

# Manacles I - Hinged

## Introduction

Manacles are deceptively hard to make, particularly if you can't weld. To be more precise, it's hard to make a pair of similar, secure and comfortable manacles.



Unlike leather cuffs, whose only critical dimension is the circumference, manacles are unforgiving and prone to create painful pressure points. But loose manacles may not be secure, particularly with women, whose narrower hands can scrunch down to a size barely larger than their wrists.

However, if you make them well and fit them properly, manacles are probably the most secure method of restraining a submissive. Their appearance of security and harsh medieval reputation probably add to the appeal.

Their unforgiving reputation is well earned; prisoners who wore manacles over a long period of time often suffered severe chaffing and scarring, something we definitely don't want to happen to our submissives.

Even if you add padding, submissives wearing manacles will tend to move gingerly; manacles can put great pressure on

small areas because metal doesn't yield the way rope or leather does. Leave some slack in any bondage that uses manacles.

To make the manacles more comfortable and prevent hair from being pulled, line the manacles with leather, fur or felt.

Traditionally, manacles are made from steel. Steel rusts and tends to have a dirty film that's hard to remove from sheets, carpets, clothes and the steel itself. Moreover, steel is uncomfortably heavy and difficult to drill, cut or bend. If you don't have a grinder, expect to spend a *long* time filing edges smooth.

On the other hand, aluminum is light, easy to work with and has an attractive, bright finish. The weaker, more brittle nature of aluminum isn't a concern for these manacles; aluminum is secure enough for the short term, consensual bondage for which these manacles are intended. And if your padlocks ever fail, cutting aluminum is much easier than cutting steel manacles or padlocks, especially since you'll probably have to make the cut with a handsaw.

The hinged style of manacles described here is more appropriate for securing individual limbs. For bondage that replicates stocks, see "Manacles II - Loop and Rod" on page 265. The two procedures use slightly different techniques for bending the metal; but as long as you can get repeatable results, feel free to use any method you like.

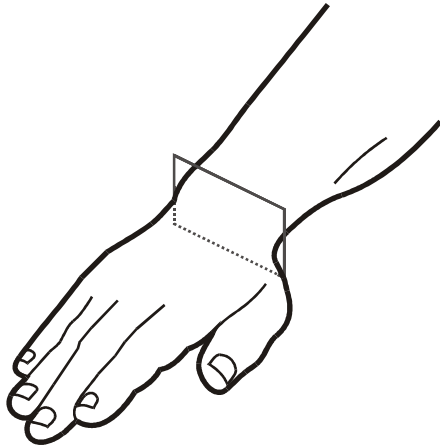
Both styles require about the same amount of skill and effort to build.

In this section:

- Overview
- Directions

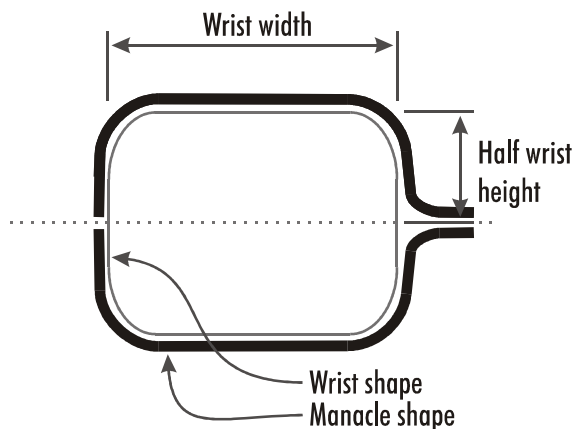
## Overview

These manacles are designed as a rectangle with rounded corners, a shape that closely resembles the cross-section of most wrists and, to a lesser degree, thin ankles.



Thus, the wooden forms will also be mostly rectangular.

Metalworking directions usually specify that only hardwood be used for forms but, because extreme accuracy isn't needed, ordinary plywood is acceptable. You don't have to sand the edges of the forms; as soon as you make your first manacle, the corners of the form will become round.



If you're willing to spend the time, you can make smoothly curved forms for your manacles. In this case, use hardwood.

## Directions

This style of manacles uses hinges and pop rivets. In truth, pop rivets aren't nearly as aesthetically pleasing as regular rivets, but pop rivets are very common and easily

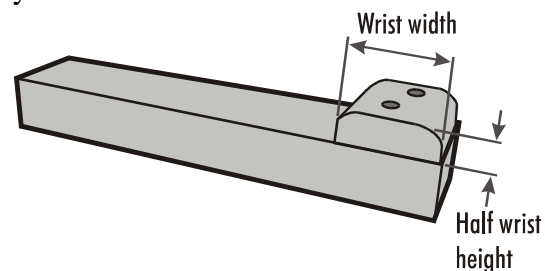
### FASTER PROTOTYPING

Instead of going to a lot a trouble to build manacles only to have them not fit properly, first make prototypes out of cardboard and test fit those.

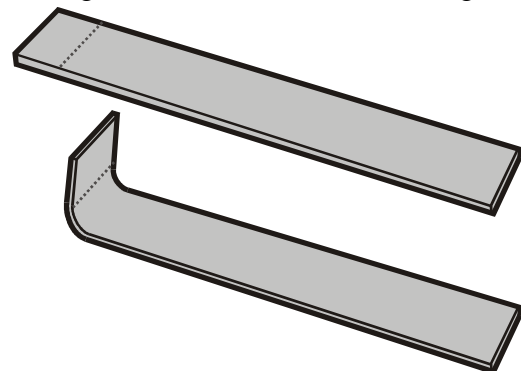
found. If you know how to set regular rivets and can find a supplier, I recommend that you use those instead.

This style of manacles uses two identical halves, each designed to encircle half the wrist. I recommend using flat bar that's about 1" [25 mm] wide and 1/8" thick [3 mm].

1. Screw a scrap of plywood to the very end of a spare 2x4 [38 x 89 mm] or other board. The scrap should be half the height of a wrist by the width of the wrist. For example, for a wrist that's 60 mm wide and 40 mm tall, use a scrap that's 60 mm by 20 mm.



2. Cut a piece of flat bar to a length of approximately 8" [200 mm]. Cut two bars for every manacle you make.
3. Make a mark 1 1/2" [38 mm] from one end and bend it 90° as shown. The space on the bend gives you enough room to attach padlocks or bolts. If you wish to have separate holes for closing the manacle and attaching it to a chain, allow extra length.



## RATTLING MANACLES

Generally, you'll find that most people secure manacles using either a padlock or a bolt. Padlocks are a much better choice, but even using a tiny padlock, the manacle shown below opens substantially (the photo shows a pop rivet in the free space).



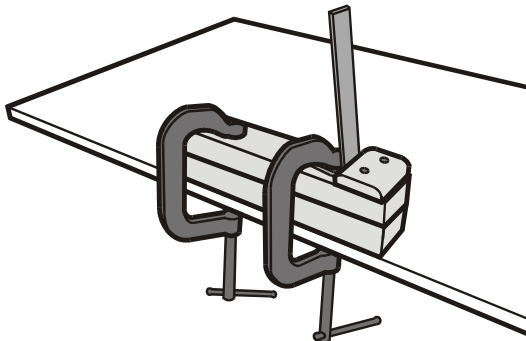
Consequently, people often use a bolt. Bolts close firmly, but they don't come off quickly in an emergency and aren't secure unless you use a wrench.

By riveting an additional spacer and hinge to the manacle, you can lock your manacles with a padlock. The manacles remain virtually rattle free, even if you use a large padlock.

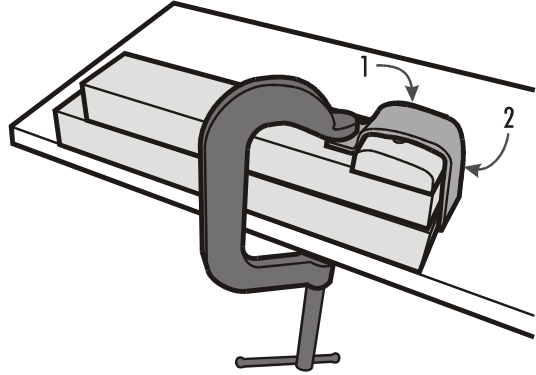


These manacles have a second hole that lets you affix them to chains without unlocking your submissive.

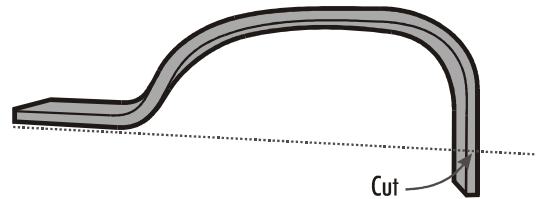
4. Clamp the flat bar against a table as shown. Use at least two clamps to keep the 2x4 [38 x 89 mm] from moving.



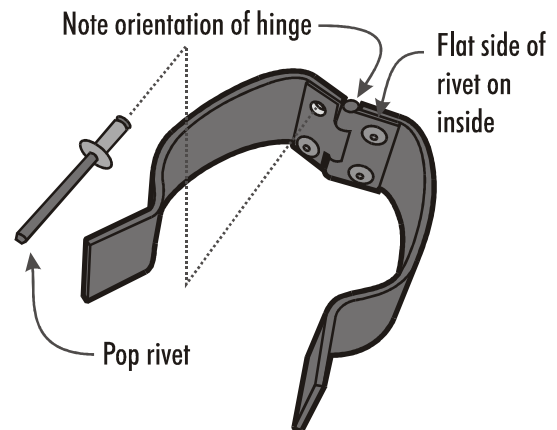
5. Hammer the flat bar around the wooden form. Don't try to pound the flat bar square against the form but rather allow the flat bar to take a natural curve. Notice that the edges of the plywood collapse somewhat — this is normal and expected.



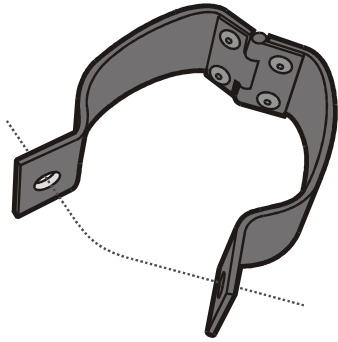
6. Cut the end of the flat bar so that when the hinge is added, the manacle will close flush.



7. Match drill the hinges and affix them with pop rivets. Follow the directions that come with the pop riveter. Ensure that the flat side of the rivet faces inward.



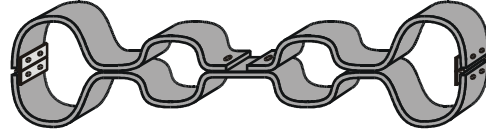
8. Close the manacles and match drill the holes for attaching the padlock, bolt or quick link.



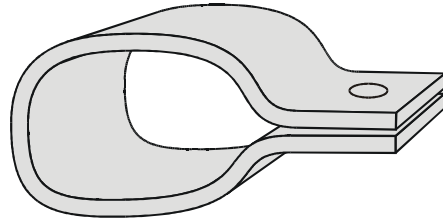
9. Ensure there aren't any sharp edges anywhere on the manacle.  
 10. If desired, file down the bulbous ends of the pop rivets so they don't protrude as noticeably.

### BE CREATIVE

- Make the locking mechanism by riveting a hasp to the manacle.
- Reproduce a hasp by folding a narrow piece of the metal upwards.
- Add a second hole so that the chains can be attached or detached without unlocking the manacle.
- Add consecutive loops to form a set of stocks.



- Line the manacles with fur or leather to make them feel softer and warmer.
- Make the manacle from one single piece of metal and close the manacle with a bolt. Realize that in the case of an emergency, removing the bolt will take a significant amount of time. Aluminum may be a poor choice because it may break after repeated bending.



Copyright Douglas Kent 2005

Sample from:

*The Better Built Bondage Book: A  
complete guide to making your own sex toys,  
furniture and BDSM equipment*

To buy a copy or learn more, please visit:

**[www.TheBetterBuiltBondageBook.com](http://www.TheBetterBuiltBondageBook.com)**

or

**[www.TBBbb.com](http://www.TBBbb.com)** (four B's)

This PDF may be freely distributed provided it is not modified. If possible, a link to one of the above URLs would be appreciated.