

CANADIAN



LEATHERCRAFT

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How To Tackle A Leather Demonstration

by Madeleine Mitchell

....(Please Note: The author does not profess to be an expert demonstrator, but rather an interested bystander and avid observer.)

1. Pick Your Project - and, for Heaven's sake, make sure you can do it. High button boots make a quaint leather project, but do you truthfully think you can handle it in an hour and a half? Projects should be fun and easy - fun, so that, if you make a mistake you can get a laugh, and easy, because you don't want your audience having to show you what to do!
2. Research Your Project - Know its functions and proper name. Refrain from saying the "whatchacallit" and "thingamabob". Find out if there is another way to do it. Nothing can be more shattering than working for hours and then overhear a member of the audience say, "I made one of those with the kids in twenty minutes, using popsicle sticks." Check out variations. Occasionally slipped knife cuts and dye splotches can be passed off as variations, but be convincing!
3. Plan Of Attack - These steps should keep you modestly ahead of your audience.
 - (a) Display your samples. Borrow some if you sold your piece. Try to display colour, styles and function. If this is impossible, go for broke and say that the OCC has borrowed your entire collection for a private showing to an Arab sheik. (continued)

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2.

- (b) Keep to the time limit set by the organizer. Check this very carefully before beginning. Many the pregnant pause when you prepared for a 15 minute demonstration and they expected a four-hour workshop.
 - (c) Take every tool you own. Chances are the tool you left at home will be critical to the completion of the project. Asking your audience to lend you a saddle-stitching horse could be tacky.
 - (d) Find out about your audience. Are they "watchers" or "workers"? The "watchers" are the more difficult because they hang onto every word like it's scripture. The "workers" are great fun because they're as anxious as you to get the thing over with.
 - (e) Organize your technique into simple steps - the fewer the better. Audiences might get a little testy if you're at Step No. 104, and the project is not yet recognizable.
 - (f) Summarize in a single word, or pass around the finished project, (whichever comes first). If you encounter a number of vague looks, suggest that for a modest fee you could supply a written procedure. Then, track down the "note-taker". (every group has one), and offer to buy her notes.
4. Evaluation: You must ask yourself, were you understood? Did you use simple language or stun them with your ebullient didactic phraseology? Slang is a no-no, except in situations where your audience is heard to murmur, "heavy duty", for sure, and "take off-ay".

In conclusion, a demonstration is a literal time-bomb as your audience awaits the slip of your carving knife or the sticky encounter of the glue pot. However, never hesitate to accept an invitation to demonstrate. Not only is the invitation alone the essence of flattery, (never mind that six other people turned down the invitation), but Nirvana cannot be far away when your project, replicated by your eager audience, turns up at a C.S.C.L. Annual Meeting wearing a Salon ribbon!

HAZARDS IN LEATHERWORK

submitted by Carol McLean, F.C.S.C.L.

Source of Material:

- (1) Safe Practices in Arts and Crafts - A Studio Guide, by Gail Barazani, College Art. Assn. of America, 1978.
- (2) Artist Beware - by Michael McCann, Watson-Guption Publications, 1979.

I think that craftsmen are becoming more aware of the hazards encountered in "plying their trade", and it was on this topic that a conversation between myself and Sandra Dunn, (Information Services Officer, Crafts Resource Centre, Ontario Crafts Council), took place at the official opening of the Canadian National Exhibition this year.

She offered to send me any information that the O.C.C. had available, so that I could not only be aware of the dangers myself,

but be knowledgeable in the same, in order to pass this information on to my students and our Woodstock Guild. Upon reading what was sent, I realized that, because of its importance, it should be shared with every member of the Society. I felt that the Canadian Leathercraft was the best vehicle to do this. Please take the few minutes to read the following and share it with any fellow leatherworkers you know.

Also, if you are interested in the hazards related to any other medium, please drop Sandra Dunn a letter at the Ontario Crafts Council. I know that she would be happy to oblige with any information they had.

Sandra also included the following address, where a library service is available, which will see that information on specific chemicals etc. is sent out on request.

Industrial Accident Prevention Association,
2 Bloor Street East,
Toronto, Ont.
Tel: 416-965-8888

Reprinted from Safe Practices in Arts and Crafts - A Studio Guide:

LEATHERWORK

<u>Contact</u>	<u>Substances and Processes</u>	<u>Effects of Overexposure</u>
Inhalation or Skin Contact	Dyes, including aniline	Dyes may be toxic when absorbed by the skin. Aniline can damage red blood cells, causing anemia and possible kidney injury.
	Solvents in Dyes:	
	Ortho-dichlorobenzene	Strong skin irritant
	Xylene	Narcotic; can cause blood abnormalities, menstrual, heart irregularities.
	Nitrobenzene	Liver damage
	Alcohols	Can affect the nervous system
	Methyl alcohol (methanol)	Skin absorption can damage ocular nerve and cause blindness.
	Dusts of leather, Chemicals in and on leather & skins	Irritate respiratory tract and cause bronchitis. Chemical residues on shoe leather may cause dermatitis of feet.
	Dusts on skins, furs & other animal products may contain disease-producing organisms.	Although rare in the U.S., skins and animal yarns from developing countries, if not decontaminated, may carry anthrax.

<u>Contact</u>	<u>Substances and Processes</u>	<u>Effects of Overexposures</u>
Inhalation or skin contact	Cements and glues may contain rubber or resin solids, or toluene, polyvinyl alcohol, nitrocellulose, polystyrene base adhesives	Dermatitis, nervous system effects, nausea and dizziness.

What to do	1. Secure good ventilation especially local exhaust ventilation, for work with dyes, cements, burning tools. (Exhaust fan directly over work area.)	2. Use protective gloves for work with stains, dyes, cements, oils, waxes, other finishes.
	3. Wash hands frequently	4. Reserve work clothes for work area.
	5. Do not eat, drink, or smoke in the work area.	6. Keep children out of the work area when solvents or dyes are in use.

Reprinted from Artist Beware:

LEATHERCRAFT

Working with leather involves two basic steps. (1) cutting, carving, sewing, and other physical processes, and (2) cementing, dyeing, and finishing the leather.

Leather and Tools. Tools used to work leather include knives, awls, chisels, punches, needles, and bevelers. These can be used to cut, carve, model, lace, sew, and otherwise manipulate the leather into the shape and design desired.

Hazards. Inhalation of leather dust results in increased rates of nasal cavity and sinus cancer, and bladder cancer in leather and shoe workers. This appears after 40-50 years, and is probably not a serious hazard for leather craftsmen, as these cancers are still very rare.

Precautions. (1) Cut in a direction away from yourself and keep your free hand behind or to the side of knives and other tools that can slip. Do not try to catch sharp tools that fall. (2) Do not allow leather dust to accumulate. Vacuum it regularly.

Cementing, Dyeing, and Finishing. Leather cementing is done either with rubber cement or Barge cement. Before dyeing and finishing, the leather may be cleaned with an oxalic acid solution. Solvent-type dyes may contain denatured alcohol, carbitol, monochlorotoluene, or artho-dichlorobenzene. Oil dyes may contain turpentine or mineral spirits. Lacquer and resin finishes may contain a variety of solvents, including toluene (toluol). Waxes and preservative

mixtures such as neatsfoot oil may also be used as protective finishes.

Hazards(1)ortho-Dichlorobenzene and monochlorotoluene are moderately toxic by skin contact and ingestion, and highly toxic by inhalation. They can cause liver and kidney damage. Monochlorotoluene may also be absorbed through the skin.

(2). Rubber cements and their thinners that are labeled extremely flammable usually contain hexane which is highly toxic by inhalation, causing nerve inflammation and possible paralysis of the arms & legs.

(3) Toluene, found in Barge cement and many lacquers, is moderately toxic by skin contact and highly toxic by inhalation.

(4) Denatured alcohol is slightly toxic by skin contact and inhalation and moderately toxic by ingestion because of added toxic chemicals.

(5) Mineral spirits and Turpentine are moderately toxic by skin contact, and inhalation, and highly toxic by ingestion.

(6) Carbitol is moderately toxic by skin contact, slightly toxic by inhalation, and highly toxic by ingestion.

(7) Denatured alcohol, hexane, and toluene are flammable; mineral spirits and turpentine are combustible.

PRECAUTIONS

1. Use leather dyes that contain ethyl alcohol rather than ortho-dichlorobenzene or monochlorotoluene.
2. Wear gloves when using solvents and dyes.
3. Use solvents with good general ventilation.
4. Obey standard precautions against fire. Do not smoke or have open flames in areas in which solvents are used. Store waste rags in a self-closing safety container which is emptied each day.

I hope the above information is of use to each and every one of you. I think we sometimes take far too many things for granted in our work, even to the point of jeopardizing our own health. We are all aware that the sharp knives we use can cut badly, because it is something tangible that we can see, but tend to ignore an unseen hazard, because it is not obvious.

Your body is precious; protect it. You don't want liver damage; you don't want to have brain or eye damage, and you don't want to put an extra strain on your respiratory system. Guard your health.

I think that if craftsmen are aware of the dangerous substances, he can then protect himself.

That is my reason for this article. Forewarned is forearmed.

I don't mean to be a "crepe hanger" or a messenger of gloom and doom. Do enjoy working with leather, which is a wonderful medium, but do take care!

Editor's Note: We appreciate the material provided by the OCC for this article, and echo Carol's warning. Even your plants and pets suffer from products that some people pour about with gay abandon. Keep healthy by caution... we don't want to have to remove YOUR name off the mailing list due to an accident!!

Reprint of article from the London Free Press;
Submitted by Jean Pickering, Thamesford, Ontario.

LEATHER-MASK ART FORM POSSIBLY 3,000 YEARS OLD

Winnipeg(CP) - Doug Gibson, leathermask artist, practises an art form possibly 3,000 years old, but he draws much of his inspiration from a fantasy world.

"I don't know where the faces come from," Gibson said of his colorful forms. "They are almost other-dimensional... sometimes when forming the mask I deliberately use a hole in the wood or a scar in the leather to add a fantasy edge."

Gibson, a former belt-maker who also crafts leather wall hangings, said probably not more than 10 people in Canada produce leather art masks.

The masks were once part of a school of ancient art in which murals of embossed leather covered entire walls, he said. However, since leather does not preserve well, art historians have uncovered few traces of this art medium.

"In fact, there are no records of the use of wood or leather (as art)," Gibson said. "There is no doubt they were used as mediums, however. The traditional medium, canvas, has only been around for the last 300 years. What did they use before that?"

Gibson, and Wayne Burgeois, who has apprenticed with Gibson for several years, recently had their work on display at a craft fair in Winnipeg and pieces were sold to collectors in the U.S. & Canada.

Uses Saddle Leather :

The masks are made of vegetable-tanned, saddle leather, rather than synthetically-tanned hides.

The leather is placed in hot, almost boiling water where it is left immersed until the material takes on a loose clay-like consistency.

"It's organic and in this form it allows you to sculpt," Gibson said.

He often drapes the softened hide over a piece of wood carved into a specific form. The mask will take on the shape of the wooden form as it dries and hardens.

After they are sculpted, the dried forms are painted. Gibson uses acrylics, enamels, wood dyes, air brushed and other preparations to create the rich colours seen in his work.

"I'm a colorist," he said. "The effects of colour on leather are the same as on paper, but paper is one-dimensional. I can push the leather into a three-dimensional piece, a mix of painting and sculpture."

DESIGN SOURCE BOOKS by Carol McLean F.C.S.C.L.

A few people have asked me where I get all of my nice design, nature and other interest books, & I thought that it might be an idea to include it for everyone: (Free catalogue available).

PUBLISHERS CENTRAL BUREAU, Dept. 121,
220 Bartley Drive,
Toronto, Ont. M4A 1G2

Two of the books many have remarked about are- CHINESE FOLK DESIGNS by Willis M. Hawley # E 26336- \$5.00 and JAPANESE DESIGN MOTIFS, # E28746 - \$6.00.

LEATHER COVERED BOTTLES - by Carol McLean, F.C.S.C.L.

Always pre-sterilize any bottles that are going to be used as decanters. The method for doing this is as follows:

- (a) Wash well in warm water and soap.
- (b) Rinse well with hot water.
- (c) Drain well.
- (d) Place in COLD OVEN, then set heat indicator for 300 degrees.
- (e) After this temperature is reached, maintain at 300 degrees for 1 hour. Then turn oven off, but DO NOT REMOVE bottles.
- (f) When oven is completely cold again, remove bottles. This eliminates any possibility of cracked bottles.
- (g) Always keep any PLASTIC CAPS OUT OF OVEN, as they will melt.
- (h) LABELS WOULD BE WASHED OFF FIRST, of course.

REMEMBER... put bottles IN cold and take them OUT cold.

DIFFERENT STYLES OF COVERINGSType 1. Patchwork or Stained Glass effect.

For this, you use any or all of the following; suede, chrome-tanned or vegetable-tanned leather. Use either alone, or mixed together for textured contrast. Small pieces are utilized, making a project that uses up all those pieces that you do not want to throw out because they are too small for a project, but too valuable. (You paid just as much for them per inch as you did for the larger pieces!)

The seam or join lines are sometimes covered with lacing or strips of cut leather either of a matching or contrasting shade. e.g. White patches on the bottle, with black lace covering. (Optional).

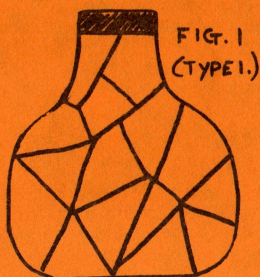


FIG. 1
(TYPE 1.)

If joins and fitting has been done exactly, which is very difficult and time consuming, no lace need be used to cover seams. It's your choice.

To adhere the leather to the bottle, I use either white cement (Weldbond type), and wait until it becomes "tacky" enough to hold OR put contact cement on a portion of the bottle and let it dry completely, then "dry fit" a few pieces in place at a time. After I am sure that they fit well, I then apply contact cement to the BACKS- (very important-don't get them mixed up at this point, and cement the fronts, as they will not fit upside down). Let them dry, and apply to bottle. Continue, a few pieces at a time.



FIG. 2.

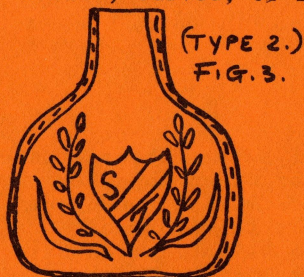
"SEAWEEED DESIGN"

I did a bottle with curved lines to simulate seaweed waving with the motion of and found the curved lines were difficult. A braid of three thongs of suede around the top edge of the bottle neck finished it off. I filled the central depression with Polyfilla, and let it dry, then sanded it smooth. A piece of leather was cut to fit the bottom

area, using a paper pattern made by tracing around the base while the bottle was sitting on a piece of paper. After this piece was fitted well, it was then skived to a "feather" edge, and glued down with white cement.

Type 2. Stitched Side Seam Bottle

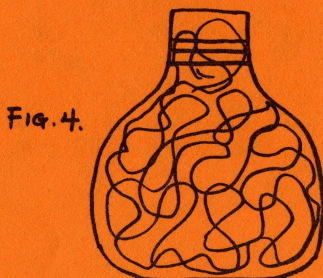
As this style has been previously written up in "Canadian Leathercraft", I will not repeat the technique again. Clara Cavanagh has demonstrated this style many times, and would be a good source of information for any enquiries re this method. It is sufficient to say that the bottle has sewn side seams, with saddle-stitched seams, and the surface of the leather may be tooled, carved, or left plain.



Type 3. Batik Dyed Leather Covering.

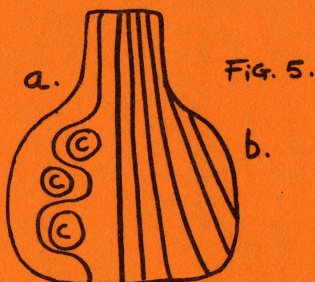
The bottle is covered with 1 1/2 oz. vegetable-tanned or English skiver, vegetable-tanned, that has been pre-dyed (before fitting to bottle), by the Wax Resist Batik Method or Crinkle technique and then adhered to the bottle using white cement.

The side seams are covered with either a strip of matching leather, or with lacing. (This method will be discussed later in detail). Decorative strips of lacing can be placed around the bottle neck as well as along the side seams.



Type 4. 3-Dimensional Effect

Shapes of cardboard are first glued to the bottle and then covered with skiver-weight leather. Some 3-D objects are string or heavy cord placed in an abstract or controlled pattern. The bottle (see Fig. 5) is divided in half to illustrate three effects. The left side of the bottle shows curved cord applied, sweeping around circles of applied cardboard. The right side of the bottle illustrates the use of either straight strips of cardboard, or a ray pattern using heavy cord. Cardboard or millboard or bristol board can be used, (giving various thicknesses). Found objects, such as split peas or grains of rice will give a very textural surface when skiver is molded around them.

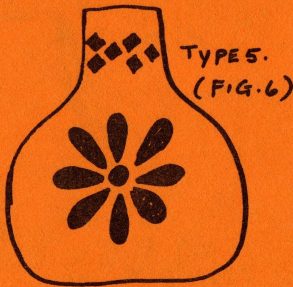


Another aspect of 3-D work is using a bottle that has interesting raised or depressed areas. Perhaps you will be fortunate enough to even find one having appropriate initials right in the glass. I once covered a bottle that had a letter "M" encircled by a scroll-

type border and felt very happy that I had been able to personalize a bottle so easily. Many other things can be of use if you try experiments using scrap first.

Type 5. Filagree Decoration (See Fig. 6)

This entails using either an interesting coloured bottle to shine through the filagree-work openings, or to have a different coloured piece of leather showing through the openings. This is accomplished by using an interesting, contrasting-coloured piece of thin leather that has been skived paper thin to eliminate bulk from behind the leather. (This could cause an unpleasant bulge if the bulk of the leather was not skived away).



Stencil ideas can be used here as well as many other leather filagree designs.

Monograms are also very striking when used in this situation as well.

Type 6. Butt-seams

Bottles can be fitted so exactly with a covering, that the seams are butt-joined, and since they are so neat in their fit, these seams need no covering with further material.

Type 7. Side Seams Overlapped

The side seams are fitted to precisely incorporate a 1/8"-1/4" overlap that is skived very thinly and engineered to come at the exact side seam (or 4-seam) points. This can be a great challenge because the leather can either shrink or stretch as it is put on the bottle. Often the last final fit has to be done after all but 3/4" at the edges has been glued down, and any extra skiving done at this point if needed.

The leather MUST be pre-dyed for this technique because any white glue on the leather that is still in its natural state would act as a resist when dye was later applied.

I usually PRE-DYE ALL my leather before I apply it to the bottle to avoid this problem, no matter what type of technique I am using to cover it.

These techniques need not be relegated to just bottles as decanters, but can also be used to cover bottles without lids as decorative accents in a room - or as dried weed & grass holders. Small bottles, such as spice bottles, make an interesting subject for this technique, and serve the double purpose of being decorative and colour-schemed to your kitchen, while also keeping sunlight away from your spices for added protection of the flavour. Small jars can also be covered to use as containers on a dresser top or vanity. Many more uses are awaiting your imagination. These are just a few as a start for your own thinking.

Combinations of two or more types together can be very interesting, too. e.g. Side seam saddle-stitched with a filagree design as a decoration, or a butt-joined seam type with 3-D work on it, and a decorative seam covering.

Type 8. Side Seams as Decoration

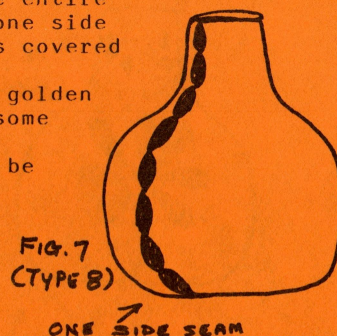
This style uses the theory that, if you can't make the join at the side seams inconspicuous, then make it so very obviously a part of your design that the seam will disappear.

Cover the bottle as you would for a butt join, leaving the covering leather perfectly undecorated, -(only dyeing to enhance it at this stage.) Then place cut-out shapes up the entire seam line. e.g. A U.S.A. Bicentennial idea - one side of the bottle red, one side blue, and the seams covered with a pattern of white stars.

A Canadian theme - The bottle covered with golden tan coloured leather. The seams covered with some maple leaves dyed in autumn shades.

Circles or ovals, or other such shapes can be used for similar purposes.

Another obvious covering for the seam is a braid of 3-5 strands of leather lacing, either one shade, or assorted. This braid can also be used around the neck of the bottle to carry out the decorative design theme.



Type 9. 3-D Leather Tooled Decoration

A piece of leather can be glued to the bottle in the desired spot, with the edges either skived or left square, (whichever you desire to incorporate into the design of the project.) When the covering piece of skiver leather is glued, and still damp, a design or monogram of your choice is tooled into the leather. Because you have the extra depth of the previously adhered piece of leather behind the skiver, you are able to depress the skiver into it and get a lovely tooled effect that would not be possible with the skiver itself against the hard bottle surface. As the glass would not "give" under the skive, you would not be able to depress the surface properly. A piece of dalex can be used behind the skiver as a base for tooling, and even leather "splints" are fine.

TIPS: If there are raised bumps or numbers on the glass bottle, they can be sanded off with sandpaper, or a carborundum stone.

Check your leather on the back side for weak spots by holding it up to the light. Mark these areas on the back, for reference when cutting out pieces later. This is particularly important when using skiver weight leather, or Rose Marie weight skiver.

Pre-dyed skivers can also be used to cover the bottles, although colour choice is quite limited.

Little perfume bottles and flavouring bottles make interesting shapes to cover if you like to work in "miniatures", and these are particularly attractive when used in an accent grouping.

TO COVER A BOTTLE (using lace to cover seams)- SUPPLIES & TOOLS REQ'D

Scissors: Exacto knife, (#11 blade) avery sharp, pointed blade:
 White glue, (water-base) Weldbond is the type I use: Glue Brush:
 Skiving knife: Pinking Shears-(opt.): Pencil: Indelible felt
 marking pen: Modeller-tracer: Marble or glass for skiving surface:
 Polyfilla (opt.) to fill any depressions in bottom of bottle: Bone
 folder: Bottle to be covered: Natural colour vegetable-tanned
 skiver weight leather: Dye: Polish coat: Bristol board (if 3-D
 work is desired): Masking tape: Lacing: Newspapers for dyeing
 surface: Cotton sheet or similar material, about 2 feet square,
 for making a pattern: Tracing paper.

METHOD: PREPARING BOTTLE & CAP FOR COVERING

Pre-wash and sterilize bottle if it is to be used as decanter.
 Using indelible marker, draw the seam lines on the bottle using
 the seam lines on the bottle. Occasionally these seam lines will
 have to be adjusted to even them out as some glass bottle seams are
 uneven. These marked lines are VERY IMPORTANT later, as they are
 your guides to making your cloth pattern.

This is a good time to make "sketches" directly on the bottle to
 try out a design for a 3-D effect. It can easily be removed with a
 cloth if you want to experiment a few times. Tracing paper can be
 placed over these dark lines (drawn on the bottle with the felt
 marking pen), and copied so that you can transfer them to the
 bristol board. Two or three layers of bristol board can be glued
 together and then cut out from this pattern and then glued to the
 bottle, following your original sketch lines on the bottle. Use white
 glue for this job, at the "tacky" stage. If your bottle is very
 round and has very curved sides it may be difficult to keep these
 pieces glued to it. You may have to either adjust your pattern or
 place it on a different spot on the bottle. Contact cement will
 give a "little bit more strength" to this bonding process, and can
 be used instead of the white glue for this work.

Remove any 3-D marker lines from the bottle now, as you do not
 want them to bleed through the covering leather later. Do not remove
 side seam lines yet, though as you still need them.

CAP: If it has external screw lines, it is best to cover the
 outside of the cap with 3 or 4 wrappings of masking tape. Trim off
 flush with the top of the cap. Make sure bottom of cap is even too.

If desired to cover "shaker" holes of a spice bottle glue a
 bristol board circle over top of them before covering with leather.
 Two or three circles of different sizes can be stacked here
 to give a 3-D effect. The leather can be tooled along the
 edges of the circles to accentuate the pattern. See
 (Fig. 7a) illustrating this stacked effect..... Fig. 7a.



MAKING A CLOTH PATTERN

Cover 1/2 of the bottle with many pieces of masking tape that
 has been formed into circles with the sticky side out. Place these
 especially along the side seams, centre area of the bottle, and top
 neck edges and bottom edges. These will keep the cloth stable so
 that a pattern can be made from which to cut your leather.

Place a piece of cotton fabric on the centre area of the bottle and smooth as much as possible towards the side, bottom and neck edges. The fabric can be gently adjusted on the bias grain to fit a bit snugger. Do not worry if it does not fit as neatly as your leather will later, as the cloth is just an approximate fit now. Trim the fabric to within $1/2$ " of the seam lines marked on the side of the bottle. Also, leave $1/2$ " at the top, (if a screw top is to be used), OR $1\ 1/2$ " if top edge is to be tucked inside the bottle top. Also leave about 1" at the bottom of the bottle as the leather must be wrapped around to the underneath part. Double check that all parts of the bottle that need to be covered will be when leather replaces the cloth.

If both sides of the bottle are the same, then one pattern will do for both sides. If not, then two patterns must be cut out. Some bottles have four sides, either 4 equal (1 pattern to cut) or rectangular, (2 patterns to be cut.) Mark on your pattern whether 1, 2 or 4 pieces are to be cut from the pattern.

BOTTOM OF BOTTLE

Place the bottle on the fabric in a "sitting" position, and trace around the base, giving the approximate size piece needed. It is best to allow a bit extra as leather will sometimes shrink in the dyeing process. Mark "Cut 1" on this pattern piece.

CAP

Place cap on fabric and trace around and add $1/4$ " all around. Mark this piece of pattern "Cut 1". Lay cap on side and by rolling it along, follow both the bottom and top edges to give shape needed to cover it. Mark "Cut 1" on this piece also. Some caps can be covered with a circle for the top of the cap and a straight strip for the side. Allow approximately $1/2$ " to $3/4$ " overlap for the side seam. Other caps may require a flared shape because the cap is wider at one edge than the other, creating a pattern piece shaped as illust. Allow approx. $1/4$ " both top and bottom edges for fitting later.



Using cloth pattern pieces, lay these out on the BACK of the leather. Using a pencil, lightly mark around the pattern pieces to find out how much leather is needed.

NOTE: DO NOT CUT THESE PIECES OUT INDIVIDUALLY NOW. (CUT ONLY THE WHOLE AREA OF LEATHER TO BE USED OUT OF THE HIDE NOW.) THE ENTIRE PIECE OF LEATHER IS NOW DYED TO DESIRED SHADE NOW. LET DRY TO SEE IF COLOUR IS RIGHT. IF NOT, ADD MORE DYE NOW. LET DRY.

Recheck that pattern pieces marked on the back of this leather are still correct size, or if leather shrank during dyeing step. Enlarge pencil tracings if pieces are too small. Make sure that no unwanted marks on the dyed side of the leather are evident that will spoil the finished effect of the bottle later on.

Carefully cut out the pieces along guide lines. Leave the trimmed areas between the cut outs as large as possible because they can be used to later cover seams or perhaps be used as

a decorative accent on another project. (Scraps can be used as pin back reinforcements when making jewellery).

Partially dampen the leather when molding to each section of the bottle, although, when pieces need to be initially fitted to the bottle it is best to keep them dry until after fitting and skiving is completed. Dampen only when finally glueing the shape. (Usually only bottom and 2 pieces of the cap enter into this category.)

Using a 1/4"-1/2" brush and white glue that has been partially diluted with water, spread the glue on the central area only of the bottle. Centre the dyed piece of leather over this area with the flesh side of the skin against the glued bottle. The leather can be gently moved around until it is exactly where it should be. Make sure there is enough to wrap around the bottom to where it will not be seen, (so ~~that~~ the bottom will be inconspicuous when fastened later,) and enough for the top and sides of the bottle.



FIG. 8

If you have a 3-D design on the bottle, this is the time to tool or shape the leather into it. Sometimes a Q-Tip is an excellent tool for this, and will not mark the leather if used gently. Leather may have to be redampened as you work, to keep it manageable. When you are satisfied that the leather is as you wish it on this central area, spread a bit more glue in an ever-widening ring out from the glued area. Smooth the leather over this, working the wrinkles & excess towards the seam lines and shoulders of the bottle. Continue by glueing a bit more at a time, then smoothing leather until you are out to the marked seam line. Often it is necessary to trim very carefully to remove some of the excess leather in the neck-shoulder area of the bottle until it will stay glued to the bottle. Be very careful that you do not take away too much when you are cutting. I find that sometimes a gentle bias pull will help to work excess leather to an area where it can be controlled or eliminated, especially at the shoulders of the bottle, (See fig. 9. for pull pattern.) Try pulling in direction of arrows to spread the fullness around. Smooth with your fingers. BE CAREFUL NOT TO OVER-STRETCH THE LEATHER AS IT MAY SHRINK WHEN DRYING AND PULL AWAY FROM THE SEAMS, OR EVEN TEAR OR SPLIT!

An easy way to mark where the leather should be trimmed for the side seams is by doubling it back & folding it along the marks you drew on the bottle seams. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO MAKE SURE THE SEAMS ARE STRAIGHT, AS A CROOKED OR OFF-CENTRE SEAMS CATCH THE EYE QUICKLY AND CAN ONLY BE FIXED NOW! Lifting the leather back from the seam line approx. 1/2", trim with scissors on the fold line. Keep this trimmed piece - often it is also used as a seam covering "lace". Glue up to the seam line and smooth leather on to the bottle. Take care to keep the glue off the outside leather.

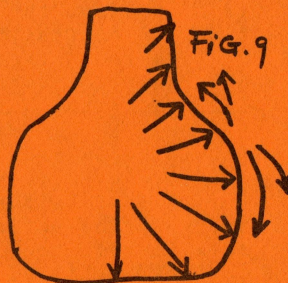
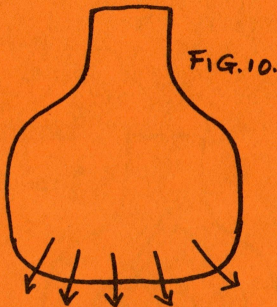


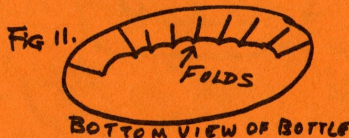
FIG. 9

The top of the bottle is trimmed exactly below the screw-top section if a cap is used, or molded up over the lip of the bottle and tucked and glued to the inside of the neck of the bottle.



The bottom-side section of the bottle is next glued, and smoothed to remove excess leather folds. When trimming this leather, take into consideration that the leather circle (or oval) that covers the bottom of the bottle should never show when the bottle is sitting on a table top. (Make sure to pull the top section of the leather under the bottle by a good amount to avoid this.)

Often folds cannot be eliminated completely but can be smoothed out flat with a modeler so that the bottom covering piece can lie flat and the bottle will sit and not teeter.



Do the second (plus 3rd and 4th if square bottle is used) side of the bottle in the same manner. Try to butt the seams as neatly as possible. Let sides dry as you work on the bottom covering piece.

BOTTOM OF BOTTLE

Place dry bottom piece of leather in place, trim as close as is possible, making sure that the folds from the side leather are well covered. Sometimes it is wise to make an orientation mark (on a spot which will be covered later), as a guide in fitting this piece. Skive the bottom leather to a feather edge. (VERY IMPORTANT!!)

Try for an exact fit now and make any adjustments. Set the piece aside for a moment until the seams are covered.

SIDE SEAMS

Decide what you are going to use for covering the seams, either lacing (contrast or matching), 1, 3, or 5 pieces in a braid, or a strip of the matching leather skiver, which can be either the trimming from the side seam area or a piece from the original dyed hide. A contrasting strip of skiver could be used as an alternative.

Trim the skiver piece to a 1/8th" or 1/4" width, the length necessary to cover the length of the whole seam PLUS enough to wrap under the bottle to the same distance that the side material has been turned under the bottom of the bottle. The lower 1" section should be skived very thinly as a bumpy seam would cause the bottle to sit unevenly. If you wish, pinking shears can be used to cut out this strip for a different touch. It's a good idea to pre-dye these strips before glueing them on to the bottle, (if they are not yet coloured.) After skiving and fitting, apply glue carefully to back of strip, and place strip along seam line. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT YOU ARRANGE SEAM COVERING IN A STRAIGHT LINE. DOUBLE CHECK!! Centre this strip carefully at both top and base, and keep TOTALLY STRAIGHT DOWN THE SIDE!! Pat down seams with a Kleenex to avoid glue oozing out onto the finished side sections.

BOTTOM SECTION

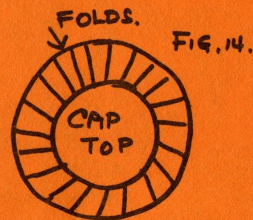
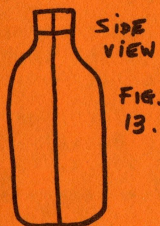
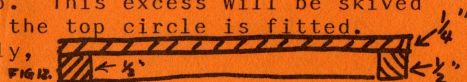
Glue this prepared section in place, watching for excess glue!

COVERING CAP OF BOTTLE

Sides of cap are covered first. Screw lid on bottle & mark where a side seam of the bottle comes. Take cap off. Temporarily fit the leather to the cap by wrapping it around the sides, and allow a 1/4" - 1/2" overlap before trimming any leather from the length. The leather is kept flush with the bottom of the cap & is trimmed to allow approximately 1/8" - 1/4" at the top. This excess will be skived and molded to the top of the cap before the top circle is fitted.

Skive this 1/4" top line area very thinly, (see Fig. 12) and also skive the 1/2" overlaps, eliminating bulk in the overlap. Both ends of the overlap are skived on the underside for 1/2 of the amount of the overlap. Apply glue to the flesh side of the leather and place it in such a manner on the cap as to align the seam of the cap strip with one seam line of the bottle. (Fig. 13)

After the side of the cap has been fitted, then gently fold the skived area over the top edge of the cap & smooth out with a modeller or fingers. (See Fig. 14) Place dry top circle on lid, and trim to fit. Skive edge feather thin. Glue on to top of cap. Smooth out with a tissue. Gently remove any excess white glue with a Kleenex and warm water.



If any further dye is needed, you can give the entire bottle another coat now. MAKE SURE YOU LIGHTLY MOISTEN THE LEATHER BEFORE YOU DO ANY DYEING TO AVOID STRWAKS ETC. Let dry completely. Buff well with a soft flannel cloth to remove any dye sediment.

FINISHING

Polish coat the entire bottle and cap. I find it a good idea to do the bottom first, so that the coverage on the sides and top (visible areas) can be done in one smooth coat. Sometimes I can invert the bottle on a small wooden dowel until it is dry on the bottom, thus eliminating any marks while wet. Buff well when dry.

If you wish to skive the side seams, the fitting is more exacting before glueing the leather to the bottle. 1/4" is skived on either edge of each section so that all bulk is eliminated. Keep the style simple when using this technique to make the fitting easier.

SUMMARY

I know that this has been a lengthy article, but I felt that there was so much to say on the topic. Any points that are unclear, or special questions left unanswered may be asked by mail, and I will try to answer these problems. I sincerely hope that you will try bottle covering, a fascinating and versatile part of our craft, since each bottle is different in its problems, requiring that one go step by step. Don't let it overwhelm you, as it can be done, and, like peanuts, you won't be able to stop with one. You'll want to explore different shapes of bottles, use different techniques, and have many design ideas. Happy Bottle Covering!!

Carol McLean, F.C.S.C.L.

UPCOMING EVENTS

We trust that by the time you have this bulletin, you will have already received both your NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING and CALL FOR ENTRY, LEATHER'82. If anyone in your Branch needs either of these forms, please contact your Editor:

Mary M. Patterson,
270 Durie Street, Toronto.

***** M6S 3G3 Tel: 769-5705. *****

Our ANNUAL MEETING plans are well underway, for the Apr. 30, May 1&2 weekend, here in Toronto, at the Holiday Inn West, Highway 427.

We urge you to send in your registration form as early as possible, with cheque to cover registration fee and banquet. Please mail to: Mr. George McPhail, 3 Lambton Ave. Toronto M6N 2S2. (Payable to "CSCL").

Also requested are room reservations, BUT DO NOT ENCLOSE PAYMENT! (You pay at the hotel yourself!) Send room reservations to: Mrs. Gladys Riddell, Apt. 204, 65 Southport St., Toronto M6S 3N6.

Gladys will also undertake to answer any special enquiries re the accommodations, plans etc. if you telephone her. 416-762-7466. (Please telephone after 5 p.m. on week-day evenings.)

LEATHER '82 - Entry forms and articles will be accepted by Bob and Dorothy Muma at their new home address: 625 Rushton Road, Toronto M6C 2Y8.

Entry Fee: \$3.00

Entries close: 10:00 a.m., May 28th.

We are hoping that Leather'82 will be as fine an exhibit as ever assembled by the C.S.C.L. members, but your work is needed!! We particularly remind our Members-at-Large that we will be looking for their entries, since they don't have a Branch executive to nudge them into preparing pieces for our Biennial Exhibition!

Leather '82 Opening: July 1

Place: The Gallery,

City of Brampton

Public Library and Art Gallery

150 Central Park Drive, Bramalea, Ont.

Watch for details of our upcoming SPRING WORKSHOP in next issue:

Subject: CRAFT PHOTOGRAPHY

Date(to be confirmed) Sat. May 29th

This is a vitally important aspect of crafts; don't miss it!

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We appreciate the fine job of reporting done by the members of the Woodstock Branch for this issue of Canadian Leathercraft. Barrie Branch is preparing the Spring issue, and we would like to remind members to send in their SHOP TIPS.... we need them anytime!

For those who keep their issues of Can. Leathercraft, an updating of the index is presently underway. Watch for it soon.