



By Loren Woerpel, Noc Bay Trading Company

Powwow Drum Kit - 24"

There are a number of ways people lace up drums, but the way we show here is our suggestions with the materials provided.

Prepare the drum rim as you desire, but oil wood stain and a covering of polyurethane works well. If you want rope handles, now is the time to drill a pair of holes in the four directions of the rim in the center area.

Place the drum rim on one of the raw hide pieces in the best place, avoiding holes as best as you can in the area inside the rim and use the heaviest part of the hide where there is a choice. Using a lead pencil, lightly draw a circle on the raw hide 2 inches larger than the outside of the rim. Do this also to the second hide.

Using a heavy scissors or a tin snips, cut out the drum heads on the pencil line.

Next step is to mark the lacing slits around the drum. However you plan it, remember you need an even number of holes and the same number around both heads. We do this by first lightly marking spots with a yard stick "north and south", then "east and west" as in Figure 1. Then split those marks by half, then again as in Figure 2.

Next, at each spot mark a double line a full 1" from the edge of the hide and $\frac{3}{4}$ " apart as in Figure 3. When everything is marked, cut the slits open using a $\frac{1}{4}$ inch wood chisel. A hammer and a scrap piece of wood are needed to do this job. Just tap the chisel through the hide.

Prepare the lacing material by finding the half mark and cut into two lengths. Trim all of the ends so they are pointed.

Fill a large garbage can with clean water. When all is ready, soak the hide in water for at least 4 to 5 hours, until very limp. Also put the lacing in the water except for about 12 inches of each end. Use something to tie them outside the container so they stay stiff.

When everything seems ready, remove from the water and sponge off the extra water on the hide with a towel. Working on a clean table top, lay the first head on the table, right side down. Position the rim in center place, then lay the top head on the rim right side up. Match the north points of each hide. In the bottom head slits lace the first lacing length as shown in Figure 4 and pull to the middle. Do the same with the second lacing on through the matching slit in the top head.

Now as in Figure 5, alternately lace around the drum as you would your shoestrings on a boot. First go right for several slots, then change to the other side of the lacing and go left. Continue to tighten the lacing as you go around the drum. When you complete the circle, temporarily tie the lacing to the opposite side of each lace. Continue to tighten the lace, starting from the starting points to the tying points, almost like you would tighten your boot lacing. Now, remembering that as this wet raw hide and lacing dries it shrinks, pull it only until everything is taut and bouncy. (Unfortunately this is the trial and error part of drum making.)

You can make the edge of the two hides sooth against the rim if you temporarily tape it down by winding and overlapping electrical tape around those edges of the drum until it dries.

Let everything dry and see how it turns out.

Figure 1

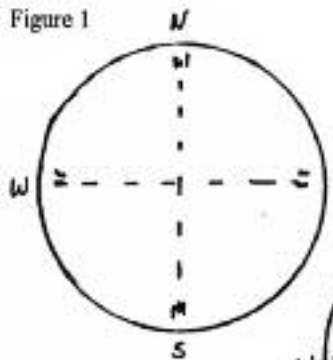


Figure 2

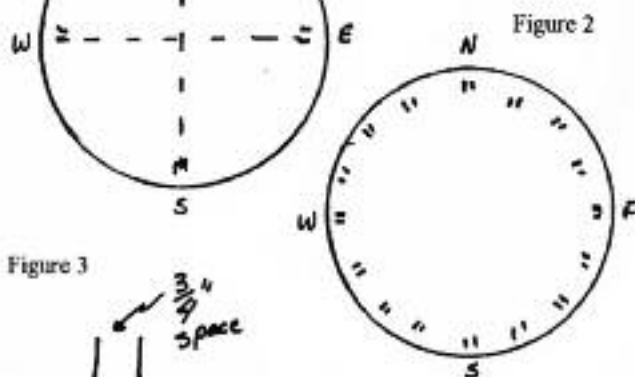


Figure 3

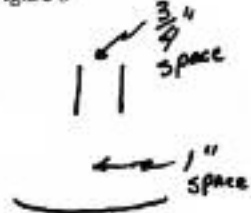
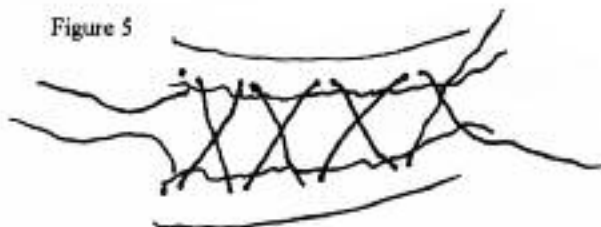


Figure 4



Figure 5



Copyright © 2005 by Loren Woerpel, Noc Bay Publishing

Noc Bay Trading Company

P.O. Box 295

Liscanaba, MI 49829

800-652-7192 www.nocbay.com