

*Chatham County 4-H Leatherworks Club*

## **Basketweave Coaster**

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The starting point for leatherwork is basic stamping, i.e., creating a repeating pattern with one or more basic stamps. The usual starting stamp is the basketweave stamp because it is relatively simple to use and line up for the repetitive pattern. Taking your time and following the steps outlined will lead to the completion of your first hand stamped project!

Materials:

- One four inch square of vegetable tanned leather

Tools:

- Straight edge, also known as a ruler;
- Wing dividers
- Stylus;
- Swivel knife;
- Basketweave stamp;
- Beveler
- Camouflage;
- Mallet or maul
- Edging tool (Edger) or sand paper; and
- Slicking tool...stick, round, wood, plastic, antler, canvas or heavy denim.

1. Case the leather blank;
2. Set the wing dividers to a  $\frac{1}{4}$ : gap and use them to mark a line  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch from the edge;
3. Set the leather aside to start to return to its natural color;
4. While waiting read the rest of the instructions to see where we're going;
5. While waiting you can also strop your swivel knife on both sides (see the Basics of Tools) to prepare it for use.
6. Once the leather starts to return to its original color, but still feels cool to the touch, use the swivel knife to cut the border. Remember not to lean the swivel knife to either side, but keep it perpendicular (straight up and down) to the leather surface. Take your time and pull the swivel knife from a corner almost to the other corner. Finish the side by pulling from the corner where you were ending. This is how you avoid over cutting the corner.
7. Now use the straight edge to mark your guideline. The example used here has the baseline running corner to corner. You can also run it from one side to the other or at some other angle. Start simple. Straight across (close to the center) or corner to corner.
8. On to the basket stamp! To help maintain on constant pattern (the center part of some stamps create a directional pattern; some stamps may not be perfectly symmetrical), it is a good idea to mark one side of the broad sides of your with a sharpie or nail polish. Starting close to the center of the guideline, line up the wings on one side of the stamp

on the guideline and strike the basket stamp to create an impression. Keep a firm hold of the stamp so that it doesn't bounce and make a shadow impression.

9. Move your stamp to the other side of the guideline, and place one wing in the impression just made, and the other wing on the line. Stamp the impression. Move to the other end of the first impression and do the same thing. You now have three staggered stamp impressions.
10. Repeat step 9 until you have a double line of stamps along the base or guideline. As you approach the border, try not to let the impression cross the border. This is one case where you may not want to keep the stamp perfectly vertical, but tilt it slightly end to end. If you have to tilt too far, you probably don't need that impression. When tilting the stamp, do not strike it as hard as normal.
11. Pick one side of that double row of stamps to work on. I like to have that chosen side furthest away from my body when I'm working. You're now going to start the process of "laying bricks." Place the wings of the stamp in the wing impressions in the leather, with the stamp going across (closing off) the gap in the line of stamps. Make your impression and move to the next gap. Repeat this until you complete the row.
12. Move up to the top of the brick wall you have going and lay another layer of bricks following the same process. Do this until you have reached the border line(s) you are moving towards. Half your coaster is now stamped!
13. Turn your coaster around so that the unfilled space is pointed away from you. Repeat the process in steps 11 and 12 to stamp the rest of the coaster.
14. It's now time to bevel the inside of the border line you cut at the beginning. Bevel carefully and try to maintain a clean consistent surface after beveling. You don't want a choppy pattern in your beveled lines.
15. Now to add a border stamp...we'll use the camouflage tool.
16. Start in a corner and place a stamp. Now add another one by aligning the heel of the tool (the pointy bit) with the impression just made, and put in another impression. Move to the next corner and repeat this process until you have a start at both ends of all four of your border lines.
17. Pick one of the borders and working from both sides of that border, fill the border with camouflage impressions. As you approach the center of the border, i.e., your two sets of impressions are coming together. Start adjusting the placement of the camouflage impressions so that the two sides meet close to the same spacing (no half impressions or big gaps).
18. Repeat the process for all four borders.
19. Clean and burnish the edges of your coasters and you are done!
20. Hang on to these coasters since we'll use them when we get to adding color to your work.

3 Finish one half of the coaster



1 Mark and Cut Border

2 Mark Guideline and start the Basketweave



3 Finish One half of the coaster



*4 Finish the basket stamping on the other half*

*5 Bevel the interior of the Border*



*6 Layout the border tool stamps in the corners*



*7 Fill in one side of the border working from each edge until you reach the middle.*

*8 Fill in the Center of the border*



*9 Stamp the other three borders*