

Weaving Through Sides Of Gourds

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Weaving through the sides of gourds is an enjoyable and challenging touch to make a gourd take on the appearance of a weaved basket or bowl.

Using a gourd that will produce the shape you want (I prefer an inverted apple gourd), measure the base line up from the bottom, marking all the way around the gourd. Second, measure up to the point where you want the rim of your basket to be, again marking the circumference around. Next measure down from the rim, approximately 1/2" and mark that line around the gourd. I use a hem marker that uses chalk to mark all the horizontal lines. This ensures level lines and removes easily. I then trace over the chalk with a lead pencil to have a more permanent line. At this point I decide if I want a handle, and draw that on. After that is done, I cut out the top, or around the handles, remove the insides, and clean well. Remember to wear a mask, and gloves.

The next step is to draw the vertical lines on the gourd. I mark the vertical lines at 1/4" to 1/2" intervals. In the beginning you may want to mark both the top and bottom lines, but with time, you will be able to "eyeball" your verticals with just marking the top line below the rim. The intervals can change, with whatever preference you choose. An important point to make is that after marking your vertical slot locations, you **MUST** end up with an odd number of vertical lines. This will ensure even weaving. Using a flexible plastic 6" ruler, connect the marks from the top to bottom. After this is done, use a Dremel with a grinding wheel. I pierce the vertical lines that have been drawn, being careful to maintain an even width from top to bottom. After each is done, finish as you want with stain, or paint. I prefer using leather strips to weave thru the gourd. The leather strips can be purchased at any hobby store in small bolts in a variety of colors. Starting at the bottom, start working your weaving material in and out of the gourd, pushing down the material as you weave. I generally work with an arms length of material, as too much will bind up, and knot. Pay particular attention to the rows, making sure that the material alternates on a slot, every other row. When weaving is done, I use a dab of hot glue to secure the ends.

A variety materials can be used to create any unique look you want, from fancy to down home.

Happy weaving.