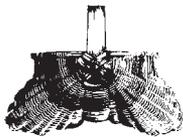


Melon-Shaped Egg Basket



GH PRODUCTIONS, INC.
The Basket Maker's Catalog

Materials are available from your basketry supply store, or contact:



GH Productions, Inc.
The Basket Maker's Catalog
521 E. Walnut St. - Dept. IN
Scottsville, KY 42164

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Melon-Shaped Egg Basket

The 10" Melon-Shaped Egg Basket is a rib-construction basket made by lashing two intersecting hoops together to form an 'eye' on each end of the basket. Ribs are carved then inserted into the 'eyes' to build the framework on which the weaving is done. The basket is woven in plain weave (over one, under one) from each eye, meeting in the middle.

Hints in working with Reed

1. When the pattern calls for soaking your flat reed or round reed, soaking 1 or 2 minutes in warm water is usually long enough to make reed flexible. If reed becomes dry while you are weaving, dip in water for a few seconds and resume weaving.
2. Do not soak your reed too long; it can become mushy & darken in color.
3. Flat reed has a smooth side and a rough side. You can determine the rough side by sharply bending a wet piece of reed in half. The rough side will usually fray or splinter more than the smooth side.
4. Keep your stitches and tension even as you make your basket.
5. As you weave, gently push or pull on the ribs to keep them in position and to maintain a pleasing shape. Do not pull weavers too tightly over the top rim as this will cause your basket to become misshapen.
6. Reed should be completely dry before being stored.

Materials

- 2 10" x $\frac{3}{4}$ " Round Hoops (Handle and Rim)
- 2 18 gauge Brass Pins or Nails (to secure the hoops together)
- 8 ft. $\frac{1}{2}$ " Flat Reed (Eyes)
- 20 ft. #6 Round Reed (Ribs)
- 100 ft. $\frac{3}{16}$ " Flat Reed (Weavers)

Notes

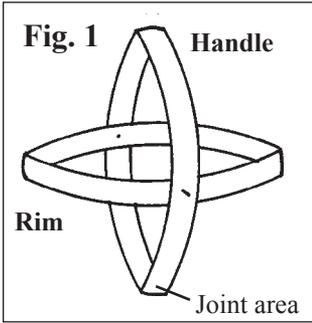
Please read the entire instruction booklet before beginning your basket, and read each step all the way through before beginning that step.

Supplies Needed

Scissors or Shears
Slip-joint Pliers
Measuring Tape
Basketry Awl

Chip Carving Knife or Razor Knife
Pencil
Container to hold water
2 Twist Ties

Fastening the Hoops Together



Measure and mark the half-way points of both the handle and rim hoops. The handle and rim will cross each other at these points with the handle on the *outside* of the rim. See Fig. 1. Make sure the joint area on the handle is at the bottom of the basket. Make an indentation with your basket awl on the inside of both the handle and the rim at the marked half-way points.

Place a brass pin or nail in the indentation on the *inside* of the rim and, with a pair of pliers, squeeze the nail through the rim from the inside to the outside. Stop when you feel the point of the nail on the outside of the rim. Repeat this on the other side of the rim. Next, align the point of each nail with the indentation on the inside of the handle, and squeeze the nails all the way through both rim and handle. Bend nails over on the outside of the handle.

Lashing the 'Eyes'

Hold the rim hoop between your knees with the bottom of the basket toward you and one cross of the hoops facing you. Lash the hoops together using a wet 48" long piece of 1/2" Flat Reed (smooth side of reed to the outside). See Figs. 2A-2I. **Hold the reed tight against the hoops as you lash each step.**

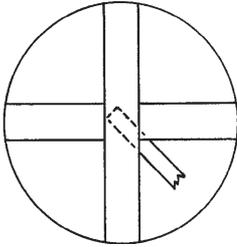


Fig. 2A—Begin by placing one end of the reed behind the cross (on the inside of your basket). The rough side of the reed will face you. The length of lashing will appear at the lower right. Pull lashing material tight as you work.

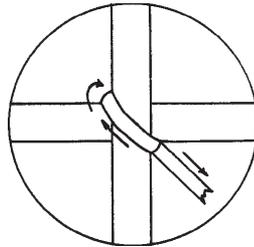


Fig. 2B—Move the lashing from lower right to upper left on the front of the cross. The smooth side of the reed should now be facing you. Lap over the beginning of the reed (behind the cross) to appear at the lower right.

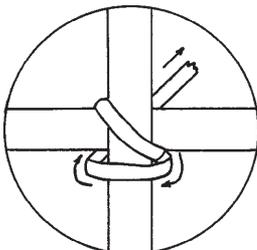


Fig. 2C—The lashing continues in front of the handle and behind the cross, emerging at the upper right.

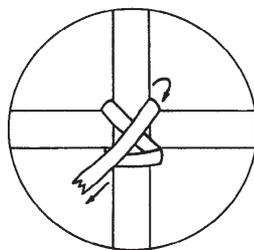


Fig. 2D—From the upper right bring the lashing in front of the cross to the lower left.

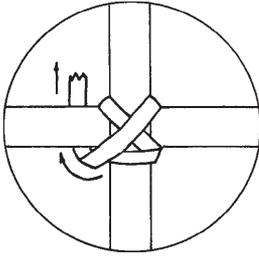


Fig. 2E—From the lower left to the upper left, go behind the left-hand side of the rim. Keep lashing tight.

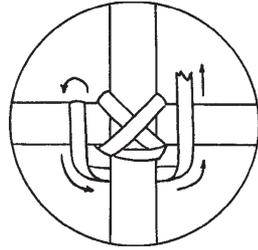


Fig. 2F—Bring the lashing over and in front of the left-hand side of the rim, behind the handle, and in front of the right-hand side of the rim.

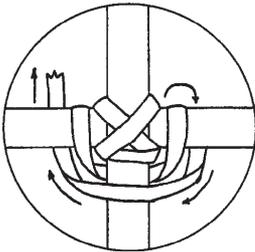


Fig. 2G—The lashing goes over the right-hand side of the rim, behind the right-hand side of the rim, in front of the handle, and behind the left-hand side of the rim.

Now, overlapping about half way on the previous row:

- repeat Fig. 2F
- repeat Fig. 2G
- repeat Fig. 2F

The lashing will be in front of the right-hand side of the rim at the upper right.

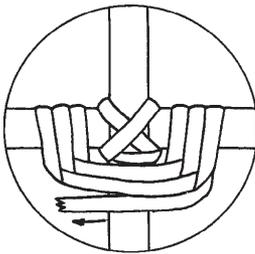


Fig. 2H—From the upper right bring lashing over the right-hand side of the rim, behind the right-hand side of the rim and in front of the handle.

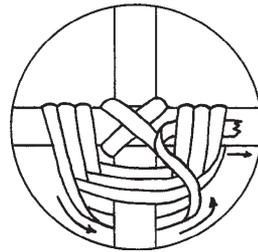


Fig. 2I—**WORKING FROM THE INSIDE OF YOUR BASKET**, bring the end from the lower right, and tuck the end behind some (or all) of the lashing along the rim. Pull the end of the lashing as tightly as you can.

Trim the end of the lashing to 1" in length along the inside of the rim. The weavers will eventually cover this end. **Repeat the lashing process for the other end of your basket.**

Preparing & Inserting Ribs

The next step is cutting your basket's ribs to length and inserting them into both eyes.

There are two methods for determining the length of ribs for this melon-shaped basket: Method 1 calls for cutting ribs to a pre-determined length and Method 2 teaches you to judge the rib length by 'eyeing' each rib's placement into the basket.

Due to the size variation of hoops (they may be slightly smaller or slightly larger than 10" in diameter) measurements for pre-cutting are guidelines at best. We highly recommend that instead of pre-cutting your ribs you use Method 2 and learn to judge the needed rib lengths.

Method 1 — *Pre-cutting (remember these measurements are just guidelines)*

Cut **TWO** ribs of each of the following lengths from #6 Round Reed (to make a total of 14 ribs). Refer to Fig. 4 and Fig. 7 for final placement.

Ribs #1 cut 2 ribs 15" long

Ribs #2 cut 2 ribs 15¹/₂" long

Ribs #3 cut 2 ribs 15¹/₂" long

Ribs #4 cut 2 ribs 14¹/₄" long

Ribs #5 cut 2 ribs 14¹/₂" long

Ribs #6 cut 2 ribs 14¹/₂" long

Ribs #7 cut 2 ribs 14¹/₄" long

After cutting each rib to length, mark the number of that rib (Example: #1) on the rib with a pencil. This mark should be made near the *center* of each rib.

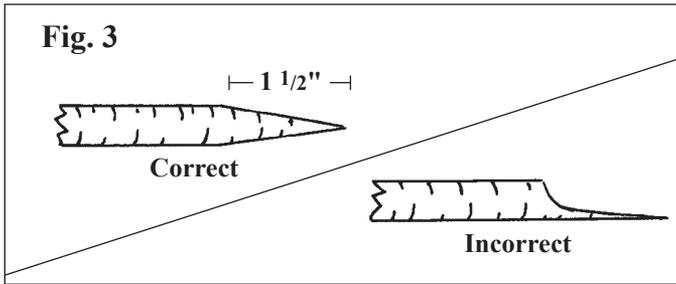
Method 2 — *Learning to judge rib length*

Instead of pre-cutting the ribs, follow the recommendations below to achieve ribs that best fit the exact size of your hoops. Using Method 2 you'll only cut Ribs #1, #2 and #3 at this time. Ribs #4, #5, #6 and #7 will be cut to length after you have completed several rows of weaving on both ends of your basket.

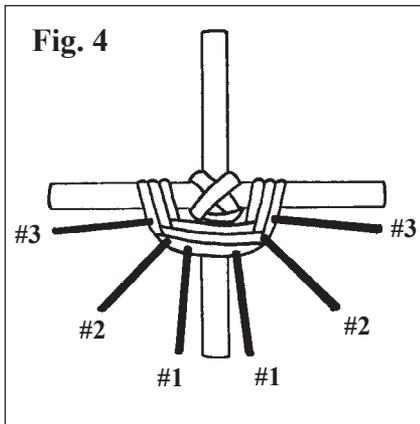
- Sharpen one end only of a piece of #6 Round Reed as described in this "*****" [instruction booklet](#) under **Methods 1 and 2 Sharpening the Ribs**.
- Lay the rib around the basket, gently bending it from eye to eye, in as near its final positioning as possible. (The point of each rib will be inserted approximately ³/₈" into the eye on each side.) Refer to Fig. 4.
- Holding the basket at eye level, judge the length of the rib by positioning the rib to match the curve and shape of the hoops.
- Cut the rib to the appropriate length and sharpen the other end.
- Cut a second rib this same length for the opposite side of the basket; sharpen and taper both ends.
- When using this method, only cut two ribs of each at this time: Ribs #1, #2, and #3 (for a total of 6 ribs).

After cutting each rib to length, mark the number of that rib (Example: #1) on the rib with a pencil. This mark should be made near the *center* of each rib.

Methods 1 and 2 Sharpening the Ribs Using your chip carving knife, sharpen and taper both ends of each rib. Begin the taper about 1½" from the end of the rib. Make the point sharp but strong. See Fig. 3. Be patient as this step often takes some time to complete.



After the ribs are sharpened, you will insert Ribs #1, #2 and #3 into the eyes of the basket. (Ribs #4 - #7 will be added to the basket later.) The ribs should be spaced and positioned as indicated in Fig. 4.

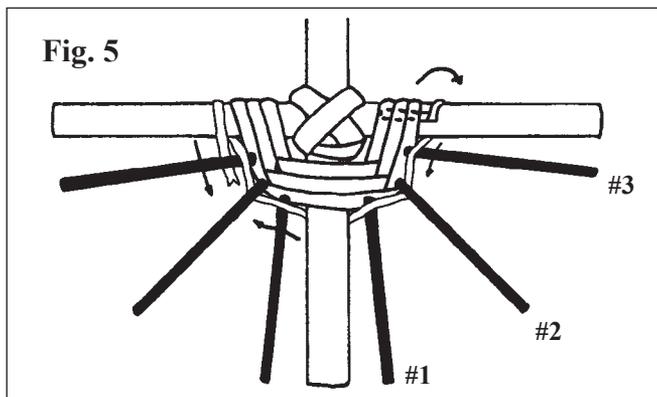


Soak each eye and Ribs #1, #2 and #3 in water for about a minute. Gently bend each rib, shaping it to follow the curve/shape of the basket. Now with your awl, make a hole for Rib #1 in the eye (at the angle and position as indicated in Fig. 4) for a depth of about ¾". Turn your awl around and around to create a hole.

Remove the awl, hold the rib close to its tip and slide the rib into the space made by your awl. If the rib does not slide easily into the hole, use your awl again to open the hole or perhaps sharpen the rib a bit more so it will slide easily into the hole. Insert the rib

into the eye about ¾" deep. Make a hole in the opposite eye and gently bend the rib and insert the other tip into this hole. Repeat the step, inserting the remaining Rib #1 into both eyes on the opposite side of the basket. Next, insert Ribs #2 then Ribs #3. The lashing may split a bit when using the awl.

After all 6 ribs are inserted into both eyes, hold the basket at eye level and adjust the ribs as needed. Your basket should have a smooth even shape that matches your hoops; see again Fig. 4 showing rib length and basket shape.



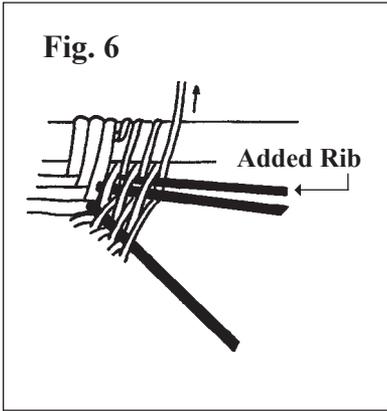
Weaving & Adding Ribs

With Ribs #1, #2 and #3 inserted into the eyes on both ends of the basket, you are ready to begin weaving. Select a flexible weaver ($3/16$ " Flat Reed) and soak it for a couple of minutes. Place it between the lashing and the rim, on the right-hand side of the eye, with the smooth side of the reed touching the rim. See Fig. 5. Fold the weaver up and over the top of the rim (the weaver's smooth side is out as you go over the rim), then bring the weaver behind the rim and position the weaver tight up against the lashing. Weave over Rib #3 and under Rib #2 placing the weaver tight against the lashing. Weave over Rib #1 and under the handle positioning the weaver tight against the lashing, etc. See Fig. 5. With each over and under stitch you take, place the weaver in position before pulling the long length of weaver through to the outside of the basket and weaving over and under the next ribs. *In the body of the basket the weavers will touch each other. At the rim and handle you will see the wooden hoop between rows.*

The weavers have a smooth side and a rough side. The smooth side should be facing outward as the weaver goes over the rim on every row. In the body of the basket, one row will be smooth side out and the next row will be rough side out; that is the nature of this basket. Stop weaving at the rim after you have completed six rows of weaving in the body of your basket. See Fig. 6. To keep the long weaver out of your way, coil the remaining length of weaver and fasten it to the handle with a twist tie. **Now repeat the weaving on the opposite end of your basket.** After completing six rows on each end you're ready to add the remaining ribs.

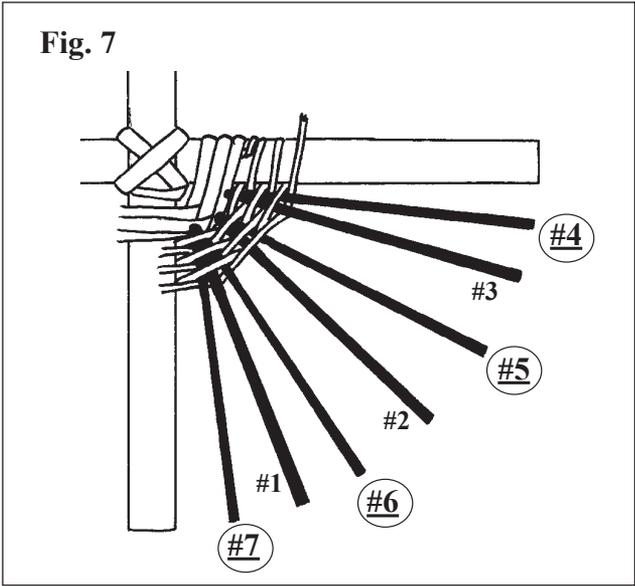
Method 1—all your ribs are cut and sharpened. Soak ribs a minute, gently shape, then lay the sharpened end of a rib into the weaving beside an existing rib on both ends of the basket. See Fig. 6 and Fig. 7 and text below for placement of added ribs.

Method 2—you'll need to apply the same principles you used earlier to determine the rib length for Ribs #4, #5, #6 and #7. **Note:** To determine the length for added ribs, soak a piece of #6 Round Reed for a minute then taper one end, slide the tapered



end into the six rows of weaving beside an existing rib (see Fig. 6), gently bend the rib to the other side, and cut the rib to length. Sharpen the rib and add to basket as described for Method 1 in previous paragraph.

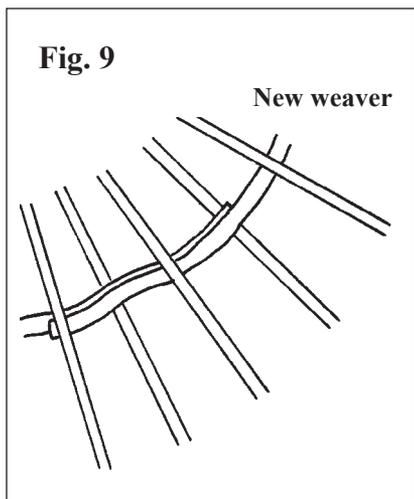
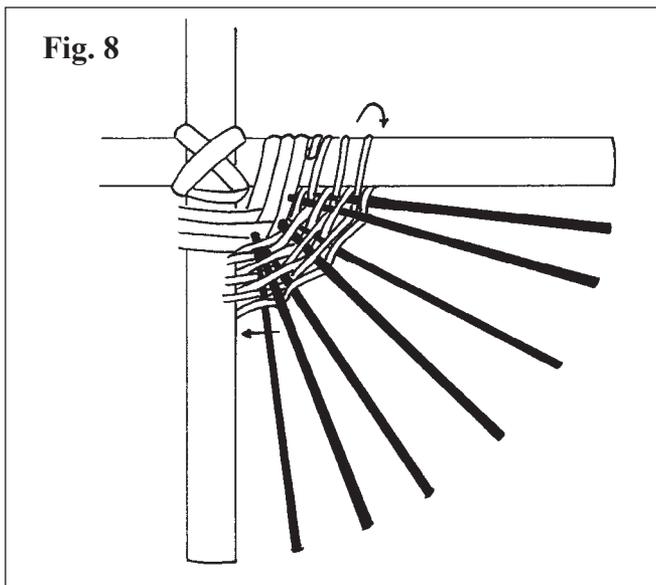
Methods 1 and 2. After adding a new rib, hold the basket at a distance and observe the shape of the added ribs. If a rib is too long, remove it from the basket and shorten it. If a rib is a bit too short, you can pull it outward as you continue the weaving. Make your new ribs fit the shape established by Ribs #1, #2 and #3.



See Fig. 7 for placement of added ribs:

- Ribs #4 above Ribs #3
- Ribs #5 above Ribs #2
- Ribs #6 above Ribs #1
- Ribs #7 below Ribs #1

Rewet your weaver and begin weaving from the rim downward. As you weave, "pick up" each new rib by including it in the over one, under one pattern. See Fig. 8. As you begin to "pick up" the new ribs you will notice that the first new rib alters the established weaving pattern and the second new rib 'corrects' the weaving pattern. For this reason you added an even number of new ribs to each side of your basket.



Notes: When you reach the end of a weaver, overlap the end with the beginning of a new weaver for a distance of four ribs and tuck each end behind a rib. Position the weaver so its smooth side is to the outside as you weave over the rim. Trim the weaver as needed. See Fig. 9.

Continually push and pull on the ribs, adjusting them as you weave, in order to shape the basket and to space the ribs evenly apart.

Continue to weave, working on one end of the basket for several rows and then on the other end until the weavers meet in the middle. Overlap the two weavers as in Fig. 9 to complete your basket.

If the weavers meet on the rim before they meet in the body of your basket, slide the weavers on the rim toward each eye to make room for more weavers over the rim. Trim off any hairs or splinters.

Sign and date your basket (perhaps on the inside of the handle).

Enjoy your Melon-Shaped Egg Basket.