



Dollar Tree Potato Masher Basket with variations

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app. 8" in diameter and 3 1/2" deep

Many baskets have been made around antique potato mashers. This basket lends itself to lots of variations while still being worked around the potato masher, sold at Dollar Tree Stores. The grid in the base of this particular masher works perfectly with 3/8" flat/flat.

Materials for Navy basket (bottom row, center):

Spokes - 3/8" flat/flat – cut 8 (eight) 18" long
Twiners - #2 natural and Navy round reed. (#1 of each may be substituted)
Weavers – 3/8" flat/flat
Rim row – 1/4" flat/Flat or 7mm flat/flat
Outside rim – 3/8" flat/oval
Inside rim – 3/8" flat/flat
Rim filler - #2 or #3 seagrass
Lasher – 3mm flat oval



1. On the wrong side of 4 spokes, place a light pencil mark in the middle of the length. Put 2 more marks on either side of the middle mark 1 1/4" out.
2. Working with the wrong side up and envisioning a clock, lay out one spoke from 12 to 6.
3. Place a second spoke 9 to 3 with the middle of the spoke on top of the middle of the spoke beneath it.
4. Place a 3rd spoke halfway between the 12 and 3 and extending between the 6 and 9, again matching the middle of the spokes.
5. The 4th spoke will extended between the 9 and 12 to the area between the 3 and 6.
6. Crimp a long piece of well-soaked round reed and begin twining around the 8-spoke circle, starting 1 1/4" from the middle, using the pencil mark as a guide. Continue twining for approximately 5 rows or the diameter of the potato masher. DO NOT CUT TWINERS.
7. Thread the remaining 4 spokes into the wider grid holes in the masher as illustrated below, passing the center of the spokes over the center of the base.
8. Place the masher with the additional spokes on top of the base, making sure the additional spokes fall in between the first 8 spokes.
9. Continue twining, picking up the new spokes as you work.



10. Work until the base measures approximately 8".
11. Upset spokes.
12. Using 2 natural and 1 Navy round reed, triple twine (triple rod wale) 2 rows with a step up at the end of each row. (Rows 1 and 2)
13. Weave 2 rows of stop start weaving, using 3/8" flat/flat. (Rows 3 and 4)
14. Twine 1 row of Navy round reed. (Row 5)
15. Begin checkerboard. With one piece of Navy round reed and one piece of natural, twine 5 rows. (Rows 6-10)
16. After completing the 5th row of twining, reverse the reed by adding an additional twist to bring the back reed to the front and front reed to the back, reversing the colors and creating a checkerboard. Weave 5 more rows. (Rows 11-15)
17. Weave 1 row of twining with 2 pieces of Navy round reed.
18. Weave 1 row of 3/8" flat/flat in stop/start weaving.
19. Add rim row.
20. Add inner rim, outer rim, and filler.
21. Lash with 3mm flat/oval.

Variation #2 (bottom row, right) adds 3mm black cane for lashing and decorative inserts.

1. Follow steps 1 – 11 of previous basket.
2. Rows 1-4. After upsetting spokes, continue twining 4 more rows.
3. Cut 16 piece of black cane, approximately 5" long.
4. Rows 5-10: Weave 6 rows of stop/start weave, using 3/8" flat/flat. After first row, insert the cane under the twining and centered over the spokes. Weave over the cane as if part of the spoke.
5. Row 11: Add rim row.
6. Add inner rim, outer rim, and filler.
7. Lash with 3mm black cane.

Variation #3 (bottom row, left) continuous weave over an even number of spokes, using 7mm flat oval and spaced dyed #2 round reed. Shangri-La was used in the illustration.

1. Follow steps 1 – 11 of previous basket.
2. Rows 1 - 3: After upsetting spokes, triple twine (triple rod wale) 3 rows with a step up at the end of each row.
3. Taper the end of the 7mm flat oval about 5 -6" and begin continuous weave, ensuring to weave over 2 spokes at the end of each row to keep the over/under pattern. Weave approximately 7 rows, ending with a tapering where you started.

4. Weave 3 rows of triple twine (triple rod wale) with a step up at the end of each row.
5. Add rim row.
6. Add inner rim, outer rim, and filler.
7. Lash with 3mm flat/oval.

Variation #4 (top row, right) start-stop weaving with spaced dyed 1/4" flat reed.

1. Follow steps 1-11 of previous basket.
2. Upset spokes. Continue twining 2 more rows, with a step up at the end of each row.
3. 2 rows of start/stop weaving, using 3/8" flat natural.
4. 2 rows of start/stop weaving, using 1/4" flat spaced dyed reed.
5. Weave 1 row of start/stop weaving, using 3/8" flat natural.
6. Repeat step 4.
7. Weave 1 row of start/stop weaving, using 3/8" flat natural.
8. Add rim row.
9. Add inner rim, outer rim, and filler.
10. Add 1/4" spaced dyed reed to outside of outer rim before lashing.
11. Lash with 3mm flat/oval.

Variation #5 (top row, left)

Basically, this is worked the same as Variation #1 (the Navy basket) with the exception of using dyed round reed as an accent in the base.

Of note, the 1 row of twined dyed round reed before and after the checkerboard was omitted in the model; and only 3 rows were twined before the twist to make the checkerboard. This, of course, is subject to individual preference.



While these baskets can be used for many purposes, I think they're perfect for condiments, cosmetics, and vitamins/medications.