

The Learning Circle

By Loren Woerpel, Noc Bay Publishing, Inc.

HAND DRUM STICK

The original drum sticks for hand drum use varied from region to region and tribe to tribe. Today's materials allow for a easy but very solid way to make sticks that will work and sound good, and look good as well.

We start by making the drumstick rod from a $\frac{3}{8}$ inch diameter hardwood rod. The length can be your personal preference but we start by using a 15 inch long rod. The hardwood dowel can be decorated by painting, wrapping with colored tape, staining, or burning and then finishing with clear acrylic spray.

To start the head, apply tacky cement to the top 3 inches of rod. Begin winding craft yarn over the 3 inch area in a double layer. Again apply the tacky glue to the yarn winding. continue to wrap another layer of yarn. Do the wrapping slowly and tightly, sometimes smearing the glue over the wrappings. Continue this process until you have built up the head to about a $\frac{7}{8}$ inch diameter, with a slight slope in the handle direction. See Figure 1. End with a slip knot around the wrapping, pulling tightly in a area of glue.

At the handle end of the stick, begin a similar yarn wrapping but 4 inches along the base of the handle. Build the handle wrapping up to about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch diameter, slightly sloping both ends. end with a slip knot.

From a piece of leather about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 6 inches, cut a handle cover to shape based on the dimensions of your built up yarn handle. See Figure 2 for an idea of the shape of this cover. The cover should stretch tightly over the handle, so try it on and re-trim if necessary.

Think of this next step as like sewing a leather cover on a baseball. When your cover appears that it will sew on with some stretch, apply a thin coat of tacky glue to the inside of the cover. Smear a thin coat as well on the yarn wrapping. Then apply the leather in position on the handle, covering the yarn build-up area. Using a glovers needle and size F nylon thread, wax the thread with beeswax. Begin stitching from the top of the handle to the bottom using the baseball stitch shown in Figure 3. Finish at the bottom by sewing across the handle. You can then fringe the left over leather.

To complete the head, use a piece of leather about 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 3 inches. Cut a cover in the same shape as for the handle. See Figure 4. Try your cover over the wrapped head trimming until you have a stretch for the fit. When ready, again thinly coat the underside of leather with tacky glue and the yarn wrapping as well. As before, position the cover on the head wrapping and sew it up using the baseball stitch.

Let it all dry and you are ready to use it!

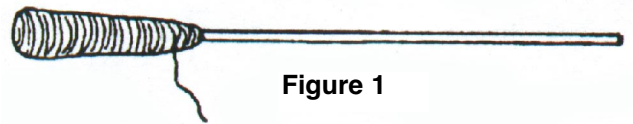


Figure 1



Figure 2

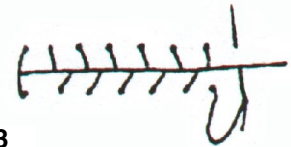


Figure 3

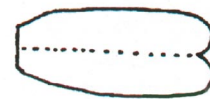


Figure 4

