

Packing Your Handwoven Basket

Reed shrinks as it dries. Be sure to pack weavers tightly for a nice looking basket.

I often joke about walking into my first basket guild meeting with an ice cream pail, a pruning scissors, a pencil and a flat tip screwdriver, but... the story is completely true. You really don't need much to get started on your basket weaving journey and I had woven a number of baskets before going to my first guild meeting.

Experience is the best teacher for sure! I learn new things all the time that help me to improve my skills as a weaver and I've had help from many generous people along the way. If you're serious about weaving, you may want to take a look at your packing skills and maybe even invest in a few tools that will take your work to a new level.

Packing your handwoven basket is one of those skills that sets a great basket above the rest. As reed shrinks, lots of space between the weavers can be removed by careful packing. With a large basket this becomes VERY essential. It may seem tightly packed already. However an inch or more can sometimes be packed on a large basket, just by letting it dry overnight.

Allowing the basket to dry overnight will allow for last adjustments to those weavers before cutting and tucking.

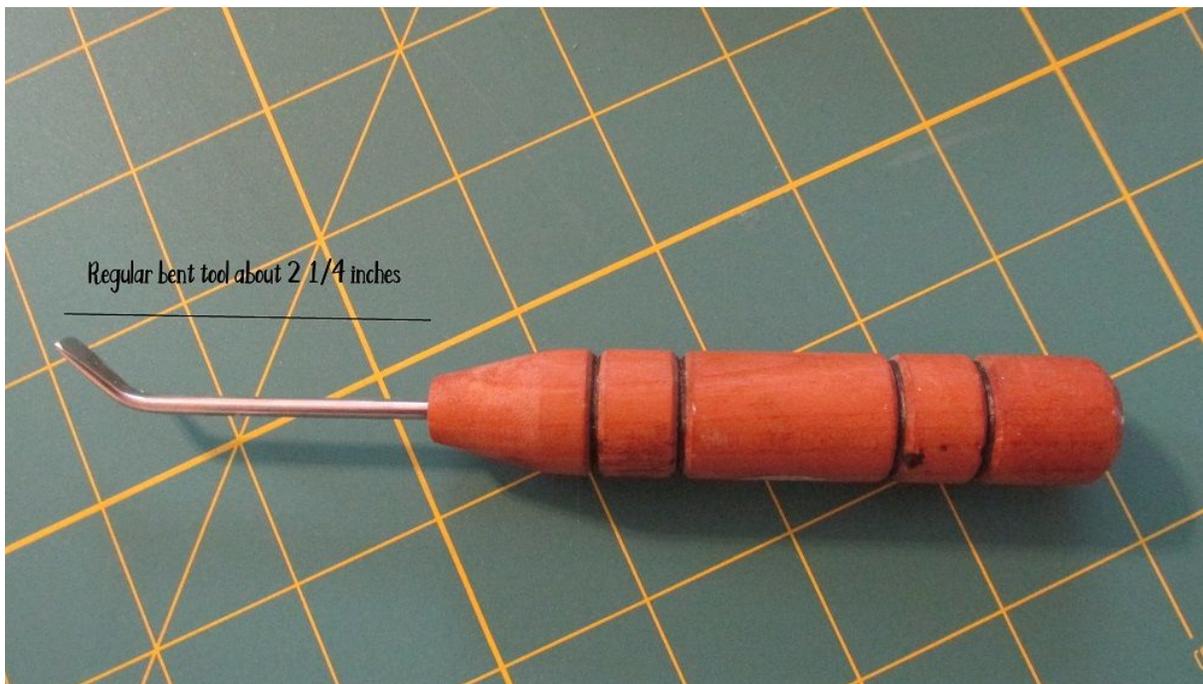


When the lower weavers on this basket were packed down there was a gap. This can be eliminated by continuing to carefully pack the weavers above it.

Instruction:

You **do not** need to wet your basket. Start at the bottom of the basket and gently move each row down by putting pressure on the top of the weaver and moving them toward you or down. Find a position that works well for you. Some people work better standing. For others it may be sitting, with the basket in your lap.

Work your way around the basket leveling each row as you work up the sides. The use of a packing tool is very helpful. Weave-Rite tools are good quality tools and sold by most basketry suppliers. There are a number of sizes and styles. The regular bent tip tool-with a tip of about 2 ¼ inches-works well for many baskets and is a good place to start. It is a great replacement for screwdrivers and fingernails!



Once you're finished with all your packing, you can cut and tuck your basket and get ready to rim.