

## Hen Basket (rough steps outline)



### **Materials:**

**Ribbing:** at least 12-24 ft of unsplit ivy vines that are pretty straight and sturdy but flexible enough to be bent into a circle. About the width of a pinkie finger  $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{3}{8}$  inch wide. (You will likely want to add more ribs at various point in your weaving so having an extra 12 ft worth is recommended, which is why it says 12-24ft of ribbing material)

**Weavers:** at least 120 feet of split english ivy that is about  $\frac{1}{4}$  wide (give or take) and flexible enough to wrap around a finger or two.

### **Making 4 Starter hoops:**

This basket begins with 4 starter hoops. 2 small and two large.

**2 Large hoops:** You will need two pieces of ribbing about 42" long. Bend them into a circle about 12" in diameter with about 6" of overlap. For the overlap Cut top of one end at a diagonal longways and bottom of one end at a diagonal longways so that the two overlapping pieces lay flat against each other. Wrap with twine and set aside

2 small hoops: Do the same as above except your piece will be 28 inches long. The hoops will be 7" in diameter with 6 inches overlap. Repeat the splicing so the overlaps lay flat against itself and bind twine.

**Lashing the hoops in place:**

–Line up all the hoops so that the overlap point are at the top and lined up with each other. The two large hoops go in the middle and the two small hoops go on the outside.

*Special tip:* once the hoops are all in correct placement. Tightly Twine one row across the center of the overlaps with a piece of strong string or cordage to make sure things are wiggling around too much while starting the lashing. Tie off with a double knot.

–Take one very long weaver, fold in half over the handle (where you just twined your hoops together) From the fold point clip (secure, not cut) one side of weaver. And using the unclipped side of the weaver start wrapping around all 4 hoops and wrap as tight as you can. Going in one direction about 2 1/2 inches. And Clip. Then go in the opposite direction with the other side of the weaver 2 1/2 inches in the other direction. You should then have a wrapped portion of the handle center at the top of the hoops that is about the width of your hand. Now clip the other end as well to keep the tension in place on your wrapped handle.

–Tie a spacer stick across the hoops to spread them to the desired width of your basket.

– Using the clipped lashing weaver you will continue to alternate working on one side then the other. Start the lashing by going over two hoops, and coming to the center then over the other two and back out the center. If you want it to stay the same color for this whole portion make sure you do a little twist in the back. Continue wrapping until you cover completely the overlapped join portion of the hoop. Then clip to keep the tension, and repeat on the other side and clip. (pattern is over two and under two.) This process makes little pockets that you will slip your ribs into!

**Adding primary ribs:**

At this point you will add a total of 6 ribs to your basket. 2 between each hoop. You will likely add more ribs later especially if you are making a pretty rounded hen basket. That process will be very similar.

You will create a taper on the ends of your rib, and slip each rib into the lashing pocket on each side. Making sure that your rib piece is the length you need in order to create the width and roundness you want for your basket. Try to make sure the corresponding rib on the opposite side is about the same length. For the ribs that sit near the two large

base hoops make sure they are about the same length or slightly shorter than the two larger hoops. This is a really important part of the process for shaping your basket.

That is important if you want to have basket that can stand up straight without falling over! Those two hoops will form the base of your baskets.

### **Lock in the ribs:**

As you start to weave make sure that all your ribs stay in their correct order!

To lock in the ribs do a straight weave with one weaver going over one rib and under the next and continuing on making sure your ribs are evenly spaced and in the correct order as you go. Do several rows, then repeat on the other side. If the ribs pop out, stick em back in!

—\* at this point you can add more ribs if your basket is quite wide or if there are pretty big gaps between each rib. Make sure you add them in even numbers and symmetrically placed throughout your basket. It's the same process as before but you are pushing your ribs into the weaving you just did. You may need to use an awl or bodkin to get your new ribs into position. Once youve added your ribs, lock them in in the same way as before.

### **Weaving each side:**

You'll continue doing single weave on each side until you get to a place where turnback are necessary. Then do the turn back to ensure you have a straight line going down the middle. This ensures your basket doesn't have a hole in the middle at the end.

### **Finishing up:**

The last bit of weave can get sort of tough because your weaving in such a tight space. Take your time and maybe switch to slightly finer weaver material so you can fit it into the small spaces in the ribs.

Your done!

