

CARE OF YOUR BASKETS:

- Do not display your basket in areas where they are likely to attract dirt and grease, like a kitchen.
- Avoid direct sunlight.
- Check baskets occasionally for insect damage, fading and decay.
- Handle carefully, using two hands, especially with older baskets; never pick up at the rim.
- To dust, use a paint brush with long, soft bristles.
- Keep out of reach of pets and children.
- Do not nail directly to a wall as this will damage the basket.
- Display in a showcase or on a stand, positioned so that the principle design or shape is best shown.



INDIAN ARTS & CRAFTS ASSOCIATION

SINCE 1974



THE WORLD'S LEADING AMERICAN INDIAN ARTS ALLIANCE

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The IACA Mission

To promote, preserve and protect authentic
American Indian arts and crafts.

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COLLECTING
AMERICAN INDIAN
BASKETS



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BASKET WEAVING IS ONE OF the oldest and widely made American Indian art forms. Ancient fragments of baskets have been found throughout the U.S., some were thousands of years old.

Like other American Indian arts, there are tribal and regional differences in basketry – different materials, weaving techniques, shapes and patterns. Tribes regularly made use of the local materials around them. Baskets from the Northeastern Woodlands are traditionally made from splints of pounded ash tree or braided sweet grass. The Southeast tribes use bundled pine needles or river cane wicker. In the Southwest, baskets are made of tightly coiled sumac or willow wood, and Northwest Coast tribes use cedar bark, swamp grass and spruce root.



The two main techniques for basket making are plaiting and coiling. Plaiting is the more common technique with two materials woven together in an under and over pattern. Coiling is when flexible material is wrapped around a fixed bundle of grasses, reeds or similar materials. The stitches of the flexible material are attached to the preceding coil, which attaches the coils together.

Like patterns and materials, weaving techniques also tend to be regional. The main technique used in the American Southwest is coiling, as seen in baskets from the Hopi, Tohono O’Odham and Apache tribes. The Eastern Woodlands tribes primarily use the plaiting method, as seen in the baskets of the Penobscot and Cherokee.

Basket making is traditionally done by women, who originally were responsible for keeping a good supply on hand to store food and belongings, and to use for trade.

Selecting a basket, as with any other art form, is a matter of personal choice. Baskets can be available from the basket-makers themselves, through tribal craft co-ops and through retailers. Prices range from a few dollars to thousands, depending on the antiquity, condition, design, skill, etc.

When purchasing a basket, whether old or new, request and record as much information as possible. Always work directly with the artist or with a reputable and knowledgeable dealer. All IACA retail members are carefully vetted and commit to selling genuine American Indian art, correctly and accurately labeled for the consumer.

All Native Made art and craft, whether ancient or contemporary, carries with it the spirit of purpose. The shapes, colors, textures and designs each have meaning to Native people. It is from this purpose that creativity thrives.

WHEN SELECTING YOUR BASKET:

- *The design should be well-positioned on the basket.*
- *Repetitive designs should be in proportion to the size of the basket.*
- *Each material used should be consistent in size and color.*

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