

“White Woven Christmas”

by Sheri L. Van Duyn

Dimensions: 5” diameter x 9” handle height

Materials:

#2 round reed-base and top braid
3/16” or 1/4” flat reed
1/2” flat reed-spokes and weavers
1/2” x 24” handle insert
3/8” wide red and green satin ribbon
3 jingle bells-red, gold or silver
Red Pipe cleaner-1 piece
White acrylic paint-bottle or spray
Elmer’s glue



Preparation:

Cut 5 spokes of 1/2” flat reed at 18” long. Cut 1 piece of 1/2” flat reed at 25” long. Mark of all these spokes on the rough side in the center with a pencil mark. Soak these pieces along with several pieces of #2 round reed.

Construction:

Lay out 2 spokes at 18” plus the long spoke at 25”. Place these 3 spokes like a bicycle wheel crossing them at the center marks and spacing them evenly.

Crimp or bend a piece of #2 round reed just off center and loop over 1 of the spokes. Begin twining with the 2 pieces at 1” out from the center.

Continue twining in the manner until you reach a diameter of just over 3” wide. Now weave in the remaining 3 spoke pieces by twining before and after each new piece. Now continue to twine over the 6 spokes until you reach a diameter of 5”.

Upset or bend up each of the spokes. Continue twining up the sides for 4 rows. If you run out of a round reed weaver, just add to the inside and continue twining.

Weave 5 rows of 1/2” flat natural reed. Each row will be a start and stop weave; so each row will be cut off. Alternate where each row will start and end. Overlap 2 or 4 spokes to secure.

Crimp 1 long piece of #2 round reed or take 2 pieces of # 2 round reed and twine 3 rows around the top of the basket. Place the ends to the inside to finish. Soak the basket along with 12 pieces of #2 round reed cut at 20” long.

Tuck the spokes at the top of the basket. The spokes are bent over the twining rows and woven back into the inside of the basket. Make sure to leave the long spoke pieces in tack. Insert the 1/2” insert piece. The handle height is 9” long.

Finishing:

Take 1 of the 12 pieces of #2 round reed and insert the end through the last 3 rows of twining to the top of the basket. Go over 1 spoke and insert the other end. Pull up evenly leaving a loop resting at the base of the last row. Continue placing another piece on the same loop; go over to

the next spoke with the other end and pull up evenly. Proceed by inserting each of the 12 braid pieces. Each spoke will have 2 pieces placed on top of them creating a “U” shape series of loops.

Continue by doing the *3 step braid*:

Take any pair and go behind the next pair to the right and come back out. (All spokes out.)

Now cross over with 1 pair to the next pair on the right and go back to the inside of the basket. (All spokes in.)

Take 1 pair of spokes and cross over the next pair to the right and drop down. (All spokes down.) This step can be done twice if desired. Trim the pairs after shaping the basket and allowing the basket to dry thoroughly.

The Handle:

Soak a long piece of 3/16” or 1/4” flat reed. Insert the end of this piece into the basket and begin wrapping around the handle of the basket. Make sure the rough side of the piece is next to the handle and smooth side is facing out. Pull this piece through each time. Keep the piece horizontal as you continue to wrap around. When the other side is reach, tuck the tail of this piece into the wrap to secure or tuck the tail end of this piece into the basket.

Painting:

I have chosen to white-wash this basket. This can be done 2 different ways.

#1: Take acrylic paint (in a tube or bottle) and a brush; “paint” the white color on the basket. I have found that it is better to paint 2 “lighter” coats than 1 heavy coat. It is also handy to have water close to you as you spread this paint on the basket, so that it penetrates the reed easier.

#2: Or, take white spray paint and work outside to spray the basket. Work over a plastic bag. Again it is better to give the basket 2 light coats than 1 heavy coat. Paint is very attractive on reed, but does not allow the reed to breathe; sometimes these baskets will dry out faster and become more brittle.

Accenting:

Take red ribbon and weave through Rows 1, 3 and 5. Overlap behind a spoke and glue to hold in place. Repeat the process on Rows 2 and 4 with green satin ribbon.

Take red and green ribbon and make several loops. Add 3 jingle bells in the color of your choice by placing through a pipe cleaner. Twist to 1 side of the basket handle.

Fill with candy canes, pine cones or treats of your choice.

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