



Melissa's Basket

#8109

Originally made for Michael Sims' niece, Melissa, in December 1999, this popular basket is generously sized and easy to make. It's a great beginner project.

Materials/Supplies:

3/4" Flat Reed	75 ft.	Stakes & Weaver
5/8" Flat Reed	50 ft.	Weavers
3/16 " Flat or 1/4" (dyed)	20 ft.	Weavers
5/8" Flat (dyed)	5 ft.	Weaver
3/8" Flat	20 ft.	Weaver & Filler
12" Notched Handle	1	Handle
1/2" Flat Oval	10 ft.	Rims
#7 Round	5 ft.	Rim Filler
1/4" Flat	25 ft.	Lashing

Size: 13" x 10" (base) Height: 15"

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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. Soak round and flat oval reed for 5 to 10 minutes. Rewet reed as needed while weaving. *To minimize "running" of dyed reed, rinse several times and rub with towel before using.*
2. Do not over soak your reed, it will become mushy.
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.
4. Keep your weaving even as you make your basket. When weaving the sides, do not leave spaces between the rows of weaving.
5. As you weave, gently push or pull on the stakes to keep them vertical and to maintain a pleasing shape.
6. Reed should be completely dry before being stored.

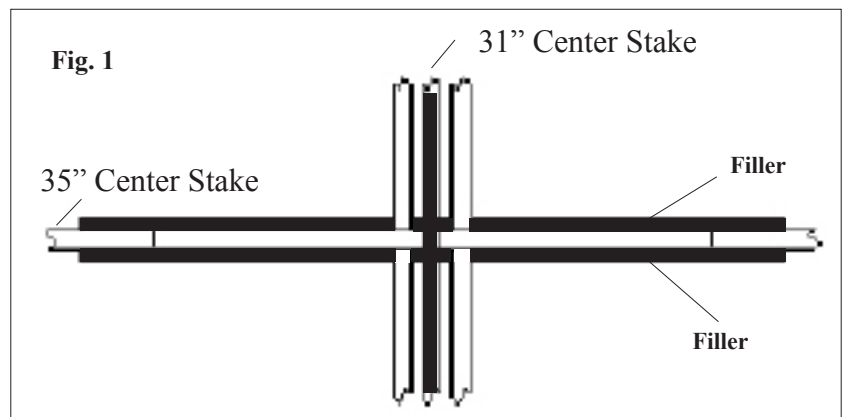
Weaving your Basket

Cut 9 pieces (stakes) 35" long and 11 stakes 31" long from 3/4" Flat Reed. Mark the center of each piece on the rough side. Tie a twist tie around the center of one marked 31" stake. Cut 8 pieces 20" long from 3/8" Flat Reed for the base fillers and mark centers on rough side.

Soak all the stakes and fillers. Weave the base with all pieces rough side up. **Lay a longer 35" stake horizontally.** Next, center the twist-tied 31" stake vertically on top of the 35" stake.

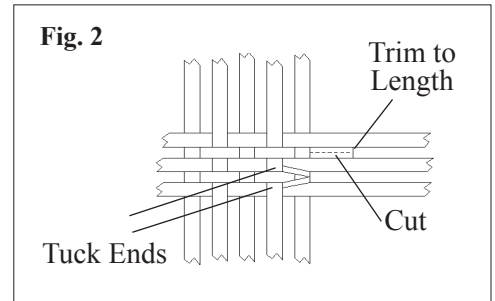
Lay 1 filler piece (3/8") along each side of the center 35" stake, **placing the filler pieces over the 31" stake as shown, tightly against the 35" stake.** See Fig. 1.

Weave a 31" stake parallel to each side of the center 31" stake—weaving over the fillers and under the 35" stake with about 3/8" space between. See Fig. 1.



Next, you'll add 4 more of the 31" stakes to each side of your base for a total of 11 31" stakes. Center each stake, weave it opposite the over one, under one pattern of its neighbor, and leave about 3/8" space between stakes. Adjust so the base measures 13" in length.

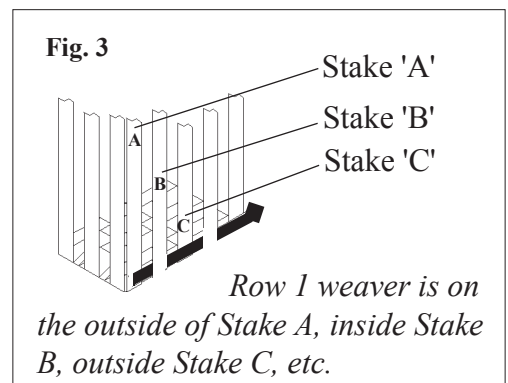
Note: For the remaining fillers and 35" stakes you will alternate stake, filler, stake, filler, etc. Be sure to place equal numbers of stakes and fillers on each side of the center 35" stake. Now, weave another 35" stake alongside each filler leaving no space between the filler and stake. Crease the fillers at the edge of the base on each side, trim to length, cut in two, and tuck. See Fig. 2.



Weave the remaining fillers and 35" stakes, alternating the weaving pattern and alternating stake, filler, stake, filler, etc. Place these into your base evenly to each side of the center 35" stake. Remember that you want to push every filler and 35" stake tightly against each other. You'll have a total of 8 fillers and 9 35" stakes and the base width will be about 10.5". Crease, trim, cut & tuck the remaining fillers (refer to Fig. 2).

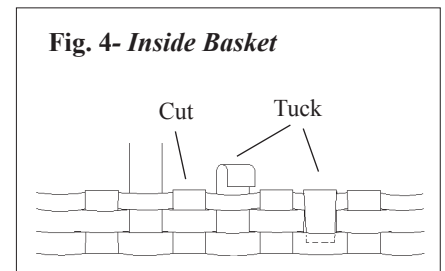
Soak the base and upset the basket by creasing each stake upward at the edge of the base.

Weave the sides in plain weave (rough side to the inside) as follows, using clothespins to hold the weaver in place on Rows 1 and 2:



Row 1	3/4" Flat (See Fig. 3)
Rows 2 - 7	5/8" Flat
Rows 8 & 9	3/16" or 1/4" Flat (dyed)
Row 10	5/8" Flat (dyed)
Rows 11 & 12	3/16" or 1/4" Flat (dyed)
Rows 13-15	5/8" Flat
Row 16	3/8" Flat

Pack the rows. Cut and tuck each stake where the top row of weaver is on the inside of the basket. Hide the tucked end behind a weaver on the inside of your basket. See Fig. 4.



Cut all remaining stakes level with the top of the basket.

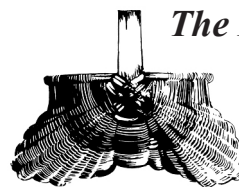
Insert the handle behind some weavers on the inside along the center stake of the long sides of your basket.

Measure the rims, allowing about a 4" overlap. Mark and carve the overlaps.

Attach rims and rim filler to the basket, cutting the rim filler to butt up against the handle on each side of the basket. Hold rims in place with plastic twist ties, clothespins or cable ties.

Single or double lash the basket (creating a backstitch at the handle) with 1/4" Flat.

This is such a wonderful basket in size and shape—and it's easy to make. I hope you really enjoy making and using the practical and pretty Melissa's Basket.



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