

Coiled Cedar Basket



Artifact Type: Coiled Cedar Basket

Material: Cedar and Bear Grass, Dyed or Soaked Cherry Bark

Description: Coiling is a technique which involves sewing. A foundation material (such as split root bundles) is coiled upwards and stitched into place. A pointed tool called an awl is used to pierce a hole in each coil. The sewing element (such as the shiny outer surface of a split cedar root) is then threaded through the hole and sews that coil down to the coil below it.

Coiled baskets can be woven so tightly that they hold water. In the past, coiled baskets were also used for cooking. On the Northwest Coast, Salish weavers are well known for their coiled baskets. They are often decorated with geometric motifs. A special technique known as imbrication is used to decorate coiled basketry. Imbrication involves folding the decorative element (such as horsetail root or bear grass) under each sewing stitch on the outer surface of the basket. Imbrication folds on a basket resemble rows of corn kernels.



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