

# Homemakers Basket

by Beth Hester

*The Basket Maker's Catalog*



Size: 12" diameter (at rim); Height: 8"

## Materials/Supplies

8" Slotted Base	1
5/8" Flat Reed	60 ft. Stakes & Weavers
#2 Round Reed	12 ft. Weavers
1/4 " Flat Reed	35 ft. Weavers & Lashing
5/8" Braided Seagrass	12 ft. Weavers
1/2" DYED Navy Flat Reed	8 ft. Weavers
3/8" Flat	4 ft. Weaver
1/2" Flat Oval	8 ft. Rims
#3 Seagrass	4 ft. Rim Filler
12" Oak Swing Handle/Ears	1

This beautiful and sturdy basket was created for Janis Steele, President of the Meador Homemakers\* Club. It's one of those baskets you'll enjoy weaving—just add your own variety of color and materials for the accent rows and you're set with a basket to use or one to give as a gift.

*\*The Extension Homemakers organization is part of the University of Kentucky and Kentucky State University off-campus information network; it's an informal educational organization designed to help its members gain knowledge and skills to improve the quality of life for themselves, their families and their communities. In Allen County one will find a truly great group of women who join together to learn and share ideas about health, the environment, managing resources, cultural arts (basket making, quilting, etc.), and other subjects.*

Make your own Homemakers Basket and celebrate the idea of learning!

## Hints in working with Reed

1. When the pattern calls for soaking your flat reed, soaking 1 or 2 minutes in warm water is usually long enough to make reed flexible; seagrass needs only to be spritzed. Soak the Round Reed and Flat Oval Reed for 5 to 10 minutes in hot water. If reed becomes dry while you're weaving, dip it in water.
2. Soak dyed reed separately, rinse well and wipe with towel before using.
3. Flat reed has a smooth side and a rough side. You can determine the rough side by sharply bending a wet piece of reed in half. The rough side will usually fray or splinter more than the smooth side. As you weave, place the smooth side of the reed to the outside of the basket.
4. Manipulate your materials in order to space stakes equally apart and work toward a 12" top diameter.

## Weaving Your Basket

Sand your slotted base and apply the finish of your choice, allowing the finish to dry completely. Cut 28 pieces (stakes) 11" long from 5/8" Flat Reed. Trace the outline of the base onto a piece of paper. Cut out the shape; fold in half and in half again. Unfold and, using the crease lines as your template, mark the edge of the base in 4 places to indicate the 4 quarters. Soak all the stakes then insert each stake into the base's slot (7 stakes evenly spaced into each quarter) with the smooth side up; this is the outside of your basket.

*Note: If the stakes are a bit thick for the width of your slot you may want to sand the slot or pinch the ends of the stakes with pliers to flatten them before inserting.* Soak #2 Round then twine 1 row—be sure to place each twine stitch as close to the edge of your base as possible. Keep stakes evenly spaced as you twine a second row. Secure the ends of #2 Round Reed underneath a couple of twined stitches on the inside of the basket; trim ends.

To check the security of your stakes, push each stake into the slot, reseating the stakes if needed. Dampen the stakes around the edge of your twining, turn the base so the rough side of the stakes are upward, then gently bend each stake upward—coaxing it into its 'new' upright position. DO NOT crease the stakes—you want the stakes to gradually 'round' upward from the base and twining.

The remaining rows are start/stop rows. Soak each weaver before using and overlap the ends of each row across a distance of 4 stakes, hiding the ends. As you weave the first 5 stop/start rows with 1/4" Flat (rough side of reed to the inside of the basket), put some tension on the weaver to force the stakes upward. After a few rows the stakes should remain upright. (*I find it helpful to use several clothespins as I'm weaving the first few rows.*) Check security of stakes in slot before starting row 8.

Now weave 3 rows of 5/8" Flat Reed; hold stakes upright and maintain an even space between all stakes. You're working toward a 12" diameter.

Next you'll weave the accent rows using 5/8" Braided Seagrass and 1/2" DYED Navy Flat Reed (see photo). Follow these rows with 2 rows of 5/8" Flat Reed and 1 row of 3/8" Flat. The basket will be about 8" tall.

Here's the overall plan:

Rows 1 - 2	Twine with #2 Round Reed
Rows 3 - 7	1/4" Flat
Rows 8 - 10	5/8" Flat
Rows 11 - 15	Alternate 5/8" Braided Seagrass and 1/2" Dyed Flat (see photo)
Rows 16 - 17	5/8" Flat
Row 18	3/8" Flat (rim row / this row will be covered by the rims)

Pack rows. Soak portion of stakes that extend above the top row for several minutes—do not rewet the woven sides of the basket. Identify each stake where the top row of weaving is on the inside of the basket; crease, trim to length, then tuck each of these stakes behind a row of weaving on the inside of your basket. Cut all remaining stakes flush with the top of the basket.

**Handle, Rims and Lashing**

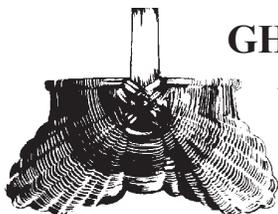
Locate two stakes, one on either side of the basket, on which to position the handle. Beginning at the upper row of 1/2" Dyed Flat Reed on the outside of the basket, insert the tapered ends of one of the Swing Handle's ears behind the weavers along one of the chosen stakes. Place the ear behind the weavers on the inside and the outside of the basket, pushing the ear downward behind one row of weaving at a time. Position the shelf of the ear's notch so it's level with the bottom of the rim row. Insert the other ear along its chosen stake. See photo for placement.

Soak the 1/2" Flat Oval. Determine the rim lengths, allowing about a 4" overlap. Mark and carve each overlap.

Attach rims & filler around top row with cable ties or twist ties; use #3 Seagrass for filler.

Single lash the rims with 1/4" Flat Reed, creating a backstitch across each ear of the handle.

Enjoy!



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