

WOMAN'S BREASTPLATE Medium, 5'2" or less

The design shown here makes a medium 8 inch wide breastplate when using plastic bone. It may be made larger by adding to the length with extra beads or bone, or by adding to the width with extra strings. The arrangement of beads and colors are varied by the craftsperson to attain a unique design.

Materials Needed:

(In our kit, beads are not included, but must be purchased separately. You need at least 500.)

36 inches of 1/2 inch wide strap (Holes are pre-punched in our kit)

68 four inch long plastic hairpipe

10 two inch plastic hairpipe

20 yards of simulated sinew

16 tin cones or cowrie shells

1 piece of soft leather for cutting short thongs

MAKING THE BREASTPLATE

(Instructions are given for making the breastplate as shown. Adjust if changing the size. In our kit the strips of pre-punched leather are cut to size)

1. Cut the 1/2 inch wide strap leather into 3 eight and one half inch pieces and 4 two and one half inch pieces. Mark straps for punching holes (If not pre-punched). Start 1/4 inch from left edge and make holes every 1/2 inch.

2. Cut 10 five foot lengths of simulated sinew for your outside rows.

3. Cut the soft leather scrap into small strips about 3/16 inch by six inches in length. (See Figure 1) Tie one end of each sinew around the center of a leather thong. Wind the sinew around the leather several times then use your best knot to tie tightly. Trim off the extra end of sinew. Thread a cone on to each of the sinew lengths and pull the cone down to cover the knot. Finished it looks like Figure 2.

5. Lay the strap leathers out on a floor or table in position and string bone and beads according to your pattern and as in Figure 4. Finish by tying all of the top ends of the (Hint: Applying super glue to each knot will help prevent the knots from unravelling.)

6. Cut 4 five foot pieces of simulated sinew for the center strings. Tie one end to thongs and slip a cone over each as in step 3.

7. String the beads and bone on each of these according to your pattern in Figure 4. For each row, when you reach the third strap at point (a), thread back down through the next hole over, and continue to follow the pattern to the bottom at (b). Finish each of these lines off as in Figure 3, using thong and cone, but tying the knots on top of the cones after winding around the thong several times and pulling the thong into the cone, while binding the cone up tightly against the last bead in the string. Finish each line the same way.

8. Cowrie shells can be used instead of tin cones. Figure 5 shows tying the shell on using a barrel hitch knot. This kind of knot holds well with the waxed simulated sinew.

