

Make a nest or rustic basket from tree willow



Spring is a fabulous time to make things with plants because they can be much bendier than later in the season. Use some of the thin willow hanging from trees in spring time (ask if you may take some if the tree isn't yours). You could also buy Green Willow from wholesale willow suppliers when they have it available but that's an expensive option.



A



B



C



D

- A You need about twenty lengths of the willow. Rub off some of the new leaves if they're too big or you don't like them then get four longer lengths (approx. 80 cm each) and lay them on a table with them crossing in the middle. Tie them fairly firmly together trying to also maintain a "spokes on a bike wheel' layout

- B Lift up the thin end of one of the spokes and fold it up from where it is tied in the centre. Gently weave this around the other spokes by going over one spoke, going under the next then going over and under, all the time until you've about 8 cm left of your length. Get a new length ready. Finish the 8 cm and then tuck the thinnest point of the new length into a gap close to where you are to trap it in place. Carry on from where you were before going over and under in turn. Keep looking at what you've done- if you seem to have gone over and are about to go over the same spike again, you've gone wrong. Undo your work until you find where you went adrift. I seem to do as much undoing as doing up!

Keep it snug, but as this is only a rustic basket, it will be 'gappy' and uneven.

- C As you go on, start to raise the other spokes (I start to sit near to a table so that when I lean in, they're pushed up more easily and can't move around too much)
- D Carry on and when you're maybe 6cm high and nearing the ends of your spokes, it'll be time to do the edge. You can't go too high as the weaving isn't stable enough without adding more spokes in any case.

Finally.....

Get a spoke and weave it around the spokes next to it in order (over, under etc) and then tuck it down in to a gap, get the next spoke and do the same. You will need to do some threading in and out when you've run out of spokes but need to tuck in the final one or two, but by now, you'll have the idea.

If your basket is really gappy, you can do more threading with new lengths to 'stitch it together'. Just poke one end in a gap, thread it around another bit of the weaving, tuck it in another gap and continue 'plugging any holes'. Remember to wash your hands!

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