

HOW TO MAKE BASKETS

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How to make baskets by Mary White

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MARY WHITE

**HOW TO
MAKE BASKETS**



GRAIN PLAQUES—Of the Hopi, Apache, Havasupai and Pima Indians, from New Mexico and Arizona. PIMA SCRAP BASKET—Arrow-head design, now adapted to white men's needs. RARE DOUBLE-WEAVE CHOCTAW COVERED BASKET—From Louisiana. PAINTY GUMMED WICKER WATER-JAR—The handles of braided horsehair. HOPI COILED YUCCA TREASURE BASKET—At the top of plate are strips of gual willow and the seed-vessel of the *Mertensia*, or "Cat Claws," from which most of the water-tight baskets in the Southwest are made.

How to Make Baskets

By MARY WHITE

WITH A CHAPTER ON "WHAT THE BASKET MEANS
TO THE INDIAN," BY NELSJE BLANCHAN



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TO
A. D. T.

PREFACE

THE twisting and weaving of Nature's materials, grasses, twigs, rushes and vines, into useful and beautiful forms seems almost instinctive in man. Perhaps it came to him as the nest-weaving instinct comes to birds—for at first he used it as they do, in the building of his house. Later, shields and boats were formed of wicker work, but how long ago the first basket was made no one is wise enough to tell us. To-day Indian tribes in South America weave baskets from their native palms, South African negroes use reeds and roots, while the Chinese and Japanese are wonderful workmen in this as in other arts and industries; but basketry has come down to us more directly through the American Indian. Generations of these weavers have produced masterpieces, many of which are preserved in our museums, and the young basket maker need not go on long pilgrimages to study the old masters of his craft. Here at last, as in England, the value of manual training is being realized, and basketry is taking an important place;

following the kindergarten and enabling the child to apply the principles he has learned there. He still works from the centre out, and weaves as he wove his paper mats, but permanent materials have replaced the perishable ones, and what he makes has an actual value.

Basketry also fills the need for a practical home industry for children; so not only in school, club and settlement, but on home piazzas in summer young weavers are taking their first lessons. Though they are unlearned in woodcraft, and have not the magic of the Indian squaw in their fingertips, they can, and do, feel the fascination of basketry in the use of rattan, rush and raffia. It is hoped that this book may be a help in teaching them "How to Make Baskets."