

Comprehensive Basket Weaving Course Outline

Course Structure

- **Phases:** 4
 - **Total Weeks:** 16
 - **Total Lessons:** 32
 - **Duration per Lesson:** 60 minutes
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Phase 1: Foundations and Cultural Understanding (Weeks 1-4)

Week 1: Introduction and Cultural Heritage

Lesson 1.1: History and Cultural Significance

- Origins of basketry across civilizations
- Role in daily life and ceremonial practices
- Evolution from necessity to art form

Lesson 1.2: Global Basketry Traditions

- Indigenous Basketry Practices overview
- Regional variations and distinctive styles
- Cultural storytelling through basket patterns

Week 2: Materials and Sustainability

Lesson 2.1: Natural Materials and Properties

- Understanding material behavior and characteristics
- Sustainable harvesting practices
- Environmental consciousness in basketry

Lesson 2.2: Material Preparation Techniques

- Steaming and bending processes

- Mellowing and skeining methods
- Proper storage and care of materials

Week 3: Essential Tools and Workspace

Lesson 3.1: Traditional and Modern Tools

- Bodkin, rapping iron, and gauge usage
- Workspace setup and organization
- Safety considerations and ergonomics

Lesson 3.2: Understanding Basket Anatomy

- Stake, weaver, and bye-stake identification
- Foundation, foot, and crown elements
- Tension and structural principles

Week 4: Design Principles and Planning

Lesson 4.1: Form Following Function

- Functional vs decorative basketry approaches
- Scale, proportion, and symmetry concepts
- Negative space and volume considerations

Lesson 4.2: Pattern Development and Color Theory

- Rhythm and repetition in weaving
 - Natural dyes and color combinations
 - Planning basket dimensions and capacity
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Phase 2: Fundamental Techniques (Weeks 5-8)

Week 5: Basic Plaiting and Foundation Work

Lesson 5.1: Simple Plaiting Techniques

- Over-under weaving patterns
- Creating stable foundation patterns
- Maintaining consistent tension

Lesson 5.2: Foundation Construction Methods

- Square and round base techniques
- Stake placement and spacing
- Pricking up and upset transitions

Week 6: Core Weaving Techniques

Lesson 6.1: Randing and Basic Weaving

- Single rod weaving (randing)
- English and French randing variations
- Maintaining pattern consistency

Lesson 6.2: Pairing and Reverse Pairing

- Two-rod weaving techniques
- Creating decorative effects
- Tension control and spacing

Week 7: Intermediate Weaving Patterns

Lesson 7.1: Slewing and Multiple Rod Techniques

- Multi-rod weaving patterns
- Creating textural variations
- Troubleshooting common issues

Lesson 7.2: Fitching and Decorative Elements

- Fine material decorative weaving
- Creating bands and accent areas
- Color integration techniques

Week 8: Shaping and Structure

Lesson 8.1: Controlling Basket Shape

- Tapering and expanding techniques
- Creating curves and angles
- Maintaining structural integrity

Lesson 8.2: Problem Solving and Adaptation

- Correcting mistakes and irregularities
- Adapting patterns during construction
- Quality control standards

Phase 3: Advanced Techniques and Specialized Methods (Weeks 9-12)

Week 9: Coiling Techniques

Lesson 9.1: Basic Coiling Methods

- Core preparation and binding techniques
- Starting the coil foundation
- Maintaining even coil spacing

Lesson 9.2: Advanced Coiling Patterns

- Decorative stitching variations
- Shape manipulation in coiled work
- Pine needle and grass coiling

Week 10: Twining and Complex Weaves

Lesson 10.1: Twining Fundamentals

- Basic twining techniques
- Open and closed twining
- Creating structural strength

Lesson 10.2: Continuous and Start-Stop Weaves

- Advanced weaving methodologies
- Seamless pattern transitions
- Complex geometric designs

Week 11: Wickerwork and Stake Techniques

Lesson 11.1: Stake and Strand Construction

- Traditional wickerwork methods
- Ribbing and structural elements
- Creating rigid frameworks

Lesson 11.2: Tracking and Chasing

- Complex multi-rod patterns
- Maintaining alignment and spacing

- Advanced tension management

Week 12: Borders and Finishing

Lesson 12.1: Border Construction Techniques

- Trac border and follow-on trac
- Rope border variations
- Plait border methods

Lesson 12.2: Scalloping and Decorative Finishes

- Creating twisted decorative elements
 - Securing and finishing techniques
 - Final quality assessment
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Phase 4: Mastery and Specialization (Weeks 13-16)

Week 13: Handle and Lid Construction

Lesson 13.1: Handle Design and Construction

- Bow handle attachment methods
- Reinforcement and durability
- Ergonomic considerations

Lesson 13.2: Lid Making and Fitting

- Creating properly fitted lids
- Hinge and closure mechanisms
- Decorative lid treatments

Week 14: Regional Specializations

Lesson 14.1: Native American Techniques

- Traditional patterns and methods
- Cultural significance and respect
- Contemporary applications

Lesson 14.2: European Heritage Methods

- Willow basketwork traditions

- Regional variations and styles
- Historical authenticity

Week 15: Restoration and Conservation

Lesson 15.1: Assessment and Repair Techniques

- Identifying structural issues
- Matching materials and techniques
- Preservation ethics

Lesson 15.2: Documentation and Records

- Photographing and cataloging work
- Maintaining craft lineage
- Teaching and knowledge transfer

Week 16: Portfolio Development and Mastery

Lesson 16.1: Creating a Personal Style

- Developing signature techniques
- Innovation within tradition
- Artistic expression and creativity

Lesson 16.2: Teaching and Community Engagement

- Sharing knowledge effectively
 - Building basketry communities
 - Commercial applications and opportunities
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Assessment Methods

Practical Projects

- Week 4: Simple plaited mat
- Week 8: Basic round basket with border
- Week 12: Advanced basket with decorative elements
- Week 16: Master project showcasing personal style

Knowledge Assessments

- Terminology quizzes (ongoing)

- Cultural context discussions
- Material identification tests
- Technique demonstrations

Portfolio Requirements

- Process documentation with photos
 - Reflection essays on cultural significance
 - Technical drawings and planning sketches
 - Final exhibition-quality pieces
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Learning Outcomes

Upon completion, students will:

- Master fundamental and advanced basketry techniques
- Understand cultural contexts and traditions
- Demonstrate material knowledge and sustainability practices
- Create functional and artistic basket forms
- Teach basic techniques to others
- Appreciate basketry as both craft and art form
- Apply problem-solving skills to basketry challenges
- Maintain respect for traditional practices while developing personal style