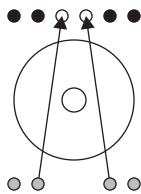
Start with an "XXXX 0000" color pattern to produce this braid's distinctive alternating chevron pattern. Another good color pattern is "XX00 00XX", which produces an argyle pattern.

Start



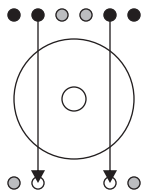
Begin with 8 strands in 2 groups of 4. The left-hand strand of the top group is strand 1 and the numbers proceed clockwise.

1



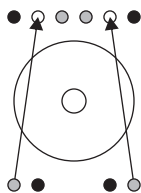
Move strand 6 counter-clockwise to the center of the top group, and strand 7 clockwise just to the left of that.

2



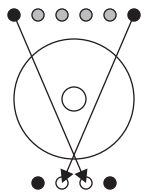
Move strand 2 counter-clockwise to the center of the bottom group, and strand 3 clockwise just to the right of that.

3



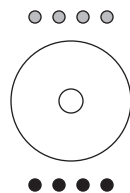
Move strand 5 counter-clockwise to the right-hand empty space in the top group, and strand 8 clockwise to the left-hand empty space.

4



Move strand 4 clockwise to position 7 and strand 1 counter-clockwise to position 6, crossing it over strand 4.

End

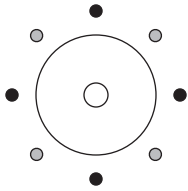


Top strands have all moved to the bottom and bottom strands to the top. The outermost strands have moved to the center.

Tsukushi "Beauty" Gumi

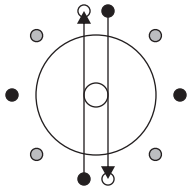
Think of Tsukushi Gumi as two overlapping Maru Yotsu braids, where one braid is moving twice as fast as the other. This creates a honeycomb texture that's a wonderful braid for combining two dissimilar materials.

Start



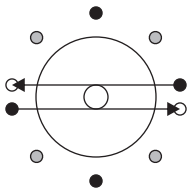
Begin with the strands evenly distributed around the marudai in an "XOXOXOXO" pattern. The strand at the top is strand 1.

1



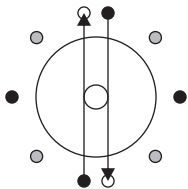
Exchange the positions of strands 1 and 5. Both strands should move clockwise around the marudai.

2



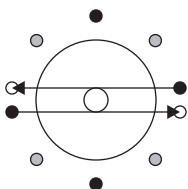
Exchange the positions of strands 3 and 7. Both strands should move counter-clockwise around the marudai.

3



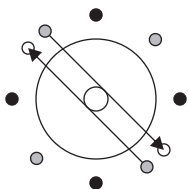
Repeat step 1, exchanging the positions of strands 1 and 5. Both strands should move clockwise around the marudai.

4



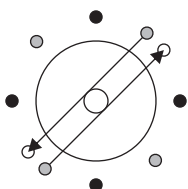
Repeat step 2, exchanging the positions of strands 3 and 7. Both should move counter-clockwise around the marudai.

5



Exchange the positions of strands 8 and 4. Both strands should move clockwise around the marudai.

6



Exchange the positions of strands 2 and 6. Both strands should move counter-clockwise around the marudai. The end position replicates the start.

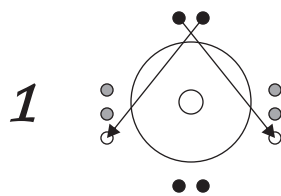
Hira Kara “Flat Chinese”

Hira Kara Gumi creates a braid that is neither round nor flat. It is smooth and two-sided, but thicker towards the center than at the edges. It is more difficult than some braids, due to its constant crossing, but it is this crossing that produces the braid’s interesting shape.

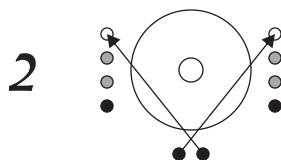
Start with an “XX OO XX OO” color pattern, which will create a different zig-zag pattern on each side of the braid. Hira Kara Gumi is well known for the differences produced by varying its colors, even if only two colors are used. One author documents 37 distinct 2-color patterns.



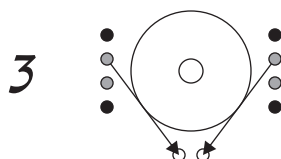
Begin with 8 strands in 4 groups of 2. The left-hand strand of the top group is strand 1 and the numbers proceed clockwise.



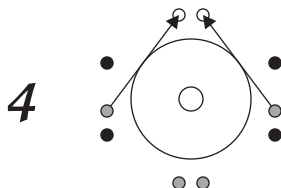
Move strand 1 clockwise to the bottom of the right group, and move strand 2 counter-clockwise to the bottom of the left group, crossing over strand 1.



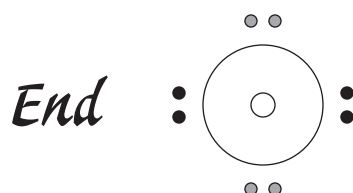
Move strand 6 counter-clockwise to the top of the right group, and move strand 5 clockwise to the top of the left group, crossing it over strand 6.



Move strand 8 counter-clockwise to the left side of the bottom, and move strand 3 clockwise to the right side of the bottom.



Move strand 7 clockwise to the left side of the top, and move strand 4 counter-clockwise to the right side of the top.



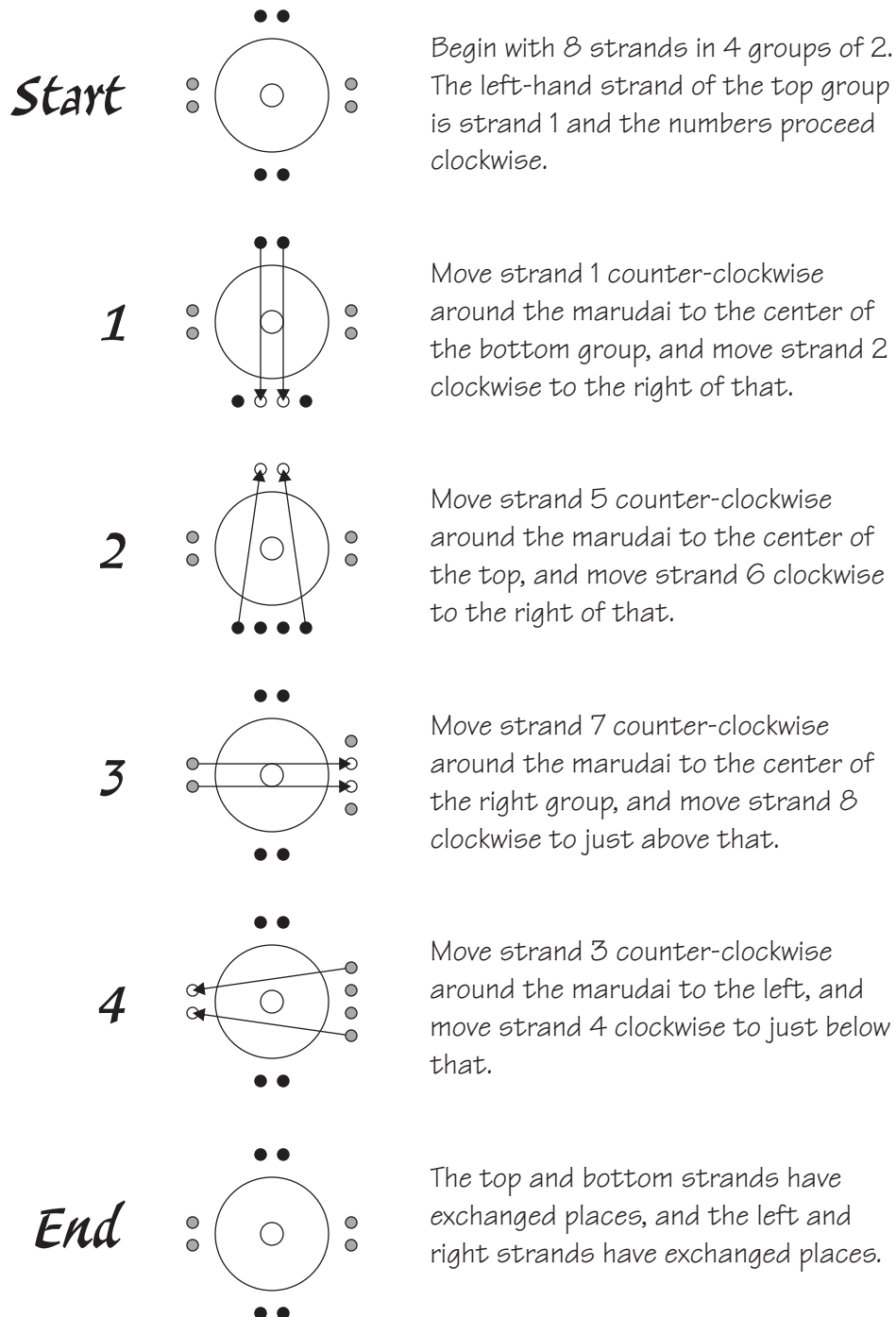
Strands from the edge have moved inward, and strands at the center have changed sides and moved out. Straighten strands before proceeding.

Kusari Kaku Yatsu

“Chain Picture Eight”

Kusari Kaku Yatsu Gumi creates a square braid that resembles a chain of interlocked links. It is a fast pattern that can create great lengths of braid quickly and easily.

Start with an “XX 00 XX 00” color pattern, which will create wide vertical stripes of color, since the vertical and horizontal colors never mix.



16 Strand Kongou Gumi

You can increase the number of threads used in Kongou Gumi without increasing the complexity of the braid at all. Even though this braid has twice as many strands, the pattern still has just two simple movements. Twice as many strands make the braid thicker and stronger.

Start with an "XXXX 0000 XXXX 0000" color pattern to create thick spirals of color. Subtle variations of color within a group (such as two medium green strands, one dark green strand, and one light green strand) can produce the appearance of iridescence while still using regular thread.

