



Coiled Coasters

Family Friday Project

Thread Options:

Yarn

String

Strips cut from plastic bags or fabric

Coil Options:

Rope

Newspaper

Grass or straw

Long pine needles

Fabric



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History

Ancient Baskets

Baskets were one of the oldest crafts, made by every ancient people. Since ancient baskets were made out of natural fibers like roots, cane, twigs, and grasses, most did not survive

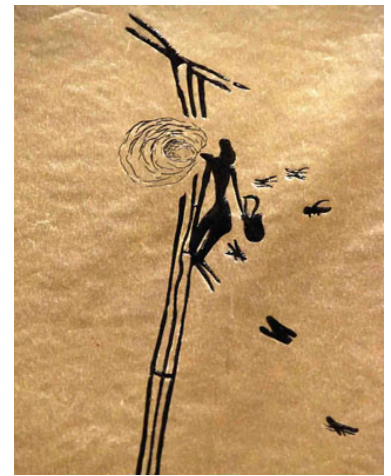
until today. The oldest remaining basket

is 10,000–12,000 years old. Basketry is

older even than pottery, which likely developed from waterproofing baskets by lining them with clay; the oldest known pots carry the

indents from baskets. Even today, baskets are only woven by hand—no one has been able to build a machine to manufacture them.

petlamp.org



Rock art, 6000 B.C. Spain



Cord-marked clay vessel, 5000 B.C. Japan



Coiled basket, 5450-4400 B.C. Fayum, Egypt

Dat so la lee, degikup basket ca. 1895 Nevada

Coiling

Coiling is a technique of winding up the fiber like a snake while stitching it every quarter of an inch or so. The inner coiled material was usually grasses and the sewing material might be a stronger grass or stripped down tree fibers. The Native Americans of the Southwestern states of the US have long perfected coiling with grasses. Their wrapping usually covers the inner grasses completely.



Coiling with sweetgrass is done in West Africa, and those techniques arrived in this country with the African slaves. Today sweetgrass baskets are still woven in the eastern US coastal states. Yet another kind of coiled basket is woven from pine needles- the longer the better. These baskets are popular in Florida and the Northwestern US. Usually they're sewn with raffia. (mccarlgallery.wordpress.com)



Nigerian basket



Artist Spotlight: Mary Jackson

[Mary Jackson](#) is a basket maker who lives in Charleston, SC with her husband, Stoney. She makes sweetgrass baskets that come out of a tradition that has been passed down from her ancestors. It originated in West Africa, and brought to America by slaves.

This kind of basket making is an identifying cultural practice for people who were cut off from their own history, and has been a part of Charleston and Mt. Pleasant communities for more than 300 years.

Jackson uses sweetgrass, palmetto, pine needles, and bulrush in her work, which is innovative, but always mindful of its past. (craftinamerica.org)



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Artist Spotlight: Corine Pearce

[Corine Pearce](#) is a Pomo basket weaver from Redwood Valley, CA. Throughout the history of the Pomo people, baskets were the essential tool of life and Pomo baskets are among the best in the world by fact of their sheer technical virtuosity. Corine has dedicated her life to sharing her specialized knowledge and abilities with people throughout the world as well as by teaching her community at the Redwood Valley Education Center.

craftinamerica.org



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Let's get started!

Collect Supplies

Needle If you don't have a darning needle or plastic needle, or if your sewing material is too thick, you can cut a needle out of a plastic container.



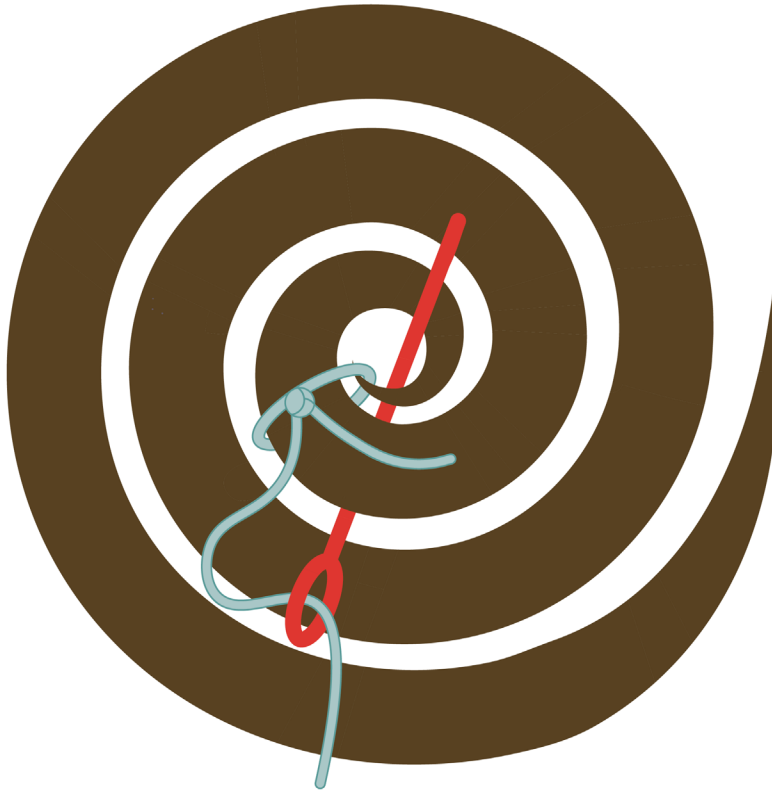
Coil I used clothesline in the picture on the cover, but you can get creative. Long grasses, newspaper, fabric—many things will work. If you are using something like newspaper, I recommend twisting it as you go to make your coils rounder.

Thread To sew your coil together, you can use thread, string, yarn, or anything long and thin. I cut strips from a garbage bag to sew my newspaper basket together.



Collect Supplies

Make your coaster by always sewing wrapping your thread around the outermost two layers of your coil material. To add a new length of thread, either tie it to the end of the previous thread or wrap the end of the new thread in with the coil for a couple of inches.



Once you have the hang of it, feel free to get creative. Start lifting your coil up and in to make a basket; wrap your thread around your coil between stitches to make it extra colorful; or make a pattern by alternating between two colors, tucking whichever one you aren't using alongside the coil as you wrap.

