

THE LEARNING CIRCLE

by Loren Woerpel, Noc Bay Trading Company

DREAM CATCHER

The Dream Catcher now comes in all sizes and a great variety of designs, depending on the artist making them and how they were taught. These instructions are the most basic of design and materials. We leave it up to you choose how you want to finish the decoration of your dream catcher.

Many make the hoop out of bent willow, which in the northern climate needs to be collected and bent in the spring. These instructions show the alternative of making the Dream Catcher with a metal hoop and wrapping it with a buckskin thong. These are written for right handers, so left handers may want to reverse all directions.

Start by dabbing a light coat of glue, (we use contact cement or rubber cement) at the start of your thong wrapping. Let it dry until tacky. Begin wrapping as in Figure 1, being careful the thong is tightly wrapped but not overlapped as to make ridges.

Complete all the way around the hoop, and then slightly overlap the starting piece of thong. Finish the wrapping with a single half hitch knot as shown in Figure 2.

Do not cut the thong yet. As in Figure 3 and 4, form a hanging loop with the end of the thong, then tie around the loop with another half hitch as shown. Now cut off the remainder of the thong.

You are now ready to start the web. Completed it looks like Figure 5. For a three inch diameter hoop, take a 2 yard piece of simulated sinew.

Start the web by tying a knot at the top of the hoop next to the hanging loop. The entire first row is loosely woven as shown in Figure 6. The hitch tied is the same at each intersection of the hoop or thread as you proceed and is detailed in Figure 7.

Copyright: 1994 by Loren Woerpel

Noc Bay Trading Company; P.O. Box 295; Escanaba, MI 49829; 1-800-652-7192



Figure 1

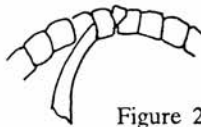


Figure 2

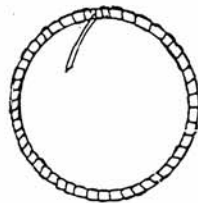


Figure 3

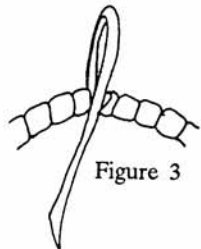


Figure 4

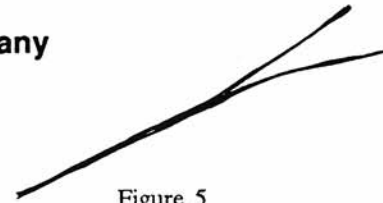


Figure 5



Figure 6

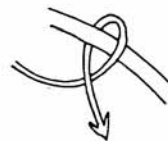


Figure 7

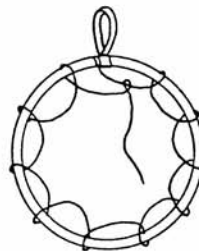


Figure 8

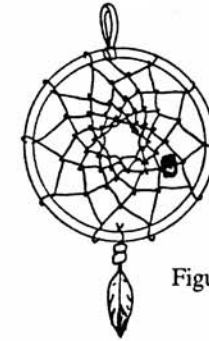


Figure 9

For this example, using a 3 inch hoop, after the first knot, try attaching the web in ten equally spaced spots around the hoop about 1 inch apart. After the tenth spot, the next hitch is made at half way position on the first loop after the knot in the first row, as in Figure 8.

As you tie these hitches, you begin to pull each stitch in the web up snugly but not tight. You continue around the web, tying a hitch and pulling tighter on each row until you are down to a small center hole in your web.

At the point you want to quit your web, tie a double half hitch knot over the middle of the next length of thread in the web, and pull tightly. Some people like to put some glue on this knot. Super glue works, as will any clear drying craft cement.

On this basic Dream Catcher, people are adding a variety of decorations. The original decorations used a small feather hanging from the bottom of the hoop or the center of the web, and the inclusion of a bead woven into the web somewhere about half way from the edge of the hoop to the center of the web.

A variety of looks can be achieved by varying the number of points you attach the web to the hoop, and the length of the first row of loops in the web. Some people have specific reasons for certain numbers of points in the web.

People are also adding colored materials and a variety of fringe effects, but we will leave that up to you.

Our experience is that the beauty of the Dream Catcher comes from its original uncluttered form and uncluttered notion that we exist in the presence of two worlds, a physical one and a spiritual one.