

Tooling a Basket Weave

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We've already used the basket weave stamp to make a basket weave pattern. As with most things in life, there are multiple ways to do things. This handout explains how to use tooling, rather than a stamp, to create a basket weave pattern. One of the big advantages to this approach compared to stamping is when you want to put something in the middle of the basket weave such as a name, initial or brand.



Photo 1 Tooled Basket Weave Coaster

Photo 1 shows the completed coaster used to demonstrate the pattern.

Materials Required: Vegtan leather

Tools Required: Wing dividers, straight edge, stylus, swivel knife, beveler, border stamp (camouflage tool works) and mallet.



Photo 3 Leather cased with border cut

I'm starting with a 4"x4" piece of vegtan leather that has been cased. I then mark a 1/4" border line around the outside of the square. The quarter inch border leaves space if I want to stitch the square onto something else. I then use a swivel knife to cut the border line (Photo 2).



Photo 2 Basket Weave Lines marked

The next step is to lay out and mark the lines for the "basket weave squares/diamonds." I've used a 1/2" spacing for the lines

and drawn them parallel to the diagonals. You can use whatever spacing and orientation you want. The key thing is to

keep the spacing consistent and the lines parallel to each other. Wing dividers and a straight edge are helpful for this. Also be sure to stay inside the border. Having already cut the border will help remind you of this. The end result is shown in Photo 3.



Photo 4 Basket Weave Lines Cut and Border Beveled

Next use the swivel knife to cut the Basket Weave lines. Be sure to keep your swivel knife cuts inside the border! Cut the basket weave lines along their entire length.

After cutting these lines, bevel along the inside of the cut border as in Photo 4

Now it's time for the simple yet tricky part....beveling all those lines to create the over/under pattern of basket weave! Pick one of the squares. Each square consists of two parallel line segments. Let's call one set top/bottom and the other set left/right. Start with the top/bottom pair and bevel on the outside of those lines so that it looks like that square is going over the intersecting band. Then on the left/right pair, bevel the inside of each line so that it looks like the neighboring band is passing over the band you started with. This establishes the basic basket weave pattern.



Photo 5 Starting to bevel the Basket Weave Over/Under Pattern

Go back to the top/bottom pair of lines (where you beveled to the outside of the square), moving along these lines skip a square and bevel the outside of the top/bottom lines for the next square. (If you numbered your starting square "1", you move along the band skipping square "2", then bevel to the outside of square "3.") Keep doing this as you bevel all those interior lines. The result should look something like Photo 5. Take your time with your beveling and remember that you want it to look like the bands first go over one then under one. If you make a mistake,

beveling on the wrong side of one line, move to the other side and bevel it the way it was supposed to be, but hit the beveller harder.



Photo 6 Basket Weave Bevelling Complete; Deco Cut started

Once you've beveled all the lines, it should look like Photo 6. In Photo 6, I've also started the next step which is to use the swivel knife to add small decorative cuts where the strand passes under it's neighbor. These help give the idea of wicker strips woven together. Do this for each intersection.



Photo 7 Deco Cuts Completed

When that's done your work should look like Photo 7.

The final step in tooling this pattern is to add a decorative border stamp! The final result is shown above in Photo 1.

Even though the tooling/stamping is done, you should still clean and burnish the edges and add color if desired!