

Purim *Mishloach Manot* Basket

Because the technique of chair caning results in the creation of a hexagonal Magen David, we thought you would be interested in the following directions for caning with which you can make a large basket (10½" in diameter) and a smaller 7½" diameter basket. For further information, do as we did: consult your local library. These baskets make ideal holders for your Purim *Mishloach Manot* gifts and *hamantaschen*.

The following directions apply for both baskets which are woven exactly alike. Where the small basket requirements differ from the large one, the smaller dimensions are given in parenthesis.

Materials: *Large basket*—approx. 1½ oz. of wide, natural color winding reed and a little of the narrower winding reed for the border. *Small basket*—a smaller quantity of each of the same material, plus 2 pieces of No. 6 round reed, 21" long.

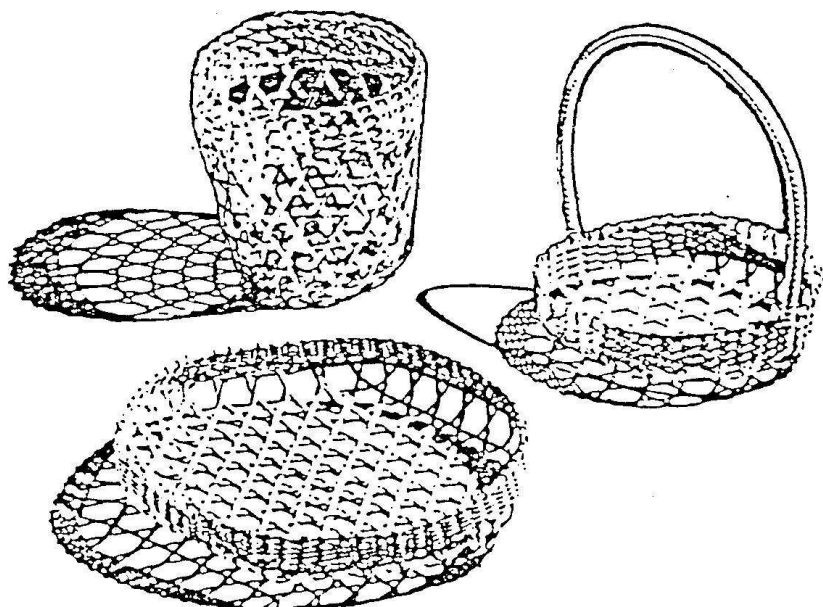
Cut 36 winding reed stakes 18½" in length (24 stakes, 3¾") and follow the directions given above for the caning pattern.

Weave 12 (8) crosses between the 2 horizontal winding reed stakes, and cross the perpendicular stakes on the outer side.

1) Weave in 5 (3) additional horizontal winding reed stakes above and 5 (3) below. There will now be 12 (8) rows of horizontal stakes facing in all directions.

2) To make the sides, weave with 2 winding reed weavers—preferably the narrow size—about 1" to 1½" straight up and tighten the work so that the edge is perpendicular. Finish the top by positioning a long piece of winding reed over the extreme top edge on the inner side turning the stakes over this and down again into the weaving—similar to the method of Border 4.

(Make a handle of 2 pieces of 21" round reed which is inserted into the straight woven sides and wrapped with winding reed. Glue it into place.)



Chair Caning Pattern Procedure

Caning is done with winding reed, usually in either wide or narrow, natural color reed. It must be done carefully, but it is not as difficult as it looks, and actually it works up rapidly. The stakes must be quite damp, otherwise they slip out of position quite easily. The size of the hexagonal (6-sided) opening which results from this weaving pattern is determined by the width and thickness of the winding reed used, as you involuntarily (and quite properly) push the reeds close together as you weave.

Clip the winding reed stakes and begin the weaving. As a rule, directions will ask for stakes of uniform length. The economics achieved by determining a more exact measurement of the length needed for each piece of this inexpensive craft material will not make up for the inconvenience and time lost in figuring it out precisely in advance.

1) Begin with a diagonal cross, something like an X (A-1 and 1; see pp. 88-89) Above and below in this X, weave-in two horizontal stakes (A-2 and 2). Then weave the required number of crosses on both sides continuing to weave-in the crossing stakes on each side of the horizontal stakes (A-4 and 4).

2) Then weave the next horizontal stake into the new cross A.4 on each side of the horizontal stakes A 2. above and below, so that you always, as we have done here, begin at the middle and longest row, and work yourself up and down from that position. You must constantly remember to weave-in the crossing stakes on each side of the last inserted horizontal stake, properly close to each other. The opening will then be smaller at the top and bottom to form the interesting hexagonal shape. Always maintain a true parallel in the horizontal stakes (Fig. B).

3) When the required total of crosses in all directions have been woven, you can begin the sides in plain weaving, using a long winding reed weaver to weave-in the crosses all the way around (Fig. C), leave the outer stakes uncrossed as they are to be used for the edge. Tighten up the weaving slightly to get the edges perpendicular. You can, as suggested previously, use some clothespins to hold them, and remember to keep the stakes well-dampened. As there are an even number of stakes, you must weave with two weavers, which is advantageous because it is easier to hold them in place (D). For the finished edge use Border 3 or 4.

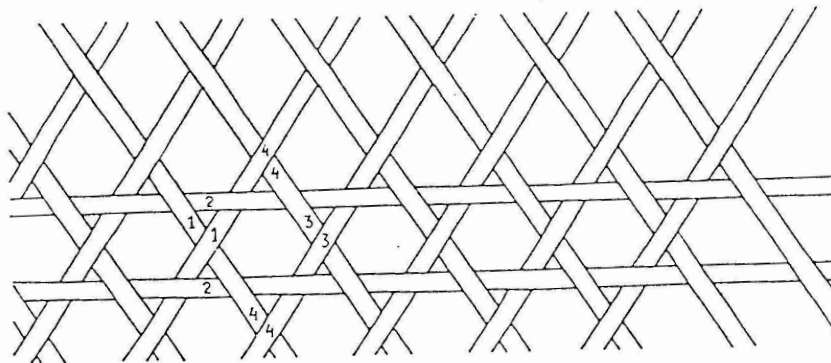


Fig. A: Setting-up the base. The numbers in the text (A 1, A 2, etc.) correspond to those in the drawings.

Fig. B: Weaving the base.

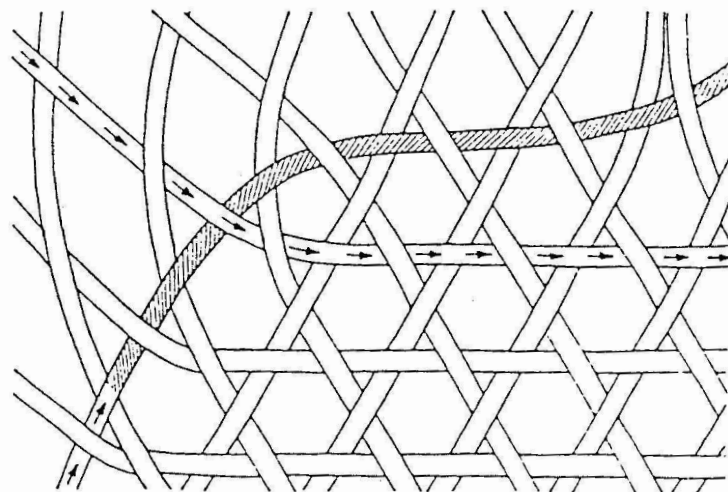
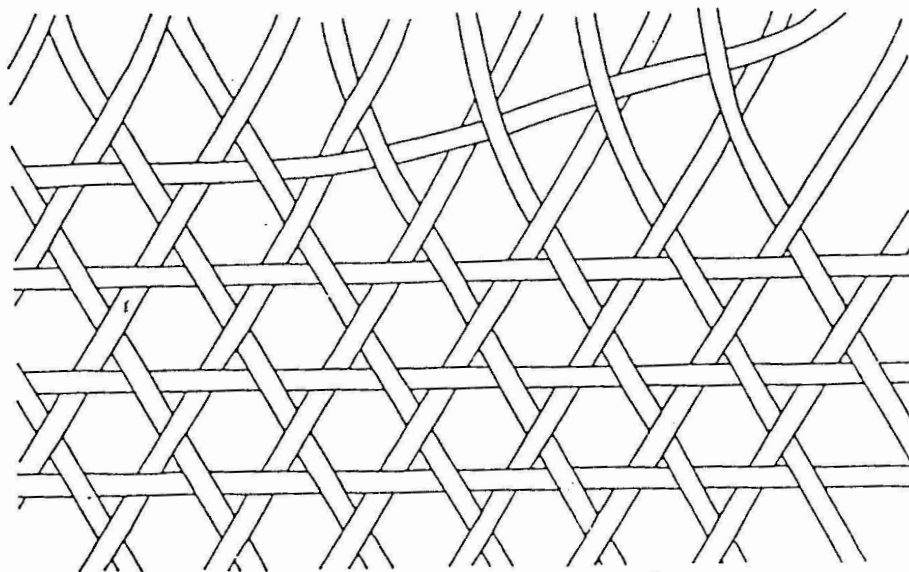


Fig. C: Beginning the sides of the basket. Weave with a long winding reed, shown here with hatching and arrows.

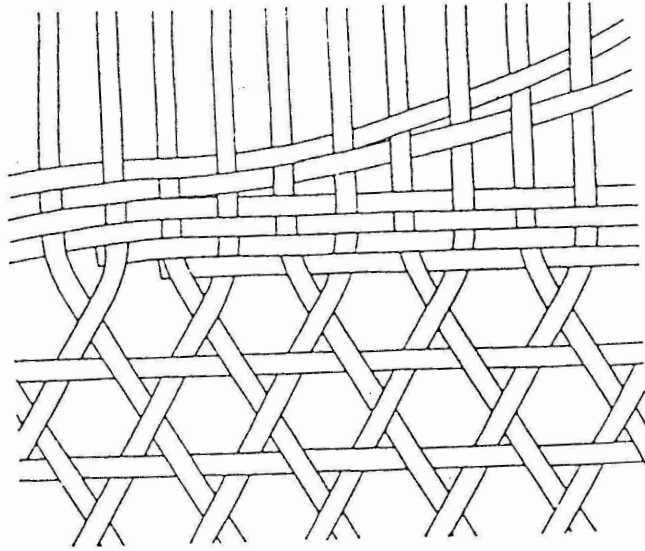


Fig. D:
Straight sides of the basket
are woven with two weavers.

