

Bark Basket Pattern

This pattern utilizes birch or cedar bark. Bark baskets were traditionally used to store dry materials. Cedar bark should ideally be gathered in late spring or early summer. Birch bark should NOT be taken from a living tree. Care should always be given to not girdle a tree when collecting bark. In addition to the cedar or birch bark, willow branches can be used in the seams of the basket. The branches, of course, should be very thin.

MATERIALS:

Bark, awl, willow, sinew, needle.

Tip: Bark can be kept pliable by keeping it in water.

STEP 1

Cut a desired rectangular length of bark.



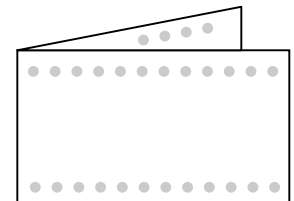
STEP 2

Using an awl, make holes along the two edges of the length of the bark.

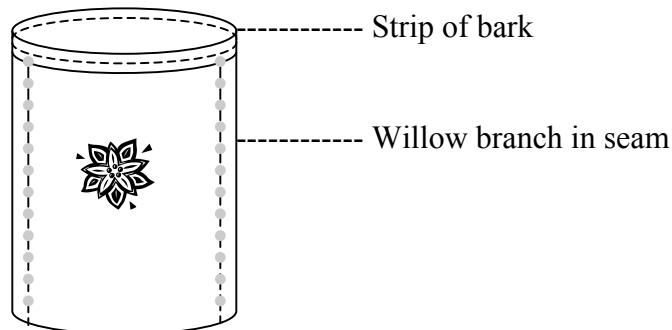


STEP 3

Fold the bark and begin sewing together. After a few of the holes are sewn, add a willow branch in the seam. Continue sewing until you reach the top. Now repeat sewing on the other side, inserting a willow branch again into the seam.



If desired, a strip of bark can be added around the top of the basket to give a finished look. Birch bark can be scraped to add designs if desired.



STEP 4

Shape the basket so that it will open by inserting a rock or stick. Allow the basket to dry with the rock or stick in place. Remove when dry.