

# Leather Workers

The leather workers at the Adobe were responsible for many things. They often turned the hides into boot, chaps, belts, pouches, and most importantly-saddles. The students will have the opportunity to provide-bookmarks, pouches, or bolo tie slides.

Each student is to provide one complete and usable leather product.

References: Leatherwork Manual by Patten, Stohlman, and Wilson

Leather pieces have been found wherever ancient man roamed. When Cortez conquered Mexico in the early 16<sup>th</sup> Century, leather artistry came boldly into the New World. The complete hide of an animal is known as the SKIN. Large animal hides are often cut in half at the backbone-this is one SIDE or one half of the hide. The thickness of leather is usually measured in ounces. The hides that were cured and produced at the Adobe were exported around the world. They were frequently used as the belts in the factories emerging on the East Coast.

## Vocabulary:

Skin: leather tanned in the whole pelt, same size and shape as it came from the animal.

Side: one half skin or hide, usually 22 to 26 square feet

Grain: Epidermis or outer layer of the animal skin

Full Grain: Leather just as it is when taken off the animal. Only the hair has been removed. (Only full grain leather will absorb water and tool correctly-Top Grain usually means that it has been sanded to remove scars and then painted over again-you must get FULL GRAIN and not TOP GRAIN)

## Local Leather Dealers (as of 9-04)

Barta George Hide Company  
888 Lakeville in Petaluma  
707-762-2965

Call of the Wild  
(Tandy Leather Dealer)  
3598 Gravenstein Highway South in Sebastopol  
707-829-8544

Stevenson-Paxton Sales  
37 Commercial Boulevard in Ignacio  
1-800-648-1622

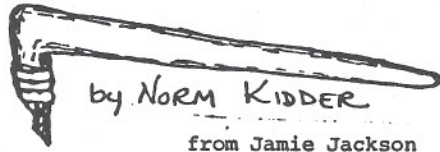
[www.Tandyleather.com](http://www.Tandyleather.com)

07-22-06

# Brain and Smoke Tanning

## Learn to make leather

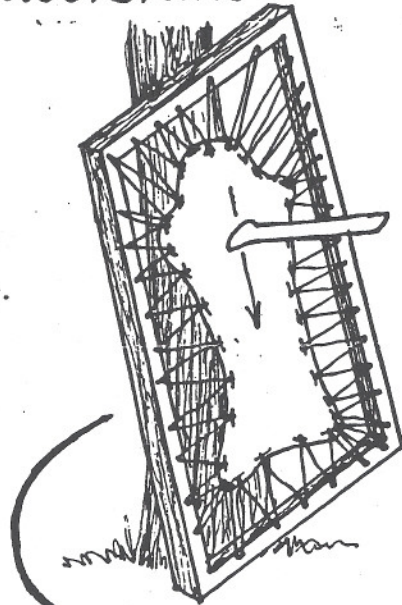
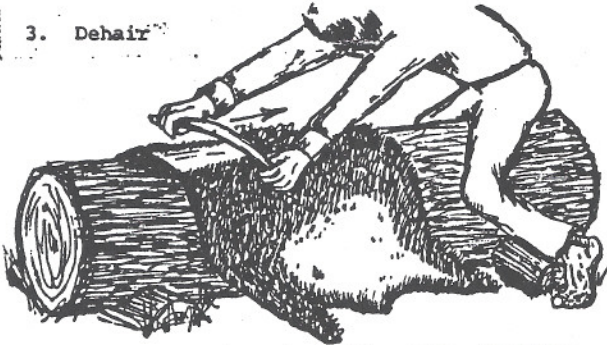
### from deerskins



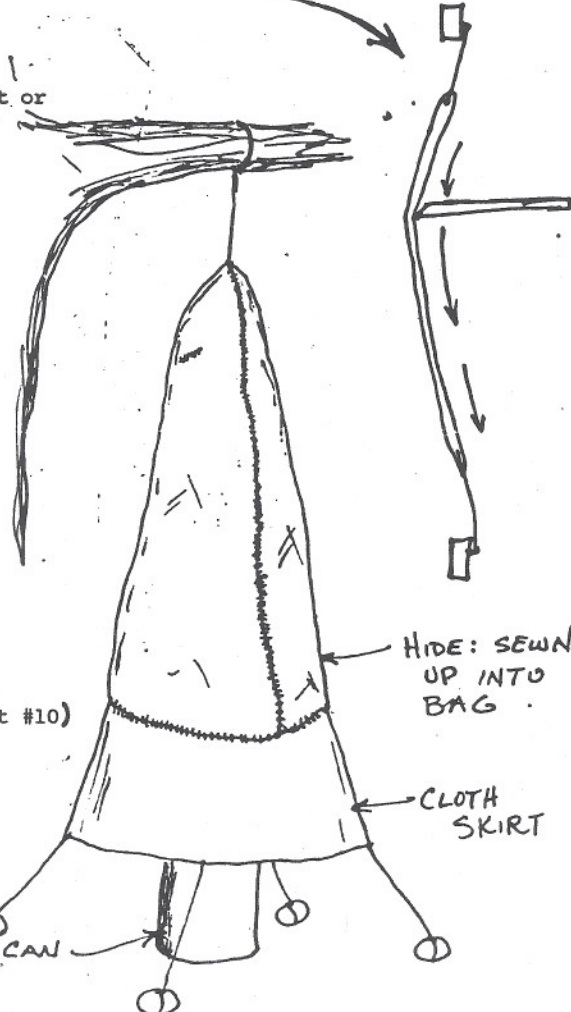
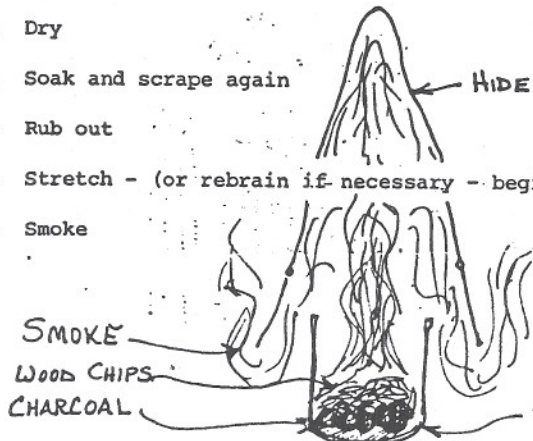
by Norm Kidder

from Jamie Jackson

1. Wash off salt
2. Soak in lime bath until hair slips
  - a. Dissolve 5 lbs. hydrated lime/100 lbs. WET pelt in enough water to cover.
  - b. Stir as frequently as possible - several times a day.
3. Dehair



4. (Optional) Neutralize in delimer:
  - (a) 3 lbs. Amonium Sulphate/100 lbs. wet pelt or
  - (b) 1 quart vinegar/hide plus water to cover
5. Wash
6. Stretch on rack
7. Scrape flesh
8. Dry completely (drum tight)
9. Degrain: scrape grain off hair side
10. Soak at least three hours (or overnight)
11. Scrape both sides
12. Apply cooked, mashed brains to both sides.
13. Dry
14. Soak and scrape again
15. Rub out
16. Stretch - (or rebrain if necessary - begin at #10)
17. Smoke



# *Leather Working Station*

## **Materials Needed: (\*Provided by Park)**

- \* Leather tools (stored in 3 white tool holders)
  - \* Wooden mallets for pounding
  - \* Pounding Boards
  - Leather (the class needs to provide this)
  - Scissors (the class needs to provide these)
  - Sponge to soften leather with water (the class needs to provide these)
- Optional:
- Leather Punch
  - Lacing

## **Station Set-up:**

1. Set up the leather station. The station can be set up near the Blacksmiths Forge or near the Walnut Trees. We do not allow students to pound on the tables so you will have to have enough "pounding boards" and benches for them to work on. One of the larger benches can fit two "leather workers".
2. The leather tools and mallets are in a blue milk crate on the second shelf of the open shelf unit in the ELP Supply Room. It is labeled, "Leather Tools..."
3. Take the crate out to the area that you have designated as the leather station.

## **Station:**

1. Have the student select a piece of leather from the selection the class has brought.
2. Then have the student select several decorative tools from the three tool holders.
3. You must use the sponge to soften the leather a bit. Sponge both sides of the leather with the damp sponge twice. Let stand for 3-5 minutes. (Students could use this time to select the tool designs they want to use.)
4. The students use the mallet to pound the design tools into the leather. Please make sure that the pounding board is under the leather before beginning.

## **Station Clean-up**

1. All scraps and cuttings should be cleaned up.
2. All the leather tools should be placed back in to the three white holders.
3. The holders, mallets, and pounding boards should be placed back into the milk crate.

4. The milk crate is returned to the shelf in the ELP Supply Room.
5. The staff person on Wednesday will check to make sure that the items are properly returned to their place and counted.